



District decision makers sample processed products. (credit I. Ndyetabura)

## Learning Cases for promoting market development

### for orange-fleshed sweetpotato in East and Central Africa

Championing Change - Using champions to promote better nutrition in rural Tanzania

In 2011-2013 the team from Maruku Agricultural Research Institute, Kolping Society of Tanzania & Small Industries Development Organisation discovered that by using champions to promote the excellence of orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP), they could encourage major changes in the economy and nutritional profile of Misenyi district in Tanzania.

“Research done in Tanzania and elsewhere (Uganda & Mozambique) has shown that promoting OFSP can contribute to improvements in the food security and income of small-scale farmers and the nutritional well-being of consumers, in particular mothers and young children” says Innocent Ndyetabura a research scientist from Maruku Agricultural Research Institute.

By using extension techniques and later the Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA) methodology they were able to create positive change in the area.

Back in 2005, researchers from Maruku had worked with Ephraim Rugemalila and his family in Nyabihanga village in Kyaka ward, Misenyi district on evaluation trials for OFSP varieties. OFSP is a type of sweetpotato with very high levels of Vitamins A, B and C; it matures early, is easy and quick to cook as well as tasting great. So successful was the trial in Nyabihanga that two tons of roots were harvested and the project was obliged to help the farmer transport his roots to Kagera Sugar market 30 km away.

This success was observed by a neighbouring farmer and his wife called Frederick and Agnes Kitone, both in their forties. Proud parents of three boys and a girl, they were looking for ways to make their one acre plot pay. The Kitones bought an extra acre of land and hired a tractor to prepare the land before planting a crop of OFSP.

“I got vines from a neighbouring farmer called Ephraim

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Use of the media (TV and local FM radio) has been critical to market and advertise OFSP. Mr Kitone being interviewed by FADECO community radio. (credit I. Ndyetabura)



“We have been able to build our own processing centre, a new house with three rooms and we have now changed from being peasant farmers to becoming entrepreneurs,” Mr. Kitone said. “Our family’s credibility has increased such that we are in position to access loans from financial institutions if we need them.”

Their future plans are: to ensure consistent supply by introducing an irrigation system; to expand the selling of OFSP products in Bukoba (the regional town). “I would also like to obtain a certificate from the Tanzania Bureau of Standards and Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority” says Mr. Kitone.

The fact that we have used the Kitones to champion OFSP has meant that they have been able to mobilise their neighbours to form groups for production and processing of OFSP. The Kitones buy fresh roots from other farmers, providing them with a market. One of the farmers at Nyabihanga village explained:

“At the beginning we had no market for OFSP root but at least now we have our market and that is Kitone”.

In addition, the Kitones are now providing support on processing and packaging to other processors in the area (Bukoba Women Empowerment Association BUWEA) and Bethania – a women’s church based association in Misenyi District).

“Through knowledge and skills gained from the training, we are now competent in processing various OFSP products, such as crisps, chichili, mandazi and chapattis” said Regina Majariwa (BUWEA - Chairperson).

Within the PMCA process, the Kitones are supporting other groups on business planning such that women processors are now active in those groups, and are able to gain skills, confidence and credibility. These women’s groups had faced challenges in obtaining suitable processing equipment, but the Kitones agreed to lend their processing equipment. Mr. & Mrs. Kitone are both entrepreneurial champions in their own right, but are also contributing to women’s social enterprises in their community. In this way the benefits of market opportunities are more equitably shared.

“The Kitones have needed a lot of help,” says Abel Beebwa from Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) “but the investment we have made in their training has paid great dividends. Through the PMCA they have worked hard with other value chain actors to pass on their knowledge and ensure that everyone learns from their mistakes and successes”.

**Capturing Our Learning:** An interactive “write-shop” (facilitated by Well Told Story) was held to capture participants stories. Participatory role-plays explored what happened in different countries along the value chain. Divided into 3 acts the role plays portrayed the problem being faced; the solution; and the new reality. A mock radio phone-in show was used to tease out technical issues. Commentators and facilitators identified significant “ah-haa” moments, probing actors and directors for more information, allowing commentators to explore how things happened differently across countries. Recording the information was a crucial part of the process! Participants took notes, spokespersons for each play recorded the action and “ah-haa” moments were recorded on flipcharts. By the end of 2 days, we had stories with heroes and data which danced. Countries had also deepened their understanding about their own value chain activities, and had shared valuable experiences.

This Learning Case is a “work in progress” developed under the project “Scaling up Technologies in Orange Fleshed Sweetpotato Using the Agricultural Innovation System (AIS) to Address Food and Nutrition Security in Eastern and Central Africa”. The project duration was from February 2012 to October 2013 with funding provided through the ASARECA Multi Donor Trust Fund. This regional project operated in target districts in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The overall project was led by the Lake Zone Agricultural Research and Development Institute (LZARDI), Tanzania with technical backstopping from the International Potato Center (CIP), sub-Saharan Africa Regional Office.

Mushongi, C. C<sup>1</sup>, Ndyetabura, I<sup>1</sup>, Shumbusho, E<sup>2</sup>, Rachel, Z<sup>1</sup>, Asiimwe I<sup>2</sup>, Lukonge, E<sup>3</sup>, & Beebwa, A<sup>4</sup>.

- 1 Maruku Agricultural Research Institute, P. O. Box 127, Bukoba, Tanzania. [cyprumusho@yahoo.com](mailto:cyprumusho@yahoo.com)
- 2 Kolping Society of Tanzania, P.O. Box 1236, Bukoba, Tanzania
- 3 Ukiriguru Agricultural Research Institute, P. O. Box 1433, Mwanza, Tanzania
- 4 Small Industries Development Organisation, P. O. Box 645, Kagera, Tanzania

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Rugemalila and planted them on one acre of land which I had bought before” said Fredrick Kitone.

After months of hard work, Fredrick Kitone’s family enjoyed a bumper harvest but soon found that there was no market for their roots. Having harvested their roots, the Kitones started to eat them at home but the surplus started to rot. After experiencing post harvest losses, Fredrick Kitone took the initiative to visit Maruku Agricultural Research Institute for advice:

“We saw that the Kitone family needed training on value addition in order to take full advantage of sweetpotato” said Innocent Ndyetabura.

In 2006 the Kitones, together with other farmers, were invited by Maruku Agricultural Research Institute to a participatory training workshop on the processing and utilisation of OFSP at Kajunguti Sisters Convent, which – despite their setbacks – they were happy to attend, as they would then be able to process any surplus roots they produced. After this training, they continued with processing activities and even diversified into processing of banana and cassava on top of OFSP products.

They started selling their processed products at the Bunazi weekly market in Kyaka, on Saturdays. Following the training, Agnes Kitone became deeply involved in the business.

“We found that involving women in our trainings and ensuring that their invisible contributions became better

known made big gains in productivity; the process has high effects on nutrition and health” said Cypridion Mushongi said, a researcher from Maruku.

The Kitones also became involved in our other OFSP activities. They were invited to participate in annual agricultural shows and other events that we organised as well as pursuing their own work in local markets. The Kitones received technical help from Maruku Agricultural Research Institute (processing, varieties, marketing and agronomy information on sweetpotato); SIDO (packaging and entrepreneurship advice); and made great strides as a result of their own efforts with support from our PMCA facilitators. Simultaneously we also reaped big benefits because the Kitones became ambassadors for OFSP. They extolled the virtues of the crop and became involved in teaching other value chain actors on how they had achieved success.

In 2012-2013 the project “Scaling up Technologies in Orange Fleshed Sweetpotato using the Agricultural Innovation System to address Food and Nutrition Security in East & Central Africa” was set up in the area. A consortium of SIDO, ARI-Maruku & Kolping Society of Tanzania, adopted the Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA), so as to promote innovations and competitiveness in OFSP market chains. PMCA is an approach for facilitating change in market chains that lack coordination, such that it focuses on identifying and analysing market opportunities for target

products; it uses a series of thematic group meetings to build mutual trust among value chain actors; it promotes mutual learning and collective actions; it also empowers actors, particularly women, to take advantage of the market opportunities available. Women have been empowered through the process, because facilitators have encouraged their inclusion in all the processes and ensured that women benefit from all the activities.

At a PMCA phase one final event, the Kitones were able to meet and interact with OFSP value chain actors as well as other stakeholders including media people. They became champions of OFSP on FADECO Community Radio and in other media.

During PMCA phase 2, the Kitones together with other value chain actors were invited to join thematic group meetings for OFSP processed products; the major aim during this phase is joint analysis of identified market opportunities. As members of the group the Kitones have been able to learn how to make a business plan, they have benefited from publicity and have received consumers’ views on their product – for quality improvement, access to technical experts on packaging, labelling and marketing. They have worked closely with Dr. John Jagwe, a CIP consultant on business planning.

“When you prepare a business plan for your enterprise it helps you to know the profitability of your enterprise” says



OFSP flour ready for sale at Bunazi weekly market. (credit I. Ndyetabura)

Dr. John Jagwe. “We have helped the Kitones and their fellow actors to do that”.

As a result of our interventions the Kitones together with other people have changed their lives:

“Our family have benefited a lot and we have been able to expand OFSP production through the purchase of extra land, we have gained enough knowledge on business plan development and marketing; we have managed to pay school fees in private schools” Mrs Agnes Kitone said.

Training thematic group members to process and conserve OFSP. (credit G. Nyeho)



Agnes Kitone selling her processed products. (credit I. Ndyetabura)

