



Partnership for Sustained Elimination of Iodine Deficiency

Report of Board Meeting
April 30 – May 1, 2001
Indianapolis

Hosted by Kiwanis International

Present:

J. Werner Schultink (Chair – UNICEF)
M.G.Venkatesh Mannar (Secretary - MI)
David P. Haxton (MI)
Jack C.S. Ling, Gerard Burrows (ICCIDD)
Walter W. Becky, Richard L. Hanneman (Salt Institute)
L Nettles Brown, William A. Brown (Kiwanis)
Bruno de Benoist (WHO)
Dong Zhi Hua, Zhang Yan (China Salt)
Glen F. Maberly, Frits van der Haar, (PAMM)

Absent with apology: Jan W.F. van Ingen (ESPA)

1. Opening Comments

The Chair opened with an outline of developments and preparations for the Special Session for Children at the time of the UN General Assembly in September 2001 (UNGASS). The aim of the UNGASS is to review progress made towards the goals for Children set at the earlier Summit in 1990. The Special Session would also look forward and sign off on goals and activities for the coming decade. In the area of public nutrition the biggest success has been in the area of IDD elimination. More than 70% of the households in the world have adequately iodized salt. These figures are being updated through large-scale surveys currently ongoing in several countries. Other successes include supplementation to address Vitamin A deficiency, polio immunization and breastfeeding promotion.

Among the successful accomplishments of the past decade, IDD elimination through Universal Salt Iodization (USI) is the only one where a broad global alliance has emerged as witnessed by this Partnership – among UN Agencies, Salt industry associations, Civic initiatives and Technical support organizations. This type of cooperation is considered as a paradigm for the future in addressing the major health and nutrition problems of the world. UNICEF views the IDD elimination partnership and the added

value with great interest. UNICEF wants this Partnership to be a success. This model may also serve as a base for a broader fortification coalition being initiated with the Gates Foundation.

The objective of the meeting is to move forward on the agenda for the Partnership. There is no need to reopen a discussion on the rationale or justification for the partnership.

Ling stated on behalf of ICCIDD that his organization is ready to support the partnership in constructive way in the future. He recognized that there was still some distance still to go before victory over IDD could be claimed and that the most difficult part may lie ahead. He viewed the partnership as an overarching network to facilitate the efforts of individual partner organizations. ICCIDD is a multidisciplinary organization of individuals, who are dedicated to support the achievement of the global goal of IDD elimination through advice, research and active involvement in programs.

Becky, on behalf of Van Ingen conveyed the desire by ESPA to be associated with the Partnership on a long-term basis. He added that he had been requested by Van Ingen speak on behalf of ESPA as well as the Salt Institute at the meeting.

Debenoist stated that WHO recognizes that health problems should be addressed in a broader way, because of the recognition that many health-related problems are caused or amenable by action outside the immediate control of the health sector. WHO is already involved in several public-private Partnerships, such as for immunization, essential drug policy and eradication of tropical diseases. WHO is very supportive of the partnership and would like to see that the Board plays a coordination and facilitation role.

Dong expressed appreciation for CNSIC having been accepted as Partner. This provides opportunity to work with a global outlook. As regards CNSIC's engagement he mentioned the need for time to grow into the Partner role. He hoped that coordination among Partners leads to avoiding duplication of efforts and waste of resources. Dong emphasized the national responsibility and that the Partnership should find ways to assist national entities to strengthen this. An analysis was offered of the factors that have contributed to the many results accomplished in China. Most recent data show that the coverage of household salt in China is now at 95%. The target for 2001 is 96%.

2. Minutes of the Meeting in Paris January 10, 2001

The Secretary drew the attention of the Board to comments received from two members regarding the minutes of the meeting, expressing disagreement with the wording of the minutes.

The Chair proposed a motion that the Board agrees to file the minutes of the meeting together with the comments and append the comments of Ling as the new Chair of the ICCIDD. He reiterated the consensus that the purpose of the Partnership is to act as a facilitating coordinating body and not to create a rigid superstructure. He added that the discussions during the meeting should address any specific remaining concerns. Maberly seconded the motion. The Board accepted unanimously.

3. Partnership Work Plan

Maberly introduced the updated Global Score Card and presented the work plan outline and some suggested priorities. He highlighted region-wise reviews and progress of individual countries, and complexity of the problems still to be addressed. Coverage estimates are based on data from UNICEF, WHO and ICCIDD.

The Chair observed that by using the number of unprotected newborns (instead of populations not receiving iodized salt) there is quite a shift in operational directions. He felt that for certain countries it would be good to highlight specific comments.

Dong emphasized that the statistics for China should be accurate. The Board accepted his suggestion that official UN methods of reporting will be adopted. It also was accepted that all data for a country be included under reference to that country, and that the maps will contain a disclaimer that the borders shown do not imply official endorsement by any of the Partnership organizations.

The Board expressed its appreciation for the updated Global Score Card. With the better data it was clear that a future direction could be better focused. It was recognized that the data was presented mainly for advocacy and not as a scientifically accurate report.

Ling stressed the need for consumer education to make people demand iodized salt exclusively. The outcome should not be access to iodized salt, but its consumption.

It would be useful to compare the data on iodized salt availability with data available with the salt industry. In countries where there is no data included in the Score Card, e.g. the developed countries of the West (US, Japan, Western Europe, Australia) there is sometimes a problem and need for data. Scientific literature cites evidence that iodine deficiency is returning in these countries. This is an issue for this partnership.

Hanneman raised the question what the relevant data are that we should collect for these countries? What are the parameters (or best indicators) of greatest concern to sustainability? Are the methods to establish progress and to verify sustained elimination agreed-upon?

Maberly: The data on salt coverage are obtained by well-designed large-scale household surveys. These are the best data you can get. The general agreement is that in countries where >90% USI is achieved, it is recommended that a verification follows that the population has adequate iodine nutrition. The USI data are presently being consolidated for the UNSS. There are solid recommendations from WHO/UNICEF/ICCIDD Expert Consultations on how such verifications may be conducted. This should receive special attention among the tasks of the Partnership. It requires also investment in data collection and laboratory capacity. An international network of reference laboratories is being built with CDC in a technical lead position, with Partners around the table involved.

Chair: We want to improve the global data set using sources including the salt industry.

The meeting refocused on the work plan outline and prioritization of actions? UNICEF is working on two large sources of funding: USAID, with special interests in Central and Eastern Europe, India, Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia and Uganda, and the Gates Foundation, with resources for work in China and other countries. Agreement at this Partnership would be very helpful for UNICEF to program this resource.

The group proceeded with an elaboration of criteria for selection of countries for priority activities through the Partnership. Criteria that were considered included: Number of newborns yet to be protected; Salt situation; Geographic location; Political factors and Resource availability. Another way to look at a selection was introduced: (a) Countries where a push would be needed to reach the goal; (b) Countries

where the next step would be to sustain the success of reaching the goal; (c) Countries where the need is to verify goal achievement; and (d) Countries where data need improvement.

The attached Table offers a summary of the considerations of the meeting.

4. Criteria for country support and evaluation of progress

The definitions and conduct of national reviews and evaluations were considered. What are the current agreements to verify that the national policy goals are achieved? What are the conditions and evaluation criteria for sustainable elimination of IDD? How should national reviews be prepared, conducted and published? What are the expected outcomes of external evaluations?

The recommendations of the WHO/UNICEF/ICCIDD Expert Group meetings of 1992 and 1999 were recalled. The 1999 report is about to come off the printer and contains specific guidelines of factors to take into account as criteria for “IDD Freedom” and for assessment of program conditions. Other materials are the Iodized Salt Program Assessment Tool (ISPAT) and the guidelines for a national Salt Situation Analysis (SSA), developed for the series of Regional Salt Producers meetings in 1999 and 2000.

Mainly through national initiatives and supported by UNICEF, ICCIDD and WHO, review missions have been fielded in a number of countries, with a stronger focus on biological indicators. These assessments have yet to be combined with analysis in the same mission of the framework and conditions for sustainable salt iodization. Reports of previous missions have not been sufficiently shared or published in the literature. Some recent reviews have been more comprehensive e.g. Bolivia and Peru. Reports of these two reviews are posted on the PAMM website.

For external reviews, particularly when considering national goal achievement, the group developed a consensus that the future direction would be to ensure agreed, harmonized assessment tools and criteria that comprise both the biological status indicators (Has “IDD Freedom” been reached?) and the programmatic situation analysis (What is the likelihood of “Sustained Elimination”?). In addition, the results of these comprehensive missions should be communicated publicly and widely.

UNICEF has an agreement with ICCIDD under the Gates Foundation grant to work on “pilot surveys” for the analysis of the situation in a number of countries. The work conducted so far should merge into the recommendations following out of the Partnership meeting.

Dong shared the experience from China. Rather than achievement of a decade goal, China has embraced the concept of a periodical goal. For assessing the periodical goals, a framework is in place of comprehensive criteria. These include technical indicators (household salt use >90%; urinary iodine >100 ug/dl, etc), the structural organization, quality of the monitoring system, assurance of continued funding, market accessibility, and the iodized salt supply system. Experience in provincial application of the framework dates from 1998. Efforts are made to decentralize assessment to districts/municipalities.

The group decided to combine the three instruments available in a single package as a guideline for future missions:

- ISPAT (very comprehensive)
- WHO/UNICEF/ICCIDD criteria (to be published by May 2001)
- Salt Situation Analysis (used prior to salt producers meetings).

A group, consisting of Maberly (lead), Hanneman, Dong, Ling and Debenoist will work together to propose bringing together the guidelines from these documents.

The Chair proposed to select 3-4 countries for evaluation by Fall 2001. A group consisting of Debenoist, Ling and Schultink will provide a shortlist on recommendations from regional offices and requests already on hand, and propose a selection. We should look carefully at the composition of the teams for these missions and approach fielding through the UNICEF Regional Offices.

5. Partnership Secretariat Function and Financing Plan

The documents prepared by a Board Subcommittee on the Finance Plan and by the Interim Coordinator on a Secretariat were reviewed. The consensus was that a Secretariat is needed, and its role should be supportive of decisions by the Board. Major functions of a Board Secretariat are communications and coordination. The Secretariat should be minimal in size and not take independent initiatives. There was consensus that the Secretariat is the office of the Board in support of the Partnership.

UNICEF will fund a Secretariat for a start up phase of 18 months, with an evaluation of its role and function by 1 year. The group agreed to aim for the first year to make a difference and a running start. Work by the Partnership should show the ability to deliver on expectations; we want quality and we want performance. The Professional to be hired for heading the Secretariat would need to be a technically qualified person. The decision by UNICEF of funding means that UNICEF will supervise the work of the Secretariat.

There was agreement that the present documents were too detailed. A clear link between the work plan and staff time is needed. The budget should reflect the resources needed for the Secretariat as well as the work of the Partnership. A job description of a Professional heading the Secretariat needs development.

The Board agreed that a revised document should be prepared for outlining the

- Objectives and functions of the partnership,
- Role of the secretariat in supporting the partnership,
- Job description of the staff,
- Options for location.

The revised document should be prepared and circulated to Board Members by the end of May. Members comments by June 15. Final draft circulated for approval at next Board meeting. Mannar, Becky and Schultink will prepare the draft. Debenoist offered to send his ideas in writing to Schultink.

As an introduction to the task of revision, the meeting reviewed part of the texts on mandate and mission of the Partnership. The following texts were developed jointly:

Name: PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINED ELIMINATION OF IODINE DEFICIENCY

The mission of the Partnership is to support national efforts for sustained elimination of iodine deficiency through universal consumption of iodized salt. The partnership is a collaborative effort of public, private and civic organizations.

The Partnership shall consist of any organization that is interested in the sustained elimination of iodine deficiency. Partners need to be accepted by the Board of Trustees.

A Board of Trustees will govern the Partnership. The Board should be made up of the following categories of organizations:

- (1) Leading Salt Corporations and/or their associations and leading iodine corporations and/or their associations;
- (2) UN and/or bilateral development agencies;
- (3) International not-for-profit, non-governmental organizations and/or research organizations;
- (4) Private foundations.

6. By Laws

The meeting discussed the draft document prepared by the Subcommittee on By Laws. There was agreement that the document should be shorter, less detailed and complex. There also is a need to define terms such as “Country Watch”, “Sustained Elimination”, etc. A clear description is required of the link between the Partnership and Country Watches. Membership and dues should be matters that the Board should decide. Representation by UN agencies, salt producers, donors, etc. should be balanced. The procedures for Board meetings and budget decisions should be informal and collegial.

After discussion the Board agreed on a committee of Becky, Mannar and Brown to draft and present a new draft document at the next Board Meeting in July.

7. Other business

The 2001 UN Special Session

This meeting for government delegations will be held on September 19-21 at the UN in New York. About 70-100 Heads of State are expected to attend. The purpose is to review progress towards the goals of the Summit for Children in 1990 and to agree and sign off on visions and goals for the new millennium. The elimination of iodine deficiency by strengthened public-private Partnerships is included in the draft document for approval at the Special Session. UNICEF is the coordinating organization on behalf of the UN.

In the context of the UNSS, a Round Table will be held each day of the meeting (Three in total). The RT on September 20 is planned to address Food Fortification and Education. The idea is that a few heads of state will be present along with leaders drawn from other sectors. One hour at the RT will be devoted to a global coalition on food fortification. The message being developed for the RT is that (1) Fortification of basic foods is OK and safe; (2) The experience shows that public-private collaboration is essential in nutrition; (3) Salt iodization is a major success story. The story of IDD elimination through USI would constitute a 10-12 minute section of the RT. The need is for people who can speak with passion and pride on the success, shared by all.

The meeting decided to prepare a 1-page concept paper for use in preparation of the RT. A group to discuss the statement includes Schultink, Maberly, Ling, Hanneman and Haxton. The concept should be discussed at the next Board meeting.

Other ideas for the UNSS and associated events were offered. We might prepare a visual display of the global progress made, maybe showcase a small working model of an iodization plant on display, assure sufficient media attention for instance by bringing in children.

Next Board Meeting

The group decided to meet again on July 16-17, 2001 in Chicago at Morton Salt. Becky advised that a group reservation will be made at Allegro Hotel.

**SUMMARY TABLE OF PRIORITY ACTION IN 2001 BY THE PARTNERSHIP
FOR SUSTAINED ELIMINATION OF IODINE DEFICIENCY¹**

Region	Countries	Partners' Interests	Consensus of Specific Actions	Suggested Next Steps
SOUTH ASIA	India	ICCIDD, MI, CDC/PAMM, UNICEF	Advocacy and re-enforcement of National and State regulations; Salt industry rehabilitation; Accelerate policy applications with particular emphasis on communications	UNICEF and MI are pursuing the possibility of joint work to assist the national programme. Role of salt associations to be strengthened.
	Pakistan	MI, CNSIC, UNICEF	Address reasons for low coverage. Re-orient policies that obviously are not working	UNICEF to review the new proposal and advise Partnership on next steps
	Bangladesh	ICCIDD, MI, CNSIC, UNICEF	Salt industry to improve quality. Re-orient attitude of collaboration among national Partners	UNICEF to review new proposal and to advise Partnership on next steps. ICCIDD offers economic analysis.
	Afghanistan	WHO	Situational review required	WHO to provide review and advise on next steps.
EAST ASIA & PACIFIC	Philippines	ICCIDD, KI, CDC/PAMM, CNSIC, WHO	Focus on attaining USI: both local and imported salt (from China and India); Drive initiative from the cities upwards; Communicate on the impact of ID on mental ability.	Team to visit Philippines by end of May. CNSIC to assure iodization of all salt exports to the Philippines and to provide training of salt producers. KI to work with their local clubs and future President. CDC/PAMM coordinate.
	Indonesia	UNICEF, MI	Assist producer associations in solving problems; Decentralize to sub-national levels	UNICEF is working on new proposal and will advise the Partnership.

¹ CNSIC: China Salt; SI Salt Institute; KI Kiwanis International; CDC/PAMM Centers for Disease Control/Program Against Micronutrient Malnutrition; MI Micronutrient Initiative; ICCIDD International Council for Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders; WHO/PAHO World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization

Region	Countries	Partners' Interests	Consensus of Specific Actions	Suggested Next Steps
	China	ICCIDD, SI, MI, CNSIC, CDC/PAMM, KI	Generate interest and willingness for China to provide training ground for its neighbors. China is initiating massive consumer education through sales outlets of CNSIC.	CNSIC to promote learning of China's leadership in national policy. ICCIDD's Focal Point for Communications works closely with CNSIC on consumer education. CNSIC has become member of SI. CDC works on strengthening national monitoring systems. WHO oversees AusAid assistance in Tibet.
EAST & SOUTH AFRICA	Ethiopia	ICCIDD, CDC/PAMM	Needs fresh policy analysis; Iodized salt imported from Djibouti	Needs high-level political intervention, UNICEF leading. ICCIDD offers assistance in IDD problem analysis.
	Angola	UNICEF	Severe war situation makes efforts difficult.	UNICEF is coordinating a national program evaluation
WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA	Ghana	ICCIDD, MI	Market-based salt iodization project has started and needs time to show its value	No present actions. Await results from the initiative.
	Mali	MI, WHO	Address the major source of salt for French-speaking West Africa in Senegal. Muster stronger ties for collaborative action among national Partners	ESPA/UNICEF to work with Salins to get salt producers to iodize salt. Regional Meeting 27/29 May (UNICEF/Salins co-hosts). Invite ESPA to be at meeting. FvdH to attend and report back. Dan Lantum (ICCIDD) and Andre (WHO) to be invited. MI has interest in laboratory capacity building
	Senegal	ESPA, MI, WHO, UNICEF		
	Mauritania	WHO	Mauretania has high salt potential. Needs plan for salt iodization.	WHO to explore the situation and recommend. Debenoist will share a recent WHO report.
MIDDLE EAST	Sudan	UNICEF WHO	Present policy does not appear to work. Re-orient attitude of collaboration among national Partners	UNICEF to review a new proposal and advise the Partnership. WHO to review situation and recommend next steps.

Region	Countries	Partners' Interests	Consensus of Specific Actions	Suggested Next Steps
	Iraq	ICCIDD, WHO	Requires situation analysis	UNICEF/ICCIDD will check whether John Egbuta can follow up. WHO interested to assess situation.
	Turkey	KI, SI, ICCIDD, CDC/PAMM	Salt situation analysis and re-orientation of attitudes by national Partners required.	UNICEF and PAMM/CDC to report after Geneva strategy meeting on May 4. Salt Institute/ESPA to talk to its member(s) in Turkey. ICCIDD offers assistance in IDD problem analysis. KI has clubs in Turkey.
C'WLTH INDEPT. STATES	Russia	ICCIDD, KI, SI, CNSIC, UNICEF, CDC/PAMM	Advocacy for higher priority on political agenda.	UNICEF and PAMM/CDC to report after Geneva strategy meeting on May 4. Moscow is basis of newly appointed ICCIDD Reg. Coordinator. ESPA interested in assisting.
	Ukraine	SI, KI, CDC/PAMM, UNICEF	Programming mission to take place in June for progressing the national strategy.	UNICEF and PAMM/CDC to report after Geneva strategy meeting on May 4. Joint mission in June to include ESPA salt industry expertise.
LATIN AMERICA	Guatemala	ICCIDD, SI, MI, PAHO, CDC/PAMM	Program situation analysis	ICCIDD offers assistance in IDD problem analysis. SI to inquire through members. MI is developing sub-regional monitoring system, which includes iodine nutrition.
	Cuba	CDC/PAMM, KI, PAHO	Explore iodized salt situation	UNICEF to inquire
	Dom Rep	ICCIDD, SI, PAHO	Explore iodized salt situation	PAHO to take a lead. ICCIDD offers assistance in IDD problem analysis. SI to inquire through members.
	Haiti	SI, KI, PAHO, CDC/PAMM	Program situation analysis	PAHO to take a lead. ICCIDD offers assistance in IDD problem analysis. SI to inquire through members.

SHORT-LIST OF TASKS AND COMMITTEES ESTABLISHED DURING THE MEETING

A number of issues arising during the meeting were referred to subcommittees for consideration. The following is a short tentative task description. Also single member tasks are included for convenience.

- Bringing together of current guidelines for the conduct of an independent review to verify a country's progress towards sustained elimination. Present draft at next Board meeting.

Group members:

Maberly (lead), Hanneman, Dong, Ling, Debenoist

- Shortlist of countries suggested for an independent review (Narrative status description, evidence of national request, etc). To be presented at next Board meeting.

Group members:

Debenoist (lead), Schultink and Ling, with support of Van der Haar

- Revision of document describing Partnership, defining the role and responsibility of a Secretariat, and options for its staffing and location. First draft by end of May.

Group members:

Mannar (lead), Becky, Schultink (Debenoist will share his ideas with Schultink)

- Revision and shortening of By Laws. First draft by end of May.

Group members:

Becky (lead), Mannar and Brown

- Drafting of a 1-page concept paper on recommended Partnership participation in a Round Table at the UN Special Session in New York, 19-21 September 2001. Draft concept paper to be presented at next Board meeting.

Group members:

Schultink, Maberly, Ling and Hanneman, with support of Haxton

- Finalize executive summary of 1st Board meeting, Paris. (Mannar)
- On-site logistical arrangements next Board meeting, July 16-17, 2001. (Becky)
- Prepare agenda, share documents from Subcommittees. (Mannar)