

MOU between Sudan and WFP, UNICEF & MI

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of Health of Sudan, Ministry of Industry of Sudan and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Micronutrient Initiative (MI) on March 13, 2007. The aim of the MOU is to advance the achievement of Universal Salt Iodization (USI) for the control and reduction of iodine deficiency diseases (IDD) in Sudan.

With a population of almost 37 million, of which over 5 million are children under 5 years of age, Sudan's prevalence of iodine deficiency is well documented. Iodine is an essential micronutrient which is needed for proper brain development of the foetus and young children. While Sudan produces some 175,000 metric tons (MT) of salt per annum, only 3,000 MT of salt produced annually is iodized; in effect, only 1% of households consume iodized salt.

The general objectives of the MOU are: to increase household consumption of iodized salt to more than 90% by the end of 2008 and to increase production and distribution of iodized salt from 3,000 metric tons to 165,000 metric tons a year. To achieve these objectives, the Sudanese Ministries of Health and of Industry will be working with WFP, UNICEF and MI to focus on the areas of capacity building for production of iodized salt, including technical and monitoring support; procurement support for equipment and potassium iodate; developing and enforcing a strategic plan for social mobilization and marketing towards demand creation and awareness of IDD and its remedy USI; as well as conducting surveys and assessments to enable national monitoring of IDD.

For full details please refer to the MOU.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
Joint project between
THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF SUDAN (MOH),
THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY OF SUDAN (MOI),
THE UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD PROGRAM (WFP)
THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)
AND,
THE MICRONUTRIENT INITIATIVE (MI):
Regarding the
ACHIEVEMENT OF UNIVERSAL SALT IODIZATION (USI) PROGRAMME IN SUDAN

1. Background:

1.1: Parties:

The parties to this Agreement are the Ministry of Health of Sudan (FMOH), Ministry of Industry of Sudan (FMOI), UN-World Food Program (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Micronutrient Initiative (MI).

The MOH is responsible for ensuring the health of the population of Sudan. The MOH's priorities include prevention of micronutrient deficiencies and particularly addressing the scourge iodine deficiency disorders. The MOH has developed a National Fortification Strategy and a comprehensive action plan to address Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) in Sudan through Universal Salt Iodization (USI)

The MOI is responsible for supporting the growth and development of Industries in Sudan and ensuring industries comply with regulations and standards for products set by the Government of Sudan. The MOI is committed towards supporting the salt industry to comply with salt iodization and understands that achieving the USI goal would be immense contribution by the salt Industry towards the health and well-being of the people of Sudan and also makes the salt industry competitive in the global market and thereby promoting towards further industrial development in Sudan.

The MI is a non-governmental organization which endeavors to stimulate and support national actions to eliminate micronutrient malnutrition, assuring universal coverage and sustained impact on the health and well-being of people. It supports and promotes an integrated approach to address micronutrient deficiencies through supplementation programs, food fortification and other food based approaches. MI seeks to achieve its objectives through the establishment of partnerships with other development agencies, governments, industry, scientific institutions and NGOs. MI has its global headquarters in Ottawa, Canada and its Africa Regional Office in Johannesburg, South Africa.

WFP is the food aid arm of the United Nations system operating to provide food aid to eradicate hunger and food insecurity. WFP addresses problems of food insecurity and malnutrition in poor developing countries using food assistance as a means of addressing immediate hunger on the one hand, and as leverage for ensuring that poor people have access to additional non-food resources and services on the other. WFP seeks to ensure that much of its food aid is appropriately fortified with micronutrients, requesting donors to provide fortified commodities where possible. WFP supports the fortification efforts of many national governments and in Sudan is extending support towards achievement of USI.

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential in growth and development through programmes such as health nutrition, education and overall protection of the rights of children. UNICEF responds to emergencies to protect the rights of children and the provide life saving interventions for women and children. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies and government of Sudan, UNICEF supports MOH in the coordination of Nutrition activities and supports its partners and provides direct support to government and other partners in order to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide their care.

UNICEF in many countries including Sudan has supported the government in the initiation of the USI programme alongside key partners like MI and key areas of support have included provision Salt Plants, Potassium iodate, Capacity building, Advocacy, mobilization of other partners support, Support to social mobilization and periodic surveys to overage of consumption of iodized salt. USI is one of the key strategies that UNICEF has used in Sudan alongside the provision of supplementation in its effort to prevent and eliminate micronutrient deficiency.

Under this MOU, UNICEF will support MOH and the government in the areas of social marketing and mobilization at all levels, establishment of monitoring system capable of assessing progress in the progressive use of iodized salt, follow-up on enforcement of law and legislations, systematic labeling and branding iodized salt and creating awareness among consumers. In case of funding gap and availability of funding, UNICEF will also support the procurement of potassium iodate and salt iodization plants. UNICEF seeks to achieve the above mentioned objectives through establishment of partnership with government, UN agencies, MOI, development partners, private sectors and the community. UNICEF will draw heavily on the support from the UNICEF Micronutrient focal person in HQ in New York, USA, while at Sudan country office level; a National Officer position has been established to over see this programme.

This MOU specifies the implementation responsibilities and partnership between the parties listed above in relation to Achievement of Universal Salt Iodization (USI) in Sudan. The relevant

responsibilities of the Ministries of Health and Industry are assumed to also reflect the responsibilities of their respective State level Departments especially Red Sea State where most of the salt in Sudan is produced.

The overall coordination and management of the USI programs will be the responsibility of the government institutions at all levels and will be supported by implementing partners.

Collaboration in the area of Universal Salt Iodization will focus on implementing projects and activities which will promote the iodization of all salt produced in Sudan with a focus on the salt produced at Port Sudan in Red Sea State.

In order to achieve the program objectives for USI, the parties will work very closely with various key partners including the salt industry, donors and other local and international development agencies and partners.

MI, WFP's and UNICEF assistance will be in line with Sudan's USI achievement plan as well as the National Nutrition Policy and Guidelines.

2. Project Summary:

2.1 Project Name: Universal Salt Iodization Programme in Sudan: To control and reduce the development of Iodine Deficiency Disorders in Sudan

2.2 Program Goals: Elimination of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) in Sudan by 2015.

2.3 General Objective:

- To increase households consumption of iodized salt to more than 90% by end of 2008
- To Increase production and distribution of iodized salt from 3,000 metric tons (MT) to 165,000 MT year.

2.4 Specific Objectives of the USI Collaboration:

The main objectives of the project are to:

- To contribute to the reduction in the prevalence of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) and to protect newborn children from IDD through the promotion of universal salt iodization as a strategy to combat IDD in Sudan.
- To contribute to an increase in the production of iodized salt by supporting the production, and thus increasing the availability and access to iodized salt by households.
- To enhance the capacity of Government and the private sector to sustain iodization of salt in accordance with the national strategy and standards.
- To improve monitoring and coordination of the National USI program by supporting activities which improve coordination among stakeholders, data collection, analysis and disbursement.

2.5 Activities:

- Increase production and distribution of iodized salt
- Enact ministerial decree to ban production and distribution of non iodized salt in the market within 6 month from starting of production of Iodized Salt
- Build Capacity of Universal Salt Iodization (USI) Programme
- Set an adequate internal and external quality assurance and quality control system
- Develop and Implement Social marketing plan for USI
- Conduct baseline survey and follow up on Iodine, deficiencies, disorders Iodized Salt availability, consumption.
- Formulate financial Supporting network from national and international agencies to ensure adequate financial flow to support the project

2.6 Expected Outcomes:

By end of 2008 household consumption of Iodized salt increased to 90% in the country.

2.7 Project Period:

Three years (2007 –2009)

3. Duties and Responsibilities of Partners:

Under leadership of Federal Ministry of Health, all partners contribute and support the project as stated in the below defined responsibilities:

3.1 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MOH:

Through its departments and offices at all levels, the MOH will:

- 3.1.1 Be responsible for the overall coordination and management of the USI program with all stakeholders and communicate information on program to all parties
- 3.1.2 Collect and maintain information on USI program
- 3.1.3 Provide guidelines on iodine levels to be maintained, coordinate monitoring and evaluation of USI program at all levels in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Trade.
- 3.1.4 Share its vision and objectives for USI with all stakeholders including resources already allocated for activities within the National Action Plan. This would enable stakeholders to avoid duplication and maximize its resource allocation to critical activities of the program.
- 3.1.5 Implement the necessary measures stipulated in the legislation regarding the production and marketing of iodized salt.
- 3.1.6 Facilitate and assist partners where possible to implement program activities.

3.2 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MOI:

Through its departments and offices at all levels, the MOI will:

- 3.2.1 Facilitate and support linkages with the salt producers in relation to building capacity of salt producers to adequately iodize salt.
- 3.2.2 Use its existing regulation and enforcement mechanisms to encourage salt producers to iodize salt
- 3.2.3 Monitor and maintain information on salt production and share this with the parties to promote effective programmatic actions
- 3.2.4 Advocate to state and national level government departments for regulations and laws that encourage growth, profitability and investment within the salt sector since this contributes to industrial growth and sustainability of the program
- 3.2.5 Advocate to salt industry and promote salt iodization as a strategy to combat iodine deficiency
- 3.2.6 Implement the necessary measures stipulated in the legislation regarding the production and marketing of iodized salt.
- 3.2.7 Facilitate and assist partners where possible to implement program activities

3.3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MI

Within the framework of this MOU, MI will provide the following support within the constraints of its capacity and resources:

- 3.3.1 Support the MOH and MOI in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of USI projects and mobilize resources or expertise in areas that could contribute towards achievement of USI in Sudan.
- 3.3.2 Share reports on planned activities, progress made and recommendations to all parties to avoid duplication of resource allocation
- 3.3.3 Performs its activities in line with the National USI Action Plan and under the guidance of the Government of Sudan.
- 3.3.4 Collaborate with partners and stakeholders
- 3.3.5 Recognizing that MI's main technical capacity is in the production of iodised salt, MI will focus its USI activities on increasing production (supply) of iodized salt which would necessarily entail working closely with salt producers.
- 3.3.6 Within its area of expertise and resource availability, MI will provide technical or material support to salt producers in order to build capacity for iodization of salt with approval of FMOH and other concerned government institutions. MI will be responsible for procurement and technical support in the installation of the new iodization plants and repair of the old, the establishment of the quality systems and providing appropriate training on salt iodization techniques, equipment maintenance, quality and inventory management to individuals involved in the implementation of the project.
- 3.3.7 Recognizing the importance of reliable data and information for USI program planning, implementation and monitoring, MI will support the MOH and MOI in the development of a tracking and management system for USI.
- 3.3.8 MI's further support to other areas of USI will be subject to the availability of funds or resources within the MI and in line with the program priorities.

3.4 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WFP

Within the framework of this MOU, WFP will provide the following support within the constraints of its capacity and resources:

- 3.4.1 Support the MOH and MOI in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of USI projects and mobilize resources or expertise in areas that could contribute towards achievement of USI in Sudan.
- 3.4.2 Share reports on planned activities, progress made and recommendations to all parties to avoid duplication of resource allocation
- 3.4.3 Performs its activities in line with the National USI Action Plan and under the guidance of the Government of Sudan.
- 3.4.4 Collaborate with partners and stakeholders
- 3.4.5 Clearing and forwarding of equipment and KIO3 that is imported into Sudan for increasing the capacity of salt producers to produce iodised salt
- 3.4.6 Supporting efforts towards advocacy demand creation and awareness on USI and IDD directly and through partnerships with other agencies and government institutions.
- 3.4.7 WFP's further support to other areas of USI will be subject to the availability of funds or resources within the MI and in line with the program priorities.

3.5 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNICEF

Within the framework of this MOU, UNICEF will provide the following support within the constraints of its capacity and resources:

- 3.5.1 UNICEF will support MOH in developing and enforcing strategic plan for social mobilization and marketing with all key actors: decision maker, salt traders, school teachers and community leaders, women's groups, health workers where the benefits of iodized are being raised. These campaigns include interviews on radio and TV spots, posters.
- 3.5.2 Under the leadership of the MOH, UNICEF will support MOH and key partners in updating the Sudan Plan for Universal Salt Iodization. This plan will then become the framework for all activities identified, therefore any actors willing to participate will fit into this overall structure and only activities identified in the framework will be recognized.
- 3.5.3 Where there is gap, UNICEF will support the salt producers in the form of potassium iodate and with equipment for monitoring of salt quality.
- 3.5.4 At National level, UNICEF will support MOH in conducting surveys and assessments to enable national monitoring of IDD. This will included the Sudan wide household survey where salt iodization usage and prevalence of goiter which will be the main indicators for monitoring. This will also include localized surveys undertaken, in various states where the usage of iodized salt as well as the prevalence of IDD will also be assessed among the population.
- 3.5.5 UNICEF will support MOH in advocating to government to create supporting environment for Iodized Salt production, including policies and encouraging measures for investment in this industry.
- 3.5.6 UNICEF will support MOH in enforcement of legislation that ban use and marketing of non-iodized salt and support the government of Sudan in instituting a system for monitoring.

3.5.7 UNICEF will support government in the development and enforcement of s systematic labels for iodized salts and awareness raising of all the stake holders including the community on the government seal for iodized salt national wide.

A. NOTICES

Unless otherwise agreed, any correspondence, notification or communication between the Parties under or in connection with this Memorandum of Understanding should be addressed as follows:

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B. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Each Party shall retain the intellectual property rights in all materials, publications, images and texts which that Party introduces to the other Party during the collaboration foreseen under this Memorandum of Understanding. The intellectual property rights in any materials, publications, images and texts resulting from joint activities by the Parties under the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be owned jointly by the Parties unless specified to the contrary by a separate Memorandum of Understanding entered into by WFP and MI.
2. Neither Party shall use the name or emblem of the other Party, or any abbreviation thereof, in connection with its business or otherwise without the express prior written approval of the other Party. In no event will authorization of the WFP name or emblem, or any abbreviation thereof, be granted for commercial purposes or for use in any manner that suggests an endorsement by WFP of MI's products or services.
3. Neither Party shall communicate at any time to any other person, government, authority or entity external to the other Party, any information known to it by reason of its association with the other Party which has not been made public, except with the authorization of the said Party or as required by law or regulation. Should either Party be required, by law or regulation, to disclose confidential information of the other, that Party shall notify the other immediately in writing. These obligations do not lapse upon termination of this Memorandum of Understanding.

