



Bundesministerium für  
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit  
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BMZ

# Press Release

Development Policy

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## **SAFO goal achieved: 100 million people with malnutrition now using vitamin A-fortified cooking oil**

- **GIZ and BASF combine expertise to combat malnutrition in developing and newly industrialized countries**
- **An example of a successful public-private development partnership**

Berlin, Germany – 10 May 2012 – The SAFO development partnership – an alliance of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and BASF SE to combat vitamin A deficiency – has achieved its target: more than 100 million malnourished people in developing countries are now using cooking oil fortified with vitamin A. GIZ is the organization responsible for implementing the partnership on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Experts from Germany and other countries at the Hungry! Conference taking place in Berlin today discussed experiences and other ways to reduce malnutrition.

“The number of malnourished people in the world has risen from 817 million in 1990 to 925 million last year. The vast majority of them live in rural areas. Rural areas were ignored for decades. However, rural areas are not a burden that’s best ignored, but a real opportunity for development. That is what has prompted BMZ’s active involvement. We set up a task force on the subject that has already drawn up a 10-point program for rural development and nutrition security,” said Dirk Niebel, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF statistics, 40% to 60% of children under 5 in developing countries have vitamin A deficiency. As the human body is unable to make its own vitamin A, the vitamin needs to be ingested with the diet. However, many people in newly industrialized and developing countries cannot afford sufficient quantities of vitamin A-containing foods such as fish and meat. Alongside supplementation and dietary diversification, fortification of staples such as cooking oil, flour, sugar, milk and rice with vital nutrients is an affordable solution for the people concerned.

GIZ and BASF combined their expertise in 2008 in a development partnership called SAFO. SAFO stands for Strategic Alliance for the Fortification of Oil and Other Staple Foods.

BASF experts help producers in developing countries to fortify cooking oil or other local staples with vital nutrients. In parallel, GIZ supports governments in introducing fortification standards and laws and in establishing quality control systems. These measures are necessary to ensure that the staples primarily consumed by low-income families are fortified.

“The long-term consequences of vitamin A deficiency for the people concerned range from a permanently weakened immune system to infectious diseases and blindness,” said Michael Heinz, Member of the Board of Executive Directors of BASF SE responsible for the Performance Products segment, which includes the Nutrition & Health division. “The initiative has enabled us to improve the nutrition situation for many millions of people. SAFO shows that public-sector development aid and the private sector can successfully work together to develop and implement solutions to reduce malnutrition,” Heinz added.

Many leading economists consider reducing vitamin and mineral deficiency to be one of the most effective development aid investments from a cost-benefit point of view. Public-private partnership can be a promising model in the battle against malnutrition, as SAFO shows. The SAFO development partnership in its current form ceases at the end of 2012. Building on the achievements so far, political decision-makers and BASF will seek agreement with further partners at the Hungry!-Conference on continuation and intensification of the alliance.

Links:

BASF works to improve nutrition in developing countries with its Food Fortification Initiative [www.food-fortification.com](http://www.food-fortification.com)

## **About BASF**

BASF is the world's leading chemical company: The Chemical Company. Its portfolio ranges from chemicals, plastics, performance products and crop protection products to oil and gas. We combine economic success, social responsibility and environmental protection. Through science and innovation we enable our customers in almost all industries to meet the current and future needs of society. Our products and system solutions contribute to conserving resources, ensuring healthy food and nutrition and helping to improve the quality of life. We have summed up this contribution in our corporate purpose: We create chemistry for a sustainable future. BASF posted sales of about €73.5 billion in 2011 and had more than 111,000 employees as of the end of the year. BASF shares are traded on the stock exchanges in Frankfurt (BAS), London (BFA) and Zurich (AN). Further information on BASF is available on the Internet at [www.basf.com](http://www.basf.com)

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