Goal

The virtual elimination of iodine deficiency disorders

» Iodine Deficiency Disorders

Result

The iodization of salt is an enormous success story. Some 91 million newborns worldwide are protected yearly from a significant loss in learning ability as a result of increased usage of iodized salt. In 1990, less than 20 per cent of households in the developing world were using iodized salt. By 2000, some 70 per cent of households in the developing world were using iodized salt.

… but

There are still 35 countries where less than half the households consume iodized salt.

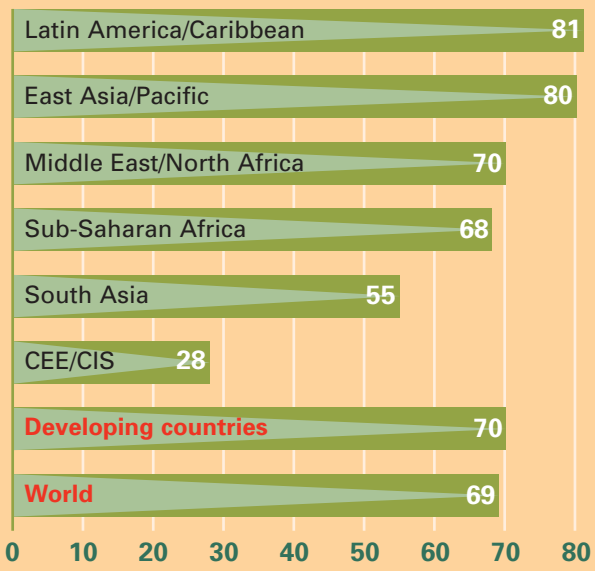
Issue

Iodine deficiency is the world's single greatest cause of preventable mental retardation. Severe iodine deficiency causes cretinism, and even mild deficiency can cause a significant loss in learning ability. Other effects include goitre and, in women, a higher risk of stillbirth and miscarriage.

In the early 1990s, about 1.6 billion people – or one third of the world's population – were at risk. The solution was relatively simple and low-cost: the iodization of all edible salt.

SIGNIFICANT GAINS

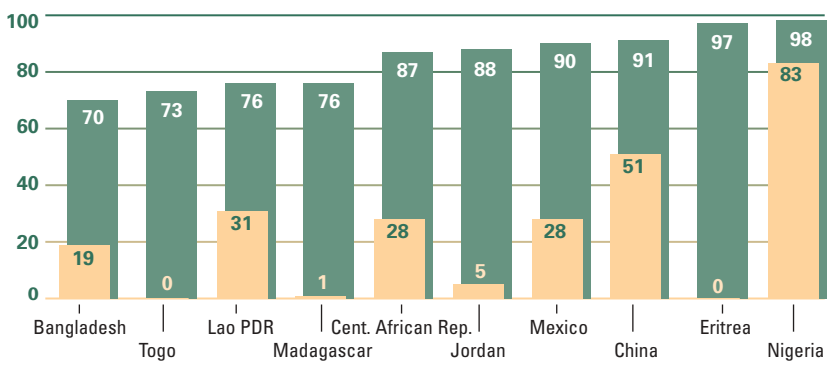
Percentage of households consuming iodized salt, 1997-2000



Source: UNICEF, 2001.

Major increases in iodized salt consumption

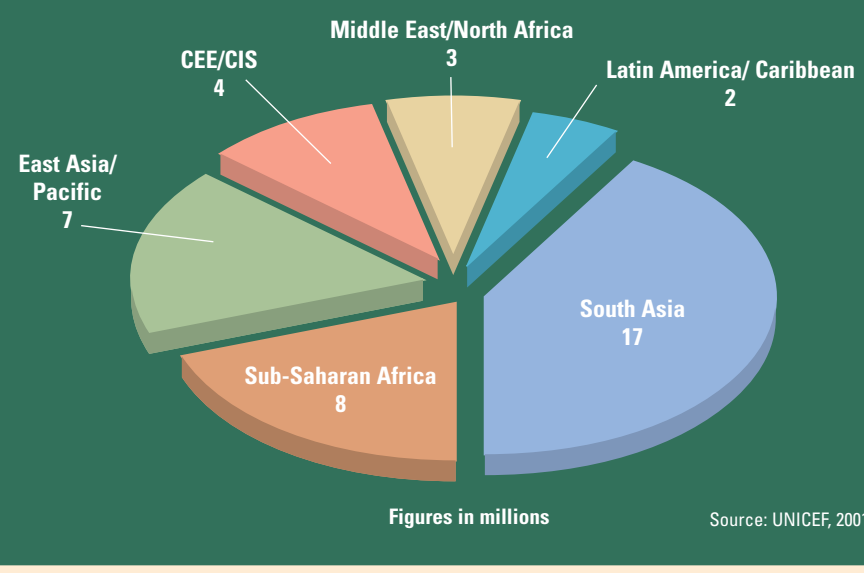
Rate increase from the early 1990s to the end of the decade in some of the poorest and most populous countries



Source: UNICEF, 2001.

Millions still unprotected

41 million newborns are still unprotected from learning disabilities linked to IDD.

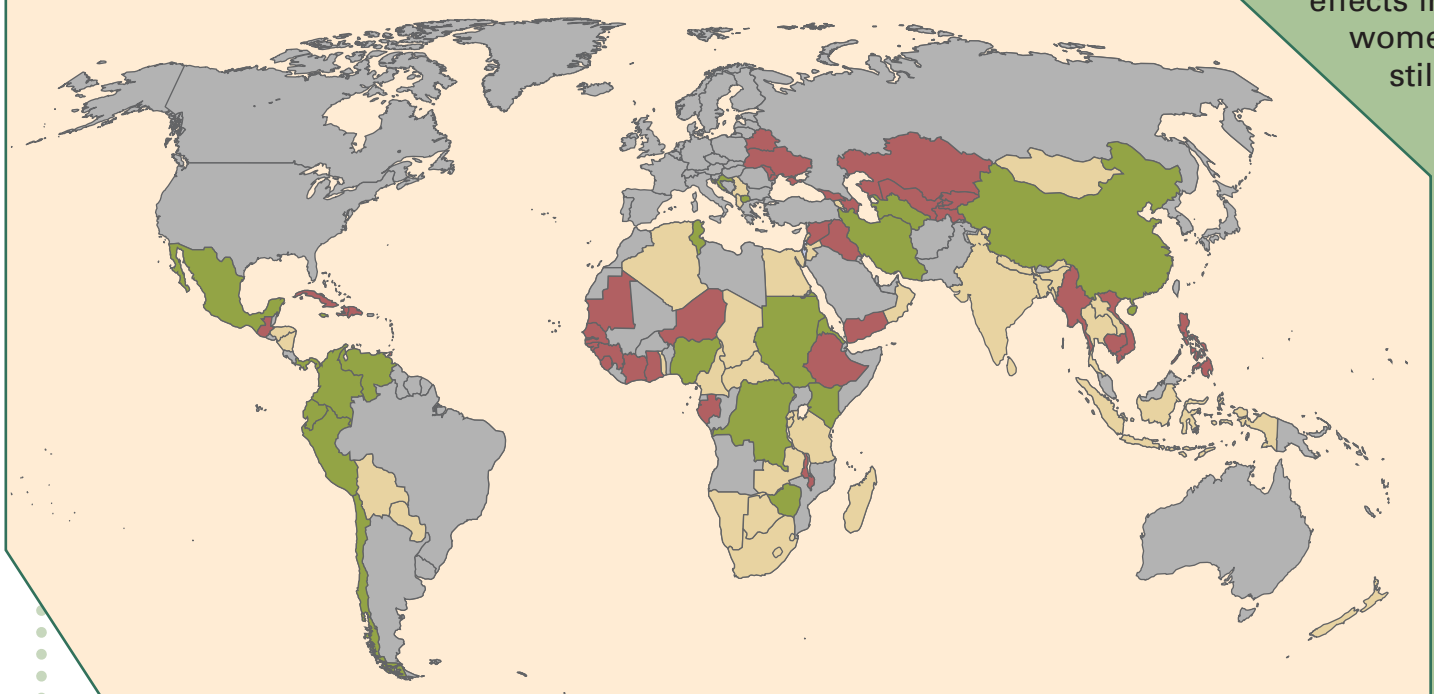


Source: UNICEF, 2001.

Major progress in iodized salt consumption in 56 countries

Percentage of households consuming iodized salt, 1997-2000

90% or more | 50-89% | Less than 50% | No recent data



Source: UNICEF, 2001.