
Tsunami Relief Initiatives in Aceh & North Sumatra, Indonesia

Supplementation with Vitamins and Minerals (SUM)

Following the massive earthquake and resulting tsunamis on 26 December 2004, relief efforts were initiated by international, regional and national-level groups to assist in short, medium and long-term recovery from the disaster. While relief operations have prevented further loss of life among the displaced survivors from a second wave of casualties due to disease and malnutrition, many are still living under conditions that keep them vulnerable to these threats. HKI's ongoing support for vitamin-mineral interventions are accepted as important inputs to rehabilitate the health and well-being of human resources to support the reconstruction in all areas of development.

Objective: To provide vitamin/mineral formulations that improve health and nutritional status to all tsunami affected population which is estimated at a total of ~540,000 persons, including ~200,000 children below 12 years of age.

Current Status:

Providing vitamins and minerals represents one of the most cost-effective ways to save lives and prevent disease¹. Vitamin A and zinc are two key nutrients for children under 5 years that are proven to reduce mortality from diarrhea and measles by 30 to 50% and to reduce the severity of diarrhea, pneumonia, and malaria by 30 to 40%. Other vitamins/minerals, such as iodine and iron, are important as well and can substantially improve health, especially in the context of poor food availability and sanitary conditions. Through the SUM, HKI provides vitamin and mineral formulations to partners involved in the relief effort and their staff is trained to distribute them in their program areas. HKI teams also distribute these vitamin and mineral supplements directly to displaced and homeless survivors, particularly children and women.

Main strategies of the SUM:

- An initial immediate and widespread dosing of children (6 months - 12 years) with high-dose vitamin A capsules.
- Provision of dispersible zinc tablets for 10 days as adjunct to diarrhea treatment among children (2 months - 12 years) to reduce the severity and duration of life-threatening diarrhea.
- Distribution of multivitamin/mineral formulations for children aged 6 mo - 12 yrs (1 daily dose of 14 vitamins and minerals in the form of sprinkles) to be taken daily for 150 days to complement the food aid, enhance health and prevent vitamin/mineral deficiencies.
- Distribution of iron fortified soy sauce, 1 sachet per 4-5 people per day for 8 months, to reduce anemia, particularly among adults, and make the diet that is largely based on food aid (rice, noodles, and biscuits) more palatable.
- Train health staff of partner agencies to distribute vitamins and minerals to affected populations being reached by their services.
- Engage private sector producers of vitamin and mineral supplements to provide them at reduced cost.
- Monitor and evaluate to assess the coverage of and need for micronutrient supplements, basic assistance, and the conditions of the affected communities.

HKI is working together with other NGOs, under the aegis of the United Nations, pooling expertise, resources and technical capacity for short, medium and long term assistance efforts in the region.

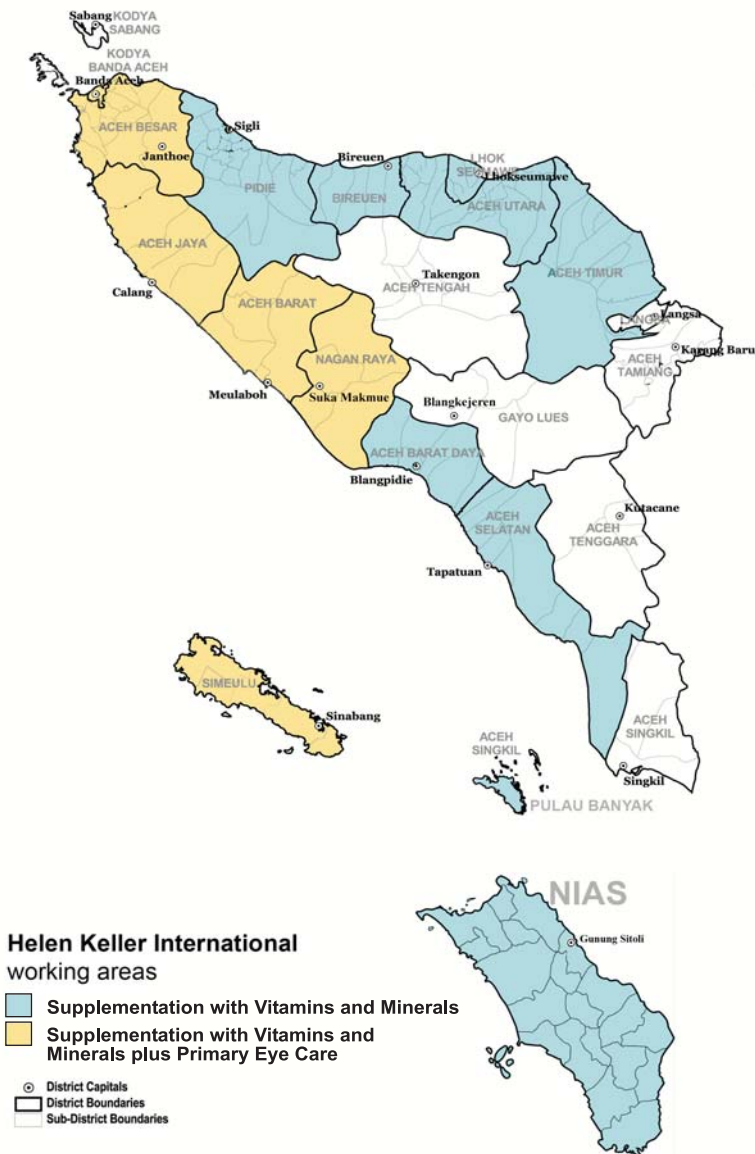
¹ HKI, Tsunami Relief Bulletin, Vitamins and minerals are crucial components of first line emergency response because they markedly reduce mortality and severity of disease, Yr 1, Issue 1, January 2005, Indonesia

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Collaborations: Ministry of Health (MOH), CARE International, Plan International, Surfaid International, CWS, Terre des Hommes (TDH), Indonesian Doctor Association (IDI), World Food Program, UNICEF, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Indonesian Red Crescent Society, Indonesian Red Cross, Save The Children, MDM, PCI, clinics at the camps, and other NGOs.

Funding: Several donors have already contributed to HKI's relief efforts. The principal donors to date are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands; CARE; Plan International; Terre des Hommes; Taipei Economic and Trade Office, Taiwan; Michael and Susan Dell Foundation; The Heinz Foundation; Sight and Life; Brother and Brother; Sullivan & Crommwell and individual donors. Supplies of vitamins and minerals have been received from Nutriset, Kimia Farma and Akzo Nobel.

For more information please visit our website www.hkiasiapacific.org



HKI field staff distributes iron fortified soy sauce to IDPs



HKI field staff explains to mother about the use and benefits of Vitalita Sprinkles



Promotion & education materials distributed to a barrack