

MI Partners to push forward the case of Food Fortification in Nepal

Kathmandu, August 24, 2008 – The Micronutrient Initiative (MI) was a lead participant at a half-day sensitization programme on Food Fortification held in Kathmandu today. The objective of the programme was to sensitize media and consumer groups about the importance of food fortification strategy and fortified foods in eliminating vitamin and mineral deficiencies in Nepal. The programme was jointly organized by the Government of Nepal, the National Food Fortification Promotion Nepal (NFFPN) and MI Nepal.

Papers presented at the advocacy programme included a backgrounder about “Micronutrient Deficiencies and their Impact on Public Health” by Dr. Uttam Kumar Bhattarai, Director General, Department of Food Technology and Quality Control (DFTQC); “Status of Micronutrient Deficiencies, Policies and Programmes of the Government of Nepal” by Raj Kumar Pokharel, Chief, Nutrition Section, Child Health Division, and “Present Status of Food Fortification in Nepal” by M R Maharjan, National Program Manager, MI Nepal.

Millions of people in Nepal suffer from vitamin and mineral deficiencies. The problem gets exasperated by the lack of awareness among people about the advantages of appropriate cost effective solutions such as food fortification in addressing these deficiencies.

“For more than a decade, MI has been working in Nepal to help reduce vitamin and mineral deficiencies through food fortification and supplementation, but the situation continues to be alarming” says Mr Maharjan. “Vitamin and mineral deficiencies can be dealt with very simply by fortifying our daily foods with micronutrients. The cost of fortification can be as little as a few cents per person per year. Dietary diversification and supplementation would also complement food fortification activities” adds Mr. Maharjan.

The program highlighted the role of all stakeholders in Nepal’s battle against vitamin and mineral deficiencies, with a special focus on media professionals and consumer groups.



Mr M R Maharjan making a presentation on Food Fortification at the sensitization meeting in Nepal

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