Biography

Dr. Tran Thuy Nga is Head of Department of Micronutrients, National Institute of Nutrition, Hanoi, Vietnam. She has studied on intervention solutions for malnutrition in mothers and children, specializing in micronutrient deficiencies, notably vitamin A, iron and zinc and focused on applications of nutrition and food sciences in supporting nutrition-related diseases and community health care. Dr. Nga has been the principle investigator for various projects to test the efficacy and effectiveness of interventions to improve the nutritional status of pregnant women, infants and school children. She has published 95 articles on National and International scientific journals. She graduated from Hanoi Medical University as a medical doctor and obtained her Ph.D. in Nutrition at Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand with the scholarship from the International Nutrition Foundation and Ellison Medical Foundation in 2008. Dr. Nga has been working as a researcher at the National Institute of Nutrition and as a visiting lecturer for Hanoi Medical University.

Abstract

Vietnam has achieved remarkable reduction with regards to the prevalence of anemia, iodine and Vitamin A deficiencies. However, micronutrient deficiencies and anemia remain a public health problem. Reduction of iodine deficiency is unstable. On the other hand, zinc deficiency is severe in all vulnerable groups and micronutrient interventions to improve nutritional status are unsustainable. A large percentage of the population have inadequate knowledge and practice on micronutrient deficiency prevention. In this context, programs to improve micronutrient status for Vietnamese people should be more comprehensive with the involvements of all related partners including government, enterprises, research institutions and communities. The approval of mandatory decree for food fortification showed the government determination in solving the problems of iodine, iron, zinc and vitamin A deficiencies. However, there is a requirement for strong and continuous commitment from both the government and the community to effectively implement this decree. Platforms for collaboration between the government and food processing enterprises as well as organizations responsible for intervention programs should be developed and strengthened. Increasing communications on micronutrient deficiencies, raising awareness on the importance of micronutrients, changing behaviors, and increasing consumers’ demand for fortified foods are essential. Prevention activities for other micronutrient deficiencies such as vitamin D, calcium, and folate also need to be future focal points if the results from General Nutrition Survey shows relevant evidences.