

ZINC SAVES KIDS: THIRD YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

PERU

The report highlights the significant progress made during the reporting period June 2012 – June 2013. This period marks the third year of the UNICEF-IZA partnership and the 'Zinc Saves Kids' initiative.

During this period IZA/Zinc Saves Kids funds helped to:

- Leverage government resources to strengthen zinc supplementation strategies for the treatment of diarrhoea and prevention of anaemia with multi-micronutrient powders (MNP) containing 5mg of zinc.
- Expand the administration of zinc for diarrhoea treatment by increasing the number of health establishments distributing zinc for diarrhoea treatment from 45 in 2012 to 188 in 2013. As a result 5,700 children suffering from diarrhea received zinc compared to 3,100 in 2012. Health Establishments in Loreto that had distributed zinc for diarrhea treatment reported a 63% reduction in the rate of dysenteric diarrhea – one of the most severe forms of diarrhea.
- Enactment of the Health Resolution on the prevention of anemia through MNP supplementation with zinc. The Ministry of Health (MoH) allocated US\$ 8.5million to the purchase of MNP in 2013 for the treatment of 720,000 children nationwide.

Country Situation



Key Facts of Peru:

Country: 1,285,220 km²

Population: approx. 30 million people.

GDP: US\$ 203.8 billion*

GDP growth: 6.3%*

GNI per capita : US\$ 6,060*

Poverty: 25.8%*

Life expectancy: 74 years

Political structure: 24 regions, 195 provinces, 1,828 districts

*Worldbank data 2012

In 2012 the average GDP growth was reported at 6%. Poverty declined from 30.8% in 2010 to 25.8% in 2011. However, there is little evidence of redistribution of the benefits of economic growth. In rural areas the poverty rate is 56% which is three times higher than in urban areas where poverty is reported at 18%.

With 8.1% of the GDP social spending remains well below other Latin American countries which spend on average 18%. To close the gap in quality and access to basic social services Peru would need to spend 15% of its GDP. However, budget allocations increased to maternal and child health; nutrition; and education.

Chronic malnutrition was reduced by 1.4 percent between 2011 and 2012. Big differences persist between rural (31.9%) and urban areas (10%). The level of stunting is significantly lower in coastal area (8%) compared to the jungle (21.6%) and the highlands (29,3%). The Government of Peru aims to reduce chronic malnutrition to 10% by 2016.

In 2012 771,404 children under three were anemic, this is 44.5%. Even though there is no statistics on zinc deficiency, the fact that zinc deficiency is linked to stunting and anemia

prevalence it can be concluded that zinc deficiency in children below three years of age is high.

Diarrhea was reduced by 2% in 2012 which is very positive given that since 2007 the country had not registered a decline in this indicator. The differences between urban and rural areas are high. The situation is especially critical in the Amazon region where the prevalence of diarrhea is twice as high as in other regions.

Specific Objectives

- Improve the zinc intake in children under three through MNP supplementation and promotion of complimentary feeding (as part of the anaemia reduction strategy)
- Reduce the incidence and severity of diarrhoea in children under five years of age in vulnerable areas through therapeutic zinc
- Improve the knowledge about effective zinc interventions in public programs of survival, growth and child development

Main Actions

- Advocate to institutionalize a national policy to prevent and control micronutrient deficiencies
- Emphasize zinc deficiency
- Capacity strengthening
- Promotion of family practices of MNP consumption
- Provision of MNP
- Monitoring and evaluation

The actions contribute directly to Millennium Development Goals 1, 4 and 5.

Key Partners

Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Women and Social Development, regional health bureaus and health centers, regional and district governments of intervention regions (Aurimac, Ayacucho, Huancavelica, Cusco, Ventanilla).

Pan-American Health Organization, World Health Organization, World Food Programme, Food and Agricultural Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UNICEF conducted a joint effort on “Improving nutrition and food security of the children of Peru – An approach to the development of capacities”.

Major Achievements and Results

- Enactment of Resolution on the prevention of anaemia through MNP supplementation containing 5mg of zinc. Following the institutionalization the MoH allocated US\$ 8.5 million for the purchase of MNP in 2013, for the treatment of 720,000 children
- Expansion of the administration of zinc for diarrhoea treatment by increasing the number of health establishments distributing zinc for diarrhoea treatment from 45 in 2012 to 188 in 2013. 5,706 children suffering from diarrhea received zinc treatment compared to 3,115 children in 2012 and 621 in 2011.
- Reduction of the number of cases of acute diarrhoeal diseases in Loreto. Between 2011 and 2013 the number of dysenteric diarrhea cases was reduced by 63% in health centers which distributed zinc for diarrhoea treatment. By contrast, the number of cases in health establishments not administering zinc the number of diarrhoea cases increased in the same period. While the reduction cannot be entirely attributed to zinc, it shows a marked downward trend.
- Zinc administration for diarrhea treatment and goals for reduction of anemia and micronutrient deficiencies were included in the agenda of the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion.
- Positioning MNP supplementation including 5mg of zinc on national, regional and local agendas.

Activities

- Technical assistance to explain the efficacy of zinc in the treatment of diarrhoea at national and regional level with particular emphasis on the regions Ayacucho, Ucayali, Callao and Loreto. As a result health centres administering zinc for diarrhoea treatment increased from 45 in 2012 to 188 in 2013. This was a huge effort since many physicians showed resistance to the use of zinc for diarrhoea treatment. Multiple meetings and workshops were held to train 1,364 professionals and technicians on the benefits of using zinc for diarrhoea treatment.
- Organization of workshops and internships on MNP supplementation including zinc
- Production of information material on family practices including brochures and videos
- 62,601,660 sachets of MNP containing 5mg of zinc were distributed in 14 regions including the three pilot regions (Apurimac, Ayacucho and Huancavelica) for the treatment of 347,747 children during the first half of 2013.
- Monitoring efforts were strengthened with frequent visits to health establishments and on-site supervision of UNICEF consultants. Some regions installed coordinators to ensure progress in distributing zinc for diarrhoea treatment and MNP.
- The region of Loreto was affected by major floods in 2012 and as part of the emergency aid UNICEF provided MNP with 15 components including zinc to strengthen the health of 4,500 children.

Outlook

The progress achieved during these last three years of intervention through the UNICEF-IZA Zinc Saves Kids alliance has created conditions that will allow expanding both interventions on a major scale. Consequently, in 2013/2014 special emphasis will be placed on the support to be provided to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion for scaling-up these two effective interventions in the regions most affected by ADD, anamia and chronic malnutrition.