



HEALTH OF THE NATION IS WEALTH OF THE STATE



President of the republic of
Tajikistan –Mr. Rakhmonov E.Sh.

On 7 March 2006 President of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Rakhmonov E. had a meeting with women-activists, where he underlined significance of improving population health problem and provision of population with quality fortified food, particularly with iodized salt and

fortified flour. President also noticed strengthening of quality from the side of controlling bodies «...Ministry of Health and other related organizations to prevent mothers and children death from anemia and other disease. Although, Government of RT had accepted National Program «On iodine deficiency disease 1997-2001» and Law «On iodized salt» in 2002, but the level of above mentioned disease is still high...I have requested Ministry of Health RT, Ministry on state income and revenues RT to penalty companies and structures which import and distribute not iodized salt among population».

From 2002 and within the framework of ADB Project it is implemented program on flour and salt fortification for prevention of IDD and IDA. Within this project and in collaboration with UNICEF all salt and flour producing companies provided with fortified equipment. For the last years, Government of RT adopted several important laws and resolutions on improving population health: «Prevention of IDA in Tajikistan», «National program on reproductive health and rights», Law «On iodized salt» etc. However, according to the results of survey, only 53% of population consumes iodized salt and 85% of population informed on importance of iodized salt consumption. Due to that the level of poverty makes (64 %) and control over law compliance is weak this issue remains undecided. Obviously, this problem requires immediate actions and depends on joint actions of state agencies and public society.

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BETTER TO PREVENT THEN TO TREAT



Coordinator of ADB Project
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JFPR 9052 «Sustainable food
fortification in Central Asia
and Mongolia»
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For the last 20 years problem of micronutrient deficiency: IDD and IDA don't lose its higher socio-economic importance in all regions of Central Asia. These diseases essentially affected intellectual.

The most vulnerable groups are mothers and children. Results of national survey, conducted in 2003 showed that 65% of women and 45% of children under 5 suffer from anemia.

Iodine and iron deficiency can cause cerebral derangements and as consequence delay of psychomotor development and cognitive ability of children. The most

severe forms can cause cretinism. According to official data, prevalence of endemic goiter in Tajikistan increases from 1140 ths population in 1997 to 2150 in 2002. Studies, conducted among population reveal considerable amount of population suffer from goiter: from 42 to 82% among children and 60% among women of reproductive age. (MoH RT, 2003)

Join efforts of Government RT and donors reflected in National program on iodine deficiency reduction, designed in 1997, and National strategy on anemia reduction. Asian Development Bank support Tajikistan in prevention of these diseases. Under support of Japan fund on poverty reduction it is successfully implemented ADB Project «Sustainable food fortification in Central Asia and Mongolia». The main goal of the project is creation and strengthening of environment for sustainable food fortification and reduction of iodine deficiency and anemia.

We are ready to collaborate with all interested organizations, agencies, NGOs and Mass Media achieve goals of the Project for the welfare of Tajikistan people.

SOLVING OF NOT IODIZED SALT IMPORT PROBLEM

Raids, regularly conducted by sanitary epidemiology service and Association of salt producers and grain growers reveal not iodized salt realization on the markets and trade points. The most negative situation observes in Khatlon oblast. UNICEF Coordinator in Khatlon oblast Mr. Gadoev S. noticed that almost in all regions of Khatlon oblast consumed not iodized salt. Also was revealed lot of not iodized products of «Khoja Mumin». However, according to Head of «Khoja Mumin» many private companies use logo of «Khoja Mumin» and distribute not iodized salt.

On behalf of the President RT Mr. Rakhmonov E.Sh. it was established special commission including specialists of Ministry of Health RT, Ministry of state income and revenues, Agency on antimonopoly policy and under support of entrepreneurs, office of Public Prosecutor and Tajikstandart. As a result of control over production and distribution iodized salt in Khatlon oblast it was revealed that only «Khoja Mumin» meet requirements of iodized salt production. And the rest 75 companies produce not iodized salt. Consideration must be given to that each of these companies produce 10 000 ton of salt per year and sell it at a low price (0.05 smn per kg). Moreover, products of these companies distributed not only in Khatlon oblast but also in GBAO. As a result of investigation, commission prepared and send appropriate letter to the Government.

Control over import of iodized salt was also reinforced. Head of health department of Khatlon oblast Mrs. Nazarova F. said: «...in Vose and Khamadoni districts operated special staff of SES workers, oblast Tajikstandart, oblast consumer's association and department of internal affairs. The main goal of the staff is control over import of iodized salt and transit of not iodized salt ».

To provide population of GBAO with adequate iodized salt it was undertakes appropriate measures, apropos, it is the only region which obtained iodized salt of Asht salt plant «Koni namak» through Kyrgyzstan. The level of IDD is reduced in GBAO that per specialists opinion connected with consumption only adequately iodized salt. However, specialist of state SES indicate, that in spite of regular control it is realizing not iodized salt last time. Mainly, this salt comes from Khatlon oblast thru Kulyab-Kalaihumb route.

«It is necessary to establish sanitary post in Kalaihumb of GBAO oblast. – noticed Deputy Minister of Health Mr. Avgonov Z.T. – We intend to establish such points not only in GBAO, but also in Dushanbe – Rasht, Khamadoni, Vose and Kulyab, to preclude import of not iodized salt ».



GBAO, «... Children for whom we work

FORTIFIED FLOUR BECOMES AFFORDABLE

From immemorial time people of Central Asia consider bread as a main source of life. Fortified flour prevents iron deficiency. Arise question: Does flour that we consume contain iron?

Chair of Association of grain growers and salt producers Mr. Isokov U. answers this question: «Really, when you produce flour of first and high grade, great amount of vitamin B lose with bran. To compensate the loses, caused during grain conversion, it is necessary to fortify flour with vitamin and micronutrients in order to prevent iodine deficiency disease».

According to recommendations of Kazakh Academy of Nutrition all countries members of ADB Project use premix KAP-1 which contain (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid, iron and zinc). In 2005 as per Association of grain growers and salt producers 72770 Mt of fortified flour were produced. «The total amount of fortified flour produced makes 8% from total requirements, - noticed Isokov U. – But this is only the first steps. We are planning to increase fortified flour production. But lack of legislation slows the process. In order to achieve fortified flour producing we regularly work with flour producers, as it's necessary for the health of our people ».



Lessons at school № 44, Dushanbe



At the moment fortified flour produced of the flour mills of Shakhrinav, Hissar, Kolkhozabad and Kairakum. The cost of fortified and not fortified flour makes 37-45 somoni per 50 kg (11,3-13,8 USD).

Very often large flour mills face with the following problems: lack of revolving funds, troubles with electricity, lack of wheat. 15 dose fires were procured in order to increase fortified flour production on small flour mills. Capacity of this equipment allows producing more than 5 Mt of fortified flour per day. «People begin understand importance of fortified flour in IDD prevention», - noticed Chair of Mahala in Jamoat Zargar, Abdulvosiev district.



Flour fortification on small flour mill



Label with logo «Healthy food» on the bags with fortified flour

Not only bags with fortified products labeled with this logo but also information education materials. Special shop on fortified flour realization was opened in Istaravshan. In front of the shop there is a banner with logo «Healthy food».



Salt checking on the markets

FOR THE HEALTH OF FUTURE GENERATION



According to Deputy Minister of education Mrs. Karimova I., collegiums decided to introduce into educational program on 2006-2007 lessons on healthy life style, where IDD and IDA problems will be covered.

This will increase awareness of school children on IDD and IDA. But there are some obstacles: teachers haven't methodical books, lack of visual aids. For this purpose UNICEF and Republican endocrinology center developed methodological aids for the teachers «On IDD prevention and iodized salt consumption». Under financial support of Global Fund, Ministry of Education plans to develop brochures on healthy life style students of 5 and 11 classes.



LOGO «HEALTHY FOOD»

This logo symbolizes quality of fortified products. Today iodized salt and fortified flour marks with this logo.

Fair market

In front of Shohmansur market there is a banner with logo «Healthy food» and with superscription «You can check purchased salt in our market». «But this doesn't mean that only one market has check point, - said chair of Dushanbe markets Kaumova K. After discussion with representatives of JFPR 9052 project and UNICEF it was decided to open check point in all markets and several trade centers. This will allow checking salt on iodine existence. Beside this, we decided to purchase salt only thru large salt plant and with logo «Healthy food». In case of not iodized salt we can quickly take appropriate measures».



EVALUATION WORKSHOP

Evaluation workshop on Project realization was held on 10 – 11 May 2006. The following persons participated on the workshop: member of committee on international affairs of

Majlisi Namoyandagon Majlisi Oli Mr. Rieev N, Deputy Minister of Health Mr. Avgonov Z., Regional Project Coordinator Mr. Muzafarov R.,



representatives of international organizations and other ministries. During the workshop participants evaluated realization of the Project in Tajikistan. According to Mr. Rieev N., President of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Rakhmonov E. Sh. draws attention of state bodies to the prevention of micronutrient deficiency. As per Deputy Minister of Health Mr. Avgonov Z., Ministry of Health makes efforts to solve problems of not iodized salt and fortified flour. This was supported by Chair of Association of grain growers and salt producers Mr. Isokov U., particularly the main problems connected with economical situation in the republic, limit of electricity, lack of wheat and legislation on fortified flour.

Deputy Head Physician of SES Mr. Gurezov I.G. informed on the situation with provision of population with iodized salt and sources of not iodized salt supply. According to the MIKS (Multi Indicator Kluster Survey) 65% of population consume iodized salt, 46% of population consume adequately iodized salt. As per head of agriculture department of Tajikstandart Mrs. Abdullaeva S. great amount of falsify salt distributed on the markets. Although the bags contain information that salt iodized but the analyses showed opposite.

On 29 September 2005 collegiums of the Ministry of Health resolve to procure only fortified flour and salt for the needs of MPI. Taking into account that country budget allocated very small amount for patient nutrition – less than 50 cents per one patient in a day, managers of MPI couldn't purchase these products. Participants of evaluation workshop come to conclusion that problems, which were discussed during workshop have to be solved only with Government support and in collaboration with public society.

fortification. However, absence of appropriate conditions doesn't allow solving this issue.

Five years later and during implementation of joint UNICEF and ADB program, flour mills were equipped and quality control issues were debugged. Population (and this is of no small importance) informed that fortified flour prevent iron deficiency.

On 03 June 2006 deputy of Parliament Mrs. Yokubova M. has submitted draft law for consideration to Majlisi Namoyandagon. Apply to parliamentarian Mrs. Yokubova M. Underlined that "Recognize the isignificance of flour fortification, which is intended on improving health of population and in accordance with Constitution RT it is important to consider this document " .

It is the deputy Mr. Rieev N. opinion, member of committee on international affairs that created necessary prerequisites have to be supported by adequate law. Mentioned law on prevention of iodine deficiency (which was adopted in 2002) becomes incontestable fact on political will in solving problems of improving health of nation.

In deputy opinion, today is clear what mechanism controlling production and distribution of iodized salt requires additional legal actions. Gaining experiences show what necessary requirements have to be applied to new law on flour fortification. By the way, Tajikistan was initiator on adoption of common law between Central Asia countries, on production and distribution of fortified flour.

News from regions

- 40 households of Mehnatabad Jamoat of Kholkhozabad district get the rights to purchase fortified flour on low price. According to the result of survey, conducted by KAN and Nutrition Center of MoH, deficiency of folic acid among population makes 83,3%, anemia - 50%. Fortified flour consumption makes only 2,3 %, so low price makes fortified flour affordable to poor people.
- Under support of UNICEF and ADB 2 flour mills of Jamoat Zarfar – Vahdat district were provided with fortification equipment. Daily production of fortified flour makes 5 Mt. Fortified flour contains logo «Healthy food». «No, population of Vahdat district and several village of Faizabad consume fortified flour», - said UNICEF representative Bakhruddinov M.

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LAW IS IMPORTANT

What can we do, in order fortified flour becomes the main source of nutrition and health of population? As in case with iodized salt, we can solve this problem only joining together industries, state control bodies and public society. Therefore deputy of Parliament support offer of the MoH and Association of grain growers and salt producers on introduction of legislation on fortified flour «On fortified flour ». It should be mentioned that Government RT among the first in Central Asia who has adopted regulation on flour