Iron deficiency is the most common form of micronutrient deficiency worldwide and a major cause of anemia. Approximately 1 in 4 young children in low and middle-income countries and 2 in 5 women of reproductive age are anemic due to iron deficiency. Iron deficiency leads to impaired mental development and learning capacity, increased weakness and fatigue, and adverse pregnancy outcomes when it progresses to anemia.

A serious global problem is the leading cause of disease and disability among older children and adolescents. 2 in 5 young children in low and middle-income countries are anemic due to iron deficiency. Iron deficiency leads to increased weakness and fatigue, impaired mental development and learning capacity, and adverse pregnancy outcomes.

A practical, food-based solution is iron biofortification of staple crops. The role of HarvestPlus, a leader in biofortification, works with partners to develop and promote iron-biofortified beans and iron pearl millet. What they are: crops developed through conventional plant breeding and agronomic practices that increase iron levels. Why it makes sense: biofortification is a cost-effective and sustainable strategy based on familiar and readily available foods.

Iron biofortification works for health and nutrition across generations. Landmark studies across continents and populations show daily consumption of iron-biofortified crops can significantly improve nutrition and mental performance. Iron beans have been released so far in 16 countries. Iron works—for children, families, and communities. To learn more about the health-boosting impact of iron biofortification, visit harvestplus.org/ironworks.