

“Zinc Saves Kids”: Clinton Global Initiative Recognizes Partnership to Eliminate Global Zinc Deficiency

- *Zinc deficiency claims 450,000 children annually; 800,000 deaths in total*
- *“Zinc and Nutrition Initiative” aims to improve global health and food security by making zinc available through dietary supplements and zinc-fortified fertilizers*
- *Partnership includes UNICEF, International Zinc Association, Micronutrient Initiative and the International Fertilizer Industry Association*



New York, NY – The International Zinc Association (IZA) announced today at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting in New York City that it has formed a unique partnership to eliminate zinc deficiency and improve food security in developing countries.

“The Zinc and Nutrition Initiative announced today is designed to increase the intake of zinc by people in countries where it is most needed,” said Don Lindsay, Chairman of the IZA and President and CEO of Teck Resources Limited, one of the companies leading the initiative. “The use of zinc supplementation and zinc fertilizers can help save the lives of hundreds of thousands of children a year, and contribute to food security and increased production.”

Zinc is essential for all living organisms. In children, zinc is vital for brain development and growth. In some parts of the world, zinc deficiency has been identified as a critical problem, leading to the deaths of 450,000 children annually and contributing to 800,000 deaths in total. Approximately two billion people are at risk of zinc deficiency, and it is estimated that one third of the world’s population suffers from vitamin and mineral deficiencies. The World Health Organization ranks zinc deficiency as the fifth leading risk factor involved with diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia and malaria in developing countries. Fifty percent of the world’s agricultural soils are estimated to be zinc deficient, reducing crop productivity and nutritional value.

The Zinc and Nutrition Initiative will be undertaken initially in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and will be led by IZA with support from the zinc and fertilizer industries, governments and other donor agencies, including UNICEF and the Micronutrient Initiative, which is supported by the Government of Canada. The fertilizer program will focus on encouraging governments to utilize zinc-containing fertilizers in order to improve crop yields and crop nutrition, which leads to improved human health. The program will target \$1.8 million over three years and introduce 150,000 tonnes a year of zinc-fortified fertilizer in crop production with a projected increase of 10 percent in crop production in target agricultural soils amended with zinc containing fertilizers. The initiative is expected to reach more than six million people.

“Research shows that the provision of zinc supplements for children and zinc additions to crops have significant health benefits,” said Stephen Wilkinson, Executive Director, IZA. “We are delighted that CGI has endorsed this unique collaboration to address this important global health issue.”

About UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was created in 1946 to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War II. In 1953, UNICEF became a permanent part of the United Nations System. Funded by governments and private donors, UNICEF provides long-term humanitarian and developmental assistance to children in developing countries. Programs are targeted at developing community-level services and to promote health and well-being. For further information, visit www.unicef.org.

About International Zinc Association (IZA)

The International Zinc Association (IZA) is a non-profit organization representing the global zinc industry by promoting zinc's essentiality in present and potential product applications, human health and crop nutrition and by highlighting zinc's contribution to sustainable development. IZA conducts programs in Technology & Market Development, Environment & Sustainable Development and Communications. For further information, visit www.zincworld.org.

About Micronutrient Initiative (MI)

Passionate about developing and implementing solutions for hidden hunger, the Micronutrient Initiative (MI) works in partnership with governments, the private sector and civil society organizations to address this serious problem that affects one third of the world's population. For further information, visit www.micronutrient.org.

About International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA)

International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA) promotes efficient and responsible production and use of plant nutrients to maintain and increase agricultural production worldwide in a sustainable manner. For further information, visit www.fertilizer.org.

About the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI)

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) convenes global leaders to devise and implement innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Since 2005, CGI Annual Meetings have brought together more than 100 current and former heads of state, 14 Nobel Peace Prize laureates, hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations, major philanthropists, directors of the most effective nongovernmental organizations, and prominent members of the media. These CGI members have made more than 1,400 commitments valued at \$46 billion, which have already improved the lives of 200 million people in 150 countries. Commitments made at the 2008 Annual Meeting are expected to affect almost 160 million people. The CGI community also includes CGI University (CGI U), a forum to engage college students in global citizenship; and MyCommitment.org, an online portal where anybody can make their own Commitment to Action. CGI will hold its Fifth Annual Meeting September 22-25, 2009, in New York City. For more information, visit www.clintonglobalinitiative.org.

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