

Micronutrient Initiative supports Government of Bangladesh's efforts at creating an industrial database for sustainable development

Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 29, 2009 – The Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorder (CIDD) project of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) and the Micronutrient Initiative (MI) has developed a GIS Based Salt Industries Information System website with the technical assistance of Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS). This website will provide information on the benefits of iodized salt.

A seminar was organized on 29 January, 2009 at the CIRDAP auditorium in Dhaka, Bangladesh to launch this GIS-based, web-enabled Salt Industries Information System. The seminar also aimed to inform and motivate key stakeholders to use this website for planning and strengthening of iodization process for sustainable development.

The launch was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Industries/ Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh (GoB), BSCIC, CEGIS, media and MI, together with other distinguished guests and civil society members. Chief Guest for the occasion was Mr. Dilip Barua, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Industries, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh.

“About 4 million children are born in Bangladesh every year; of these, 630,000 infants remain unprotected from the lifelong consequences of brain damage associated with iodine deficiency. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. Three per cent of these may become cretins, 10 per cent may suffer from some brain damage retardation and 87 per cent newborns will likely grow up with a mild intellectual deficit. The numbers may sound horrifying and the repercussions of this scenario are unimaginable”, said Chief Guest for the occasion, Mr Dilip Barua, Honorable Minister of Industries, GoB.



Honorable Minister for Industries, Mr Dilip Barua, speaks at the launch of the GIS Based Salt Industries Information System website.

Mr Barua further stated “I hope that this GIS Based Salt Industries Information System will help provide relevant and updated information regarding iodized salt to concerned stakeholders - people involved in policy making, planning and decision making and the general population. Also media and civil society actors can play important role to create pressure on the Government, political leaders, UN agencies, donors, and policy makers to take proper initiative by referring to this information base”.

Special Guest, Mr.Dewan Zakir Hussain, Secretary, Ministry of Industries, GoB requested that MI and BSCIC carry on their continued collaboration for elimination of IDD and for educating all Bangladeshis regarding the urgency of using iodized salt.

About the Micronutrient Initiative

The Ottawa-based Micronutrient Initiative is an international not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that the world’s most vulnerable – especially women and children – in developing countries get the vitamins and minerals they need to survive and thrive. Its mission is to develop, implement and monitor innovative, cost-effective and sustainable solutions for hidden hunger, in partnership with others.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Zeba Mahmud
Director, Bangladesh
The Micronutrient Initiative
House- D2, Road-95
Gulshan - 2, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Tel: +880-2-8824740-4/ 403
Email: zmahmud@micronutrient.org