

Sweetpotato Advocacy Strategy for Nigeria



presented by Ijeoma Egeonu
on behalf of the

**Sweetpotato Promotion Group (SPG),
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State,
Nigeria**



SWEETPOTATO PROMOTION GROUP

- **Network of persons interested in improving the status of sweetpotato in Nigeria.**
- **Based in the Department of Agronomy, University of Ibadan.**
- **Consists of over 240 Researchers and others.**
- **Headed by**
Prof. M. O. Akoroda (Scientific Advisor),
Dr Stella Odebode (Executive Secretary),
Miss Ijeoma Egeonu (Assist. Secretary/ Treasurer).

Current situation

Vitamin A deficiency (VAD)

- **Leading cause of childhood blindness.**
- **Increases risk of disease and death from severe infections.**
- **Major micronutrient condition of public health problem in most developing countries, including Nigeria.**
- **Up to 56.4 million children under five affected in Africa. (WHO estimates)**
- **5.52 million children <5 in Nigeria affected by VAD; higher prevalence in dry savanna areas (Maziya-Dixon et al., 2006)**

Current situation

- **Providing dietary vitamin A significantly reduces severity of illness and death.**
- **Orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) can address vitamin A malnutrition.**
- **About 125 grams of OFSP is enough to meet daily vitamin A requirement.**
- **Strong advocacy and communications component needed within West Africa**
- **Knowledge networks are important.**
- **Information and experiences of OFSP benefits must be shared among countries.**

Sweetpotato issues

Widespread lack of:

- (1) Awareness of health benefits;**
- (2) Knowledge of growing techniques,
and**
- (3) Planting material.**

Solutions



- 1. Provision of resources for awareness programmes in all geo-political zones.**
- 2. Strengthening of networks for promotion of orange sweetpotato.**
- 3. Dissemination of information through the media.**
- 4. Training programmes for farmer groups.**
- 5. Establishment of zonal sweetpotato vine multiplication centres.**

Advocacy goal

Intensify awareness campaigns on the benefits of sweetpotato, and orange sweetpotato in particular.



Advocacy objectives

- 1. To increase awareness on the benefits of orange sweetpotato among policy makers in 2 geopolitical zones by December 2013.**
- 2. To increase awareness on the benefits of orange sweetpotato among farm families including care-givers of children <5 years and pregnant women in 3 geo-political zones by December 2013.**
- 3. To establish information-sharing platforms and bi-annual meetings of 4 participating countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Mali and Burkina Faso) by December 2013.**
- 4. To establish clean orange sweetpotato planting material multiplication sites in 3 States per geo-political zone by December 2013.**

Advocacy objectives

- 5. To promote the integration of orange sweetpotato production and use into State and National Agriculture and Nutrition policies by December 2013.**
- 6. To develop and promote orange sweetpotato processing methods and local recipes in 3 States per geo-political zone by December 2013 (women of child-bearing age, youth, and vulnerable groups).**
- 7. To introduce orange sweetpotato into school gardens of Faculties and Colleges of Agriculture in tertiary institutions.**

Target audiences

Objective 1:

- **State Governors**

Objective 2:

- **Farm families**
- **Pregnant women**

Objective 3:

- **Researchers; Breeders**
- **Nutritionists**

Target audiences

Objective 4:

- **State Governors**
- **Farmer Organizations**
- **Traditional Leaders/Rulers**

Objective 5:

- **State Governors**

Objective 6:

- **Postharvest Specialists (Processors)**
- **Distributors/marketers**
- **Farmers**
- **Women**

Advocacy partners

**FARA –Forum for Agric Research In Africa –
Dissemination of Agricultural Research Information in Africa;
Highly specialised in Agricultural research, and source of statistical data.**

**ECOWAS – Economic Community
Subregional mandate with capacity to influence govt policies in West Africa;
Technical expertise in agriculture.**

**FAO-Food & Agriculture Organization
Capacity to influence government agricultural policies;
Highly specialized agricultural expertise;
Information dissemination and source of statistical data.**

**USAID
Major funding partner with capacity to influence government policy at the bilateral level;
Source of Technical Assistance, and Staff capacity development.**

Advocacy partners

UNICEF

**Major funding partner and source of technical assistance;
Source of highly specialized technical expertise in child survival & nutrition.**

HKI

**Provides technical expertise, and funding to the government;
Technical support for government policy and programme in the area of nutrition;
Coordinate support at the inter-agency level.**

BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION

**Major funding partner with capacity for Resource mobilization;
Technical Assistance; Technical support; Management of grants.**

WHO

**Capacity to influence and support national level policy/capacity building;
Provide health information; Provision of technical assistance
Provision of technical assistance to countries.**

Advocacy partners

NGOs

Capacity to advocate and implement projects;

Support the government;

Influence development programmes(Technical Expertise);

Support capacity building

AGRA

Capacity building;

Support & Implement programmes in Agriculture;

Social mobilization; Funding(farmer associations;

Regional mandate

CTA

Capacity building;

Support distribution and dissemination of Agric. information;

Social mobilization

IITA

Research; Provide technical support; Capacity building

Strategy and tactics

State Governors:

Letters to book for an appointment.

Phone calls as reminders.

Meetings to include Personal Assistants, Secretaries, etc.

Invite to Sweetpotato promotion events as Special Guest.

Send brochures, newsletters and journals highlighting (orange) sweetpotato benefits.

Attend meetings and events he/she will attend and introduce (orange) sweetpotato at opportune moments.

Display (orange) sweetpotato and products during Agriculture Shows and World Food Day events.

Health Centres:

The health benefits of (orange) sweetpotato will be highlighted during Hospital Health Talks to promote sweetpotato recipes and products.

Strategy and tactics

Farmers:

Organize enlightenment rallies and meetings

Introduce orange sweetpotato during church programmes, community festivals.

Give disease-free vines and basic training on production, nutritional benefits and products from (orange) sweetpotato.

School Principals:

Encourage School Principals whose schools have farms to promote (orange) sweetpotato among pupils.

Give disease-free vines and basic training on production, nutritional benefits and products from (orange) sweetpotato.

Monitoring and evaluation system

- **Quarterly monitoring tables for each stage of the Advocacy Campaign.**
- **Empirical survey of orange sweetpotato activities in each geo-political zone.**
- **Routine monitoring of orange sweetpotato activities by use of Extension Plan and Calendar of work.**

Monitoring and evaluation system

- **Case study approach to enhance acceptance**
- **Routine training and visits.**
- **Use of monitoring indicators (Project Input ; Project Effect; Project Output; and Project Impact) to assess the accomplishment of the Orange sweetpotato Advocacy objectives.**

Advocacy activities

- **Distribution of vines to farmer groups and other stakeholders for on-farm multiplication through Sweetpotato Promotion Group (SPG)**



- **Radio/television programmes and featured interviews in Abuja, Kwara and Oyo States.**
- **Meeting with Minister of Agriculture for funding of sweetpotato-related activities.**

Advocacy activities

- **Meeting with the government officials in Kwara and Oyo States (e.g. Governors, Commissioners and Local Government Chairmen) for funding of sweetpotato-related activities.**
- **Introduction of sweetpotato, including orange-fleshed types, in to the Practical Year Training Programme of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, Ile-Ogbo Outreach Centre, Osun State.**

Advocacy activities

- Training on production of different sweetpotato products



Way Forward

- **Sweetpotato Project proposal submitted to the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) in November 2009 has gone through many stages and has been approved for funding (N23 million for three years).**

This project is in three phases: Assemblage, Assessment and Multi-site banking, with training components at all phases.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

