

RAC ADVOCATES TRAINING (RETREAT)



Palm Tree Village Hotel- Bagamoyo, Tanzania

18th – 19th September, 2012

Introduction

Helen Keller International/ Tanzania through Reaching Agents of Change (RAC) project organised a two (2) days (18th and 19th September 2012) retreat with a focus at concretising selected champions and advocates' roles and responsibilities as they commence to engage and influence key decision makers and donors to adopt and invest on Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP). The retreat was attended by 25 participants of which 16 were males and 9 females with inclusion of .HK, CIP staff and a representative from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).

Specifically the retreat had the following objectives:

1. Strengthening the understanding of RAC goal , objectives , advocacy strategy and its implementation plan
2. Determine competencies and skills necessary to deliver the advocacy strategy
3. Impart necessary knowledge and skills to deliver RAC advocacy implementation plan
4. Develop individual advocates work plans to deliver the RAC advocacy
5. Agree on monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the implementation process

Facilitation methodology adopted (power point presentations, flow charting, brainstorming and strategic planning) was a good stage for advocates and champions to get immersed and understand what is expected from their involvement. This was evident as:

1. Advocates understood the modality of undertaking proposed activities; including how and when the country promotion expert should be involved (attached work plans), monitoring and evaluation mechanism
2. There is a clarity of the advocates and champion roles and the synergy that these two groups are having at realising RAC objectives
3. Essential competencies for effective advocacy were shared, discussed and consensus reached

By the end of the retreat, it is envisaged that the agreed set of activities – with clear deliverables – shall accelerate the realisation of 3 major RAC target success which are:

1. Mobilizing at least \$ 6 million devoted to OFSP dissemination programs in Tanzania where 33% of children aged 6- 59 months and 37% of women aged 15-19 years suffer from VAD (TDHS 2010).
 - ✓ The funds raised should enable at least 200,000 direct beneficiary households and 400,000 indirect beneficiary households to obtain OFSP through a well-designed dissemination mechanism

2. Substantial progress by a cadre of trained Tanzanian advocates and champions in ensuring that the use of OFSP is an integral part of strategies that address food insecurity and micronutrient malnutrition in the country
3. Establish 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

Retreat Proceedings

1. ***Welcome remarks:*** the remarks was given by HKI/T and extended appreciation for time allotted to participate and be identified as champions and or advocates to scale-up investment of OFSP in Tanzania as well as the financial support provided by BMGF. Participants were informed of the key output realised (situation analysis, advocacy strategy development), that the selection of advocates was based on the passion and their current involvement which is directly related to OFSP promotion. Advocates and champions continued commitment was urged as OFSP is one of the food based alternative in redressing VAD deficiency in Tanzania.
2. ***Remarks from BMGF:*** shared by the representative of BMGF that improving nutrition through agriculture is one of the avenue that BMGF is pleased to support. RAC project is one of the intervention that fit best in addressing VAD through a well tailored collaborative effort of multiple sectors – agriculture, education, health –. BMGF commended the high level political support in scaling up the nutrition-agriculture link as a sustainable approach of addressing micronutrient deficiency in Tanzania among other interventions.
3. ***Opening remarks:*** the remarks were shared by the representative of the Permanent Secretary Prime Minister's Office (see the attached speech for details). The speech emphasised on the importance of cost effective yet sustainable intervention in addressing Vitamin A deficiency in Tanzania, of which OFSP fits best. Not only that OFSP is the best on this but also can be a tool for household food security as it can withstand the ongoing climate variability trends. In up scaling investment, demand and policy support, the power of media was emphasised as it guarantee reach and set discussion agenda. The speaker ended by urging the continued close working collaboration with the high level steering committee (they are ready to take the initiative to scale) and as efforts is being made to realign national nutrition strategy and food security by 2013 – advocates and champions should ensure that OFSP is incorporated.



The Acting Permanent Secretary and who is also the Director of Coordinating Government Business from Prime Minister's Office addressing the participants with his opening speech during Advocacy training in Bagamoyo Tanzania (Photo by Peter Omari, Star TV)

4. **Introduction and retreat objectives:** presentation focused on key actions needed, what it takes to implement the actions and deliverables of the retreat. Strengthening agriculture based interventions that are geared at addressing VAD calls for a well tailored advocacy in integrating and investment in OFSP. The continued dissatisfaction with the state of VAD and general micronutrient deficiency that is prevailing among under 5s and women of reproductive age, should be the cornerstone at strengthening intense advocacy for investing in OFSP.
5. **RAC overview and progress:** presenter started by saying that the “future of our children, women of reproductive age will be changed if we do something and handicapped if we do nothing.” RAC goal is centred at reducing child malnutrition and associated health problem in Sub-Saharan Africa and will be measured through improved diet diversification, reduced food insecurity and increased vitamin A intake at the household level. The project is implemented in partnership between International Potato Centre (CIP) (expert in OFSP production, use and promotion) and HKI (experience in food-based nutrition intervention and advocacy).
6. **Situation analysis and advocacy strategy:** presentation focused on the micronutrient deficiency that is experienced in Tanzania with specific attention to Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) to the under 5s and women of reproductive age. Also the patterns of national dietary practices, determinants of malnutrition and food security, policy trends and strategy and communication strategy objectives were shared. All the

sections were linked to the RAC project which targets at adoption and investing on OFSP as a cost effective, sustainable and efficient food based approach that increases vitamin A intakes.

7. ***Understanding advocacy:*** presenter began by telling a real life time story about a mother who was being interviewed on the accomplishment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with specific on Goal 5 - maternal mortality reduction, and asked *who is ready for his/ her relative to be among the remaining percentage to die?* – which in other language could mean why not elimination? ***Moral of the story – advocating for change through sustainable interventions like RAC.*** Advocacy is a deliberate well focused process which is aimed at influencing decision makers. The presentation focused much on mastering the art of advocacy which all begins with understanding the subject, planning and delivery of the intentions. A good advocate therefore need to be good at planning, be conversant with the subject, good listener (active listening), problem solver, and be able to build arguments. During discussion it was evident that an advocate should have passion to do the work, available when needed, be able to understand social cues.
8. ***Linking advocacy work with RAC results:*** presenter used flow charting and brainstorming methods to help bring advocates and champions to think on the key milestones in the realisation of RAC objectives. Advocacy activities are aimed at realising three key results which include resource mobilisation, policy support and demand creation (KASH). Through this session, advocates were able to see how they fit best in the bigger picture of RAC objectives from where work-plans were developed
 - a. ***Competencies:*** an exercise to analyse advocates and champion skills was done and the results shows that problem solving skills, building arguments, leadership and OFSP knowledge base scored above 80% on average while planning and project design had low at around 74% and 64% respectively. The competency level/ score indicate that planning and problem solving alongside networking, public speaking and negotiation need to be strengthened.
9. ***Media engagement and advocacy:*** the presentation focused on mass media with specific attention to do's and don'ts and utilisation of media association to ensure that correct information reaches both decision makers and beneficiaries.



One of the Advocates from Media Houses conducting presentation on how to engage media with OFSP Advocacy Strategy (Photo by Revelian Ngaiza-PE)

10. **Reviewing advocacy materials and toolkit:** advocates and champions were guided on the materials present in the toolkit. They were informed that the toolkit shall have fact sheets, power point slides, OFSP video, advocacy strategy, situation analysis, posters/ banners, brochures, talking points among others. To ensure good understanding of the fact sheets, advocates and champions did 'kind of' elevators' speech based on the assigned fact sheet within 5 minutes. All did it very well and used the language that one is comfortable with (hence both Kiswahili and English were used). It emerged during the sharing that some of the materials take reference to Sub Saharan Africa (SSA). This was advised to be changed and take reference from Tanzania only.
11. **Advocacy matrix and implementation plan:** the advocacy has 3 main categories, resource mobilisation, demand articulation and policy support (with focus to fast tracking of the food policy). Also key activities from the advocacy strategy were shared from where advocates and champions will be deriving their individual work plans. This led to identification of individual advocates area of focus.
 - a. **Advocates focus:** during discussion it was apparent that policy support appeared to be above the line activity while resource mobilisation was below the line activity with demand articulation remain to be a cross cutting activity (see the attached synthesised advocates/ champion area of focus).
12. **Advocates work plans:** advocates shared their tentative work plans and it was agreed that they will share the final plans with the country PE (see attached work plans).

13. **Closing remarks:** this was given by Mr. Karim Mtambo. The Director of National Food Security from Ministry of Agriculture who stressed the fact that OFSP is linked with vitality and its success highly depends on not doing business as usual. Resource mobilisation, demand articulation and policy support shall be realised if all involved, especially advocates and champions, assure their commitment.



The Director of National Food and Nutrition Security in the Ministry of Agriculture Food Security & Cooperatives, Mr. Karim Mtambo stresses something to the graduated advocates during the closing remarks at Bagamoyo on 19th September, 2012 (Photo by Peter Omari)

In addition to specific topics presented/ discussed during the retreat, the following were noted:

1. Resource mobilisation: DALDO should be made aware of the importance of incorporating OFSP in their budget/ work plans
2. Advocates and champions should tap on the fact that FY2012/13 budget will have more emphasis on nutrition, hence an opportunity
3. Whereas farmers are ready to take on OFSP, vine availability has continued to be a challenge. Partnering with TAPP-USAID could help to solve specific area problem (where the project operates)
4. There arise a need to streamline the involvement of TCCIA in OFSP

5. There is MoU between Ministry of Agriculture and Home Affairs on cassava. A need to revise the MoU and include OFSP could be the best opportunity in strengthening production and consumption

List of Participants

	Name	Sex	Job Title	Organization
1	Ms Asia Kapande	F	Regional Coordinator	TAHEA
2	Mr John Peter	M	DALDO	Geita DC
3	Mr Dionis Mboya	M	AO	Kilosa DC
4	Ms Margaret Benjamin	F	SNO	HKI
5	Dr Kiddo Mtunda	F	Agronomist	ARI/CIP
6	Ms. Helen Semu	F	Nutrition Coordinator	Health Promotion & Education Unit – MHSW
7	Mr. Benedict Jeje	M	Ag. Director	TFNC-MHSW
8	Ms Margaret Natai	F	Nutrition Focal Person	MAFC
9	Mr Richard Kasuga	M	Head of Government communications and spokesperson MAFS	MAFC
10	Mr Masembe Tambwe	M	Senior Journalist	Daily News Ltd
11	Mr Peter Omary	M	Program Manager/Journalist	Sahara media
12	Mr Karim Mtambo	M	Director Food security	MAFSC
13	Ms. Salma O Mohamed	F	Senior Research Officer	ARI-Ministry of Agriculture-Zanzibar
14	Mr. William Balyehele	M	SMS- Crop	Ukerewe DC
15	Ms. Shelly Sunberg	F	Senior Nutrition Coordinatoe	BGBF- USA
16	Dr. Sonii David	F	GAA	HKI-Region
17	Dr. Adiel Mbabu	M	PM	CIP-Region
18	Mr. Godfrey Mulongo	M	M&E Specialist	CIP- Region
19	Mr. Revelian Ngaiza	M	PE	HKI-Tanzania
20	Mr. Moses Mnzava	M	Consultant	UDSM
21	Dr. Christina Nyhus	F	DCD	HKI- Tanzania
22	Mr. Issack Kitururu	M	BCC Specialist	HKI- Tanzania
23	Ms. Mary Bonaventure	F	Regional Nutrition Focal Person	RAS-Dodoma- PMO-RALG
24	Mr. Obey M. Assery	M	Director	PMO
25	Mr. Peter Lanya	M	Director Temeke	TCCIA