



Tropentag, September 20-22, 2023, hybrid conference  
“Competing pathways for equitable food systems transformation:  
Trade-offs and synergies”

## Promotion of biofortified crops through establishing production & processing demonstration sites for vitamin A maize in Gombe State, Nigeria

DOLAPO NATALIE OMOKANJUOLA

*Harvest Plus Nigeria, Nigeria*

### Abstract

Maize stands as Nigeria’s most consumed staple food; however, smallholder farmers continue to grapple with low agricultural productivity, impacting their income and access to nutritious foods. This inaccessibility to nutritious foods contributes to micronutrient deficiency with Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) being a prevalent issue especially among young children and women of reproductive age. While Nigeria cultivates yellow and white maize extensively, the recent introduction of Vitamin A maize, commonly known as orange maize, holds promise as a climate and nutrition-smart crop. It exhibits high yield, disease resistance, drought tolerance, and a higher Vitamin A content. Though its adoption is gradually increasing in states like Kaduna, Kano, and Jigawa, Gombe State lags behind. This study project aims to enhance the productivity of smallholder farmers and reduce Vitamin A deficiency among children and pregnant women in two Local Government Areas in Gombe State through the promotion of Vitamin A maize. Gombe State is characterised by a high poverty level, vulnerable groups, and has become home to internally displaced persons due to the insurgency in the Northeastern part of Nigeria. The promotion project will explore two approaches: establishing Vitamin A maize production demo sites and processing demo sites. The production demo sites will serve as learning plots, helping farmers adopt Vitamin A maize, resulting in a significant 50% increase in their yield compared to conventional maize breeds. On the other hand, the processing demo sites (nutrition corners) will be set up at Primary Health Care Centers, providing knowledge to women and caregivers on integrating Vitamin A maize into their household consumption to fulfil their daily Vitamin A needs. Ultimately, this biofortification promotion will enhance food availability, accessibility, and utilisation in Gombe State.

**Keywords:** Biofortified crops, Gombe State, smallholder farmers, vitamin A deficiency, vitamin A maize