



# The International Zinc Association

## Press Release

### **Zinc to play key role in new public-private partnership to accelerate progress towards ending preventable childhood deaths**

#### *\$20 million pledged to support diarrhea treatment program*

**June 14, 2012, Washington, D.C.**—Today, a unique public-private partnership was announced at “The Child Survival Call to Action” meeting convened by the Governments of Ethiopia, India and the United States in close collaboration with UNICEF. The partnership will unite governments, private sector partners, donors, and non-government organizations to save over two million children’s lives every year by accelerating progress toward ending preventable childhood deaths from diarrhea and pneumonia.

In the past two decades, child deaths have fallen considerably, declining from 12 million in 1990 to 7.6 million in 2010. While impressive, this progress is not enough to achieve Millennium Development Goal #4 which aims for a two-thirds reduction in child mortality by 2015.

- Diarrhea and pneumonia are among the leading killers of children under the age of five worldwide – responsible for 29 percent of all child deaths, or more than 2 million deaths every year.
- 75% of the child deaths occur in just 15 countries, and the majority of those occur in just five countries: India, Nigeria, DR Congo, Pakistan and Ethiopia. Most of those deaths could be prevented.

Low-osmolarity oral rehydration salts (ORS) and zinc treatment could avert over 90% of diarrheal deaths at a cost of less than \$0.50 per treatment. Yet, fewer than 5% of children under five in high-burden countries are receiving the full recommended treatment and just 23% of children receive antibiotics for pneumonia.

Program experiences reveal that tremendous impact can be achieved by scaling-up existing interventions if there is political will, an enabling regulatory environment and sufficient resources for implementation at scale. While the public sector has a vital role to play, no single group can do it on their own; engagement of the private sector is essential to ensure full scale-up of diarrhea treatment.

The International Zinc Association (IZA) was an early proponent of public-private partnerships and is supporting UNICEF’s programs through the **Zinc Saves Kids** initiative. “We are pleased to see our initial effort with Zinc Saves Kids spreading its reach to The MDG Health Alliance’s partnership which will help to drastically reduce the number of child deaths caused by diarrhea,” says Stephen Wilkinson, Executive Director of IZA, “By combining our efforts with similar initiatives the reach is broader and the potential to save lives is multiplied.”

Signatories to the Declaration include the U.S. and Canadian governments, the Clinton Health Access



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Initiative, the MDG Health Alliance, Teck, McCann Health, and The International Zinc Association, along with a number of other implementing partners. A copy of the Declaration and more information on the commitments can be found at [www.apromiserenewed.org](http://www.apromiserenewed.org) and [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov).

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About the Child Survival Call to Action

Convened by the Governments of United States, Ethiopia and India, and organized in close collaboration with UNICEF, the Child Survival *Call to Action* is focused on ending preventable child death through the survival of newborns, children and mothers. The *Call to Action* comprises 700 prominent leaders from government, the private sector, faith-based organizations and civil society to kick off a long-term, focused effort to save children's lives. Visit [www.apromiserenewed.org](http://www.apromiserenewed.org) for more information.

About IZA

IZA is a non-profit organization representing the global zinc industry by supporting and advancing zinc products and markets through research, development, technology transfer and communicating the unique attributes that make zinc sustainable and essential for life. IZA is supporting UNICEF's zinc and health programs in Peru and Nepal through the **Zinc Saves Kids** initiative. IZA is also promoting crop health through its **Zinc Nutrient Initiative**. Please visit [www.zinc.org](http://www.zinc.org) to learn more.

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