

Strengthening Diarrhea Management Outcomes through the Private Sector

Every year, approximately 800,000 children die as a result of diarrhea and dehydration. In the majority of cases, this is preventable, yet diarrhea is still one of the leading causes of death among children under five. WHO and UNICEF recommend the use of zinc and a new formulation oral rehydration solution (ORS) as a two-pronged approach to treat acute diarrhea in children. The SHOPS project actively addresses these issues by working in partnership with ministries of health and other stakeholders to introduce and scale up the use of zinc and ORS by tapping the capacity of the private sector.

Examples of SHOPS work

In Ghana, SHOPS works with a local manufacturer, M&G Pharmaceuticals, to ensure the availability of affordable, quality zinc products, and with the USAID health communication program to develop and air a mass media awareness campaign. The project trained nearly 8,300 licensed drug sellers and other professionals in collaboration with the national pharmacy council and professional associations.

In Nigeria, SHOPS implements a similar program, which involves training licensed drug shop operators in three states on new zinc protocols. The project works with local radio stations and community-based partners to create awareness among caregivers, and partners with two local pharmaceutical companies to market their zinc and ORS products.

In Uganda, SHOPS trained 10,000 drug shop operators. The project worked with the Pharmacy Society of Uganda to train the majority of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in the country. SHOPS and its partners are embarking on new activities to market zinc and ORS at wholesale outlets.

In Kenya, SHOPS supports a broad partnership of stakeholders that air radio and television demand generation messages aimed at caregivers and providers. The group also sponsors continuing medical education sessions on diarrhea management.

SHOPS plays an active role in the diarrhea and pneumonia working group of the UN Commission on Lifesaving Maternal and Child Medicines, leading the demand generation subgroup.



Jessica Scranton

Zinc with oral rehydration solution can both treat and prevent diarrhea in children under five.

Treating Diarrhea through Partnerships

In 2012, SHOPS partnered with M&G Pharmaceuticals to increase use of zinc and ORS in Ghana. The partnership resulted in zinc sales that were four times higher than expected, allowing for the treatment of 1.2 million children. In 2013, an additional 872,000 children were treated with zinc and oral rehydration solution. Children treated with zinc were protected for three months against a recurrence of diarrhea due to the mineral's ability to strengthen a child's immunity.

SHOPS Technical Approach

The goal of the SHOPS diarrhea management program is to create vibrant and sustainable commercial markets for zinc and ORS products and to promote a policy environment that provides the most vulnerable populations with affordable options for treating diarrheal disease. SHOPS serves as the focal point for global knowledge on diarrhea management through private sector channels.

SHOPS increases the role of the private sector in diarrhea management by:

- Conducting private sector assessments to identify the market potential for creating sustainable commercial markets for zinc and ORS products
- Brokering partnerships with commercial manufacturers and distributors, with accompanying demand creation to build the total market
- Fostering policy and regulatory change, assisting in the registration of new products, establishing national standards for quality assurance, and working in partnership with professional medical associations
- Ensuring correct and consistent product use through research-driven consumer and provider-focused behavior change communication
- Ensuring products are accessible and affordable to the poor through effective negotiations with commercial partners, and targeted product subsidies
- Using social marketing programs to catalyze the commercial market, demonstrating the viability of these products to commercial firms



Mothers and their children attended the launch of the diarrhea treatment kit in Benin.

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The Strengthening Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) project is a five-year cooperative agreement (No. GPO-A-00-09-00007-00) funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The project focuses on increasing availability, improving quality, and expanding coverage of essential health products and services in family planning and reproductive health, maternal and child health, HIV and AIDS, and other health areas through the private sector. SHOPS is led by Abt Associates Inc., in collaboration with Banyan Global, Jhpiego, Marie Stopes International, Monitor Group, and O'Hanlon Health Consulting. The views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.

For more information about the SHOPS project, visit: www.shopsproject.org



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