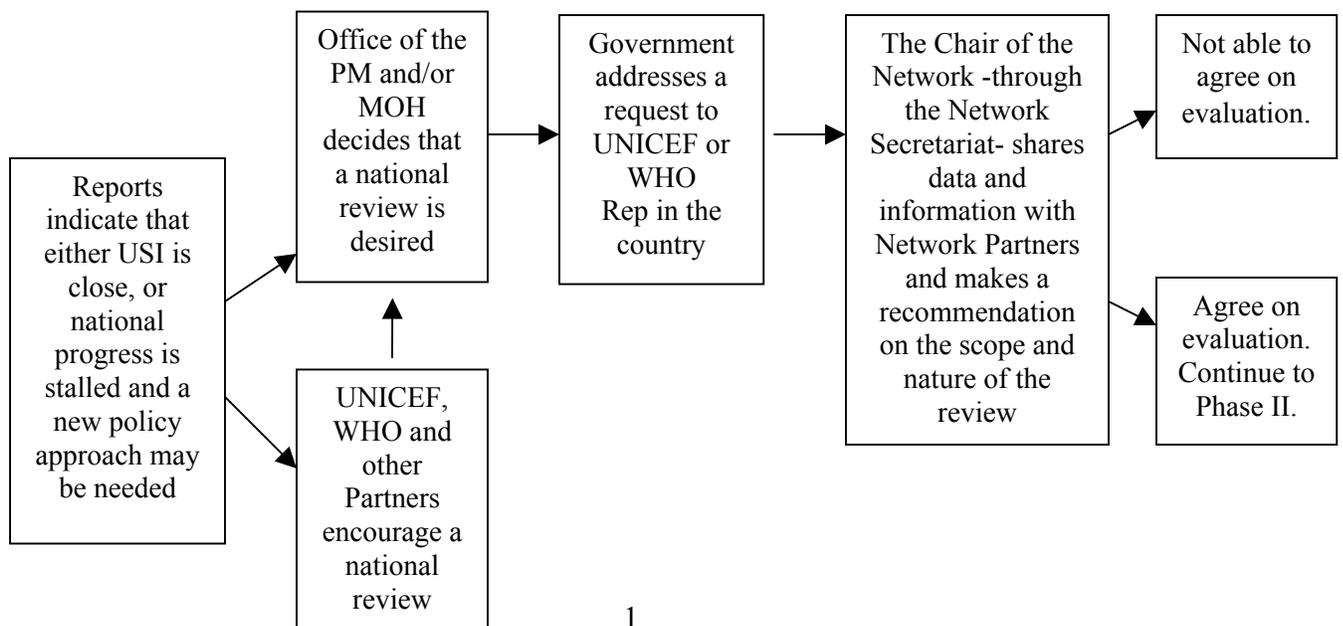


Network for Sustained Elimination of Iodine Deficiency

Protocol for Conducting A Review of National Progress Toward Optimum Iodine Nutrition

A review of national progress towards optimum nutrition may be valuable when a country has reached or is close to reaching optimum iodine nutrition through universal salt iodization. The main purpose of the review is to have an internal and external validation, and recommend ways that ensure that optimum iodine nutrition endures, with appropriate ongoing national public-private-civic oversight. The other reason for a review may be that the national progress is stalled at a certain level of salt iodization and an external review could be the stimulus needed to reappraise the problem and suggest new approaches to renew and accelerate progress towards this goal. In either case, the data itself may not be enough to initiate the process. A review may require stimulation of a request from The Office of the Prime Minister or MOH. In most cases the Representatives of WHO and UNICEF are best positioned to receive this request. This indicates national ownership and commitment to the process.

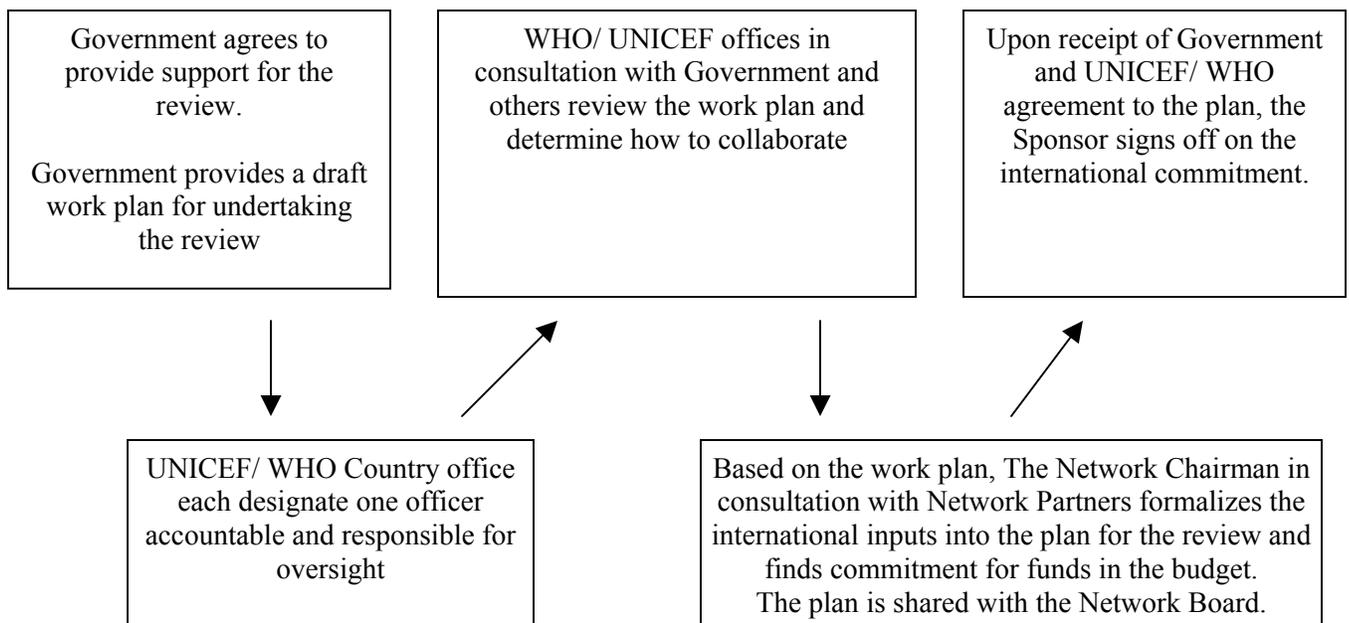
I. Starting



Once the request is received, the country UNICEF, WHO Office would do well to contact the Chairman of *Network for Sustained Elimination of Iodine Deficiency* (currently Werner Schultink, UNICEF) and share with him the information that is available of the iodization of salt, and the progress in national elimination. In turn, through the Secretary of the Network (currently Frits van der Haar, Emory U) this information will also be shared with the Network members (UNICEF, WHO, ICCIDD, Kiwanis, SI, ESPA, CNSI, MI, Emory U and CDC) to gain their input and involve them as appropriate. If there is general agreement on the benefit for an assessment, with external reviewers included, then this can move forward to the next stage. Some information to base a decision to move forward ideally includes:

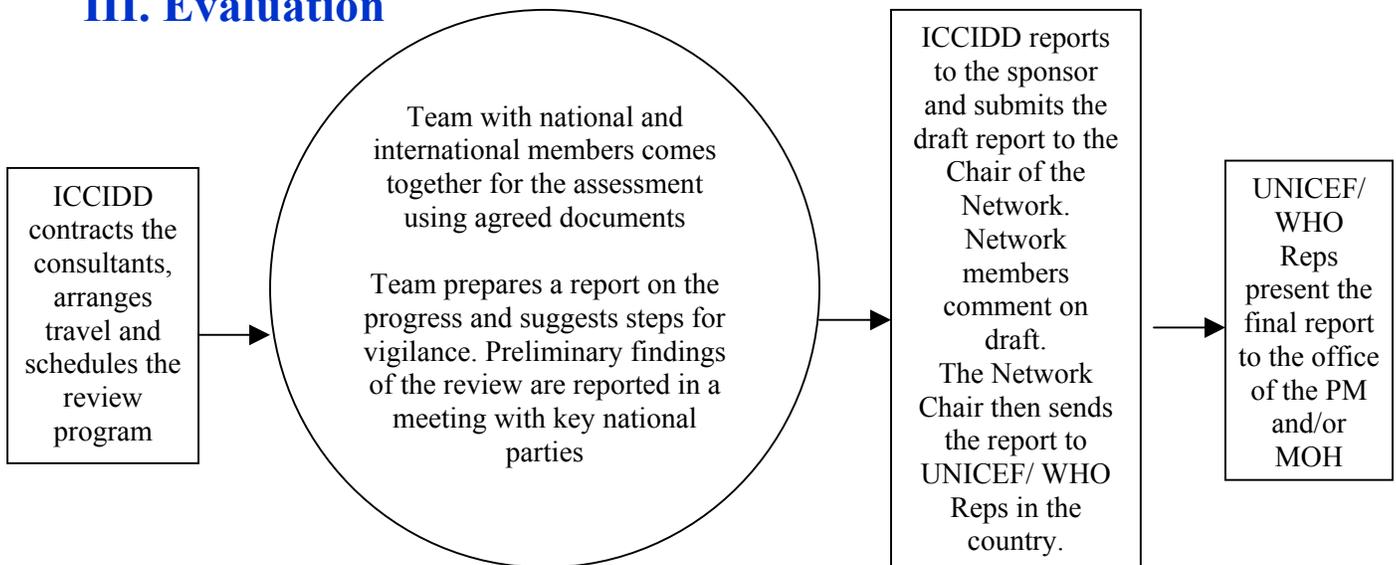
- Population based survey results (preferably nationally representative) of the use of iodized salt and of urinary iodine levels
- Information on laws and regulations, inspection and enforcement procedures for USI and some indication of the practice and results of the legislation practice
- Data on salt importation, production and iodization process, marketing and promotion, distribution, lists of the major companies, prices of products and the market situation
- Program infrastructure, oversight committee, staff, budget, type and number of laboratories and annual number of salt and urine iodine samples processed for program monitoring
- Information of political commitment for sustaining the progress in optimum iodine nutrition and the current communication efforts
- Review of activities by civil society in support of USI and iodine nutrition; review of activities in the education sector and agriculture sector; roles of civil society and professional bodies in support of USI and optimum iodine nutrition; review of general publications on iodine nutrition.

II. Preparations



The first step starts with the government along with the national program partners agreeing to the external review. The government and key national partners produce a draft work plan for the review. UNICEF and WHO Country Office designate an Officer to work with them and provide liaison with *The Network* and others in refining this plan. This will require some communications until all parties are in agreement on the plan. ICCIDD among the partners will coordinate the input from the partners and will be responsible for taking the plan forward to (a) Sponsor(s) to get the international support and commitment for this plan. The UNICEF or WHO Country Office will obtain national commitment, logistic support and provide the names of national experts for participation in the review. ICCIDD will be responsible for finding international consultants as required by the plan. It is envisaged that the review team will be composed of a balance of people with expertise and talents from the various program components. This will allow an optimal team effort to assess the product, the process and the progress and provide the country with a strong evaluation and clear recommendations for the future.

III. Evaluation



Among the Network partners, ICCIDD has been nominated to manage the review and after getting support from a sponsor such as UNICEF, ICCIDD will contract the consultants, arrange for the travel and other costs and set up the schedule for the review in close coordination with the UNICEF or WHO Country Office.

The Review will include an assessment of 1) the status of iodine nutrition (particularly, population-based surveys measuring urinary iodine), 2) the importation, production, and market practices related to iodized salt, and 3) the status of the national program including political commitment, legislation, inspection, enforcement, education, communications, monitoring and laboratory infrastructure and process, oversight committees, personnel and budgets. All these aspects will be reviewed from a public, private and civic perspective and for prospects for sustainability.

The following documents will be used to guide this process:

- ◆ Assessment of Iodine Deficiency Disorders and Monitoring their Elimination: A Guide for Program Managers (WHO 2001)
- ◆ Assessing Country Progress in USI Programmes – Iodized Salt Program Assessment Tool (ISPAT)
- ◆ Guidelines for Conducting a Salt Situation Analysis (PAMM)
- ◆ Urinary Iodine Assessment: A Manual on Survey and Laboratory Methods (PAMM 2000)
- ◆ Quality Assurance Workshop for Salt Iodization (PAMM 1997)
- ◆ Independent Assessment of Country Progress Toward the Goal of Achieving Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention, Control & Elimination by and beyond the year 2000 (ICCIDD)
- ◆ Examples of previous National Reviews

The team should present and discuss its draft findings during a meeting organized with the assistance of UNICEF and WHO Country Office with the government and other important national parties from the private and civic sectors. The team leader is responsible for submitting the report to ICCIDD (currently John Dunn, ICCIDD Executive Director). ICCIDD shares the report with the Sponsor and with The Chair of the Network. After receiving input from Network members, The Chair of the Network sends the final report to the Country UNICEF and WHO Representatives, who present the report to the highest Government Official who agreed to have the review.

A media event should be build around the report. Recommendations should focus on the future and may include strengthening a broadly based public-private and civic national oversight body.

August 6, 2002

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