



# ORS and Zinc Treatment for Diarrhea: Tanzania's Experience



# Overview

- Situation
- Advocacy/  
Policy
- Production/  
Supply
- Demand
- Future





# Tanzania: Child Health Indicators\*

## General indicators:

- Infant mortality rate  
68 /1000 live births  
(28<sup>th</sup> highest in Africa)
- < 5 mortality rate is  
112 /1000 live births  
(27<sup>th</sup> highest)  
(Reduced 25 –30% since 1999)

## Diarrhea management:

- During the two weeks  
before the survey, 13%  
of children <5 had  
diarrhea
- 96% awareness of ORS
- 54% ORS and 70% ORT  
use rate
- 45% taken to health  
facility for treatment



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# Improved Diarrhea Management Program

**Goal:** Nationwide promotion low-osmolarity ORS and zinc treatment for childhood diarrhea management

**Strategy:**

- Advocate MoH and TFDA to adopt a revised diarrhea treatment policy and to distribute low-osmolarity ORS (Lo-ORS) and zinc treatment to public sector health posts
- Ensure supply of quality zinc treatment and reformulated ORS in the private sector
- Create demand among health care professionals, drug sellers and caregivers of young children



# Advocacy/ Policy: Achievements

- Established a country-level zinc task force of all key players
- MoH changed treatment policy to promote the use of zinc with Lo-ORS for childhood diarrhea treatment
- Added treatment protocol to IMCI guidelines
- Placed zinc and Lo-ORS on essential medicines list
- Public procurement initiated:
  - UNICEF provided 1.1 million doses
  - Lo-ORS tendered by public sector



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# Advocacy/ Policy: Challenges

- MoH implemented zinc treatment for diarrhea despite competing pressures
- IMCI guidelines updated in 2007 and not yet distributed across country
- Procurement delays of zinc treatment slows down nationwide public sector availability
- Zinc distribution limited pending registration as over-the-counter (OTC)



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# Production/ Supply: Achievements

- Encouraged development of first African-produced zinc dispersible tablets
- Product wholly-financed by manufacturer
- Tested US Pharmacopeia-monograph as a quality product
- Technical assistance will enable Shelys to seek WHO GMP certification by Sep 09
- Affordable zinc treatment price \$.40 - .80/course
- Zenufa Pharma expected to launch zinc syrup by Sep 09



# Supply: Challenges

- Accelerate public sector zinc treatment distribution
- Private sector distribution to remote areas occurring too slowly
- Zinc treatment uptake by pharmacies still insufficient because more demand creation work must be done.





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# Demand Creation: Achievements

Multi-channel public-private partnership promoting zinc treatment and ORT to:

- Health professionals
- Drug sellers
- Caregivers



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# Demand Creation: Achievements

## ■ **Health Professionals:**

- ❑ POUZN developed generic promotion and training material on diarrhea treatment with the MoH
- ❑ POUZN supported training of health providers
- ❑ Supports marketing efforts of Shelys Pharmaceuticals through doctors' group meetings and detailing efforts



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# Demand Creation: Achievements

## ■ Drug Sellers:

- ❑ Activate distribution at wholesalers through special offers
- ❑ Inserting Diarrhea module in on-going training of Accredited Drug Dispensing Outlets (ADDOs)
- ❑ Trade activation of ADDOs to stimulate initial uptake
- ❑ Trade activation of rural *duka la dawa* outlets for ORS (pending OTC status for zinc treatment)

# Demand Creation: Achievements

- **Caregivers:**
  - ❑ Caregiver events
  - ❑ Mama Ushari radio series
  - ❑ Radio promotion (after OTC obtained)

Unafikiria njia sahihi ya kupanga uzazi?

Tembelea wahudumu wa afya upate ushauri muafaka

*Uzazi wa mpango kwa ajili yako*

USAID | TANZANIA

Safi Kabisa! Mama Ushari!

MARC

# Demand Creation: Challenges

- Provider prescribing behaviors hard to change
- Caregivers trust public sector health providers, but public sector only recently promoting zinc treatment → slowed private sector demand
- Lack of OTC status hinders distribution and promotional efforts





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# Future Strategies to Increase Use

- Accelerate zinc treatment adoption across Tanzania within public health system
- Expand demand creation activities by private sector partners (including new coming Zenufa), through health provider events, ADDO program, mass media advertising (once OTC) and inter-personal communication