

Interdisciplinary action on salt reduction for public health: The Norwegian Salt Partnership

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A population-wide reduction in intake of salt (NaCl) is regarded as one of the “best buys” to reduce the incidence and burden of non-communicable diseases. Norwegian health authorities aim to lower the population’s salt consumption by 30 % by 2025. **To stimulate action on salt reduction in food products and served meals, a national “salt partnership” was proposed.** While dialogue with the food industry has been a part of Norwegian nutritional policy for a long time, no formal, committing partnership had previously been established.

Background:

Voluntary collaboration within the food industry requires a level playing-field. The Norwegian Directorate of Health invited a range of stakeholders to commit to an agreement on salt reduction in 2014. A collaboration with **food and catering industries, trade organizations and associations, NGOs and research institutions** was established under leadership of the **Directorate**.

Organization of the partnership:

- The Salt partnership consists of enterprises in the food industry, the hotel, restaurant and catering industry, trade organizations and associations, research groups, interest groups and authorities.
- To ensure involvement and commitment from a broad part of the food industries, the partnership includes 6 working groups, one per food group or category. These are run by the food industry.
- The Board (steering group) includes representatives from each working group, as well as representatives from research institutes, trade associations, NGOs, retailers and the authorities. The Board represents partners in the Partnership and possess extensive and diverse expertise at various levels of the food industry, hotel-, restaurant- and catering industry, research groups, interest groups and authorities.

The Partnership’s areas of cooperation and input

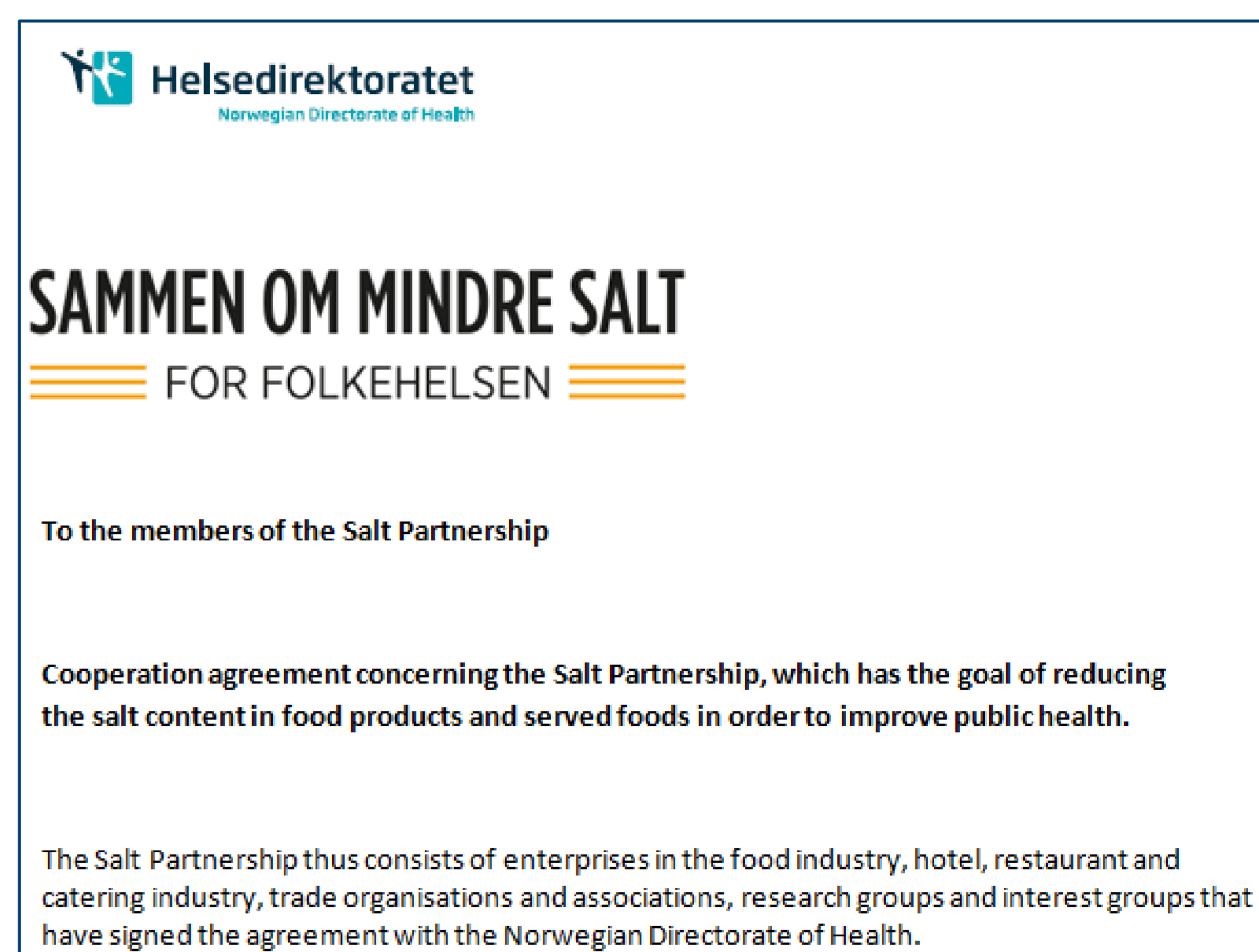
- Reduction of salt content in food
- Reduction of salt content in served foods (canteens, restaurants, kiosks, petrol stations and convenience stores)
- Sharing knowledge and expertise
- Monitoring the Partnership’s achievements

Results:

The **interdisciplinary task groups** developed the **cooperation agreement, plans for skills development and salt reduction targets for about 100 product groups.**

The overall aim is a reduction of average salt intake by 15 % by 2018. The targets will be revised in 2019.

Cooperation agreement



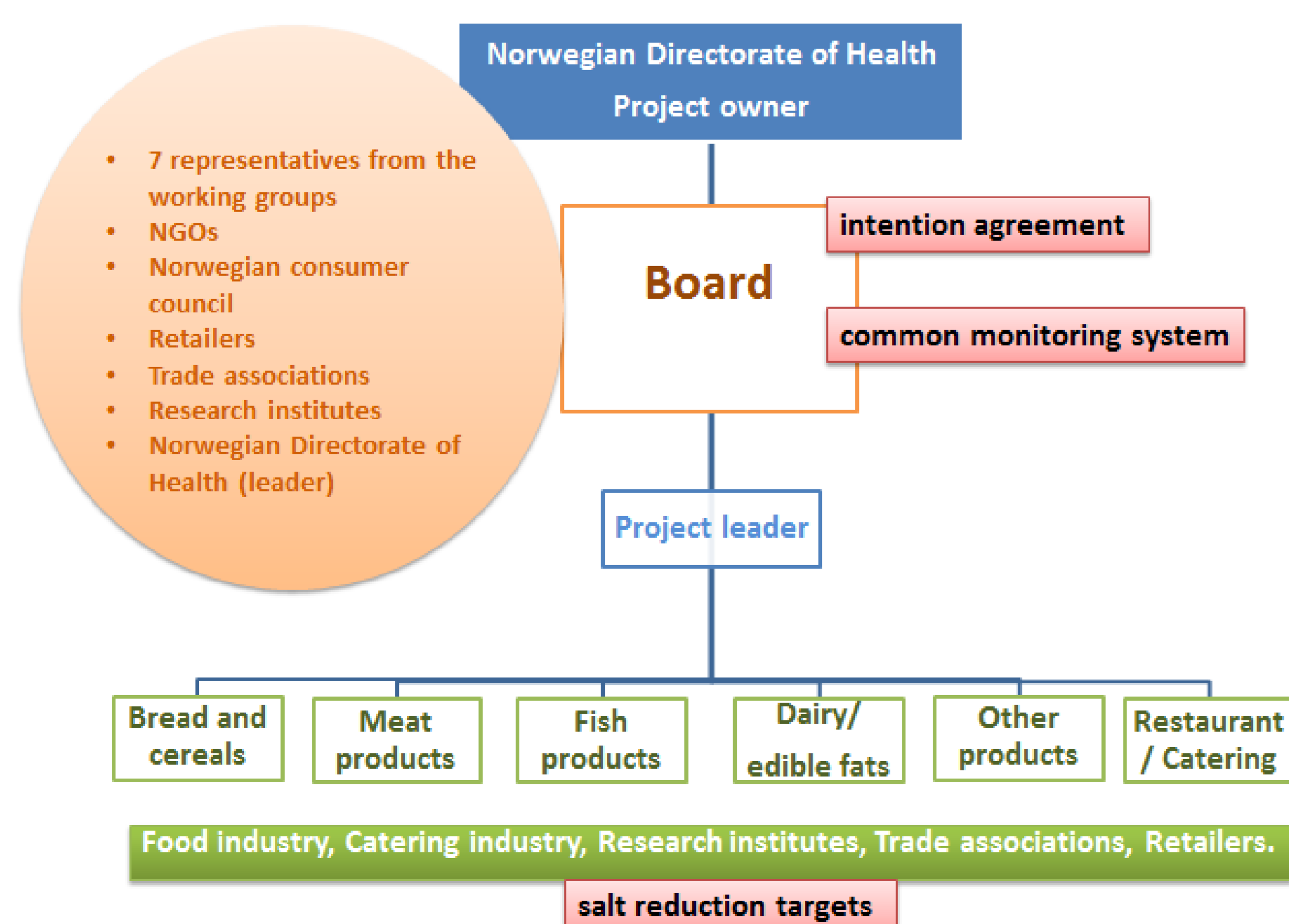
Launch of the Salt partnership

- The salt partnership was launched in 2015 and **the cooperation agreement was signed by 53 actors (59 per May 2016).**

Activities

- Implementation of a common monitoring and reporting system, development and implementation of kitchen practice to improve healthy cooking and food preparation skills, as well as public awareness campaigns, are the next steps.
- Trends in urinary sodium excretion in the population will be one of the indicators.
- The Salt partnership has been presented at the European Salt Action Network in Lisbon in April 2016, where food and health experts from across Europe met to discuss strategies to reduce the harmful levels of salt in food.

Organizational chart of the Norwegian Salt partnership



Conclusion:

Lowering the population salt intake is a shared responsibility and requires concerted, accountable work. The salt partnership is crucial to ensure a level playing-field and change current norms for salt. This public-private partnership is widely supported and is a promising initiative to gradually reduce the salt content of the food supply.