"Partnership Check-up":
Feedback from breeders & sub-grantees

SPHI

Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative

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Effective partnerships: essential for success of project

AR4D:

"…sustained multi-organizational relationship with mutually agreed objectives and an exchange or sharing of resources or knowledge for the purpose of generating research outputs…, or fostering innovation…., for practical ends."

(CIP WP # 3. Horton et.al. 2009)

Key elements for success:

- Agreed common vision
- Understanding partner motivations & incentives
- Leadership and facilitation
- Clear roles, responsibilities & performance expectations for each partner
- Guidelines for financial management & reporting
- Communication plan
- Conflict resolution mechanism

Strengthening partnerships to achieve project results

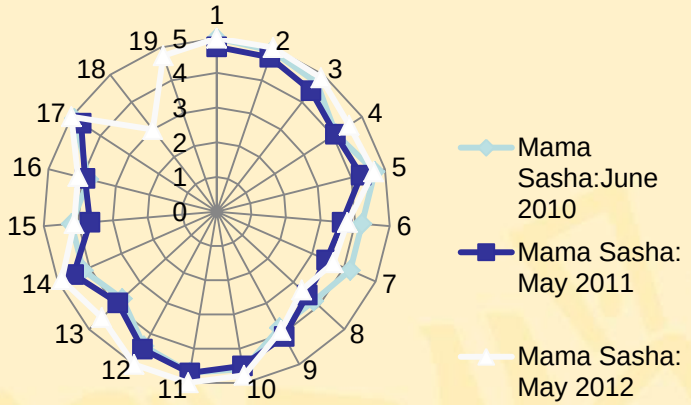
- Research & development objectives
  - Interdisciplinary
  - Multi-sector
- Outcome orientated results
- Capacities to manage:
  - Partnering processes
  - LoU compliance
  - Community of Practice
- Different tools:
  - Impact pathways
  - Stakeholder analysis
  - SWOT
  - Partnership “health” check-up tool

Table 2: Mama SASHA COVA Team Dynamic Results Feb 2013

	Number of respondents awarding					Feb-13	
	1	2	3	4	5	mean	N
1. I am in agreement with the objectives of the “Mama SASHA COVA Study”.				7	10	4.6	17
2. I am clear about my role in the “Mama Sasha COVA Study Team”					17	5.0	17
3. I am clear about the role of other team members in the “Mama Sasha COVA Study Team”.				6	11	4.6	17
4. I clearly understand the role of the field coordinator in the “Mama Sasha COVA Study Team”		1	2	9	5	4.1	17
5. I clearly understand the role of the Project Leader in the “Mama Sasha COVA Study Team”			2	8	7	4.3	17
6. I am aware of my responsibilities in the “Mama Sasha COVA Study”.					17	5.0	17
7. I have received sufficient information about the “Mama Sasha COVA Study”.			1	5	11	4.6	17
8. Internal communication among COVA team members is going well.		2	6	4	5	3.7	17
9. Communication with external stakeholders is going well (i.e. stakeholders who the COVA team is working with but where there is no contractual arrangement)			8	6	3	3.7	17
10. Team members in the “Mama Sasha COVA Study Team” are able to resolve any potential conflicts related to study activities.			2	10	5	4.2	17
11. I am willing to learn from experiences and am able to modify the way I do things.				1	16	4.9	17
12. I feel I have enough time to spend on the “Mama Sasha COVA Study”.		2	1	4	10	4.3	17
13 I submit my travel and expense requests and reports on time			1	4	11	4.6	16
14. I feel the decision-making process in the “Mama Sasha COVA Study Team” is very transparent and inclusive.	1	3	4	6	3	3.4	17
15. I am pleased with the level of honesty and trust in “Mama Sasha COVA Study Team”		4	3	6	4	3.6	17
16. I am satisfied to be contributing to the successful achievement of the “Mama Sasha COVA Study” vision.				2	15	4.9	17

Various rapid qualitative tools developed & used

- "Partnership Health Check-up": PoCPs
- *SASHA LoU Partner Review*
- Innovation Platform satisfaction index
- COVA Team Dynamic Check-list
- *Breeder network review*



Breeders survey summary results

April-May 2013: survey monkey
32 invited with **78%** response rate

67% NARIs
5% University
24% CGIAR (CIP)
5% Other

- 86% Breeders, 10% agronomists
- 76% Male, 24% Female
- 48% 35-49 years old
  33% 50 years & above
  19% Under 35 years

Community of Practice & use of Portal

- Have you **made or received visits** to/from other countries as a part of the SP platform activities?
  - 82% made a visit to another country's breeding program
  - Mozambique, Kenya, Peru, Uganda most frequent
  - 67% received a visit from colleagues in another program
  - Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda
- Signed up as a member of the **Sweetpotato Knowledge Portal** (SPK)? 85%
- How often do you **use** the SPK?
  - **Rarely: 65%;** On a monthly basis: 25%; On a weekly basis: 10%
  - On a daily basis: 0%
- **Main problems:**
  - Connectivity, connectivity, connectivity
  - Only use it to seek info required at particular time
  - Not everything you want to know about SP is on the SPK

Financial Support & Publishing

- **33%** have submitted proposals to at least one donor since 2009
- **40%** have received AGRA grant (one before 2009)
- Among 11 who responded, 7 (64%) said their national research program received funds from other sources for their sp program since 2009
- **76%** published articles on sp research and development since 2009
- **71%** presented posters on sp research and development since 2009

Rating of the Importance of the Activities of the SP Support Platforms

	Very Low Importance	Low Importance	Average Importance	High Importance	Very High Importance	Rating Average
Proposal Development & funding opportunities	5%	0%	5%	21%	68%	4.47
Technical Backstopping Visits	0%	0%	11%	39%	50%	4.39
Web-based Sweetpotato Knowledge Portal	0%	0%	6%	50%	44%	4.39
Short-term training	5%	0%	0%	42%	53%	4.37
Germplasm Exchange	5%	0%	5%	32%	58%	4.37
General Networking Opportunities	5%	0%	0%	42%	53%	4.37
Physical Meetings Focusing on Specific Topics	5%	0%	5%	47%	42%	4.21
Long-term training (MSc & PhD)	5%	0%	5%	55%	35%	4.15

Germplasm exchange

- 57% received botanical seed: 52% received SP germplasm as part of support platform.
- Actions needed to strengthen germplasm exchange:
  - The need to **strengthen procedures** for exchange of germplasm among countries: i.e. import permits, transfer agreements and issuing of phytosanitary certificates
  - **Policy aspects** related to sharing among countries within regions need to be streamlined to allow easy germplasm exchange
  - **Capacity** to eliminate viruses from vines need to be build up to avoid sharing viruses.
  - It is good for breeders who receive germplasm and seed to **give feedback on performance** of germplasm

Feedback at Kigali Breeders' Meeting

- The CoP is growing..
- Joint trainings and meetings appreciated
- Common tools such as CloneSelector allow for improved management of trial data and easier sharing of results across countries
- Continued work is needed to improve the usefulness and efficiency of germplasm exchange
- Explicit efforts are needed to support succession strategies so that the next generation of sweetpotato breeders are equipped to continue to build and expand the work

SASHA LoU Partner Review

Rapid survey for feedback from LoU sub-grantees at senior management level: 14/19 invited to take part in anonymous on-line survey Jan/Feb 13:

- Universities, INGOs, NARIs, ARIs, national NGOs

- **Role of CIP as lead organization, providing vision & quality of technical guidance**
- Choice of partners in SASHA
- **SASHA Governance structure**
- Adequacy of partner budget and staff time for SASHA activities
- **Feedback from CIP on narrative & financial reports & adjustment of activities & budget**
- Resolution of conflicts
- **Commitment to continuing R&D activities on sweetpotato**
- Views on SP community of practice & future commitment

SASHA LoU Partner Review - feedback

- **Areas with lowest & most dispersed ratings**
  - Sufficient **budget allocation** to partners (54%; 3.31)
  - **Governance structure** & partnership management & has been inclusive & transparent (61%; 3.38)
    - *"Need for greater recognition by CIP of the extent of cost sharing & input by senior staff which is not covered by SASHA budget"*
    - *"Need to improve CIP's accountability to stakeholders & have more transparent and inclusive decision-making especially on strategic decisions"*
      - trade off between a coherent, focused, results based project & participation & inclusion
      - a challenge has been the turnover in representation from organizations which are major partners
    - *"Closer integration between partner 's SASHA project staff and partner's other staff to ensure cross-fertilization (esp. Ag-Nut linkages)"*

SASHA LoU Partner Review - feedback

- **Areas with highest ratings**
  - Timely submission of narrative reports by partners (100%; 4.15)
  - **Review of activities & budgets** between CIP and partner (92% - 4.23)
  - **Satisfied with technical collaboration** & support from CIP for implementation of SASHA (86%; 4.07)
  - **Conflict resolution** over technical issues (77%; 4.0)
    - *"Technical support from CIP is over-stretched at times"*
    - *"CIP should be able to provide technical support for expansion of partners' SP activities even if not specifically written into budget "*

SASHA LoU Partner Review - feedback

- **Future of sweetpotato CoP?**
  - **Commitment** to continued SP R&D activities (93%; 4.64) within framework of SPHI & Community of Practice (CoP) (64.3%; 3.93) facilitated by CIP (92.3%)
    - *"CIP should work towards support for leadership & funding channeled through Africa-based organization"*
    - *" Rotate leadership or with active participation of others to get sustained buy-in from other partners"*
    - *"CIP has international mandate, and technical personnel to backup national programmes"*
  - **Other non-SASHA funded activities considered** as part of SPHI (71%;3.86)
  - SASHA II funding channeled through CIP (64% 3.86)

SASHA LoU Partner Review - reflections

- How do we incorporate this feedback into future partnership and governance arrangements?
  - Initial scoping and negotiations
    - Partner expectations, quantify & document “off-budget “ partner contributions
    - Agreement on how partner contributions will be recognized and communicated & vice-versa
    - Level of representation of partner organization (different accountability structures, institutional and communication cultures)
    - Understanding partner internal communication culture and practice
    - Partner regional office ***&*** country office commitment needed
    - Partner capacity statements
    - ID partner capacity strengthening requirements

SASHA LoU Partner Review - reflections

- Governance structure
  - Review composition & time commitment for SMT
  - Consistency of representation from partners
- LoU arrangements (cross country & cross programme more complicated)
- Full time communication position needed
- Review & strengthen CIP's own partnering approach & capacities needed

SASHA LoU Partner Review - reflections

- Explicit technical & systems capacity strengthening strategy developed with partners
- Strengthening African capacity for technical support and leadership of SP Community of Practice
  - *VITAA and links with AU, NEPAD and CAADP processes*
  - *Sub-Regional Sweetpotato Support Platforms – link to national platforms?*
  - *ASARECA, CORAF etc.*

Partnership health: reflections

- SASHA is complex! Multi-partner, multi-disciplinary, multi-layered, multi-country…… requirement for structure & systems as well as “champions”
- Partnership principles of “equity, transparency and mutual benefits” vs. realism of power relations
- Financial and administrative instruments influence partnership processes and outcomes
- Joint review & evaluation processes increase accountability and learning functions
- Partnership processes: a balance between facilitation and direction; energy, commitment, skill and nurturing!

Agetereine nigo gata eigu fa!

….the teeth when together break a bone……..