

Sanku – Project Healthy Children

Sanku - Project Healthy Children's mission is to provide children everywhere with the simple, inexpensive, basic nutritional support they require to survive and thrive. Sanku - PHC focuses on achieving wide micronutrient coverage for at-risk communities in Africa and beyond.

Donate to Sanku - Project Healthy Children

Currently serving

55M

people worldwide

On target to serve

people by 2025

US\$1.32

fortifies food for one person for a year

Other ways to donate

We recommend that gifts up to \$1,000 be made online by credit card. If you are giving more than \$1,000, please consider one of these alternatives.





The problem: micronutrient malnutrition

Over two billion people don't receive the vitamins and minerals their bodies require to stay healthy, including iron, vitamin A, folic acid, and iodine. [1] This micronutrient malnutrition, often referred to as "hidden hunger," can lead to blindness, miscarriage, maternal death during childbirth, birth defects, compromised immune systems, and cognitive and developmental delays.

Micronutrient malnutrition is the leading cause of preventable intellectual and developmental disabilities in the world. [2] It also kills 3 million children under five each year — that's over 8,200 deaths per day, and nearly half of all deaths in children under five. [3].[4]

Malnutrition contributes to nearly half of all deaths in children under five.



Without proper nutrition, the poverty trap deepens: people become ill and vulnerable to disability or death, they cannot attend school or work, their families lose resources in order to care for them, and the cycle perpetuates.

The solution: cost-effective food fortification programs

Food fortification is one of the least expensive solutions to malnutrition, and has proven results. [5] Adding iron to soy sauce in China led to a 33% reduction in anaemia, and within a year of adding folic acid to

wheat flour in Chile, spina bifida incidences were reduced by 51%.

How Sanku — Project Healthy Children works

Sanku – PHC is a global leader in micronutrient fortification, working with government and NGO partners to design, implement, scale, and monitor effective food fortification programs.

After they successfully designed and implemented large-scale programs in Rwanda, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Liberia, and Burundi — work that continues to benefit 55 million people [6] — Sanku – PHC realized that as much as 95% of the people in at-risk communities did not have access to the centrally processed fortified food that large-scale programs provide. In Tanzania, for example, 95% of maize is produced by small-scale local mills.

In order to keep working to achieve complete micronutrient coverage, PHC formed the Sanku initiative to help small local mills fortify their food. Sanku equips millers with a machine called a dosifier, which fortifies staple foods with the correct dosage of micronutrient premix (including iron, folic acid, B12, and zinc).



The Sanku dosifier is orange. Bags with pink stripes are sold to millers by PHC-Sanku.

Sanku bulk-buys empty flour bags, which are then sold to the millers at the same price they would otherwise pay. They use the profits to provide millers the appropriate amount of premix at no additional cost. The dosifier's proprietary technology is fully automated. Sanku monitors the miller's use of the dosifier remotely, and visits the mill if the dosifier is not in use or needs repair.

PHC's Sanku initiative currently operates across Rwanda, Malawi, Kenya, and Tanzania, reaching over two million people that do not have access to centrality processed foods. Sanku is on track to reach more than 100 million people within the decade. [7]

What makes Sanku – Project Healthy Children so effective

Cost-effectiveness

On average, PHC's Sanku program costs only US\$1.32 to fortify food for one person for a year.

💔 Scalability

Sanku – PHC works with 600+ small mills to give close to 3 million people access to vital micronutrients.

💔 Targeted programs

Sanku – PHC looks at existing data and undertakes wide-ranging surveys of eating patterns to discover which foods to fortify with which micronutrients to benefit as many people as possible. They are also currently running a program in Tanzania to fortify the diets of Burundian and Congolese refugees.

Compounding impact

Food fortification takes pressure off healthcare systems by preventing illness and disease. It also helps grow developing economies. The Copenhagen Consensus estimates that each dollar spent on iron and iodine fortification could yield over US\$9 in economic benefit. [8]

Sanku — Project Healthy Children's accountability and sustainability

Sanku – PHC reports its metrics of success online, detailing how the organization measures impact, performance, process, and cost-effectiveness. [9] More importantly, Sanku – PHC's overarching mission is to ensure that they do not become a permanent part of a country's food distribution and health systems. They help launch successful initiatives and excel at finding sustainable ways for governments to continue that work without a permanent presence.

Recognition for Sanku – Project Healthy Children

Sanku – PHC has been chosen to receive a "top charity participation grant" from Good Ventures.

In 2018, they won a Zayed Sustainability Prize and a IoT Evolution Product of the Year Award. They were included in Fast Company's list of The World's Most Innovative Companies for 2019 and the Sanku Dosifier was named one of TIME Magazine's 100 Best Inventions of 2019.

The PHC-Sanku dosifier is being used by USAID and the World Food Programme.

In recognition of his work to end malnutrition Rolex named Sanku's CEO, Felix Brooks-Church, as one of five Laureates of the prestigious Rolex Awards for Enterprise.

Frequently Asked Questions

What will my donation to Sanku – PHC pay for?

Sanku uses donor funding to procure the dosifiers, as they are too costly for millers to afford. Sanku retains ownership of the machines, leasing them to mills conditional on their compliance with a contract that requires the purchase of grain bags that off-set the cost of the nutritive premix.

Sanku visits mills every one to two weeks, examining the dosifier and delivering bags and free nutritive premix.

What foods can be fortified?

There are three main criteria for foods to be eligible for fortification. The should be:

- 1. eaten in consistent quantities by large numbers of people
- compatible with the micronutrients being added (meaning they won't cause changes in color, taste, or shelf life)
- 3. relatively inexpensive so that low-income families can benefit

Successful examples include salt, sugar, oil, margarine, milk, wheat flour, maize meal, rice, tortilla mix, soy sauce, and bouillon cubes.

Why does The Life You Can Save recommend Sanku – Project Healthy Children?

We recommend Sanku – PHC because they were recognized as a GiveWell standout charity before GiveWell retired that designation.

Is my donation tax-deductible?

You are currently on The Life You Can Save Australia's website. The Life You Can Save Australia Limited (ABN 90 623 716 370) is a Public Benevolent Institution endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient by the Australian Taxation Office.

Donations of A\$2 or more made on this site are tax-deductible in Australia.

For information about tax-effective giving in other countries, please visit our Tax Deductibility page.

Sources

All photos and videos courtesy of Sanku – Project Healthy Children

- [1] Centers for Disease Control, Micronutrient Facts
- [2] Copenhagen Consensus, Micronutrient Fortification and Biofortification Challenge
- [3] UNICEF, The faces of malnutrition
- [4] World Health Organization, Malnutrition is a world health crisis

[5] Nutrients,

Evidence Synthesis and Translation for Nutrition Interventions to Combat Micronutrient Deficiencies with Particular Focus on Food Fortification.

- [6] Project Healthy Children website
- [7] Project Healthy Children website

[8] Copenhagen Consensus,

The world's best investment: Vitamins for undernourished children according to top economists including 5 Nobel Laureates

[9] Project Healthy Children website