Biofortified crops are conventionally bred to have higher levels of essential vitamins and minerals that are needed for good health. The crop data used are from HarvestPlus and the International Potato Center.
Biofortification is a big word with a big impact. Conventional crop breeding techniques are used to increase the nutritional value of the staple foods consumed most widely by low-income families in Africa, Asia and Latin America, including cassava, maize (corn), millet, rice, beans, sweet potato, and wheat.

Biofortification empowers farmers to grow and consume healthier crops naturally enriched with vitamin A, zinc, and iron — the micronutrients identified by the World Health Organization as the most important for health.

Leading international economists have ranked biofortification as a highly cost-effective intervention, predicting that every dollar invested yields $17 in benefits. Once the vitamins and minerals are bred into the seeds, the traits are permanent—so those who share them are sowing good health in more families, communities, and economies.

Four biofortification pioneers, including HarvestPlus’ founder Dr. Howarth Bouis, shared the 2016 World Food Prize, and Time magazine listed biofortification as one of the top 25 innovations of 2016. HarvestPlus was a finalist in the MacArthur Foundation’s 100 & Change competition in 2017.

More than 38 million people are now growing and eating these healthier foods, which have a positive impact on nutrition and health, including reduction in diarrhea and and illness, improved night vision, reversal of iron deficiency, and improved cognitive and physical performance.

With additional resources and partnerships, one billion people could benefit from biofortified foods by 2030.