

HarvestPlus Malawi commenced operations in 2016 with the aim of promoting the production, dissemination, and consumption of improved, climate smart, and nutritious biofortified staple crop varieties. HarvestPlus developed strategic agricultural value chains to ensure a sustainable and profitable supply of biofortified foods to smallholder farming households and non-farm consumers. This transformative agriculture intervention aligns various market actors to sustainably and profitably produce more nutritious foods.

To date, a total of 235 metric tons of vitamin A seed has been produced and sold on the market. Currently, nearly 100,000 smallholder farming families are growing vitamin A maize.



The cost of micronutrient deficiency in Malawi

- The prevalence of stunting in children under five is 37%.
- An estimated 60% of children and 66% of adults are zinc deficient.
- Iron deficiency is high in pre-school children and women (15-22%). 34% of women of reproductive age have anaemia.

VITAMIN A ORANGE SWEET POTATO

- *Nutritional benefits:* Provides up to 100% of daily vitamin A needs.
- *Farmer benefits:* High yielding, disease resistant and drought tolerant.

IRON BEAN

- *Nutritional benefits:* Provides up to 80% of daily iron needs.
- *Farmer benefits:* High yielding, disease tolerant, heat and drought tolerant.

VITAMIN A ORANGE MAIZE

- *Nutritional benefits:* Provides up to 50% of daily vitamin A needs.
- *Farmer benefits:* High yielding, heat and drought tolerant.

“ We are benefiting from these biofortified crops namely vitamin A maize, iron beans and vitamin A orange sweet potato, as these crops provide desired micronutrients which are essential for the good functioning of our bodies. ”

— Angella Dineki, an adolescent-age beneficiary from Masokole VDC, Ntchisi District



Building Strong Seed and Crop Value Chains

In addition to reaching and empowering farmers, HarvestPlus provides technical, logistical, training, and marketing support to a wide array of partners in seed and food value chains to build strong biofortified food systems.



Crop Development: HarvestPlus supports the Department of Agriculture Research Service (DARS) to breed, test, and release hybrid varieties of vitamin A maize developed through our partnership with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT).



Seed Multiplication: The registered varieties of biofortified crops are licensed to private seed companies, some on exclusive basis, to produce seed for sale to farmers.



Seed and Grain Distribution: Seed is distributed through the agro-dealer networks, on retail cash sales and for uptake by smallholder farmers through the Affordable Input Program (AIP) sponsored by the Government, through Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. HarvestPlus supports commercial seed and grain sales, identify and link buyers and processors to grain suppliers.



Consumer Engagement: HarvestPlus creates awareness of vitamin A maize through consumer education, advertising, and the media. It also promotes consumption of vitamin A maize through utilisation campaigns which include cooking demonstrations.



Market Development: Through advocacy conducted with national partners, HarvestPlus strengthens national ownership of biofortification through effective integration into national nutrition and agricultural policies.



Policy Engagement: Apart from Vitamin A maize, which is the core value chain crop supported by HarvestPlus, orange sweet potato, iron beans and vitamin A cassava are also being promoted in Malawi through other international research institutions like CIP, CIAT and IITA. HarvestPlus moderately supports some delivery processes in these other crops value chains.

PROJECTS: Starting in January 2021, HarvestPlus Malawi is implementing a **COVID-19 Rapid Response Project** funded by Government of Canada. This project, which is titled *An Integrated Food Systems Approach to Build Nutrition Security*, runs for 18 months to June 2022, and will focus on rapidly increasing the production and consumption of biofortified staple crops by vulnerable smallholder farming households who have the greatest need for nutrition and health. It aims to improve food and nutrition security while safeguarding livelihoods to help prevent an emerging food and nutrition crises brought about by Covid-19.

HarvestPlus Malawi was subcontracted by Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM) to coordinate the implementation of production and nutrition components of the **Adolescent Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture (ANSA)** pilot project, which is being implemented in the districts of Ntchisi and Mwanza. HarvestPlus coordinated the establishment of mother and cluster demonstration plots which showcase nutritious crops, and builds capacity of technical staff to assist adolescents in the production and consumption of the nutritious crops.

PARTNERS – CGIAR Centers: CIMMYT, CIAT, ICRISAT, IITA, CIP • **NGOs:** COMSIP, AFAP, Seed Trade Association of Malawi (STAM), Clinton Development Institute (CDI), Total Land Care, FOCUS, MDT • **Farmer Organisations:** Farmers Union of Malawi
Government: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Trade
Donors & UN Agencies: World Bank, Irish Aid, Department for International Development (DfID), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Program (WFP), UNICEF, GIZ, USAID • **Private sector:** Seed Co, MUSECO, Global Seeds, Virelishama • **Research Institutions:** DARS • **Academia:** LUANAR • **Crop processing/Value addition partner:** Perisha Agro
Advocacy partners: DNHA, Ministry of Agriculture, AGRA

Partner with us to make food systems more nutritious, inclusive, and sustainable – CONTACT: Dellings Phiri, Country Manager, Malawi, c/o CIAT- Chitedze Research Station, P.O.Box 158, Lilongwe • +265 999964424, d.phiri@cgiar.org

HarvestPlus improves nutrition and public health by developing and promoting biofortified food crops that are rich in vitamins and minerals, and providing global leadership on biofortification evidence and technology. HarvestPlus is part of the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) and is based at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

HarvestPlus' principal donors are the UK Government; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the U.S. Government's Feed the Future initiative; the Government of Canada; Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF) and donors to A4NH. HarvestPlus is also supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Australian Government.



RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Agriculture for
Nutrition
and Health

LED BY IFPRI