

News Release

P288/20e
September 30, 2020

“Helping Hands”: BASF donates 40,000 liters of hand sanitizer to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)

BASF is supplying 40,000 liters of hand sanitizer produced as part of the Helping Hands initiative at the Ludwigshafen site to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) free of charge. “By doing this, we want to support the organization in the important fight against COVID-19 in refugee camps all over the world. The conditions there make it easy for the virus to spread. We are glad that we have been able to help improve the situation, in particular in health care in the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region and beyond, with our Helping Hands initiative. The refugee camps, including those in the Congo, are now among the global hotspots of the pandemic,” said Michael Heinz, Site Director and member of the Board of Executive Directors at BASF SE.

BASF is supplying the total quantity of 40,000 liters in small canisters that can be used on site quickly and easily. UNHCR selects the refugee camps, GP practices and medical centers, clinics, schools, community centers and registration centers in the Republic of the Congo, and delivers the hand sanitizer there.

“BASF’s donation of such a large amount of hand sanitizer has an immediate effect: It will save lives! The disinfectant is urgently needed in the Republic of the Congo – a country that is already faced with enormous problems even without the coronavirus. There is a lack of aid funds, and many vitally important projects for refugees and displaced people are facing closure. Hand hygiene that effectively helps prevent the spread of COVID-19 therefore makes an important contribution to

the protection concept here,” commented Peter Ruhenstroth-Bauer, Managing Director of UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe, the German partner of UNHCR.

Helping Hands: Aid shipments of disinfectant during the pandemic

BASF initiated the Helping Hands campaign in March 2020 due to the spreading coronavirus pandemic and gradually expanded it. Based on exemptions by the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, hand sanitizer was initially manufactured on the basis of isopropanol – a product that is not usually part of the company’s portfolio. After BASF initially only provided hospitals in the Rhine-Neckar metropolitan region (MRN) with free hand sanitizer, the campaign was broadened to include GP practices that provide local emergency care as well as towns, cities and rural districts in the MRN. In turn, the latter provided them to other local institutions, in particular nursing facilities. Thanks to the additionally produced quantities of bioethanol-based disinfectant, BASF was able to further expand its support and also supply the Germany-wide platform of the German Chemical Industry Association (VCI). Other BASF sites in Germany, such as Schwarzheide, Münster and Düsseldorf, launched similar initiatives. There, too, BASF played its part in addressing the bottleneck in disinfectant supplies during the COVID-19 crisis.