Local achievements and advances attributable to the ECSA-USAID D Regional Initiative

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Health Ministers of the ECSA countries passed a Resolution directing the Secretariat to promote food fortification initiatives.
PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE RESOLUTION

1st planning workshop in Lusaka, Zambia in April 2004 attended by 9 countries from the region

Consensus statement

*Building regional collaboration will facilitate the implementation of this vital national public health intervention*. 
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ECSA FF PROGRAM

GOAL: INCREASED PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION OF ADEQUATELY FORTIFIED FOODS

MAIN OBJECTIVE: Fast-track the implementation of food fortification in the ECSA Region through adequate policy and legislation, technology and research, promotion, monitoring, and surveillance

Specific Objectives

1. Fortify sugar and edible oil with vitamin A
2. Fortify flours with iron, zinc, vitamin A, folic acid, vitamins B-1, B-2, B-6 and B-12
3. Ensure all countries achieve Universal salt iodation
Approach to implement the Program

Technical working Groups formed and developed action plans to formulate harmonized guidelines to support FF programs.

1) Regulations, Standards and Food Control
2) Laboratory Network and strengthening
3) Trade and Technical Support
4) Coordination, Advocacy and resource mobilization and later in 2009,
5) Monitoring and Evaluation

Groups comprised of chief nutritionists, program managers, standards and food control officers, laboratory personnel, regional trade officers, researchers and food manufacturers from the Member States including fortificant suppliers.

Financial and Technical assistance –
USAID, UNICEF, MI, GAIN, WB, CDC, ICCIDD.
Main Areas of Focus

1. Development of guidelines
2. Training on use of guidelines
3. Advocacy
4. Provide customized support to countries

BUILD CAPACITY OF COUNTRIES TO DESIGN, IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR FORTIFICATION PROGRAMS
## Achievements

### Area of Focus 1: Development of Guidelines

1. Development of harmonized guidelines on levels of addition at factory and for monitoring at market level (using data obtained from countries)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient / fortificant compd</th>
<th>Fortificant Compound</th>
<th>Average Addition (mg/kg)</th>
<th>Factory Level (mg/kg)</th>
<th>Regulatory level (mg/kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vit A</td>
<td>Vit A Palmitate. SD</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1±0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vit B-1</td>
<td>Thiamin Mononitrate</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.8±4.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vit B-2</td>
<td>Riboflavin</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.6±3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niacin</td>
<td>Niacinamide</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60±30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folate</td>
<td>Folic acid</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3±1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vit B-12</td>
<td>Vit B-12 0.1%</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02±0.0.019</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>NaFeEDTA*</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30±10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>Zinc Oxide</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88±28</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If the iron levels are incompatible with the flour, switch to Ferrous Fumarate at 40mg/ kg
Achievements....

Area of Focus 1: Development of Guidelines

2. Development of 17 food control manuals covering internal quality control; and technical auditing and inspection of fortified salt, oil, sugar, maize flour and wheat flour

Achievements....

Area of Focus 2: Training

Conducted several trainings to build skills and impart knowledge to officials from different Govt agencies – Bureaus of Standards, Food Control, Laboratory personnel, program managers and even the private sector.

Established a Laboratory Proficiency Scheme to improve testing capabilities of laboratories. 4 rounds have been conducted and a network of lab analysts emerged.
Achievements...

Area of Focus 3: Advocacy

A2Z through the ECSA Secretariat has advocated to the Governments on the need to allocate resources for fortification as a public health intervention.

- Sugar fortification in Kenya and soon in Malawi
- Oil fortification in Uganda, Kenya and Malawi
- Maize fortification started in Uganda and will be scaled up in Kenya and Zambia
- Rwanda to pass legislation on mandatory fortification of 3 foods

Kenya: Fortification is one of the V2030 MTP 1 flagship projects

Something Sweet is finally here...

Mumias Sugar cordially invites you for the launch of our new product on the 10th of June 2011 at the Crowne Plaza Ball Room at 7.30am.
Achievements...

Area of Focus 4: Provision of TA to the ECSA Secretariat and countries

Continued to provide assistance to ECSA Secretariat to engage partners for better coordination and collaboration in the region

Provided customized technical assistance to countries

Tanzania and Rwanda given TA in formulation of standards on fortified foods
Lessons Learned

1. A regional approach reduces duplication of efforts in development of standardized implementation and monitoring tools and guidelines that can easily be adopted and provides an opportunity for peer review and assessment among member countries and institutions within the countries which supplements national level advocacy.
Lessons Learned

2. Support for locally led efforts leads to quick buy-in and effective programs:

“Once local players feel part of a process that affects them and their communities and know how regulations, standards, processes and decisions were arrived at, change will be effective. We don’t believe in cut and paste from other places or being told ‘do this’. We want to be consulted on the specifications for food fortification in our region. We are open for discussion where there is a give and take. This is my opinion.”

- Peter Mutua, Kenya
Lessons Learned

3. Need for sustained support
Only those countries who have received sustained support in designing and scaling up have made good strides in fortification programs e.g. Uganda, Malawi, Kenya and lately Tanzania.

4. Need for favourable partnerships

*Partners should see their contributions to the region as the metaphorical fortificant that adds value to something already being produced and partners must take the initiative to nurse that [relationship] and make it grow*.

Allie Kibwika - former ECSA HC Director of Operations and Institutional Development
Acknowledgments

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