

BASF uses smart initiatives to address multiple Millennium Development Goals in the fight against poverty.

From the simple to the sublime



There are times when resolving the most complex challenge starts with the simplest initiatives.

The UN Millennium Development Goals seem to pose an intractable challenge and serve as a case in point. Each goal is global in scope and complex in its own right. Yet the challenges posed by these eight goals overlap in a rippling cascade of cause and effect. Nonetheless, BASF has found that successfully addressing a linchpin issue can resolve numerous problems at once, effectively creating a reverse domino effect of positive consequences.

Consider the failing literacy program in the Jabote community in the Brazilian Amazon. For years, malaria, which is endemic to the region, prevented children from attending class. In 2007, there were 465 registered cases of malaria in a community of 132 residents, meaning that on average each person contracted malaria around three times a year.

In partnership with a local government agency, BASF's **Interceptor**® long-lasting, insecticidal mosquito nets (LLIN) were distributed, to prevent the mosquito-borne disease from afflicting children as they slept. Thus, in 2010, the rate of malaria in the now 200-strong community reduced to only 0.12 cases per person, meaning that only one in every 12 people acquired the disease – an outstanding result. With disease at bay, the children's attendance improved and literacy increased.

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This collaborative public health initiative helped the community to move forward in its efforts to mitigate a devastating disease and improve primary education, a key step towards the larger but often neglected goal of poverty reduction. In effect, a single, focused initiative moved a community along the path to fulfilling four Millennium Development Goals: Goal 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Goal 2) Achieve universal primary education; Goal 4) Reduce child mortality; and Goal 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

BASF works hard to ensure that communities like Jabote are not alone in their efforts to improve their quality of life. Working with local leaders and global partners, BASF has established extensive insect-control programs throughout Africa, South/Central America and Asia, seeking to eradicate malaria, dengue fever and guinea worm, diseases that are central elements in the vicious circle of poverty.

In Nigeria, BASF worked with Rotary International to distribute **Interceptor** LLINs to families bringing their children for a polio vaccination. The initiative helped combat two diseases at once; children received their vaccination against polio and mothers were educated on how to use the nets to prevent malaria.

BASF is also helping The Carter Center to eradicate guinea worm disease in Africa by donating **Abate**®, a larvicide which kills the tiny water fleas that harbor the parasitic guinea worms. Since 1988, BASF has donated more than 200,000 liters of **Abate**. Thanks to these efforts, infection rates have fallen by an incredible 99.9%, with fewer than 2,000 cases of guinea worm disease reported in 2010.

The end result is fewer sick people, a workforce better able to sustain itself, healthier students prepared to learn and a brighter future. Of course, the ultimate challenge is to ensure that the achievement of Millennium Development Goals is a sustainable achievement. Here, too, BASF is looking ahead.

Working with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Professor Muhammad Yunus, BASF established a joint venture called BASF Grameen Ltd. The goal of this social-business venture is to enable local entrepreneurs to sell public health products – initially, BASF's **Interceptor** LLIN. The result will be improved public health and sustainable business enterprises that foster community development and capacity, all critical pillars in the elimination of poverty.

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As the world's leading chemical company, BASF recognizes that sustainable development is central to its own long-term growth. And, accordingly, it is committed to the principles of social responsibility. A founding member of the United Nations Global Compact and Global Compact LEAD, a new platform established in 2011 for corporate sustainability leadership, BASF has also been recognized by the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index for ten consecutive years. For BASF, these achievements are not an end in themselves, but a validation of its dedication to the Millennium Development Goals.



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