



Consultation on Communications to Support Flour Fortification

Review of Communications Research

Consumer and Leadership Level Research Supported by WHO, MI and USAID showed some string commonalities and parallels:

- Egypt
- Morocco
- Bahrain
- Jordan

Perceptions of Anemia

- Recognition of Clinical Symptoms
- No Awareness of “Hidden” Impact
- Connected to Poverty and Low Status
- A Fact of Life - natural not dramatic event
- Lack of Iron not connected to Anemia - (pollution, calcium, fast-foods)
- Anemia Prevention Low on Priority List
- Misconceptions in Health Sector

Perceptions about Bread A Complex Product

- Cultural Dimensions - "Staff of Life"
- Religious Dimensions - "Gift From God"
- Natural Dimensions - "Bounty of Nature"
- Emblematic Dimensions - Social Status
- Purity/Product Quality Dimension

General Conclusions about Iron Fortification of Bread

Initial receptivity to the idea of iron fortified bread ranged from acceptance to neutrality to suspicion. **As people were informed of the benefits** they became supportive and even enthusiastic as long as there is no:

- Unaffordable price increase
- Changes in the taste, smell or color

Some Negative Perceptions

- Physical Product Change
- Chemicals into Natural Product
- Attempt to Raise Price and/or Lower Quality
- Manipulation by Foreign Interests
- Concerns about safety from Medical Sector
- Concerns about q/a capacity of Industry
- Confusion w/supplementation and GMF

There Are Differences in Communication Needs & Approaches

- Market Environment - Bread or Flour
- Consumer Environment - Demand or Acceptance
- Language and “Nuance”
- Stage of Program - Development to Launch
- Strategic Next Steps - Public Relations to Mass Media Campaign

Question: What is the Optimum Role for WHO/UNICEF/MI Fund

- Technical Expertise
- Communication Channels
- Credibility, Trust, "Brand Recognition"
- Financial Resources

Traditional Role:

- Direct Assistance to National Initiatives
- Provide Tools & Production Elements
- Communications Training & Capacity Building
- Benchmarks, Guidelines, Best Practices
- Platform to Share Knowledge & Experiences

Potential New Role: Producing Regional Campaign

Public Relations

- Media Advocacy
- Spokespeople & Celebrities
- Regional Networks
- **Objective:** Raise Awareness and Enlist Support of **Leadership:** Medical/Health, Government, Millers & Community Leaders

Advertising/Marketing

- Consumer Campaign
- Regional Logo
- **Objective:** Raise general **public** awareness of anemia and **consumer** demand for fortified flour

Issues with Regional Mass Media and Logo/Slogan

- Objectives
- Target Audience
- Design and Language
- Quality Assurance & Control

Provisional Recommendations

- Communications Training from Program Inception (From Research to comprehensive communications plan)
- Guidelines for Regional Logo, Slogan & Terms
- Engage Public Relations firm to assist in capitalizing on regional communication channels to target influential and leadership groups
- Consider individual assistance as requested under Fund Guidelines