

A4NH

2017 Annual Report



RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Agriculture for
Nutrition
and Health

Led by IFPRI



PHOTO: ELIAS SIMPUNGWE, HARVESTPLUS

FLAGSHIP 2 | Biofortification

Highlight 3: Developing More Biofortified Crops, Reaching More Households

In 2017, A4NH's Flagship Program on Biofortification, led by HarvestPlus, scaled up the number of biofortified varieties and crops released and the number of people reached. As a result of the close collaboration between HarvestPlus, CGIAR breeding centers, and national agricultural research systems, 29 new varieties of several biofortified crops—including vitamin A maize (hybrid and open pollinated varieties), cassava, and orange sweet potato; zinc wheat; iron pearl millet and beans; and zinc and iron lentils—were released across Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. These varieties not only have higher levels of micronutrients but are also high-yielding, climate-smart, and carry other attributes that farmers and consumers look for. Of particular note in crop development was open pollinated zinc maize, first released in Honduras, and quickly followed by other countries in the region.

HarvestPlus also engaged in several partnerships along crop value chains to scale up biofortified crops, with the aim of benefiting one billion people by 2030. These include both supply “push” partnerships—to get biofortified seeds into the hands of farmers—and demand “pull” partnerships—to catalyze the food sector and increase consumer awareness of the nutritional benefits of biofortified foods in order to generate demand further up the value chain. Just as partnerships with national agricultural research systems resulted in the official release of various biofortified crop varieties, partnerships with seed companies and civil society and humanitarian organizations supported the multiplication and delivery of biofortified planting materials. HarvestPlus worked with private seed companies in Zambia and India to deliver vitamin A maize and iron pearl millet seeds, respectively; and with World Vision globally to deliver biofortified crops in 18 countries across Africa and Asia. HarvestPlus is also working with the World Food Programme in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean to incorporate biofortified crops into programs such as Purchase for Progress and School Feeding. To promote demand for biofortified foods, HarvestPlus worked with food companies, including PRAN in Bangladesh, to generate a market for biofortified food and with the media in developed and developing countries to raise public awareness about hidden hunger and biofortification.

These partnerships helped to put biofortified crops into the hands of more farmers and into the mouths of more farming households. HarvestPlus's monitoring and evaluation data show that in 2017, 3.6 million farming households have acquired biofortified planting material. Monitoring surveys conducted in several countries show that a significant proportion, ranging by country between 96 and

99 percent, of recipients had planted biofortified planting material, and in 95 to 99 percent of households, the target beneficiaries—women of child bearing age and children under age 5—were consuming the biofortified foods. According to the HarvestPlus global model of households reached, which estimates the net annual number of households growing and consuming biofortified crops, by the end of 2017, 6.7 million households—33 million people—were growing and consuming biofortified crops.

