Third Sweetpotato Support Platform Meeting for East and Central Africa held at Imperial Royale Hotel, Kampala, Uganda, May 25 – 26, 2011

Report by Shiphar Mulumba, Sam Namanda and Robert Mwanga

Background and Objectives

Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa (SASHA) project is a five year intervention of the wider 10 year vision under the Sweetpotato for Profit and Heath Initiative (SPHI). Under SASHA, three sub-regional support platforms, based in countries with strong sweetpotato national research and development programs, were established to provide the organizational and management structure for developing long-term breeding skills and capacity in Africa, for Africa. They are located in each of three sub-regions: Ghana, for West Africa; Mozambique, for Southern Africa; and Uganda, for East and Central Africa. Each year, the platforms hold two stakeholder meetings with the view to update the stakeholders on the progress of the project activities and to obtain their contribution. The meetings are also seen as an avenue to conduct relevant trainings on specific areas of sweetpotato breeding, hence serving a capacity building function to the stakeholders. The agenda and list of the participants for the 3rd meeting are presented in annexes 1 and 2, respectively.

Introductions

The meeting started off with a prayer by Dr. Inosters Nzuki before Dr. Ben Lukuyu facilitated participant introductions. Members of each pair introduced each other highlighting their key interests and expectations. Key expectations included a) getting lots of stories and ideas from SPHI and SASHA, b) building capacity to work together and how we could translate science to realities, c) share experiences about the research on using sweetpotato as animal feed, d) promoting sweetpotato through schools and radio programmes, e) sharing various experiences in implementation and strategies for promoting sweetpotato production and utilization.

Opening remarks

The meeting was officially opened by Dr. Denis Kyetere, the Director General, National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) in Uganda. The Director noted the importance of the SASHA project in getting the partners together through training to improve the capacity and networking as the way foward. He quoted the proverb “Get together break the bone” to emphasize the importance of partnerships and networking. He also observed that communication takes on different meanings to different audiences and the more we learnt about communication, the better. He regretted that he would not be able to stay throughout the workshop but Dr. Japheth Magyembe was available to represent him and NARO. He wished the participants constructive deliberations.

1. Update SASHA Rwanda Value Chain Project - presented by Dr. Kirimi Sindi.

Although sweetpotato is widely consumed in Rwanda, there is normally excess production at farmer level that calls for strategies to develop value adding technologies and create improved value chains. The project objectives include a) multiplying and delivering appropriate clean planting material to farmers, b) developing a sweetpotato value chain based on farmer group formation and

c) developing a sweetpotato value chain based on contract farmers who supply semi processed root products.

Clean in-vitro plantlets are raised in the tissue culture laboratory at Rubona, hardened, and transferred to the field for further multiplication of clean vines.

Two organizational models are being tested for processed product value chains: Both scenarios offer opportunities to establish SP seed systems on a commercial basis under contrasting agro-ecologies zones and value chain models. The 1st model is based on contracted farmers to produce sweetpotato and sell semi-processed root products to a private contractor, SINA factory which makes different finished products such as cakes, bread and biscuits. The 2nd model is based on farmer groups organized by an NGO to produce and deliver sweetpotato root semi-processed products to various processors/ bakeries in urban centers. The bakeries will use sweetpotato semi-products to substitute for wheat flour in production of various products.

However, participants observed that shelf life of the processed products especially bread and puree was short and therefore recommended further research and learning experiences from China. Results on costs and profitability of products such as puree will be presented during the next platform meeting

Collaborating institutions identified included ISAR, URWIBUTSO, CRS, Ministry of Agriculture, Rwanda Bureau of Standards, Rwandan Environment Management Authority, Kigali Institute of Science and technology and Crop Research Institute of Sichuan Academy of Agricultural Sciences.

2. Agriculture and Health PoCP in Western Kenya - presented by Dr. Hermann Ouedraogo

The overall goal of this project is to assess the cost effectiveness of integrating OFSP into an existing health service delivery program to improve the health status of pregnant women and the nutritional status of children up to two years in selected districts of Western Kenya

The component project is implemented in selected health facilities in Bungoma in Western Kenya. It is three phased: pilot phase, 2nd phase and 3rd phase. It is integrated with Aids, Population and Health Integrated Assistance (APHIA) II Health project and two agriculture NGOs. Two different model implementation strategies are being tested. In model 1 also known as 'High intensity model', trainings are conducted at different levels, namely, i) Health Facility Level targeting antenatal clinic (ANC) nurses , and ii) Community level targeting community health workers, vine multipliers, setting up demonstration plots, and agriculture extension workers. In model 2 also known as 'Low intensity' – there is no agriculture training intervention. Only training at the health centers with ANC nurses is done.

Changes in the initial design

a. The design used: Initially, the design had 4 cards but it was not clear which were to be used by the nurses. Now the number of counseling cards is 5, each of the 4 cards is used for a specific trimester/visit. For each visit, the expectant mothers also have lesson (card) 5 taught on sweetpotato. Every pregnant woman is eligible to the voucher system irrespective of the trimester of pregnancy she is in at her 1st visit and her subsequent visits provided that she shifts to the next trimester of pregnancy.

b. Number of vine cuttings has been reduced from 150 to 100 vines.

c. There were problems of demonstration plot management and lack of advice on OFSP agronomy during pick up. The following changes have been made: a) The demonstration plots were linked to the vine multiplication plots; b) re-designed demonstration plots to allow demonstration of higher productivity of OFSP and to highlight importance of planting mode

d. In the evaluation design model, there was need to have a control group so as to create a better contrast. So a higher intervention group was introduced.

The main challenges were: a) Delay in getting ethical approval for the survey, therefore in blood sampling; b) Unexpected drought in April 2011, which affected 1st planting and delayed 2nd planting and demonstration plot establishment. There is currently an ongoing discussion on improved irrigation system as a solution; c) Low vine yields in April 2011, mainly due to the long dry season; d) Transition at PATH (Aphia II to Aphia Plus) with changes in personnel and logistics allocation has led to delay in printing of the final version of the information education and communication (IEC) material and the lack of supervision of the health activities by the Aphia Plus team

The participants raised the following questions:

Qn1: Of the women interviewed, are the 900 part of the approximately 2000? Response: No, 900 pregnant women were interviewed separately.

Qn2: How did you design or select the control group? Response: The control group was selected basing on number of service providers, clinical visits, and health facilities visited. There are health facilities to work in model one and two. The participants are then randomly selected into the two models.

Qn3: How sustainable is providing irrigation to vine multipliers? Response: Irrigation will help the vine multipliers during and after the project.

3. Communicating effectively to different audiences - Valerie Gwinner

Communicating science or what comes out of science:

The theme of the presentation was effective communication. Important elements included identifying the audience and audience needs, and cross cuttings issues to be shared by collaborating partners. Information should be structured to target beneficiaries such as extensionists and religious communities who influence the actions of others, and should involve a whole network of individuals. The emerging questions are- What kinds of information are needed by the people? What does the SASHA work contribute to the needs? Notably, radio as a means of communication is good at raising awareness but does not necessarily change people's behavior so other approaches should also be used. Research develops the information that is relevant to address the needs of the beneficiaries in a more practical way. The format of scientific presentations includes posters, brochures, stickers, pamphlets, flyers, pager, factsheet, story, press release, scientific article, video e.t.c. and the context should bring out the originality and significance about the approach, and generally consider the relevance of the expected outcomes.

Presentation outlines should have clear compelling brief (abstract) and introduction that fits the broader context or setting the stage. For example, improving the income of smallholders should be backed with statistics and previous related work showing what is known or what has been found so far. The conclusions should bring out the lessons and recommendations or show the strategies of moving forward.

Normally, telling stories can be a simplified way to describe complex issues, easy to use, re-use, and disseminate work for different types of audiences. Possibly, because stories are more commonly told in African cultures or quickly capture attention of visionary learners than scientific presentations, they are understood and remembered. Key message components to convey should be outlined, conclusions or most important words to attract the reader and encourage reading as in writing for the web or web fagging that gets information to many people and possibility of receiving comments especially different categories of audience. Information should be tailored or strategized to attract the attention of the target reader or listener. For example, including music interludes and short messages in northern Uganda attracted the youth to listen to farming radio programmes. Sub-headings are preferred during transition and if more information is to be said.

Steps for a scientific article

a) Abstract – is the last thing you write. It is different from a summary because one needs to highlight something from each section. Abstracts often end up on the WEB, and there is need to show your key words in the abstract so that they are captured on web searches.
b) SUMMARY: must concentrate on the recommendations and findings.

c) . Introduction: Answers what the study was about, its importance, what is known on the subject and what the study will improve in the future. Strong numbers of where, what (nature and size of problem) strengthens the introduction

d) Methodology –contains clear details of the design used, procedure/ protocols and highlights any unique features or reasons for using the method. It must be replicable. Add description of data collection and analysis in the methodology.

e) Findings: Results can be positive or negative. Use past tense and organize information around the graphs/illustration.

f) Discussion/Analysis: Describes what the results mean, why results matter, and what the new understanding from the results is. It is often hard for writers to present the facts without analyzing them.

g) Conclusions: Gives implications of the study (lessons learnt, recommendations and questions for future research.

Why tell stories?

i. Easily remembered by people
ii. Stories can be re-told in different context
iii. A story was a reward for good behavior to children
iv. Human beings personally relate to individuals than to huge populations
v. They are engaging
vi. Can be simplified way to describe complex issues
vii. Easy to use, re-use and disseminate

What is different about writing stories?

i. Work for different kinds of audiences
ii. A story has facts from your research and it contains less detail compared to the article
iii. The order information is presented in the story changes. The end (conclusions) comes first (background) and first comes last.
iv. Emphasis is different than in a scientific article
v. But if the methodology is different, may include it in a different way
vi. Packaging and dissemination of stories

How to get started writing a story?

a) Write an outline --- helps you to structure the story. You will likely change the order.
    a. What was the problem… example from the SASHA flyers…
b) Focus on key messages/points
c) Illustrations…. Story can go around the key photos
d) Real case story… with quotes to bring home the point.

Learn from the way we write for social media or web. People do not read web pages, they only scan them.

Use F shape - look at top line, centre and left hand side. Readers do NOT like to scroll

4. Potential for community level low cost tissue culture (LCTC) for sweetpotato – Dr. Charles Mugoya (ASARECA)

All the 7 programs of ASARECA have a sweetpotato component. These include: i) staple crops, ii) high value non-staple crops, iii) livestock and fisheries, iv) agro-biodiversity and biotechnology, v) natural resources management and biodiversity,vi) knowledge management and up-scaling, and vii) strategic plan for partnerships and capacity development. LCTC technologies have borrowed protocols and tools developed over many years, for example, low cost interventions by Kenya Jomo Kenyatta University.

The objectives for this project include: a) To validate low cost protocols and tools for production of virus free TC planting materials; b) To develop and operationalize pilot community based platform for production of virus free planting material of farmer preferred varieties of banana, potato, cassava and sweetpotato; c) To enhance knowledge and skills of seed value chain actors on production, management and marketing of TC seedlings; and d) To develop mechanisms for packaging, disseminating and sharing information and technologies.

At least every country has one institution or two that is doing tissue culture. There is a problem of ingredients that are not available locally.

Partners include: a) Mikocheni Agricultural Research Institute, Tanzania; b) Department of Crop Science, Makerere University, Uganda; c) Agricultural Research Corporation, Sudan; d) Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research, Ethiopia; e) National Agricultural Research Institute, Eritrea; f) INERA-Mulungu, DR Congo; g) ISAR, Rwanda; h) FIFAMANOR , Madagascar; i) International Service for the Acquisition of Agrobiotech Applications; j) Agro-Genetic Technologies Ltd, Uganda; k) Agrobiotec Ltd, Burundi; and l) MAAIF, Uganda

Roles of the partners: a) Establish and maintain clean community TC mother gardens; b) Optimize and make available low cost protocols for TC tech in all regional NARS; c) Support establishment of TC incubation centers among identified communities; d) Develop community based guidelines for handling TC materials in the incubators, TC labs and satellite nurseries.

Result 1: Enhance utilization of high quality TC planting materials

a) Establish and maintain clean community TC mother gardens
b) Optimize and make available low cost protocols for TC technologies in all regional NARS
c) Support establishment of TC incubation centers among identified communities.

d) Develop community based guidelines for handling TC materials in the incubators, TC labs and satellite nurseries.

Result 2: Strengthen capacity for production and distribution TC planting materials

a) Support establishment of community based TC multiplication and hardening nurseries and use them as demonstration/learning sites
b) Train TC laboratory actors in the NARS (including regulatory bodies) on transboundary certification requirements, disease indexing etc
c) Create stakeholders innovation platforms focusing on youth and women and potential entrepreneurs and deliver training in technical, business and market skills along the value chain

Result 3: Enhance availability of information on low cost TC innovations and products

a) Conduct a baseline survey to establish TC needs, capacities and state of TC knowledge
b) Develop a communication strategy to address TC needs across value chain
c) Create awareness on TC technologies among farming communities policy makers, and community entrepreneurs
d) Develop a user friendly simple community information database for low cost TC technologies
e) Develop TC information materials for communities

Challenges: a) There is scattered knowledge gap; b) People get different messages and farmers don't know the difference between tissue culture and clonal crops - people thing TC is a GMO; c) Most databases need IT skill yet most people do not even have computers; d) It is difficult to develop materials of different types.

The participants asked the following questions:

Qn1: People have been purchasing banana TC from AGT, where will the SP multiplication center be? Response: AGT will be one of the sites. AGT has a successful business model of satellite nurseries that can be adapted for SP. In Kenya will work with local multipliers. Potato will be in South-western Uganda; Kenya: GTIL already producing potato TC.
Qn2: Wish you had some pictures… TC incubator. Response: Protocols of low cost have been developed, assuming the worst case scenario of no clean water and electricity. A mother garden is established, materials which are in jars are brought in, in some cases, the materials come as seedlings for hardening and in other cases, and they are brought in as viable embryonic cells. In the incubation centre, there is learning, training, production, hardening and a demonstration centre.
Qn3: How can we link the sites between the New ASARECA project on OFSP and this TC? Response: Will use the same sites in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.
Qn4: Are there any linkages with BECA? BECA has facilities for TC. Response: Engaging BECA to genotype SP landraces national Kenya SP collection (for Kenya).Also involved in training in cryo-preservation.

a. Access to the protocols? They are accessible from Dr. Charles Mugoya—send him an email. (Can we link to their WEBSITE?).

b. Driving to low cost, but there is a risk of compromising quality. SASHA has experience with mass usage of TC plantlets across borders. One of sites will be at Maruku.
c. Do we have at the regional level, harmonized cross-border transfer mechanism? . Every country has its own administrative system but the objectives are almost the same in all countries. What is lacking is information on quality of the material (diseases, varieties). They want to create something specific for sweetpotato planting material as a product. The 1st template will be created that all organizations can approve and support. Also AU is supporting that exercise.
d. Where is the economics analysis? Are private companies making money with TC? Do not know. SP has a problem of profitability. If community has them, will not need the private sector. There is no private sector giving planting material for sweetpotato. For cassava, the government purchases cassava for distribution. Sweetpotato has not attracted any private sector.

5. Experience of DONATA OFSP Project in Northern UGANDA - Mr. Yuventino Obong

The project is located in the war torn areas of Lango and Acholi where sweetpotato is one of the staples. Sweetpotato is cultivated by almost every one and that is the reason why they thought it was the best way of disseminating OFSP. Unlike cereals and grain crops, it is mainly harvested piecemeal for home consumption and/or income generation.

Most sweetpotato cultivars grown used to be white-fleshed varieties that contain negligible amounts of Vitamin A. Four orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) varieties being promoted are 1) Kakamega 2) Ejumula 3) Vitaa (NASPOT 9 O) and 4) Kabode (NASPOT 10 O).

These 4 OFSP varieties contain reasonable quantities of Vitamin A that poor families in the region need.

The Challenges: a) Lack of the varieties and poor agronomic practices, b) prolonged dry period from December to March; c) Prevalence of pests, diseases and roaming animals during dry period that reduce sweetpotato production; d) raising funds --- project is small and community does not want to pay because they are used to getting things for free; e) preserving and multiplying seed during the dry season is difficult. – limited funds make it hard to do Monitoring and Evaluation making it difficult to know how effective radio messages are; f) lack of reading habit in English; most of the farmers need translations due to low literacy level.

The achievements are:

a) First meeting was held in August 2008. Gulu University and Ngetta ZARDI presented at this meeting;

b) There are 12 partners now.

c). Four varieties were introduced and multiplied had average yield of 16 MT while average yield of farmer varieties was 10 MT.

d). Farmer groups reached with the new varieties were selected by participating NGOs.

e). Eight sub-counties were covered in Lira and 7 sub-counties in Gulu.

f) More sub-counties and districts are indirectly benefitting from the project.

g). Institutional framework for Lira innovation platform for technology adoption (IPTA) has been changing.

h). District leaders were briefed on the project activities and radio talk shows were held to disseminate information on OFSP.

i). Training development personnel and representatives from community-based organizations (CBOs)

LOBO PA LUPUR" OR THE FARMING WORLD 102 MEGA FM – Ms. Grace Amito

Radios are the most used means of communication in Uganda. In N. Uganda its considered to be the most cost effective means of communication. Mega Fm: 102 mega fm is a radio station based in northern Uganda in the heart of Gulu town. Grace Amito is in charge of the farming program on this radio station. Had to learn about agriculture.. She had to look for experts on agriculture. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) was there in the beginning, but left. Gulu Univ and Donata – started working with them. Expanded with Gulu Univ and got professors to help with other topics.

Plans for promoting OFSP

1. Introducing in school farming program and will give them vines for students to take home. The radio station has started working with 5 schools so that they start multiplying vines. Vines are then given to a student from each of the respective schools to go and plant them in their home fields. Those homes are then encouraged to give out vines to other families so that they too can grow them. The students who work well will be paid at the end of this exercise.

2. Have training for bakery owners. People who make chapatti will also be involved so that they can add OFSP to the chapatti which will then be promoted over the radio.

3. They are also sponsoring a lunch request hour where the promoter asks every now and then: Have you eaten OFSP today?

4. Have billboard promoting OFSP (a bill board with a beautiful health baby who has eaten OFSP).

5. Send SMS to some farmers urging them to plant OFSP.

5. Held a farmer's field day at the radio station and farmers were advised to work in groups. A 2 day show. Displayed OFSP on the day

Participants asked the following questions

a) How do you manage to translate scientific info into the local language? Response: MEGA FM targets the Acholi community. 85% in Luo. Asked the local community to give a name for the OFSP, once she had described it to them. The ones who ate it became orange.
b) Gulu: SP vines are being sold in the main market… How do we build on that potential? Response:Farmer heard about SP over the radio… and contacted farmers for information.Farmers living positively are encouraged to eat sweetpotato by informing them that.. If they ate OFSP, it gave them energy. This group is expanding. There is Still need to build up production and they will be supplying schools.

6. Update on SASHA Animal Feed Research – Dr. Ben Lukuyu

The objectives for this project include: a) Identify the appropriate adapted dual purpose and forage varieties for specific livestock production systems and specific agro-ecologies; b) Determine the most appropriate combination of sweetpotato vines/roots with other available feedstuffs that maximize livestock productivity and household incomes under the environmental and economic constraints in the project area; c) Model and test novel feed and production and feeding strategies based on optimizing sweetpotato legumes-other feed resources-pig and dairy interactions.

Progress to date (Kenya)

a) M.Sc. student defended proposal and accepted by Egerton University

b) Planted trials on seven farms in South (3) and North (2) Rift and Central (3) provinces

c) Data collection from trials was completed (biomass (vine and root) yields, nnutritional composition, farmer preference, climate data)

d) Feed samples were analyzed using NIRS. In-vitro digestibility (Tilly and Terry) at Egerton University.

e) Two abstracts submitted to CIALCA and Tropentag Conferences in Rwanda and Germany respectively

f) Soil samples will be analyzed for NPK at KARI NARL, Kabete.

g) Progress on data analysis

Progress to date (Rwanda)

a) Bulking of sweetpotato varieties for trial completed

b) 10 farms were selected (13th – 18th March 2011) and planted in Nyagatare, Gatsibo and Rwamagana (20th – 25th March 2011)

c) Varieties planted: Kakamega, NASPOT 1, Cacaerpedo, Mugande, Kwetsikumwe, 2002/155; 2002/154; 2000/040

d) Soil samples were collected from all the 10 farms and are awaiting analysis at ISAR, Rubona

e) At 75 days harvesting is expected to be done 2nd week, June

f) The M.Sc. student is currently taking course work at Nairobi University. Activities are supervised by Dr. Cyprian Ebong, ISAR and EADD teams.

g) Feed samples analysis completed using NIRS. In-vitro analysis of gas tests to be done at Egerton University.

h) Statistical analysis of the vine and roots DM yield data complete

i) Draft thesis available

Upcoming activities

a) Baseline survey on sweetpotato and pig management practices
b) Feeding dairy goats
c) Silage making for quality and improvements to the tube silage making method
d) Incorporating sweetpotato in other feed formulations
e) Promoting use of sp in making silage in combination with other locally available feed resources.
f) Use of sp dual purpose varieties in Uganda through farmer demo plots
g) Through learning, cutting regimes will be adjusted upward because 75 days for Asia is too soon. There is a need to look at informal dissemination of new varieties

Lessons learned

1) Cutting regimes

    a) The 75 days cutting stage mimicked trials used in Asia, however, it appears to suppress vines and root yields in Kenya.

    b) Learning in Kenya will inform the cutting regime trial in Rwanda – adjust cutting regimes to mimic farmer practices

2) Dissemination of dual purpose sweetpotato varieties; anecdotal evidence of farmers adopting varieties…we are planning a quick rapid appraisal

Participants raised the following Questions

Qn1. Was social economic evaluation done in the project so that cost benefit analysis can be computed? Response: Gross margins have been done for the sweetpotato and they are 3 times that for Nappier grass. As far as gross margins are concerned, farmers using sweetpotato get 3 times as much income as those using Napier.

Qn2: Was there analysis of nutritive value of plants that were not harvested? Response: Chemical compositions have been done on the roots. The roots are used as feed for pigs.

Qn3: Are you using the word ratoon correctly? Response: Will review the use of the word ratoon.

Qn4: Have you explored the use of roots for feeding animals? Response: Ruminants can handle high levels of energy, unlike the non ruminants. Roots are fed on pigs-because they-are monogastrics. Roots will be involved in feed rations for the pigs. Still working on the rations. Use non-marketable roots for silage. Pigs are monogastric—will also look at micronutrients in the roots. Deciding on the proportions of sp, maize bran e.t.c. needs to be done with care and water content is an issue with sp. Can have problems with effluent.

7. Strategy for communication of SASHA outputs – Dr. Lone Badstue

Communication of research outputs and application- is necessary to achieve impact. Good communication enhances value of our research. There are different types of communication products suitable for different audiences. Due to the limited resources available, there is need to prioritize use of these limited resources. The components of SASHA include breeding, weevil resistance, seed systems (Marando Bora), proof of concept, management and sweetpotato platforms.

Objectives of the presentation included:

1) Present approach and key considerations in the elaboration of a strategy for communication of SASHA research outputs

2) Get input to the strategy from partners and key stakeholders.

Tripple A guiding principles for communication of R4D

Available: stored in open digital formats that can be easily located through structured search

Accessible: can be viewed, queried and obtained in full online without restrictive legal, technological or financial barriers

Applicable*:* customized and adapted for easy uptake, adaptation and use by key actors and change agents

Audiences for SASHA communication products include:

1) Primary audience include: a) Other scientists / researchers; b) Technical/implementing actors, e.g. GOs, NGOs, development professionals ; and c) Donors and policy makers

2) Secondary audience include farmers, retailers, processors, and consumers

They expect to receive results of research activities, best practices, technologies, impact and statistics. Others are protocols or procedures and policy recommendations such as decisions on movement of planting material. Policy: example could be that all health centers could be advised to plant OFSP. Examples of presentation formats are breakfast meeting or special evening, field day, policy brief, media brief (for example live talk shows and interviews), fact sheet, brochures (for example on how to make silage), power point presentation, stories, images, posters, checklist (especially relevant for procedures, extensionists and mothers) and exposure visits.

8. Demonstration of the Triple S Strategy - Sam Namanda

Demonstration on storing roots in sand for planting sprouted roots in root beds was conducted. The decision on spacing and technique of watering the root beds was illustrated. Copies of leaflets were distributed.

9. Sweetpotato Knowledge Portal (SPKP) Update - Robert Mwanga/Shiphar Mulumba

The participants were showed progress on the type of information needed on the portal as expressed in the previous sweetpotato support platform meeting. HarvestPlus materials: Will brand and load on the knowledge Portal the tools. The SPKP contains a wide coverage of information related to the sweetpotato activities. It is also one of the ways in which CIP and its partners share information and make their output easily available. The participants had a demonstration of the following: a) How to register on the website; b) How to search for already existing information on the site; c) How to add new information on the site and in the right section; d) How to create links for information already uploaded on other sites or exists on other sources; e) How to change the language in which the content appears; f) How to add images into the page content type.

Exercise: Use of stories for communication - Valarie Gwinner

Participants were paired and each told his or her partner a story about what they are doing. Each story was required to include: a) Identify what to tell a story about from what one is doing; b) what

approach was being used before the current approach; c) why does the approach matter; d) what will the approach deliver and help at the end of the day; f) what is left to do?; g) bring in the quotations from farmers and other partners involved and possibly present illustrations if any.

The following are the different examples of stories told:

a) Sweetpotato for home consumption by Henry Mutebi: Henry is a leader for consumer group in Uganda national Farmers Federation. Sweetpotato forms 30% of the food and cassava forms the bulk. Excess sweetpotato is usually sold. New varieties with high levels of vitamin A, that could be used for dual purpose I.e. animal feed. Kabode is very popular because high yielding and can get harvest in a short time.
b) Transgenic breeding as a novel solution to sweetpotato by Runyararo Rukarwa:
c) Face of one person conveys a much bigger picture Story by Sylvia: Lady farmer received OFSP planting material in 2007 and is still growing sweetpotato. She also sold vines to other farmers in the neighbourhood. Out of the income, she has bought a bicycle, educated her children, roofed her house.
d) Technology for agriculture platform: Digital Global site: www.teca.fao.org ---- Story by Charles Owach (FAO): The website provides a means of identifying and sharing digital technology as well as a repository for information.
e) Sweetpotato Recipes for the Cow Cafeteria by Ben Lukuyu. The SP recipes can fill in the protein gap in the cow cafeteria that comprise of other feeds like Napier. The inclusion of the recipes can bring in gross margins compared to other feeds. Farmers are starting to adopt spontaneously from the sp trials.
f) Triple S system (storage sand and sprouting system) --- by Sam Namanda. The system is very useful to conserve sweeetpotato roots in sand and later used them to rapidly generate planting materials by sprouting them in the field towards the end of the dry season.
g) Government as a seed producer ---Story by Charles Mugoya: Initially governments used to produce seed for the farmers. Later on seed production was taken by the private sector. For a good seed system, the following considerations are key: i) Farmers need to produce seed themselves; ii) Need to create a awareness about GMO and conventional methods; iii) Seed multiplication should start with good starter material; iv) Information on tissue culture should be available; v) Training is a must; vi) Collaboration between different partners is a must; vii) Infrastructure is crucial especially at local community level. With all the above you will have enough seed for all the farmers.
h) Breeding for virus resistance Story by Robert Mwanga Using successive generations instead of waiting for the complete cycle of population improvement or variety development saves money, time and resources. Integration of farmers' interest in the breeding program is very important

10. Update of New projects and conclusion of meeting.

SASHA Project focuses on developing the appropriate varieties and the evidence base. There is increased interest in funding OFSP in the region

Activities are focused on:
1) Breeding: Uganda, Mozambique, Ghana
2) Seed Systems: Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, Ghana
3) Delivery Systems: Rwanda, Western Kenya, Highlands of Kenya
4) Feasibility Study: Nigeria

Under broader SPHI umbrella:
1) Rooting out Hunger in Malawi: OFSP dissemination (Irish Aid)
2) Better Sweetpotato for a Better Life: OFSP dissemination (USAID)
3) Sweetpotato for Angola: OFSP dissemination (Chevron)

Reaching Agents of Change (RAC) 1 June 2011: CIP & Helen Keller Intl (HKI)

1) Mobilization of at least $18 million devoted to OFSP dissemination programs in five target countries (Tanzania, Mozambique, Nigeria, Ghana, and Burkina Faso), where an estimated 15.6 million children under 5 years are at risk of VAD.

2) Substantial progress by a cadre of trained African advocates in ensuring that the use of OFSP is an integral part of strategies that address food insecurity and micronutrient malnutrition at regional and sub-regional levels in SSA as well as in the five target countries.

3) Establishment of technical capacity for successful OFSP project implementation and continued awareness raising, resource mobilization, and change agent training efforts to continue once the project has ended in each major SSA sub-region.

11. Closing remarks by Dr. Robert Mwanga

The platform is for us all and we should all support it to move forward. We need to develop the communication art to pass on the messages in all forms.

Annex 1: AGENDA Third Sweetpotato Support Platform Meeting For East And Central Africa Imperial Royale Hotel, Kampala, Uganda, 25-26 May 2011

May 25 Wed		
8:00-8:30	Registration	Martha Ameru
8:30-8:45 am	Introduction	Ben Lukuyu/Participants
8:45 – 9:00 am	Welcome Remarks	DG/NARO
9:00 – 9:15 am	Update SASHA Rwanda Value Chain Project	Kirimi Sindi
9:15 - 9:30 am	Update Mama SASHA in Western Kenya	Hermann Ouedraogo
9:30 - 10:00 am	Health Break	Martin Ogwal
10:00 - 12:45 pm	Communicating Effectively to Different Audiences	Valerie Gwinner
12:45 - 2:00 pm	Lunch Break	
2:00 – 2:20 pm	Potential for Community level Low-cost Tissue Culture for Sweetpotato	Charles Mugoya
2:20 - 2:40 pm	Innovation Platform for Technology Adoption (IPTA) - N. Uganda	Yuventino Obong & Grace Amito
2:40 - 3:00 pm	Update on SASHA Animal Feed Research	Ben Lukuyu
3:00 - 5:00 pm	Communicating Effectively to Different Audiences, cont.	Valerie Gwinner
May 26 Thurs		
8:30 – 9:00 am	Strategy for Communication for SASHA Research Outputs	Lone Badstue
9:00 – 9:15 am	Discussion of Effectiveness of Potential Communication Tools	Lone Badstue
9:15 – 10:15 am	Demonstration of Triple S Strategy and Presentation of Brochure	Sam Namanda
10:15 – 10:45 am	Health Break	
10:45 – 12:45 pm	Communicating Effectively to Different Audiences, cont.	Valerie Gwinner
12:45 - 2:00 pm	Lunch	
2:00 - 3:30 pm	Communicating Effectively to Different Audiences, cont.	Valerie Gwinner
3:30 - 4:30 pm	Sweetpotato Knowledge Portal Update	Robert Mwanga
4:30 - 5:00 pm	Wrap up: Update on New Projects & Conclusions of Meeting	Jan Low

Annex 2: List of Participants

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Annex 2: List of Participants continued

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