Improving and Institutionalizing the “Everything you Ever Wanted to Know About Sweetpotato” Course: Round Two Experience

4TH Annual Technical Meeting for the SASHA Project and the Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative (SPHI)

7-9 October 2013, Kumasi, Ghana
Outline

• Introduction

• Improving and institutionalizing TOT course on sweetpotato
  • What were we trying to achieve?
  • How have we done it?
  • What has worked / not worked well?
  • What would we have done differently for better results?
    • (Pillars of capacity building – host institutions, Manual, Adult learning methodology, institutional partnerships)

• Why did we succeed?
• Conclusion
Introduction

Two broad objectives of RAC:

1. Advocacy to increase investment in OFSP and stimulate policy change in favor of food-based approaches to VAD (led by HKI)

2. Build capacity to implement OFSP projects (led by CIP)

One of the key capacity building activities – “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sweetpotato”
What were we trying to achieve?

“Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Sweetpotato” course

- The overall aim of the 10-day training course is to build the capacity of implementing agencies to implement technically strong cost-effective interventions that drive uptake of OFSP
- Ensure participants understand key aspects of sweetpotato value chain
- Trainers expected to train others (5 day course or shorter)
How have we done it?

• 10-day course is based on adult learning methodology, combining lectures, case studies, experiential learning exercises, learning-by-doing, practicals, visits to field, market and supermarket

**Round 1:** led by CIP / HKI staff, backstopped by national facilitators – Stepped down by TOT graduates (2012)

**Round 2:** Led by national facilitators, backstopped by CIP / HKI staff – Stepped down by TOT graduates (2013)

**Round 3:** Led by national facilitators - CIP / HKI staff observe and step in only if necessary – Step-down by TOT graduates (2014)

**National host institution continues** running courses beyond the life of RAC
... How have we done it?

- Different types of target audiences:
  - Primary facilitators *(host institution identified facilitators in each country – 5 day pre-training)*
  - Secondary facilitators *(district level agricultural and nutrition extension, NGO, private sector) – 10 day training*
  - Tertiary facilitators *(field level extension and NGO staff) – 5 day (or less) step-down training*
  - End users *(sweetpotato farmers - female and male, poor and medium wealth) - some become farmer trainers*

Focus of RAC - **primary and secondary trainers**, who step down the training within their programmes / projects / institutions
... How have we done it?

Overview of the RAC project’s training pyramid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Training materials</th>
<th>Competence required</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria: ARMTI, Mozambique: EMU-FAEF, Tanzania: SUA</td>
<td>TOT Manual, TOT 10 day practical hands-on learning course, TOT PowerPoint set, Field activities</td>
<td>Qualified agriculturalists, nutritionists, marketing and gender experts, prior knowledge of OFSP</td>
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<tr>
<td>District level government and NGO agricultural extension workers</td>
<td>TOT Manual, TOT 5 day practical hands-on learning course, TOT PowerPoint set, Field activities</td>
<td>Degree/diploma in agriculture. Sensitive to gender issues. In a position to train others and/or oversee a sweetpotato project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ward/village level government and NGO agricultural extension workers</td>
<td>Set of Memory Aids on all topics, TOT 5 day practical hands-on learning course, Field activities</td>
<td>Diploma in agriculture. Sensitive to gender issues. In a position to train farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respected sweetpotato farmers - representative of different wealth groups, and traders</td>
<td>Set of Memory Aids on all topics, TOT 5 day practical hands-on learning course, Field activities</td>
<td>Respected in the community, experienced and active in agriculture, ability to motivate and communicate</td>
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... How have we done it?

• Developed a training of trainers manual (2012 / revised manual and Power Point (2013)

• RAC carried out an assessment of institutes and identified national host institutions – based on set criteria

• Conducted 5 day pre-training workshop
... How have we done it?

Course Institutionalization

• 5 day pre-training, demonstration farm, irrigation
• Participants – RAC sponsored and privately sponsored
• Course is hosted by a national institution which is expected to carry on the training beyond RAC:
  – Eduardo Mondlane University
  – Sokoine University of Agriculture
  – Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute
• Language of instruction
What has worked well / not worked well – TOT manual?

Worked well

• Participatory approach (multidisciplinary team and consultant to harmonize)
• Reflections sheet - ToT revision
• Development of Power Points
• 3 Languages (English, Portuguese, Swahili)

Not worked well

• Project design underestimation of time and resources, coordination and effort needed for developing and revising, a holistic learning module (2012-2013)
What has worked well / not worked well – Pre-training?

– **6** Pre-training workshops conducted *(round 1 and round 2)*
– **39** national counterparts equipped *(27 in round 1 and additional 12 in round 2)*

**Worked well**

- Revised TOT manual and Power Points
- 5-day pre-training workshop – equipped trainers with adult learning techniques, facilitation and communication skills
- Mentorship and peer assist yielded well trained cadre of facilitators

**Not worked well**

- Timing of pre-training – back-to-back with 10-day training
What has worked well / not worked well – 10 day training?

146 individuals from public, NGO, private sector institutions have the capacity to offer training (74 round 1 and 72 in round 2)

**Worked well**
- Adult learning methodology
- Good leadership and coordination at host institutions in some countries
- Strengthening of national institutional capacities (demo farm, irrigation) and human talent to ensure sustainability
- Teamwork and commitment (facilitators and participants)

**Not worked well**
- Variations in content on Power Points during round 1 in the 3 countries
- Quality of the trainers – in some countries the national experts lacked experience and specialized skills
- Course duration - getting female participants in some countries
What has worked well / not worked well – Step-down courses?

14 step-down courses conducted (13 round 1 and 1 in round 2)
865 tertiary trainers trained (757 in round 1 and 108 in round 2)

Worked well
• Flexibility to conduct the course in 5 or fewer days in response to participants’ needs

Not worked well
• Few secondary facilitators have stepped-down training (linked to resources)
What would we have done differently for better results?

- Hold pre-training workshop long before the 10-day training - recess period
- Develop a simplified training manual for the 5-day course (step-down)
- Include “Seed money” for stepping-down courses
Why did we succeed?

• **Choosing host institutions wisely** – ARMTI, SUA, UEM

• **Broad coverage** – “Everything” – value chain approach attracted diverse institutional interest (agriculture, nutrition, health), which is necessary for sustainability

• **Training methodology** (practical, enjoyable, captivating)

• **Institutional partnerships** and approach of “take lead – take off” helped:
  • build institutions
  • Develop institutional mechanisms to deliver on their own
Conclusion

• **Partnerships** with universities / training institutions with an interest in OFSP - sustainability
• **Good leadership** and **supportive management** (host institution) responsive to human resource policies and practices ensures ownership and sustainability
• **Strengthening institutional capacities** (demonstration farm, irrigation, pre-training) and human talent to ensure an effective and sustainable training programme
• Implementing the training using the **revised TOT manual** and **Power Points** helped to improve the quality of instruction, curriculum and standardize the training materials
• **Peer assist and mentoring** of national experts, and networking strengthens national capacities
• **Teamwork and commitment** (facilitators and participants) are critical to successful training courses
• ‘**Seed money** ‘ needed to step-down courses
Thank you for your attention!

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