

# Viable Sweetpotato Technologies in Africa (VISTA) Mozambique project



Fig. 1 CIP's Valdemar Bechane explaining the project to the president of Mozambique, Filipe Nyusi (Blue shirt) during the exhibition at the IIAM in Nampula (credit O. Jeque)



## What is the problem?

Food insecurity in Mozambique's rural areas is still a significant challenge. At least 25% of people suffer from food insecurity throughout the year, and 44% of children under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition (stunting). Over 65% of children under the age of five suffer from vitamin A deficiency (VAD). Orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) is a vitamin A powerhouse that can address the high rates of VAD in Mozambique. It can improve nutrition, empower women and increase household incomes. Its short maturing period (3-5 months) and ability to grow under marginal conditions and flexible planting and harvesting times are production advantages that can help to improve food security. Since 2011, fifteen improved OFSP varieties have been bred in Mozambique, but they have never been disseminated in Nampula Province, where 20% of the population of Mozambique lives.



## What do we want to achieve?

The Viable Sweetpotato Technology in Africa (VISTA) is a three-year project that aims to contribute to improved nutrition, food security and incomes among smallholder farming families through increased production and better utilization of nutritious OFSP varieties, especially by those most at risk of VAD: children under the age of five and pregnant and lactating women. This three year initiative, which began in October 2014, will rely predominantly on agriculture, nutrition, and marketing approaches to reach 22,500 direct and 135,000 indirect beneficiaries with technologies related to OFSP. To increase vitamin A intakes, the majority of OFSP produced will be consumed at home. However, 15% of our households will be targeted to produce larger surpluses for sale. With the peak price of sweetpotato being around 28 cents/kg, we estimate the project will generate at least US\$284,000 per year in cash revenue for smallholder farmers by the end of the intervention period.



## Where are we working?

We work in four districts in Nampula Province (Monapo, Meconta, Rapale and Murrupula) and two in Zambezia Province (Alto Molócuè and Gurúè).



## How are we making it happen?

We are scaling-up proven drought-tolerant OFSP varieties linked to key nutrition messages. In addition, we are promoting improved technologies for managing quality OFSP planting material at the multiplier level, improving the ability to retain access to planting material at the household level, and improving post-harvest handling and household level fresh root storage. The project was built on recent and on-going sweetpotato



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### Partners

- The African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP)
- The Mozambique Agrarian Research Institute (IIAM)
- Else-Marie Link (EMALINK)
- The District Services of the Economic Activities (SDAEs)
- The District Services of Health, Women and Social Action (SDSMAS)
- World Vision International-Mozambique (WVI-Mozambique)





**Fig. 2 Farmers receive vines during the launch of the VISTA Project** (credit B. Rakotoarisoa)

research and development interventions aligned to Feed the Future (FTF) zones of influence. We work through a three-pronged integrated approach: *agriculture-nutrition-marketing*. Prior proof-of-concept research demonstrated that an integrated agriculture-nutrition approach, and in some selected areas, an integrated agriculture-nutrition marketing approach can have significant positive influence on vitamin A intakes and status in Mozambique. The three areas are:

**Agriculture:** Increase the OFSP supply through use of tolerant and improved varieties, net tunnels set-up at community level to ensure that the planting material is pest and disease free, and technologies to improve the vine and root conservation.

**Nutrition:** Improve vitamin A intake paying attention to demand creation activities and training women and men on nutrition issues, including the use of food preparation demonstrations and counseling to strengthen the efficient use of OFSP.

**Market:** Increase the access of the fresh roots and promote OFSP products that are new to the selected urban markets. Improved market access accelerates adoption.



## Who are we working with?

CIP is strengthening partnership with the Mozambique Agrarian Research Institute (IIAM), the District Services of the Economic Activities (SDAEs), the District Services of Health, Women and Social Action, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) particularly those associated to the Strengthening of the Communities through Integrated Programs (SCIP) in Nampula and Zambézia, and whose programs incorporate health and nutrition components. CIP also collaborates with the Government in order to incorporate the utilization of OFSP in their programmes.



## What have we achieved?

A baseline survey was conducted among 660 households from 9 June through 1 July 2015. Multiplication sites were established with 27 individual decentralized vine multipliers (DVMS), as well as the IIAM sub-stations in Nampula and Gurué. In coordination with the government extension services, 6,041 households received 43,160 kgs of cuttings, with households having children under 5 years of age being particularly targeted (Table 1). 15 farmer associations and 1 private enterprise received vines for production and multiplication for sale. Our 3 NGO partners distributed 12,312 vines to 1,430 households (Table 2). We estimate that this dissemination has resulted in 81.5 hectares being planted with improved OFSP varieties. To promote OFSP, radio spots are being broadcast in Monapo, Meconta, Rapale and Murrupula. OFSP promotion days were carried out in Monapo, Murrupula, Nampula and Alto Molocue. New OFSP varieties are under yield assessment.

**Table 1. Vine dissemination by district in the 2014/2015 seasons in collaboration with government extension services: Number of beneficiaries reached.**

Districts	Nr. DVMS	Vines distributions (Kgs)	Total Beneficiaries (HHs)	Nr. Beneficiaries (Female)	Nr. Farmer associations	People trained in new technologies	Nr. Children under-five reached by project
Monapo	4	5,610	1,104	456	8	1,104	105
Meconta	4	3,312	550	288	4	550	523
Rapale	4	2,810	746	308	2	746	709
Murrupula	6	2,124	354	108	0	354	336
Alto Molócuè	3	4,615	278	102	1	278	264
Gurué	6	24,689	3,009	1,036	0	3,009	2,858
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>43,160</b>	<b>6,041</b>	<b>2,586</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6,041</b>	<b>4,795</b>

**Table 2. Vine dissemination by 3 NGO partners in the 2014/2015 and the Number (Nr) of beneficiaries**

Partner	Target district	Vines supplied (kgs)	Nr. beneficiaries
EMALINK	Angoche, Liúpo, Larde, Mogincual	2,200	106
WORLD VISION	Nacarôa	2,000	40
AFAP	Namacurra, Mocuba, Maganja da Costa	7,112	889
SDAE-ERATI	Erati	1,000	125
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 districts</b>	<b>11,312</b>	<b>1,430</b>



## What next?

We will ensure that DVM sites for the next season are established no later than 15 September 2015, and we will train them on Triple S. Vines will be distributed to smallholder farmers, interested larger growers and NGOs. We will establish net tunnels and preserve vines in the greenhouse. A formative survey on nutrition and behavior change will be carried out.