

POUZN Indonesia: Private and Public Sector Collaboration to Improve Diarrhea Treatment

The Point-Of-Use Water Disinfection and Zinc Treatment (POUZN) project is a USAID Private Sector Program (PSP) initiative managed by AED. POUZN supports the use of zinc treatment with oral rehydration therapy (ORT)/oral rehydration solution (ORS) to reduce morbidity and mortality due to diarrhea. The project goal is to ensure the long-term and sustainable use of zinc treatment and ORT by enlisting the commercial sector to complement public sector efforts in promoting rational diarrhea treatment. According to the World Health Organization, 18% of deaths of Indonesian children under the age of five are caused by diarrhea. Furthermore, the 2007 Indonesia DHS demonstrates that 14% of children under five had diarrhea in the two weeks prior to the survey.

Creating a sustainable supply. Beginning in February 2007, POUZN began evaluating the private sector to identify companies interested in introducing zinc treatment and willing to invest in growing the zinc treatment and ORS markets. By February 2008, two of the companies selected as partners were producing and marketing zinc treatment products and co-promoting it with their ORS brands. Since then, several companies have launched or are planning to launch new zinc brands in 2009 and 2010. POUZN encouraged the zinc manufacturers to apply to WHO pre-qualification, so they can participate in international tenders.



Given the important role of the public sector in providing health care to a significant portion of the Indonesian population, POUZN simultaneously advocated for the adoption of new guidelines for diarrhea management. With the Indonesia National Program, POUZN, in cooperation with two other USAID projects, BASICS and the Health Services Program (HSP), WHO, Unicef and the Indonesian Pediatric Association (IDAI), helped to establish a zinc task force (ZTF). The three USAID projects in consultation with leading pediatricians, assisted the MOH in the development of the national diarrhea treatment guidelines, tested and adopted key messages, and created a national logo, *Lintas Diare* (5 steps for diarrhea treatment). POUZN insisted on disseminating *Lintas Diare* message and logo for harmonization of communication by all parties involved in diarrhea treatment.

In coordination with the National Diarrhea Program, POUZN also worked to ensure zinc supply within the public health system. The Zinc Task Force brought together key opinion leaders to recommend the inclusion of zinc treatment as a “program drug” in the public health system. In October 2008, the MOH purchased 736 330 courses of zinc treatment from local manufacturers for distribution in the public health facilities. POUZN also convinced B-POM, the Indonesian food and drug regulatory agency, to “fast-track” zinc products registration, and to classify them as over-

the-counter (OTC) products, a status that enables wider retail coverage. Since November 2007, a total of 1,133,000 doses of zinc have been sold uptill February 2009.

Building Demand. To introduce zinc treatment, POUZN targeted health providers and drug sellers covered by the partner companies. POUZN worked closely with each company to assist with their marketing plans, medical representative training sessions, and development of promotional



materials, all of which reflected the five components of the government's "Lintas Diare" guidelines. As a new standard for diarrhea treatment, zinc adoption requires long-term effort to change health care providers' well-established prescribing behaviors. POUZN engaged key opinion leaders early in zinc's introduction to advocate for the product's use, and contributed to winning endorsements from key opinion leaders to encourage doctors to prescribe zinc for diarrhea treatment.

Because zinc treatment has a pediatric indication only, the companies focused their promotion on pediatricians. The project is now nurturing existing and new companies and persuading them to promote zinc brands to general practitioners, midwives and pharmacists to expand the zinc treatment market.

Accelerating Reach to Rural Areas. As the project continues to stimulate partner companies to accelerate their reach in urban sectors, POUZN is focusing on complementary strategies that target rural doctors, dispensing midwives, and drug sellers. The project is adopting a multi-pronged strategy: working with the MOH to reach rural doctors in health facilities, supporting the midwives association to disseminate Lintas Diare to its members, and stimulating pharmaceutical partners to sell to rural drug sellers.

The project plans to engage community-based organizations to reach rural mothers and increase product demand. Through their work with NGOs to reach rural mothers, POUZN is providing a model for the private sector to accelerate its OTC marketing strategy and reach directly the caregivers.

Program Outlook

The project's vision for Indonesia is a sustainable zinc treatment market with multiple products sold by multiple partners and a wide distribution in the public health system. The project's ultimate goal for sustainable use is to surround the caregiver of a child with diarrhea by the same message from multiple sources.

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