

Lessons Learned from Advocacy for Policy Change in Support of Biofortification in Sub-Saharan Africa



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10th Annual SPHI TECHNICAL MEETING - Sweetpotato's Role in Africa's Food Systems:
Reaching Diverse Groups in Diverse Settings, 24 August 2019, Kigali, Rwanda

Background - Situation in Sub-Saharan Africa



- 218 million people undernourished - one in four
- 44% pre-school children – vitamin A deficient
- 24% child deaths attributable to VAD
- 39% women of reproductive age are anemic
- 163 million children and women of reproductive age are anemic
- 58 million kids stunted (costs Africa US\$25 billion a year!)

Combating micronutrient malnutrition is critical to achieving Agenda 2063 and many of the SDGs



... Background - Micronutrient Interventions



Dietary Diversification

(Eating more varieties of nutritious foods)



Food Fortification

(Adding micronutrient powder during processing/preparation)



Supplementation
(Administering doses of concentrated micronutrients)



Biofortification

(Increasing micronutrient content of staple crops)

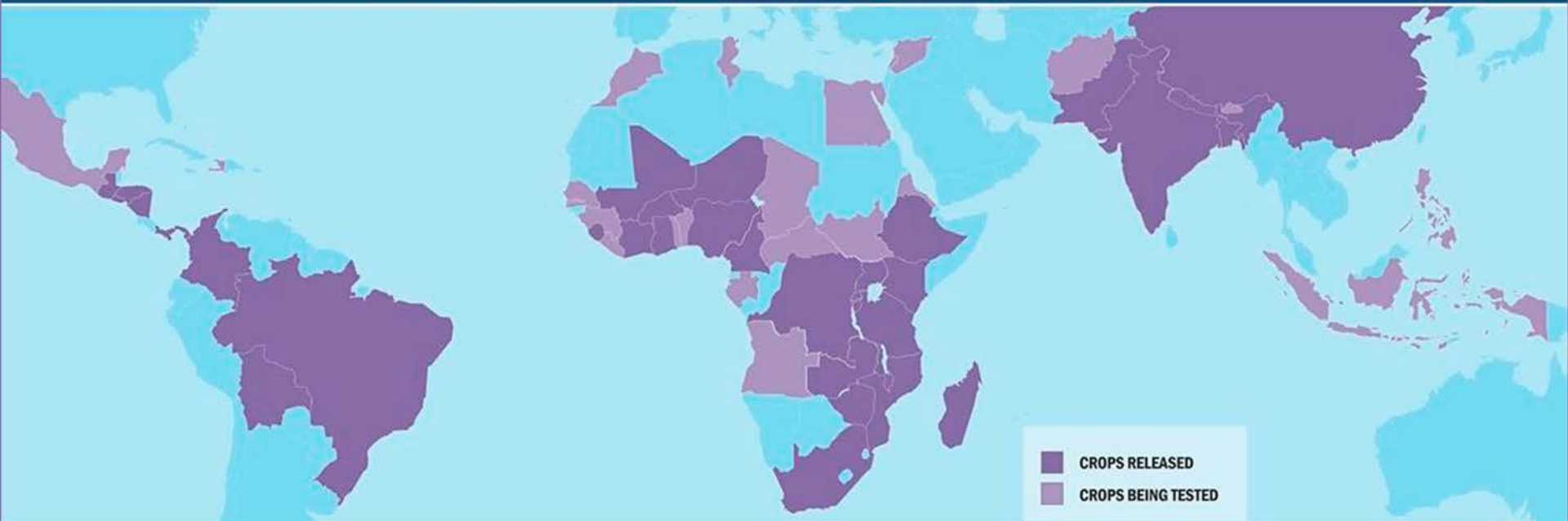
These interventions are most effective when used together

... Background - Countries where Biofortified Crops have been Released or are being Tested



More than **300 varieties** of biofortified crops have been **released**

Countries where biofortified crops have been released or are being tested



Advocacy for Policy Change in SSA



- **Appropriate and supportive** policies are critical in scaling up biofortification.
- Advocacy is a critical function in ensuring biofortification is embraced by public (AU, RECs and Member States), development partners and implementing agencies (CGIARs, UN agencies, private sector, NGOs).

“Biofortified crops are going to be game-changers with dealing with the issue of malnutrition in our world today.”

*Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President
African Development Bank*



What does Advocacy Entail?



- Engaging policy makers at all levels to influence policies, laws, regulations, strategies and national development plans in favour of biofortification.
- Active support of the cause for biofortification to influence decisions of government and other public, private and development organizations.
- Involvement of multiple and multisectoral partners – international, regional, national and community levels.



Advocacy Approach



Process

- Identify national and regional **advocates and champions**
- Develop the capacity of advocates and champions
- Establish **National Biofortification Technical Working Groups**
- Establish / Strengthen **national multi-sectoral advocacy platforms**
- Develop and implement advocacy strategies

Approaches

- Involve leaders
- Media campaigns
- Build partnerships
- Community mobilization
- Capacity building - retreats

Tools and Techniques

- Sensitization
- Dialoguing
- One-on-one meetings
- Field days
- Meetings and workshops
- Events and exhibitions
- Round tables

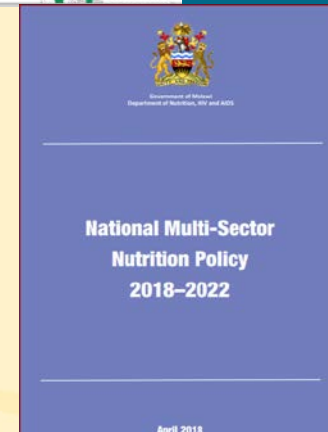
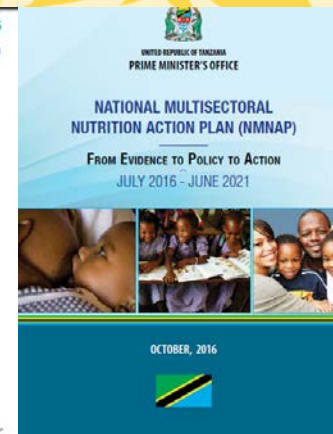
Messages and Materials

- Develop and disseminate advocacy and social and behavior change communication materials
- Policy briefs / Briefing notes
- Investment guide toolkit
- Learning modules

Key Results: 2011 - 2019



- More than **48** agricultural and nutrition / food security policy documents include statements on *biofortification, sweetpotato, nutritious foods, and or dietary diversity* in SSA.
- **7** Regional policy documents
- **23** National agricultural policy documents
- **18** National nutrition policy documents
- Some of the policies are being implemented.



Key Lessons Learned



- **Advocacy** for policy change needs to be synchronized with availability of varieties **that have been officially released in a country**, and availability of seed for farmers.
- A critical mass of **advocates and champions** with appropriate skills and tools is critical to successful advocacy for biofortification.
- Biofortification issues are broad and cross-cutting (agriculture, health, nutrition, education and environment) hence strong **national multi-sectoral multi-agency advocacy platforms** are critical for effective policy engagement.

Challenges to be Addressed



There is a need for:

- **Coordination:** A coordination body (**AU, RECs and country levels**) working towards a shared vision and results.
- **Enhancing capacity of advocates:** Support to facilitate and strengthen the capacity of advocates and champions of biofortification to continue advocating in a strategic manner.
- **Implementation of policies developed:** Support implementation of policy provisions on biofortification.
- **Investments:** Mobilize investments and seek political commitment to support implementation of supportive policies.
- **Appropriate advocacy and policy indicators:** Develop appropriate indicators for monitoring advocacy, policy formulation, implementation and impact of policies on biofortification.

Call to Action



National - African Governments

- Support formulation / implementation of policy provisions at national and local levels.
- Allocate resources for biofortification in their annual budgets, national development plans and national agricultural investment plans (NAIPs).
- Strengthen / establish credible national multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary advocacy platforms and strengthen their capabilities for effective advocacy e.g. SETSAN (National Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition), the Prime Ministers Office - Department of Coordination of Government Business in Tanzania, Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning - Nigeria.

Call to Action



Regional / sub- regional

- Champion biofortification and influence policy development.
- Support implementation of regional / sub-regional policy provisions on biofortification.
- Increase commitment and coordinate biofortification at regional / sub-regional levels.

Call to Action



Continental - AUC

- Prioritize nutrition sensitive agriculture and biofortification in the AU Agenda for adoption by AU member State.
- Champion biofortification and advocate for implementation of policy provisions by member states.
- Establish a well-resourced coordination body to strengthen multisectoral and multidisciplinary partnerships to create synergy and ensure a holistic approach to addressing micronutrient malnutrition.
- Develop a framework on biofortification in Africa – **recommendation of the 2nd Specialized Technical Committee (STC)**

Organizations Carrying out Advocacy / Advocates and Champions



Acknowledgements



BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation



Regional & Sub-regional organizations

National Governments

Thank You for Your Attention!