Reviewer’s report

Title: Food consumption patterns and associated factors in Vietnam

Version: 1 Date: 12 March 2013

Reviewer: Pattanee Winicahgoon

Reviewer’s report:

1. General: The question posed by the authors was well defined, but not new. It, however, may be useful for Vietnam since no such data are available in the previous large scale surveys, as described by the authors. Caution that the study confined to only one ecological area of the country and interpretation of data when compare/contrast the results to the national surveys need to be clearly explained.

2. Methods:

1. The data used in this study is from baseline of a larger study. Hence, the context and what the study population may/may not ‘represent’ are needed. More (but brief) information should be provided about the study population and the context.

2. The FFQ used as the key tool for data collection was claimed to be validated (with reference to a thesis which is not accessible). Since the tool is used on a confined area (mountainous, northern area of Vietnam), it should clarify whether the 107 food items in the FFQ is applicable for region-specific population.

3. Use of FFQ for deriving energy and macronutrients are possibly overestimated, whereas only weight and height were accounted for in the derived equation. It is now known that body composition of Asians and Caucasians differ significantly. This may also affect the validity of the EER equation – please discuss.

4. The validity of adoption of AMDR which is derived from US population for Asians needs to be verified, due to differences in dietary patterns, dietary quality/diversity, disease risk (e.g., body composition), physical activities, etc. This issue needs some discussion since they are among key outcomes from this analysis.

5. Generally speaking, food composition table may be rather incomplete for specific components, especially, relevant to this study is the fatty acid contents. It should be assured that the low intake of fatty acid intakes is not due to incompleteness of FC database. In particular, please provide some specific information as to completeness of FC database for fatty acids.

3. Results:

1. Are data on anthropometry also available? It is useful to at least present BMI (mean and distribution) as descriptive in Table 1.

2. Due to large sample size, the statistical significances, especially in the
bivariate analyses may not be very meaningful. This should be discussed focusing on which ones (if any) have public health significance. Similarly, for multiple and logistic analysis, the statistical vs public health significance of the differences of key parameters should also be discussed.

4. Discussion and conclusions

• See several comments under ‘Method’ and ‘Result’ above.

5. Title and abstract

• Title should be modified to more specifically reflect the study, e.g., include key words: Reproductive age women in a northern mountainous of Vietnam; food security and socio-demographic and economic determinants.

• Abstract:
A sample size of 5011 was indicated, which differ from that in the main MS (n=4983).

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.