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Technical Meeting

Regional Expert Group on Harmonization of Wheat Flour Fortification Standards

Central Asian Republics, Afghanistan, Pakistan

Agenda

14-15 March 2016,
Almaty, Rixos Hotel

Background

The USAID/GAIN Afghanistan/Central Asia Regional Food Fortification Program (2014-16) aims to improve processes, regulations, and monitoring related to wheat flour and edible oil fortification, in order to address ongoing micronutrient deficiency in the region. The Program objectives include increasing supply of micronutrients to the region through fortification of wheat flour and edible oil, strengthening quality control and enforcement of fortification, and facilitation of harmonization of standards for fortification in Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In October 2015, GAIN and USAID co-hosted a Regional Stakeholder Meeting on Food Fortification that brought together representatives of government, private sector, academia, civil society, and development partners from Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Several joint priorities have been identified at the meeting, and a Regional Expert Group on wheat flour fortification standards and potential for regional harmonization, chaired by the Kazakh Academy of Nutrition (KAN), was formed to facilitate regional cross-border trade in fortified wheat flour. The Expert Group included specialists representing national standards committees, government regulatory agencies, research institutions, wheat flour producers and respective business associations from 6 countries - Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan - see the list of members in Annex 1.

During November 2015-January 2016, in consultation with international experts, the KAN members of the group developed a technical justification for harmonizing fortification standards for low extraction (refined, white) flour used in all countries of the region, and high extraction (whole) flour mainly used in Afghanistan and Pakistan. These two analytical documents were shared with the expert group for comments and additional input. The documents highlight the need to ensure, at a minimum, adequate and comparable amounts of bioavailable micronutrients in all countries of the region as specified in the WHO recommendations; ideally, technical consensus will be reached on a unified premix composition to be used in the region.

Two options for the micronutrients in premix have been proposed:

High extraction flour	Low extraction flour
Iron (NaFeEDTA)	Iron (NaFeEDTA and Ferrous sulfate, dried to increase iron content at a reasonable cost)
Zinc (Zinc oxide)	Zinc (Zinc oxide)
Vit B ₉ (Folic acid)	Vit B ₉ (Folic acid)
Vit B ₁₂ (Cyanocobalamin)	Vit B ₁₂ (Cyanocobalamin)
	Vit B ₁ (Thiamine)
	Vit B ₂ (Riboflavin)
	Vit B ₃ (Niacin)

Objectives:

1. To review the draft technical justification for harmonization of wheat flour fortification standards in the region and obtain feedback from regional experts;
2. To reach agreement and propose a harmonized standard for wheat flour fortification; and
3. To discuss the feasibility, timeline, and the next steps for development or modification of national wheat flour standards based on the agreements reached at the regional level.

Participants:

The invited meeting participants include regional expert group members, international subject matter experts, and selected representatives of the donor and the implementing partner - see the full list in annex 1.

Agenda:

Day 1 – March 14, 2016

8:40 – 9:00 Registration

Morning session 1 - the need and potential for regional harmonization of wheat flour fortification standards

Moderator: Toregeldy Sharmanov, President, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition (KAN)

9:00 – 9:20 Opening remarks. Meeting objectives. Rationale for regional harmonization.
Toregeldy Sharmanov, President, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition (KAN)
Omar Dary, Ph.D., Health Science Specialist (Nutrition), USAID, Bureau of Global Health
Yuliya Beloslyudtseva, Kazakhstan Country Coordinator, GAIN

9:20– 10:00 The need and scientific approaches for regional harmonization of food fortification standards. Examples of exiting regional standards.
Omar Dary, Ph.D., USAID Health Science Specialist (Nutrition), Bureau of Global Health

10:00–10:30 Analysis and justification of the possibility of harmonizing standards for wheat flour fortification in CAR, Afghanistan and Pakistan
Shamil Tazhibayev, Vice President, KAN

10:30–10:45 Discussion

10:45 – 11:00 **Coffee Break**

Morning session 2 - Country comments/feedback on the proposed technical justification for regional harmonization

Moderator: Omar Dary, Ph.D., USAID Health Science Specialist (Nutrition), Bureau of Global Health

11:00 – 11:10 Feedback from Afghanistan, Dr. Homayoun Ludin, Director, Public Nutrition Department, Ministry of Public Health

11:10 – 11:20 Feedback from Kazakhstan, Evgeniy Gan, President, Union of Grain of Kazakhstan

11:20 – 11:30 Feedback from the Kyrgyz Republic, Toktogul Bazarbayev, Head of the Division of Nutrition, Department of Disease Prevention and State Sanitary and Epidemiological Surveillance of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic

11:30 – 11:40 Feedback from Pakistan, Dr. Abdul Baseer Khan, Director Nutrition/ Secretary National Fortification Alliance, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination

11:40 – 11:50 Feedback from Tajikistan, Abdusalom Vokhidov, Deputy Director of the Republican Center of the Pediatrics and Pediatric Surgery

11:50 – 12:00 Feedback from Uzbekistan, Amanku Baikulov, Consultant, Food Fortification Program

12:00 – 12:30 Discussion

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

Afternoon session - Breakout discussions to reach technical consensus on harmonization of standards

Moderator: Yuliya Beloslyudtseva, Kazakhstan Country Coordinator, GAIN

13:30 – 14:00 Regional standards for low- and high- extraction wheat flour fortification - examples for discussion

Yuriy Sinyavskiy, Vice President, KAN

14:00 – 14:20 – Discussion

14:20 - 17:30 (coffee break from 15:20 - 15:40)

Low extraction flour expert sub-group

Chair: Shamil Tazhibayev, Vice President, KAN

High extraction flour expert sub-group

Chair: Quentin Johnson, Technical Adviser, GAIN

The discussion will cover the following:

- an overview of the proposed justification/standards
- clarification of input parameters (e.g., wheat flour consumption levels)
- comments and concerns regarding the proposed justification/approach
- a detailed discussion of each of the identified issues to reach an acceptable solution
- the next steps to finalize the Regional Fortification Standards for low- and high extraction flour
- feasibility, procedures and timeline for adoption of the Regional Standard at the country level

17:30-17:40 Day 1 Wrap-up

Shamil Tazhibayev, Vice President, KAN

Yuliya Beloslyudtseva, Kazakhstan Country Coordinator, GAIN

18:00 - 20:00 Networking dinner

Day 2 – March 15, 2016

Morning session 1 - Standards harmonization - presentations, remaining issues, development of solutions

Moderator: Quentin Johnson, Technical Adviser, GAIN

9:00 - 9:20 Group 1 presentation.

9:00 - 9:20 Group 2 presentation.

9:40 - 10:40 Discussion. Development of solutions to each of the remaining issues.

10:40 – 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 - 12:30 Discussion (cont.). Conclusions. Next steps.

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

The time in the afternoon is reserved for additional discussions as necessary to reach regional agreements and commitments or for additional presentations

16:00-16:30 Close out session (summary of the deliberations and next steps)
Shamil Tazhibayev, Vice President, KAN
Quentin Johnson, Technical Adviser, GAIN
Yuliya Beloslyudtseva, Kazakhstan Country Coordinator, GAIN

Proposed ideas for other presentations:

- A comparative analysis of approaches for the development of national fortification standards and related technical protocols in CAR, Afghanistan and Pakistan

Annex 1. Invited Participants

#	Name	Position	Country
1	M. Wakil Rahimi	Manager, Food and Agricultural Products Standards Department, Afghan National Standards Authority (ANSA)	AFG
2	Homayoun Ludin	Director, Public Nutrition Department, Ministry of Public Health	AFG
3	Sedequallah Reshteen	Head of Legal Department, Ministry of Health	AFG
4	Shahzad Alam	Chairman, Pakistan Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Islamabad	PAK
5	Abdul Baseer Khan	Director Nutrition/ Secretary National Fortification Alliance, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination	PAK
6	Barkat Saeed Memon	Director General, Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority	PAK
7	Toregeldy Sharmanov	President, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition	KAZ
8	Shamil Tazhibayev	Vice-President, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition	KAZ
9	Yuri Sinyavskiy	Vice-President, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition	KAZ
10	Oksana Dolmatova	Chief Researcher, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition	KAZ
11	Akkumis Salkhanova	Leading Researcher, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition	KAZ
12	Baurzhan Amirov	Senior Researcher, Kazakh Academy of Nutrition	KAZ
13	Evgeniy Gan	President, Kazakhstan Union of Grain Processors	KAZ
14	Maral Rakhimzhanova	Chief Expert for Health Surveillance of the Committee on Consumer Protection of the RK	KAZ
15	Yelena Kuleshova	Head of the Technical Standardizing Department, Institute of Standardization and Certification	KAZ
16	Dauletbek Kogashov	Ministry of Health and Social Development	KAZ
17	Aigul Nurgabylova	Country Program Coordinator of Health and Nutrition, UNICEF Kazakhstan	KAZ
18	Toktogul Bazarbayev	Head of the Division of Nutrition, Department of Disease Prevention and State Sanitary and Epidemiological Surveillance of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic	KYR
19	Gulmira Kozhobergenova	Chairman of the Civil Alliance on Nutrition and Food Security	KYR
20	Berdimamat Adanbaev	Director of the Center for Standardization and Metrology of the Ministry of Economy	KYR
21	Ismonscho Sultonov	Head of State Supervision Department in the Sphere of Agriculture	TAJ
22	Adiba Abduvalieva	Head of Standardization Department, TajikStandard	TAJ
23	Abdusalom Vokhidov	Deputy Director of the Republican Center of the Pediatrics and Pediatric Surgery	TAJ
24	Amankul Baikulov	Consultant, Food Fortification Program	UZB
25	Sherzod Atakhanov	Manager, Food Fortification Program	UZB
26	Diloram Gafurova	Director, Donmahsulotlari IICHM, LLC	UZB
27	Omar Dary	USAID Health Science Specialist (Nutrition), Bureau of Global Health	USAID
28	Yuliya Beloslyudtseva	Kazakhstan Country Coordinator	GAIN
29	Sajjad Imran	Pakistan Country Coordinator	GAIN
30	Quentin Johnson	Technical Adviser	GAIN