

**CASE STUDY SERIES**

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## The Annapurna Salt Story: Public Health and Private Enterprise

Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD) is the world's leading cause of mental disorders, including retardation and low IQ. Research indicates that 30 percent of the world's population is at risk for IDD. Well-balanced diets provide the required amount of iodine, making the poor particularly susceptible to IDD. In India, almost 90 percent of the population earns less than \$3,000 per year; more than 70 million are already inflicted with IDD and another 200 million are at risk. Because even the poorest eat salt, it is globally recognized as the best vehicle for supplementing diets with iodine.

However, many still do not receive the required amount of iodine from salt because:

- Only about 25 percent of edible salt in India is iodized.
- Many consumers are not educated on the human body's requirements for iodine, despite the availability of iodized salt in the marketplace.
- Even those who understand the importance of iodine might be reluctant to pay the premium for iodized salt over the cost of noniodized salt.
- Traditionally, iodized salt loses a significant amount of iodine in storage, transportation, and Indian cooking. Even consumers who purchase iodized salt for its health benefits might not actually receive the recommended daily allowance of iodine.

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This report was written by Anuja Rajendra and Tej Shah under the supervision of Professor C. K. Prahalad. The report is intended to be a catalyst for discussion and is not intended to illustrate effective or ineffective strategies.

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