

## PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

### Name of the Partnership/Initiative

Universal Flour Fortification (UFF) Initiative

**Expected date of initiation: October 24 2002**

**Expected date of completion: Within 10 years**

### Partners Involved: (please NOTE)

This Initiative is very much in the formative phase and senior individuals within organizations have been contacted and are supportive of UFF and their organizations' participation. *A Policy Forum: Launching UFF* is planned following an Operative Millers Meeting in Mauritius, October 24, 2002. The hosts of the Forum are Micronutrient Initiative (a Canadian based International NGO) and US HHS/CDC. It is too early to indicate the level of Partner commitment; however the list below represents the likely participation in the Policy Forum and/or where there is senior level commitment to UFF indicated after a preliminary interaction.

#### **Governments:**

US – HHS/CDC, USDA, USAID

Canadian – CIDA

Australian – AusAID

30+ Countries that now fortify wheat and maize flour with essential vitamins and minerals

100+ Countries that would benefit from universal flour fortification

#### **Intergovernmental organizations:**

UNICEF, WHO, FAO

#### **Major groups:**

Micronutrient Initiative (Canada) and HHS/CDC (USA) are the initial promoters

#### **Other:**

Australian Wheat Board Inc

Canadian Wheat Board Inc

US Wheat Associates

Canadian International Grains Institute

Northern Crops Institute

North American Millers Association

North American Cereal Grain Export Association

Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA

A number of Milling Companies

A number of Pre-mix and Pharmaceutical Companies

#### **Leading Partner:**

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### Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative


#### **Project**

The United Nations *Special Session on Children*, May 2002 asked nations to eliminate essential vitamin and mineral deficiencies. It further suggested that fortification of commonly eaten foods should form an important part of the strategy to deliver micronutrients to large deficient populations. In recent years food

fortification has gained increasing acceptance and several countries have already initiated actions to enrich staple foods with micronutrients.

Flour fortification with iron is an important component of any public health strategy for the prevention of iron, folic acid and other vitamin and mineral deficiency. It works well to deliver iron in constant small needed amounts to a majority of the population. There is widespread recognition that iron and folic acid deficiencies are prevalent throughout the world. The consequences of this are decreased cognitive capacity of the next generation, decreased work productivity, increased maternal deaths, increased disease and increased birth defects.


Cereal flours are a major staple food throughout the world and in more than 30 countries fortified flour is being used to deliver essential vitamins and minerals in the diet. Flour fortification needs to be supported and expanded globally on an accelerated basis through stronger collaboration between private, public and civic organizations. The Association of Operative Millers (Africa and Middle East Chapter) is holding its annual meeting October 21-23, 2002 in Mauritius. This is one of the largest meetings of flour millers outside of the US to be held this year.

The *Micronutrient Initiative*, Ottawa, Canada and the HHS *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Atlanta, USA would like to take advantage of the occasion of the Annual Meeting of AOM to hold a forum immediately following the AOM meeting for a select number of senior staff from key public and private organizations to plan a joint strategy for  *Universal Flour Fortification wherever it is necessary and feasible.*

#### **Forum Objectives**

To reach general agreement by key private, public and civic organizations to

- support the concept of universal flour fortification,
- identify key needs and actions to achieve this objective and
- understand more clearly ways in which each organization could support this

There is  an invitation to other organizations interested to join the policy forum and contribute to this initiative.

Please also provide a brief description of the relationship of the Partnership/Initiative with the objectives of Agenda 21 as well as relevant goals and objectives of the United Nation Millennium Declaration:

This project addresses the priority of improving nutrition for vulnerable populations, as expressed in Agenda 21, Chapter 6, paragraphs 6.19, 6.21, 6.24 and 6.27.

#### **Expected results:**

Create national and global acceptance of Universal Flour Fortification with iron, folic acid or other nutrients. This would result in substantial reduction in the global burden of disease associated with iron, folic acid and micronutrient deficiencies and in a sustainable manner.

#### **Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:**

Policy Forum: To launch a loose coalition of supporting organizations behind UFF (Oct 2002)

Year 1: Situation Assessment and Consolidation of UFF in 30 countries.

Year 1-3: Planning, Strategic Mobilization, Education, Communication & Policy Development

Phase to establish the global norm and expand national implementation by 30%

Years 3 – 10: Full national and industry implementation of UFF

#### **Coordination and Implementation mechanism**

Several mechanisms are in place or have potential to assist with coordination of UFF. In the first

instance the policy forum is being hosted by Micronutrient Initiative and HHS/CDC. The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is being formed and my take on a key role in coordination especially among the Public Sector Donor Community in the future. Already a number of Associations and Organizations in the Wheat and Flour Industry are contributing the planning phase. It is important to take one step at a time and allow for all the partners from the public-private and civic sectors to meet and get to know each other better. Then the communication and coordination can evolve with balanced participation of all these organizations..

**Arrangements for funding**

MI and HHS/CDC are providing some seed funding to help stimulate this initiative. It is envisaged that the participating organizations will contribute largely to the activities in which they participate. In countries that adopt UFF the GAIN fund may be a logical source for national entities to consider applying for funding support along with other fortification efforts. Ultimately the customer should pay for the fortification. Fortunately this cost only 0.5% the cost price of flour.

**Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer**

Many of the organizations within the partnership are involved with training and capacity building of the Millers. It is envisaged that UFF capacity building will be inserted into that training rather than the creation of a new capacity building process just for UFF. Likewise for the other sectors national entities and participating international organizations will be encouraged to insert training components related to UFF into their ongoing programs.

**Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)**

Please provide a brief description:

**Monitoring Arrangements**

The main indicator to monitor will be the amount of flour being produced that is fortified compared to unfortified. FAO and the wheat and flour industry keep some data on production, so this will need to be expanded to include this information. National nutrition surveys conducted on a periodic basis should include some information related to consumption of fortified flour and other products as well as biological markers of micronutrient status. These systems will need to be developed.

**Other relevant information:**

An informal web site is being used. See <http://www.sph.emory.edu/~gmaberl/>  
User name: iron. Password Flour. A more public and formal web site will soon reside on the Micronutrient Initiative web site. Other communication products are being developed.

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