Health Promotion & Holistic Approach to Nutrition in I. R. Iran

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Nutrition achievements in Iran

• Reduction of malnutrition in children under 5 during last two decades:
  
  ✓ **Stunting**: 66% (from 19.9 % to 6.8%)

  ✓ **Underweight**: 76% (16.6% to 4.08%)

  ✓ **Wasting**: 43% (from 7% to 4%)

• 50% reduction of iron deficiency anemia in children under 2 years and pregnant women

• More than 90 % reduction in prevalence of Goiter
Fostering inter-sectoral governance for health & nutrition in Iran

1- Establishment of Supreme Council for health & food security (SCHFS) as a key instrument to:
   - Build healthy public policy in health, as well as other sectors, e.g. agriculture, industry, trade, and the media
   - Create supportive environment through intervention in marketing food; reformulation and labeling, price reduction through subsides for dairy products
   - Facilitate and strengthen inter-sectoral collaboration: Agreements and MOUs with relevant ministries, municipalities, health council in parliament
   - Monitoring internal and external funding
   - Supervision of relevant policy development

2- Establishment of Deputy for Social Affairs within the MOHME in 2016 to supervise and foster SDH, SDGs, and community participation to:
   - Strengthen participation of civil society, NGOs, and communities
   - Interpret SDGs into the Iranian context through situation analysis, plan to monitor policy making and implementation of health related SDGs

3- Enhancing equity through strengthening promotion and prevention in PHC for women and children:
   - Mother and child health: (Growth monitoring, nutrition education, free provision of Iron & folic acid supplements, early detection and treatment of malnutrition in children, and prenatal care
   - School health services: free provision of milk Iron supplements in schools, growth monitoring, nutrition education, healthy canteens initiatives
   - Special programs for disadvantaged areas at risk of malnutrition and low health status

30/11/16
Structure of Supreme Council for Health & Food Security (SCHFS) in Iran

SCHFS
Holding meetings in the cabinet

Secretariat of SCHFS at MOHME

Food Security & Nutrition Task group

Health threats reduction task group

Technical committees

Technical committees

Provincial Committee for Health and Food Security

30/11/16

Promoting Health, Promoting Sustainable Development in Iran
### Main objectives of SCHFS

1- **Build healthy public policy** in health, as well as other sectors, e.g. agriculture, industry, trade, and the media

- Revising 14 Food additives standards (Salt, sugar, Fat, Pesticides)
- Nutrition and food security policy statement (2015 – 2025)
- Combating Micro Nutrient Deficiency
- Healthy canteens policy for schools
- Food import regulations
- Legislations towards inhibiting junk food advertisement in the national media (TV & Radio)
- Policy for controlling herbicides and pesticide residue in food and agriculture
- Food marketing regulation to reduce salt, fat and sugar intake in Iran

2- **Create supportive environment** through intervention in marketing food; reformulation and labeling, price reduction through subsides for dairy products

**Reformulation of foods:**
- Reducing sugar, salt, and trans fatty acids in drinks and some other food products (up to 10%)
- Replacement of Iron flour-fortified in 85% of bakeries nationwide
- Food import regulation: 20% reduction of oil imports
  - **Labeling:** 50% Implementation of Traffic light nutritional labeling
  - **Taxation** of soft drinks (10% for local and 15% for imported products)
  - **Replacing** non standard salt with standards salt in the market

3- **Facilitate and strengthen inter-sectoral collaboration:** Agreements and MOUs with relevant ministries, municipalities, health council in parliament

- MOUs and agreements with...
- Formation of a joint committee to reduce contaminants and pesticide residues in agricultural products
- Formation of a joint committee to campaign for increasing awareness on nutrition and healthy food

4- **Mobilizing internal and external funding**

**Increased funding** for:

**School milk**

*Absorbing* additional fund from *Budget and Planning Organization*
Examples of inter-sectoral collaboration and bilateral agreements by SCHFS

- To provide sustainable food supply: Ministry of Agriculture
- To improve fair access to food (considering the requirements of low income people)
- Fair geographical distribution of foods: Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare
- To improve healthy and safe food supply: MOHME, Agriculture, Iranian National Standard Organization
- Intra-sectoral cooperation to reduce nutrition-related diseases, and providing nutritional health from the beginning of life: MOHME, Ministry of Education, National Welfare Organization
- Increasing nutritional literacy (Ministries of Education, Health & Medical Education, Culture, Iran’s Broadcasting Organization
Promoting Health, Promoting Sustainable Development in Iran
The NCDs targets in Iran’s national Action Plan

- **Target 1:** A 25% relative reduction in risk of premature mortality from CVDs, cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases
- **Target 2:** At least 10% relative reduction in the harmful use of alcohol
- **Target 3:** A 20% (10%) relative reduction in prevalence of insufficient physical activity
- **Target 4:** A 30% relative reduction in mean population intake of salt/sodium
- **Target 5:** A 30% relative reduction in prevalence of current tobacco use in persons aged 15+ years
- **Target 6:** A 25% relative reduction in the prevalence of raised blood pressure or contain the prevalence of raised blood pressure
- **Target 7:** Halt the rise in diabetes and obesity
- **Target 8:** At least 70% (50%) of eligible people receive drug therapy and counseling (including glycemic control) to prevent heart attacks and strokes
- **Target 9:** An 80% availability of the affordable basic technologies and essential medicines, including generics, required to treat major NCDs in both public and private facilities
- **Target 10:** At least 50% of diabetic and hypertensive individuals (who are receiving treatment) have to achieve treatments goals for controlling blood sugar and systolic blood pressure
- **Target 11:** A 20% relative reduction in mortality from traffic injuries
- **Target 12:** A 10% relative reduction in drug use
Traffic light labeling

- Improvement of food labeling and design nutritional traffic light on food
- Easily interpreted information using color codes: Red, amber and green ‘traffic light’ shapes on the front of food packages show consumers, at a glance, whether a product is high, medium or low in fat, trans fatty acid, sugar, and salt and overall energy
- This makes it easy to identify healthier food choices (green or amber lights, rather than red).
- Has the potential to change our patterns of food supply and consumption
- Promote nutritional literacy of the community and giving consumers the choice
- Encourage producer to change formulation to have less amber or red lights

Traffic light labeling

- Serving size
- Energy
- sugar
- Fat
- Salt
- Trans Fatty Acids
Lessons Learned

– Iran’s model of addressing nutrition challenges during last few decades has produced successful experiences and lessons: e.g.

- Multi-sectoral governance can work when MOH provides the required stewardship and commitment of all partners are explicit

– Health in all policies can be materialized if all related ministries and governmental bodies put health in their structure, goals, and national plans

– Engagement of civil society and related non-health institutions is essential in a whole society approach to SDGs, particularly health related SDGs

– Health gains through inter-sectoral approaches requires mutual understanding between health and development sectors

– Continued exchange of experience and knowledge translation at national and international level is essential

– Establishment of an inter-sectoral observatory system for achievements of SDGs and advocacy for SDGs are functional strategies to move forward in this regard
Thanks for your attention!

We are looking forward to hearing other national experiences.