

**MULTI-FUNDER INITIATIVE**

## Canadian International Food Security Research Fund (CIFSRF)

### Promoting locally fortified sunflower oil using e-vouchers

Canadian and Tanzanian researchers are testing the potential of sunflower oil fortified with vitamin A to improve nutrition. Product testing and electronic vouchers to jumpstart demand will increase vitamin A intake for women and children with high micronutrient deficiency.

### Bringing fortified oils to rural Tanzanians

Many women and children in Tanzania lack essential vitamins in their diets. These chronic deficiencies can lead to severe malnutrition, causing stunting and increased susceptibility to disease. One-third of all children and 37% of women do not get enough vitamin A, which, in pregnant women, increases the chances of birth defects.

The Government of Tanzania aims to expand production and consumption of fortified foods to conquer nutritional deficiencies. Fortification of edible oil with vitamin A will soon become mandatory. However, it is not certain whether poor rural Tanzanians will benefit from this policy. While the country's large-scale producers who are fortifying refined oil don't reach many rural areas, the small- and medium-scale local producers have technical difficulties in fortifying their crude oils.

### Reaching lactating mothers with e-vouchers

This project will address vitamin A deficiency in rural Tanzania by enabling local processors to fortify unrefined sunflower oil with vitamin A. The research will measure how well the consumption of this product improves the diet and food security of rural Tanzanians.

The research team will test innovative mechanisms such as electronic vouchers to target vulnerable groups on a large scale. E-voucher discounts delivered by mobile phone to 65,000 lactating mothers will provide a temporary price incentive to help build a market for the product. The scheme will also enable researchers to survey and follow household purchasing patterns.

The project will demonstrate that small- and medium-scale businesses can assist the government to reach nutritional policy goals in rural areas, while stimulating the local economy. The results will inform planning interventions in Tanzania to address vitamin A deficiency and help to develop national food and nutrition policies.

### Expected outcomes

- Deliver vitamin A-fortified crude sunflower oil to the lactating mothers of 65,000 children and their families (up to 400,000 people)
- Enable local sunflower oil processors to provide fortified oil to 600 retailers
- Improve child and maternal nutrition
- Foster local economic growth benefiting farmers and entrepreneurs
- Prove that small-scale fortification of crude sunflower oil is possible

### LEAD RESEARCHERS

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