



Newsletter December 2015

Peru - A world reference for improving child health and nutrition

During the early 2000s Peru had one of the highest rates of chronic malnutrition in children under five years of age in Latin America. More than 40% of the Peruvian population was at risk of an inadequate intake of zinc and iron. A deficiency of key vitamins and minerals over a prolonged period during early childhood has lifelong consequences: stunted growth, poor brain development and reduced productivity and earning capacity in adult life. Severely malnourished children have also an increased risk of dying from diarrhea before age five.

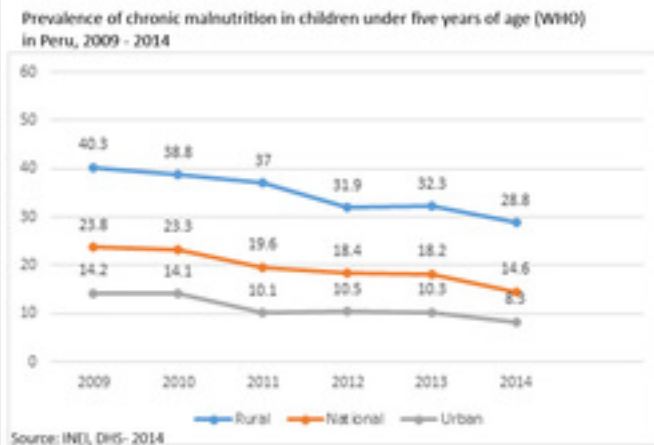
The Government of Peru recognized the priority of reducing chronic child malnutrition and sought support from UNICEF and other NGOs to design an effective strategy to tackle this problem. UNICEF promoted the implementation of multiple micronutrient powder (MNP) supplementation including 5mg of zinc to children below three years of age and advocated for the inclusion of zinc supplements in the treatment of diarrhea which can be both a cause and a consequence of chronic child malnutrition.

In 2009 the MNP supplementation program was rolled out in three areas but additional resources were required to expand this program and include zinc in the national guidelines for treating acute diarrheal diseases as long recommended by UNICEF and WHO. In 2010, IZA provided this much needed funding through the Zinc Saves Kids initiative in support of UNICEF. IZA's significant contribution helped develop a baseline study on the impact of zinc in reducing the severity of diarrhea and preventing further episodes in Peru and supported UNICEF's efforts in the field in terms of training health professionals and community workers, educating families on child feeding practices, basic health care and providing zinc supplementation and MNP to hundreds of thousands of children across the country. As a result chronic malnutrition in children was reduced by 40% within just five years from 23.8% in 2009 to 14.6% in 2014.



Wiegel Group passionate about *Zinc Saves Kids*

For the sixth consecutive year IZA affiliate member Wiegel Group, one of the leading European hot-dip galvanizing companies with plants in Germany, Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, supports Zinc Saves Kids with US\$ 30,000. "We are enthusiastic about this project which enables a fantastic bridging: on the one hand of the metal zinc used for corrosion protection and zinc as a basic module of life which promotes health, cures illnesses and even saves lives and on the other hand of our rich country and developed group and concrete humanitarian aid for people in underprivileged regions,"



Peru was internationally recognized for this unique success and hosted the second Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Learning Route to share their experiences with country delegations from Africa, Asia and Latin America. SUN is a global movement uniting governments, civil society, UN, businesses and researchers committed to support national plans to combat chronic malnutrition during the first 1000 days in the life of a child. In 2015, the Government of Peru spent \$ 4.5 million on MNP and it will increase this budget to \$7.4 million in 2016 to then cover 95% of the under three year olds in the country.

As being one of the key contributors to this effort IZA has truly made a difference.



Highlights of the 2014-2015 Zinc Saves Kids program

In the reporting period 2014-2015 Zinc Saves Kids-supported advocacy activities undertaken by UNICEF have been key in strengthening and expanding the national supplementation programs to combat chronic malnutrition. As a result the Peruvian Government approved Health Directive 056 which promotes the use of multiple micronutrient powders (MNP) for the prevention of early childhood anemia and chronic malnutrition. MNP containing 5mg of zinc was made available to 712,636

children aged 6-36 months in 2014. This is a 65% coverage of all children in this age group. Zinc Saves Kids' funds enabled the supply of MNP to more than one fourth or 189,977 boys and girls in seven intervention regions.

The national rate of chronic child malnutrition fell by 2.9 percentage points from 17.5% in 2013 to 14.6% in 2014. This represents a reduction of 16%. In 2015 the aim is to supply 870,854 young children with MNP nationwide which represents an 80% coverage.

IZA also contributed to an increase in the number of health centers administering zinc for the treatment of diarrhea by 40%, from 544 in 2014 to

commented Alexander Hofmann, Board of Directors, Wiegel Verwaltungs GmbH & Co KG.

ACN honors IZA's commitment to humanity

Recognizing IZA's sustained effort to improve the survival, growth and development of undernourished children in high-burden countries, the American College of Nutrition (ACN) selected the Zinc Saves Kids initiative as one of the recipients of their 56th Annual Conference exhibit proceeds. IZA is honored to receive a gift from such distinguished institution.

ACN was established in 1959 to advance nutrition science to prevent and treat disease by stimulating nutrition research and publication, elevating nutrition knowledge among clinicians and researchers and providing practical guidance. Committed to science without compromise, ACN does not accept funding from for-profit corporations.

Chronicle of combating chronic child malnutrition in Peru

2007:
Government of Peru recognizes priority of reducing chronic child malnutrition and seeks input from UNICEF and other NGOs to design an effective intervention program.

2009:
Roll-out of MNP supplementation program in three regions targeting 100,000 children aged 6-36 months. 23.8% of Peruvian children under 5 suffer from chronic

760 in June 2015. Particular focus was on strengthening indigenous communities.

While nationwide the prevalence of diarrhea increased by 1.6% during the reporting period, it continued to decline in the Zinc Saves Kids-supported intervention regions with the highest reduction reported for Ayacucho: 5%. This is a major success for the UNICEF-IZA alliance.

For further details, [please view the 2014-2015 progress report](#).



Looking ahead

IZA has retracted its funding significantly – positive results have been achieved and a number of Member companies have taken up the cause as part of their sustainability programs. Initiatives include the Lundin Foundation in DRC, MMG in Laos and Teck Resources in Senegal and India. As well, two other members are on the verge of launching partnerships with UNICEF. Under the umbrella of the ‘Mining Compact for Child Health’ – a joint effort of companies active in the mining and metals sector, governments and NGOs to accelerate efforts to reduce under-five mortality - the zinc industry now contributes more than \$4 million annually to save children from preventable deaths and chronic malnutrition.



malnutrition.

2010:
IZA launches Zinc Saves Kids initiative in support of UNICEF and provides significant funding to expand MNP projects coordinated by UNICEF.

2011:
Government incorporates zinc for the treatment of diarrhea.

2012: Chronic malnutrition drops to 18.4%.

2013:
Government adopts National Plan to reduce chronic child malnutrition to 10% by 2016. IZA renews its commitment with UNICEF.

2014:
712,636 children 6-36 months receive MNP. Chronic child malnutrition drops to 14.6%.

2016:
The countdown is on to meet the 10% target set by the Government.

Wanting to support *Zinc Saves Kids*?

If you wish to support Zinc Saves Kids and the zinc supplementation projects to improve child health and nutrition in Peru please click on the donate button below. Donations can be made online via credit card.



Zinc Saves Kids is a registered trademark of the International Zinc Association.

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