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### In this Issue

Zinc Saves Kids in Peru  
First Year Results  
Zinc Saves Kids proves  
life transforming for little  
Betsy



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Saves Kids.



September 29, 2011

## ZINC SAVES KIDS IN PERU



“The “Zinc Saves Kids” initiative, launched by the International Zinc Association (IZA) in support of UNICEF, has significantly helped the nutrition component of UNICEF Peru. Our national and local programs are aimed at reducing child mortality and improving the health, nutrition and development of thousands of girls and boys living in the rural areas of the country,” said Paul Martin, Representative, UNICEF-Peru. In its one-year progress report UNICEF indicated that multi-micronutrient supplementation for children under the age of five, as well as zinc supplementation for the treatment of diarrhea, have progressed significantly in Peru.

## Become a Fan of Zinc Saves Kids on Facebook

Receive updates on the Zinc Saves Kids initiative, and information how you can contribute and make a difference. The Zinc Saves Kids group on Facebook is public, so invite your friends and acquaintances to become members.



## Show Your Support of Zinc Saves Kids

IZA member companies and others supporting Zinc Saves Kids are invited to place the Zinc Saves Kids banner on their website and install a hyperlink to the Zinc Saves Kids website.

## FIRST YEAR RESULTS

41.6% of the Peruvian population is at risk of inadequate zinc intake making it one of the highest-risk countries in the world for zinc deficiency. The project supported by the Government of Peru, UNICEF and IZA made multiple micronutrient powders (MNP), including iron and zinc, available to the 101,000 children aged six to 36 months living in the three prioritized regions Apurimac, Ayacucho and Huancavelica. 90% of children started MNP supplementation; in April 2011 58% received the complete dose of sachets covering six months – sachets were to be taken every other day.

“Thanks to IZA’s support, many children have overcome anemia. Health personnel and the parents of children noticed that after taking multi-micronutrients supplements, children were more alert, active, playful and had a better appetite,” commented Paul Martin.



Based on these results, the Peruvian Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs and Social Development, with support of UNICEF, will expand micronutrient supplementation to 13 additional regions targeting 424,607 children between six and 36 months of age.



The Ministry of Health has also incorporated therapeutic zinc supplementation as part of the treatment protocol for diarrhea and has included zinc supplementation in the clinical guidelines for child healthcare. Zinc as a treatment of diarrhea was started in 24 health establishments in Ayacucho and Ventanilla with a population of 45,100 children under the age of five. 40,000 zinc sulphate tablets were distributed to 4,000 children in the Ventanilla district to treat over 5,000 cases of diarrhea. It is expected that by 2012 the administration of zinc tablets for the treatment of diarrhea will be expanded nationwide.

Photos: UNICEF

## ZINC SAVES KIDS PROVES LIFE TRANSFORMING FOR LITTLE BETSY

Five-year old Betsy is the only daughter of Francisco and Vicenta Huaman, who live in the small community of Chullcupampa in the Ayacucho region of Peru. Both from a simple background, Betsy's parents try to give her everything they never had – which reflects on the happy bright-eyed little girl, who is always asking questions and ready to play.



But this was not always the case. When Betsy was almost three, she was diagnosed with micronutrient deficiency. This diagnosis worried her parents greatly, leading them to do everything possible to improve her daughter's health. The staff from the local Huamanguilla Health Centre incorporated Betsy into the multiple micronutrient powder program, implemented in her area, due to the support of UNICEF and IZA. Through this program, Vicenta received multi-micronutrient packets for her daughter over the course of six months, with follow-up by health personnel. Later, Betsy took a six-month break, and then began taking the supplements for another six months.



Photos: UNICEF

With this intervention, there was a noticeable difference in Betsy and her health tests show that her micronutrient levels had improved. Visibly happy, Vicenta says “Those little packets gave her a better appetite. Now she eats all of her food! She always says, ‘Mommy, put the vitamins in my food.’”



Photo: UNICEF

The joy on Vicenta's face is evident when she describes how much it means to her for her daughter to be healthy and well nourished. “She is now curious and alert. She goes to the community preschool and she's just like the five-year-olds – playful, alert and happy. I think she might even grow up to be a singer...”



Vicenta now participates more actively in her community's health education meetings. “Now I do it to learn more and help the other moms in my community,” she says. Things have also changed in Vicenta's family. Together with her husband, they have learned to take great care in raising Betsy. Now, “We don't argue or fight because that affects our daughter. On the contrary, we give Betsy all of our love so that she will grow up healthy.”

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

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