

Appendix 1

INDEPTH INTERVIEW INFORMATION

State	
Interview Number	
Stakeholder Organization/Sector	
Date	
Sociodemographic Information	Age Gender Education qualification Position Years of service in the organization Nationality

Participants will be asked to suggest which actions need to be taken in terms of salt reduction to reduce the high burden of cardiovascular disease in Malaysia. In addition, they will be asked to comment on the pre-defined interventions.

Participants will be given background information about existing policy commitments nationally and regionally and relevant evidence of interventions. This will help inform the focus group.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the time to join our focus group discussion/to be interviewed. The aim of this focus group/interview is to discuss salt intake and salt related actions/policy interventions in Malaysia. We want to get your opinions about different interventions to reduce salt consumption and how useful they might be.

We would also like to remind you that this discussion/interview is being audio- recorded.

INDEPTH INTERVIEW TOPICS – GOVERNMENT/ NGO

1. Society and Culture

- What do you think about salt consumption in Malaysia? Is it an issue?
- Why is salt intake high in Malaysia?
- What other dietary risk factors are you concerned about? Are you involved in policies to address these?
- Who is responsible for reducing how much salt the population eat?
- How best can we target industry/society to make salt reduction?

2. Government/organization practice and structure

- Has the ministry/ organization conducted/ implemented any strategy/ programme to reduce salt intake of the population?
- Was the strategy/ programme effective? Why?
- What are other actions need to be taken?—Is there any target/ goal? Any implementation plan? (e.g. food labelling, law enforcement)
- Should salt targets be mandatory?
- Would reducing salt intake of the population feasible?
- What are the opportunities related to reducing salt intakes and salt levels in foods?
- Who should take the lead ?
- Who should be involve in making decision / who will support change?
- How can sectors outside of health help facilitate salt reduction? **Which departments should be involved in salt reduction outside of the Ministry of Health?**
- What is the expected impact of the proposed action?
- How can progress be monitored and who should do this? Would an independent body be useful in this case?

3. Motivation and Goals

- Would salt reduction benefit the population and communities? How? (i.e. do they realize there are economic benefits, as well as immediate health benefits)
- What does the ministry/ organization gain from participating/taking action?
- Does the ministry/ organization intend to measure and sustain the commitment for long term?

4. Barriers

- What is required to help the population change their practices, and how can you support this?
- How will you counter food industry opposition to reformulation policies?
- Does the ministry/ organization have the knowledge/capacity/ skills to take action?
- What additional resources would be needed to put a comprehensive salt reduction policy in place?
- How do you address/manage negative feedback?
- Does the current pandemic (COVID-19) affect any implementation that you plan to do? If yes, what is your mitigation plan/strategy?
- How can salt reduction be prioritized alongside ongoing sugar reduction and obesity policies?
- **Does the ministry/department recognize the significance of salt reduction and the need to participate in the process?**
- **How should salt reduction be monitored and evaluated? Who should conduct this evaluation?**

5. Additional Information

- Are they any other issue that you would like to highlight in relation to salt reduction that have not already been covered?

INDEPTH INTERVIEW TOPICS – FOOD INDUSTRY

1. Society and Culture

- What do you think about salt consumption in Malaysia?
- Do you think any relationship excessive salt consumption and health of the population?
- What part do products such as yours play in how much salt people eat?
- What do you think about the consumer's acceptance towards reduced salt products?
- What do you think about salt reduction policy? Should it be voluntary or mandatory? Why?

2. Practices and Actions

- How many of your products are high in salt?
- Has the company make any effort related to reduce salt content of the products?
- What are other efforts to be taken?—Is there any target? Implementation plan?
- Should salt targets be mandatory?
- Would reducing salt level in the product is feasible?
- Do you already practiced salt labelling in your product?
- Would reducing salt levels in foods be low cost to do?
- What supports do you need to reduce salt level in your product or to include salt in the product label?
- Do you currently use salt substitutes in your products? Would you be willing to do so?
- Do you use Himalayan salt, rock salt or similar salts in the production of your products? If so, why?

3. Motivation and Goals

- What do the industry gain from participating/taking action?
- Does the industry intend to measure and sustain that commitment for long term?
- Do you anticipate this salt reduction strategy as part of corporate social responsibility?
- What are the opportunities related to reducing salt intakes and salt levels in foods?
- (For global companies) Are you aware of the salt reduction efforts made by your company in the UK and South Africa?

4. Barriers

- Is salt reduction a company priority? What would be required to make it a priority?
- Does the industry has the knowledge/capacity/ skills to take action?
- How do you address/manage negative feedback ?
- **Are there any negative aspects to reducing salt levels?**
- **Are there any negative aspects to mandated salt reduction programs?**
- Any comments on the cost associated implementing the salt reduction policy?
- **How should salt reduction be monitored and evaluated? Who should conduct this evaluation?**

5. Additional Information

- Are there any other issue that you would like to highlight in relation to salt reduction that have not already been covered?
- What is the impact of COVID-19 on your operation and sales? (Any products more or less popular during this pandemic?)

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TOPICS- VENDORS (MEDIUM TO LARGE SCALES)

1. Society and Culture

- What do you think about salt consumption in Malaysia?
- Do you think any relationship between excessive salt consumption and health?
- What part do meals eaten outside the home, such as yours, play in how much salt people eat?
- What do you think about the consumer's acceptance towards reduced salt products/ foods/ dishes?
- What do you think about salt reduction policy? Should it be voluntary or mandatory? Why?

2. Behaviours, Practices and Actions

- How many of your dishes are high in salt?
- What is your signature dish/ product? Popular food among your customer?
- Do you use any flavour enhancers (chicken cubes, oyster sauce, tauco) in your cooking?
- Do you make any changes to make your food healthier?
- If yes, what is the customer's acceptance toward healthier food option that you prepared? If no or not yet, why?
- With respect to salt reduction, what action need to be taken?—Is there any target/ goal? Implementation plan?
- Do you think you have a role in reducing salt intake of the population?
- Are you aware of alternatives to increase the flavor of food without adding more salt and other flavour enhancers?
- Do you currently use salt substitutes in your outlets? Would you be willing to?
- Do you use Himalayan salt, rock salt or similar salts in the production of your products? If so, why?
- Would reducing salt level feasible?
- What is the expected impact of the proposed action?
- (for global companies) Are you aware of the salt reduction efforts made by your company in the UK and South Africa?

3. Motivation and Goals

- What supports do you need to reduce salt level in your product or to include salt in the product label?
- What do your company gain from participating/taking action?
- Do your company intend to measure and sustain that commitment for long term?
- Do you anticipate this salt reduction strategy as part of social responsibility?

4. Barriers

- Is salt reduction a company priority? If not, what is needed to make it a priority?
- Do the company has the knowledge/capacity/ skills to take action?
- How do you address/manage negative feedback ?
- **Are there any negative aspects to reducing salt levels?**
- Is there any extra cost associated with implementing the salt reduction policy
- what is the impact of COVID-19 on your cost and sale?
- **How should salt reduction be monitored and evaluated? Who should conduct this evaluation?**

5. Additional Information

- Are they any other issue that you would like to highlight in relation to salt reduction that have not already been covered?
- What is the impact of COVID-19 on your operation and sales?

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CONSUMERS (ADAPTED FROM MANS/NHMS 2014)

Please write or circle your answer

1.	Name Of Respondent	
2.	When is your date of birth ?	
3.	What is your identification card number ?	
4.	What is your passport number?	
5.	What other identification card number you have ? Army, police, birth certificate, others ?	
6.	How old are you ?	Completed years
7.	Landline telephone or mobile which can be contacted..	
8	What is your Ethnicity?	Melayu Cina India Iban Kadazan Dusun Bidayuh Melanau Bajau Murut Bumiputra Sabah(lain) Bumiputra Sarawak(lain) Orang Asli (Semenanjung) Lain- Lain
9	What is your marital status?	Never married Married Separated Divorcee Widow/er Cohabiting

		Others
10	What is your highest education level?	No schooling Did not complete primary school Completed standard 6 Completed Form 3 Completed form 5 Completed form 6, certificate/diploma Completed a bachelors degree Completed a master degree Completed a doctoral qualification Other
11	Are you?	Government employee Semi government employee Private employee Self employed Unpaid worker Not working Retiree Student
12	What is your average personal gross monthly income?	From salary Other household income Others?

QUESTIONNAIRE ON EATING OUT

1	In a typical week, how many days do you take breakfast? • 1 • 2	Where do you normally get the food from? • At home • Buy from cafeteria • Buy from	Where do you usually eat? • At home • At office • At cafeteria	With whom do you normally take breakfast? • Alone • With family
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 	restaurant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy from stall • Buy from fast food outlet • Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At restaurant • At hotel • At stall • At fast food outlets • Others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With friend • Other
2	In a typical week, how many days do you eat lunch? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 	Where do you normally get the food from? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home • Buy from cafeteria • Buy from restaurant • Buy from stall • Buy from fast food outlet • Other 	Where do you usually eat? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home • At office • At cafeteria • At restaurant • At hotel • At stall • At fast food outlets • Others 	With whom do you normally take lunch? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alone • With family • With friend • Other
3.	In a typical week, how many days do you take dinner? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5 • 6 • 7 	Where do you normally get the food from? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home • Buy from cafeteria • Buy from restaurant • Buy from stall • Buy from fast food outlet • Other 	Where do you usually eat? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home • At office • At cafeteria • At restaurant • At hotel • At stall • At fast food outlets • Others 	With whom do you normally take dinner? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alone • With family • With friend • Other

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW TOPICS – CONSUMERS

1. Society and Culture

- What do you think about salt consumption in Malaysia?
- In your opinion, generally, how much salt is used in your cooking?
- In your understanding, what are the major food sources that are high in salt?
- Do you use any flavour enhancers (chicken cubes, oyster sauce, tauco) in your cooking?
- Are you aware of alternatives to increase the flavour of food without adding more salt and other flavour enhancers?
- Do you think any relationship between excessive salt consumption and health?
- How important do you think reducing salt intake in your diet is?
- What do you think about reduced salt products/ foods/ dishes?
- Why are you eating out?

2. Behaviours And Actions

- Have you make an attempt to reduce your salt intake, ie. the amount of salt you add in cooking? Or salty foods or snacks that you purchased? Or during eating out? If yes, please state the action. If no, why?
- When buying packaged food items, how often do you look for the nutrition information? Do you specifically look for the salt content? Do you think it would be helpful to have information about the salt content on food packages?
- Do you currently use salt substitutes in your cooking/ dishes ? Would you be willing to do so?
- Do you use Himalayan salt, rock salt or similar salts in the production of your products? If so, why?
- What type of programs/ policies should be made by the government for salt reduction among the population? Media role? Food industry role? Restaurants/ hotels/ street vendors role? (eg. Labelling sodium or salt content in food products, consumer awareness, development of symbols to identify low salt products, agreements with food industry to lower the salt content of food products, and regulations)

3. Motivation and Goals

- What action would encourage you to reduce the amount of salt you add in cooking? Or buying or eating out? (e.g. Media's role, doctors advice, traffic light labelling system?)
- What action would encourage you to cutting habit of using salt at the table?
- need to reduce your salt intake (through home prepared foods, processed foods and meals outside home) ?
- What are other help or support do you need to reduce your salt intake (through home prepared foods, processed foods and meals outside home)?

4. Barriers

- What would make it difficult for you to use less salt in cooking? (Family members, children's preferences)
- What would make it difficult for you to cutting habit of using salt/ sauces at the table?
- What would make it difficult for you to buy less salty foods? (non availability of low salt items, high price, preferences)
- What would make it difficult for you to choose less salt when eating out? (Family members' preferences)

5. Additional Information

- Are there any other issues that you would like to highlight in relation to salt reduction that have not already been covered?
- Is there any effect of COVID-19 pandemic on your eating habit?
- Does COVID-19 pandemic inhibit enjoying eating out? Do you order food delivery? How often? What type?
- What types of food do you stock up during COVID-19 pandemic?