Unleashing the Potential of Sweetpotato to Combat Poverty & Malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa through the Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative

Jan Low
Leader of the SPHI
Project Manager for SASHA

Overview of 1st Year Highlights

East Africa Support Platform
15 December 2010

SWEETPOTATO FOR PROFIT AND HEALTH INITIATIVE (SPHI)

SPHI is a multi-partner, multi-donor initiative that seeks to reduce child undernutrition and improve smallholder incomes in 10 million African families by 2020 through the effective production and expanded use of sweetpotato.

The Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa (SASHA) Project is a 5 year project led by the International Potato Center that will develop the essential capacities, products and methods to reposition sweetpotato in the food economies of Sub-Saharan Africa. It serves as the foundation for the broader Initiative.

SPHI Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative

16 priority countries, 3 sub-regions

Under SASHA, activities in 8 countries

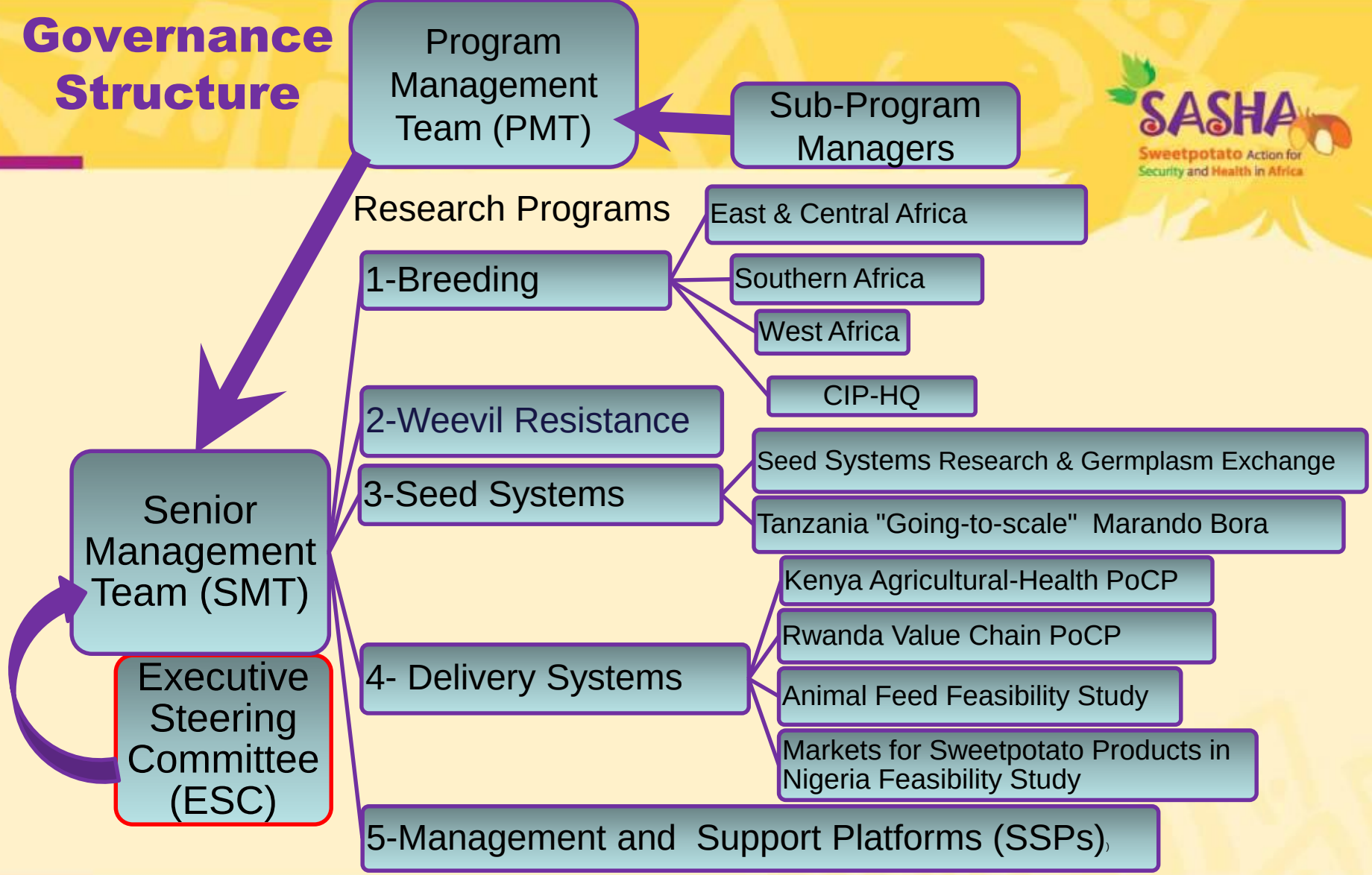
1st Annual Technical & Executive Steering Committee Meeting Held

SASHA
Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa

28-30 September
Nairobi, Kenya

- Progress to date
- Way forward for Year 2

Governance Structure



1st SSP Meetings were held in each Sub-Region in June-July 2010

- Southern Africa
- Mozambique (IIAM)
- 13 Women, 12 Men
- 18 organizations

- West Africa
- Ghana (CRI)
- 8 Women, 23 Men
- 18 organizations

- East Africa
- Uganda (NaCRRI)
- 6 Women, 13 Men
- 13 organizations

2nd SSP Meetings were held in each Sub-Region in November-December 2010

- Southern Africa
- Mozambique (IIAM)
- Field Visit

- West Africa
- Ghana (Cape Coast)
- Value Chain Development

- Major Emphasis:

  Training on the Sweetpotato Knowledge Portal

Capacity Strengthening Highlight: Strengthening Breeding Programs

- Annual meetings combined with training opportunities for sweetpotato breeders
- Continued development of research protocols and the *CloneSelector* to standardize data collection, entry, and analysis

Capacity Strengthening Highight: Safe movement of germplasm: Progress in Mozambique

- Training in virus indexing and cleaning
- NCM ELISA
- Grafting onto *I. setosa*
- Tissue culture
- Thermotherapy
- Screenhouse

Research Highlight: Seed Systems

- Replicated trial of potential of agricultural fleece (“row cover”) as a low cost method of protecting foundation seed conducted at KARI Kakamega
- Fleece has successfully protected planting material from vector ingress for over 12 months. Uncovered plants showing severe virus symptoms.

Key Lesson Learned: Setting up Complex Partnerships takes Time & Requires Lots of Interaction

SASHA
Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa

Kenya Health PoCP

Marando Bora

The Animal Feed Trio

Yr2 Rwanda Value Chain in November

- Our contracting system required agreed upon work plans prior to finalization
- For Seed System & Delivery System projects adjustments needed to be made once all partners understood the reality on the ground
- Required holding many more meetings at the Sub-program level than originally anticipated

Research Progress:

- Breeding: Robert Mwanga
- Seed Systems Research
- Delivery Systems
  - *Marando Bora: Better Vines:* Going to scale in Tanzania
  - *Mama SASHA*: linking OFSP to health services for pregnant women: Hermann Ouedraogo
  - *Rwanda Value Chain:* Preliminary trials in year 1 to help decide which products to invest in

Rwanda: Products acceptability

Peeling of OFSP

Drying in heated chamber

Going-to-Scale in Western Tanzania:

Marando Bora: *Healthy Vines*

Operational objectives:

- Provide farmers with quality seed of improved sweetpotato varieties in a timely fashion
- Stimulate increased demand for white and OF sweetpotato amongst rural and urban consumers

Research objectives:

- Assess the contribution of the intervention to raising productivity and improving food supply
- Assess the rate of degeneration due to virus among different varieties
- Assess the cost effectiveness of using vouchers.

Progress To Date

- **Inception and sensitisation:**
  - LoUs; transfer of funds; introduction of project to IPs and government; planning meetings
- **Implementation:**
  - Identification and validation of 1st wave DVMs
  - Training of trainers (IP supervisors) in vine multiplication (9M/ 3F)
  - Training of DVMs in vine multiplication
  - Adaptation of training materials for DVMs
  - M&E tools
  - PMS at Ukiriguru prepared (pump & fencing)
  - “Partnership health check-up”

Criteria and profile of DVMs

- **Criteria**:
  - Prior experience with SP, access to water during dry season, adequate resource base (land, labour), honest (community recognition)
- 43 assessed; 18 identified – 12 finally selected; 4 individuals and 8 groups (53m and 70f)
- Setting up irrigation facilities & TA
- **Lessons:**
  - Gender balance
  - TA for irrigation support

Challenge of Starting with Large Amounts of Clean Planting Material

- 31,500 in-vitro plantlets transferred from GTIL (Nairobi) to Maruku (Tanzania)
- Delivered in 4 batches
  - Dec ’09 – test
  - Feb; May; June.
  - Final batch: mid Oct
- Transfer to hardening shade:

  3-4 weeks
- 29,500 plants: ~95% survival

Hardening at LZARDI – Maruku, cont.

- 32,250 plants transferred to primary multiplication at Maruku
- **July**: estimate 160,000 20cm cuttings available
- **August:** 35,000 cuttings transferred to NGO-SMS and DVM sites

Hardening: Technical Challenges

- Variation in Multiplication Rate by variety
- Transfer in batches reduced risk but led to increase in costs
- Slow growth during dry/cool period
- Irrigation equipment breakdown
- Careful scheduling needed to avoid overgrown (old) plants

Thanks for your attention!

SASHA
Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa