



# Opportunities and Challenges for Commercial Food Fortification – a West African Example

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Micronutrient  
Initiative

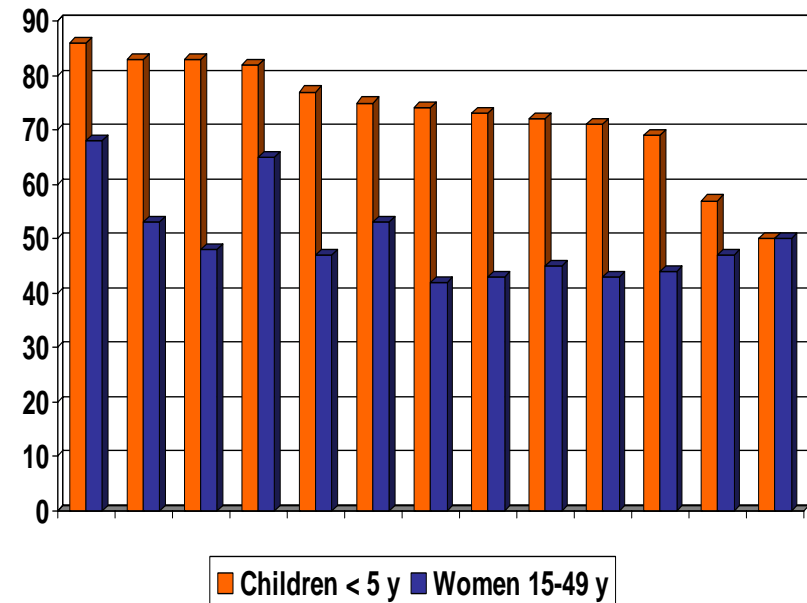


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INTERNATIONAL



# The Need in Africa

- Vitamin and mineral deficiencies account for **10%** of the global health burden
- In 34 SSA countries, at least 50% of children under 5 years old suffer from iron deficiency anaemia
- Only 21 countries reach at least 70% of children U5 during 2 rounds of VAS in 2005
- Each year, 3.5 M African children are born mentally impaired because of IDD



**Estimated prevalence of IDA by West African country**

Source: VMD Global Progress Report. UNICEF/MI, 2004.





# Past and current achievements

- Consumption surveys using Fortification Rapid Assessment Tool (FRAT) in some countries to identify appropriate vehicles for fortification
- Industry assessments in selected countries and interviews conducted with over 20 industries to identify and address bottlenecks to food fortification
- National Fortification Alliances have been established in many countries (incl. 8 in West Africa)
- Most government have national plans to reduce VMD including fortification
- Three countries have now mandatory fortification programs (Ivory Coast, Nigeria, South Africa)
- several industries are voluntarily adding vitamins and minerals to their products



There has been progress but the pace has been slow

Public sector-driven approach needs to move towards a more business-driven approach?





## National Industries Play a Key Role in Processing

An analysis of the FAO Balance Sheets as well as a review of the African food industry for key basic foods indicate:

### Flours

At least 90% of **wheat flour** consumed is commercially processed by national industries

Virtually 100% of **maize flour** consumed is processed in country (although not all is commercially processed)

### Edible Oils

66% of palm oil, and at least 90% of cottonseed and peanut oils consumed is processed in country.

### Sugar

96% (Eastern and Southern) of refined sugar consumed is processed in country (mainly commercial production) but much less in West Africa

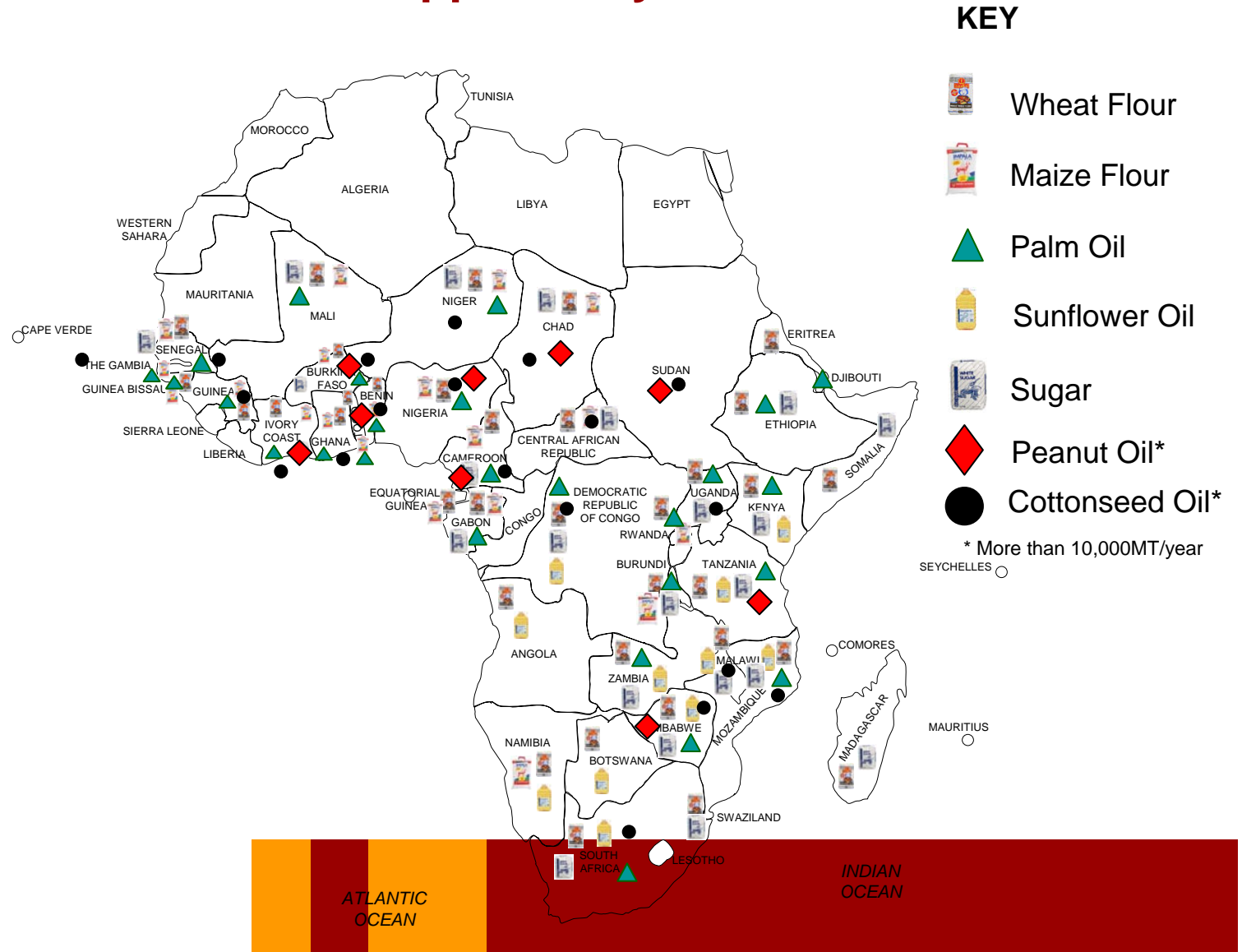
### Salt

90% of salt consumed in Eastern and Southern Africa is processed in country, but only 37% in West Africa





# Commercial fortification – an opportunity



# Commercial fortification does not reach everyone

Yes, but...

- Increased urbanisation
- Increased accessibility of commercially processed foods in rural markets

All increase the potential of reaching the populations in need

*388 M people in sub-Saharan Africa potentially have access to commercially produced foods*



## Example of Partnerships – Spreading Vitamin A Fortified Cooking Oil Across West Africa

- New Initiative where the lead implementing partner is **AIFO-UEMOA**, an already existing umbrella organization of 14 cooking oil industries in 8 WA countries that are united in the Monetary and Economic Union of WA
- Partnership initiated by HKI, bringing together key private sector, public sector and not-for-profit stakeholders to promote fortification with vitamin A of industrially processed cooking oil
- Regional partners, WAHO and the UEMOA Commission, will also provide support.





## **The West African Initiative – learning from the past and addressing some of the constraints**

- 1. Addressing the financial implications of fortification, including start-up costs and premix procurement**
  - Funding of multiple sources which will be complemented by contributions from cooking oil industries, governments and progressively the consumers**
  - Create incentives for industries by providing duty-free importation of fortification equipment and fortificant**
  - Multiple funding**
- 2. Generating consumer demand for fortified foods**
  - Complementing the industry marketing, a public sector information campaign will be developed to promote the concept of vitamin A fortified oil and include the development of a UEMOA-wide logo with criteria for industries to use the logo, etc.**





## **learning from the past and addressing some of the constraints .../2**

3. Leveling the playing field, through standard setting, monitoring and enforcement
  1. **Developing UEMOA-wide directives and norms for vitamin A fortification of all cooking oils produced and imported in the region**
  2. **Build capacity in inspection and enforcement (training of inspectors, establishing a regional reference laboratory, etc.)**





## Conclusions and future perspectives

- **As basic food stuffs are mainly processed in Africa, African industry has the potential to add vitamins and minerals to their products (restoration or fortification) therefore making a substantial contribution to improve people's lives**
- **Support from government and purchase by consumers is essential to sustain food fortification programs but industry leadership is key**
- **Example of partnerships bringing together private sector, governments and non-for-profit stakeholders may help remove bottlenecks and accelerate fortification**
- **Importance to ensure that partners coordinate well their efforts taking into account their respective comparative advantage and added-value**
- **Importance of monitoring the process and documenting the lessons learned from this industry-led approach.**

