



Quality Diets for Better Health in Ethiopia – An Example of Nutrition Enriched crop or Biofortification in Ethiopia

Implemented by the International Potato Centre (CIP) with People in Need (PIN) and the Rollins School of Public Health (Emory University)

in partnership with

the Ethiopian governmental agriculture, health and market development agencies; the Southern Agricultural Research Institute (SARI); the University of Hawassa; and the Agricultural Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) College in Sodo

Key figures on child nutrition status in Ethiopia

WHA (and SDG) Nutrition Indicators		Prevalence	Number	Year
Stunting of children U5 years of age (SDG2)		38,4%	5 689 389	2016
Wasting of children U5 years of age (SDG2)		9,9%	1 466 796	2016
Overweight of children U5 years of age		2,8%	414 851	2016
Anaemia of women of reproductive age		23,0%	11 478 894	2016
Low birth weight		20,0%	-	2005
Exclusive breastfeeding of infants U6 months		58,0%	-	2016

Strategies to reduce micronutrient deficiencies

- Dietary change: The best way of preventing micronutrient malnutrition is to ensure consumption of a balanced diet that is adequate in every nutrient (WHO & FAO 2006)
 - Stimulate the consumption of fruit, vegetables
- Food supplements
 - Vitamin A capsules via health system
- Food fortification
 - Addition of vitamin A to cooking oil, iodine to salt
- Biofortification (“nutrient enriched crops”)
 - Introduce varieties of existing crops in the farming system that are rich in micronutrients (vitamin A, Fe, Zn)

Biofortification – nutrient enriched crops



- Problem: Current crops are poor in micronutrients
- Solution: Replace “deficient” varieties by varieties rich in micronutrients
 - Breeding
 - Production and dissemination of seed
 - Encourage farmers (f/m) to replace the known “deficient” varieties by new, enriched varieties
- Assumptions:
 - Easy: No radical transformation of the farming systems and diets
 - Cheap: Once introduced and adopted, no further intervention is needed

Five fields of action:
research, extension, capacity building, value chain
development, and monitoring and evaluation

Research:

- Knowledge and consumption of vitamin A rich foods,
- Vine production and irrigation systems
- Market development of the sweetpotato value chain.



Extension

- demonstration plots with newly developed OFSP varieties
- cooking demonstrations with new recipes;



Capacity building in

- agriculture,
- nutrition, and
- financial management.



Value chain development

- training of small food processors,
- development of sales into the main town and
- market promotion events
- development of production in areas closer to towns



Monitoring and evaluation



Adaptation to COVID-19

- Provide masks, hand washing stations, apply social distancing and hire less people at one day activities and during vine harvesting;
- Provide vines (planting material) to the original target households (almost 5,000). During dissemination they receive specific COVID-19 messages from HEW. Dissemination is spaced in time and space so that social distancing is ensured;
- Work with Bureaus of Agriculture and Health to ensure compliance with COVID-19 safety measures during the activities;
- Redirect 5000 euro of the 2021 budget money to a specific COVID-19 line so that the project can respond in ways that were not originally foreseen but still aligned with the project goals (e.g., the acquisition of PPE, etc.);

Response to COVID-19

- Support emergency food aid initiatives in Hawassa City (Hawassa University and Handicapped Association). More than 2 tonnes distributed for food aid in the main town of Hawassa;
- Support Regional Bureau of Agriculture with masks and sanitizer to support their extension workers;
- Expand vine supply to more farmers outside the original target group and intervention area to bolster food supply to the market (until now already 4.3 ha additional planted in Hawassa Zuria; more to follow).

Impact of COVID 19 on food security

Negatively affect majority of households in Addis Ababa.

- Why?: lower incomes, especially for poorer HH. food security situation in Addis Ababa has worsened since beginning of pandemic.

Vegetable trade and consumption are decreasing in Addis' vegetable market

- travel bans have reduced the volume and frequency of trucks coming to Addis Ababa.
- restaurants using lots of vegetables have reduced business;
- vegetables are a cause for COVID transmission;
- wealthier buyers who consume more vegetables are confining themselves;