The Micronutrient Initiative launches a Rapid Results Initiative in Kenya

As part of its commitment to the Fortifying Africa’s Future (FORTAF) initiative the Micronutrient Initiative (MI) recently assisted the National Fortification Alliance (NFA) in Kenya to launch a Rapid Results Initiative focused on the creation of a certification and logo system for Vitamin-A fortified fats and oils. Following a highly successful stakeholder’s alignment meeting, the team responsible for implementing the RRI was launched in Nairobi on 6th and 7th September 2006.

Developed by Robert H Schaffer and Associates, the Rapid-Results Approach is a structured process to help leadership groups mobilise teams to engage in this way-achieving results and learning as they go-in successive waves of 100-day Rapid-Results Initiatives (RRIs). Each RRI aims to achieve a meaningful and challenging result. And each wave of RRIs is designed to generate new insights about longer-term goals, strategies, plans, and policies. Robert Schaffer & Associates are the consultants running the Kenyan fortification RRI.

The stakeholders alignment meeting held prior to the launch brought together key stakeholders in the fortification movement. The meeting was attended by forty critical staff from the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), the Ministry of Health, Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), the United Nations and the three major edible oil producers in Kenya namely Bidco Oil, Pwani Oil and Kapa Oil. The fact that so many high level people took time out of their busy schedules to debate the issues around fortification and to give of their knowledge and experience has certainly set the RRI process up for success.

The stakeholder’s workshop was followed by the launch of the RRI team. The RRI team is highly representative and includes representatives of the KEBS, the Ministry of Health, KEMRI and the private sector. The agreed goal of the RRI is to have at least three fully certified edible oil or fat brands selling on the shelves in Kenya within 100 days. In operational terms, this means the creation of standards for adding Vitamin A to oil, a certification regime and the actual testing of products. Products that meet these criteria will be awarded a logo designed for the fortification programme. The RRI team developed a work plan at the launch which focuses activities, assigns responsibilities and establishes timelines in order to meet the 16th December 2006 deadline. Although this is a highly ambitious goal, the rigorous requirements of the RRI process itself combined with the experience and passion of the members of the RRI team are sure to make this a success.

Originally it was intended to launch a second RRI focusing on a social marketing campaign for the products, although the key stakeholders have decided to begin this process once the first RRI is complete. It was a widely held belief that the effectiveness of any social marketing campaign would be increased if it incorporated the lessons learned from the first RRI. In the interim, the NFA is working hard on tools that can be utilised to increase the profile of the logo being developed in the first RRI.

The project profile, RRI work plan and photos of the launch are available under this section of the Fortaf website.