

WORKSHOP REPORT

OPERATIONAL PLANNING WORKSHOP

ABUJA, NIGERIA.

Bolton White Hotels, Abuja

JULY 5 – 6, 2012

HELEN KELLER INTERNATIONAL, NIGERIA

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

ADP	Agricultural Development Project
CD	Country Director
CIP	International Centre for Potato
DG	Director
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OFSP	Orange Flesh Sweetpotato
PM	Program Manager
PE	Promotion Expert
RAC	Reaching Agents for Change
SP	Sweet Potato
TV	Television
VAD	Vitamin A Deficiency
WIA	Women in Agriculture

LIST OF TABLES

ANNEX 1 Group Presentations in excel format

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objectives of the Workshop were viewed through plenary discussions, presentation of group work, brainstorming and breakout sessions. Participants were presented with the revised goal and were required to adopt the modified objectives from the previous Situational Analysis workshop held in June 2012. They were divided into 3 groups each assigned to consider the strategy modifications and to deal with the areas in the 3 objectives to be modified. Each State representative spelt out their workshop expectations.

The workshop objectives were also enumerated to include presenting the draft OFSP advocacy strategy to advocates and stakeholders. Gather feedback, clarifications and inputs from advocates on the OFSP advocacy strategy. Reach agreement on the OFSP advocacy strategy and clarify the role of advocates and stakeholders in the operationalization of the OFSP advocacy strategy

The Participants were also re-acquainted with the Reaching Agents of Change (RAC) project which focuses on Advocacy, Capacity Building, OFSP and the objectives in partnership with CIP and HKI.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Operational Planning workshop was a follow up to the Advocacy Analysis Workshop held in May 2012. The proceedings of the Workshop were carried out through plenary discussions and breakout sessions as well as presentation of group work. The workshop objectives were to

1. Present the draft OFSP advocacy strategy to advocates and stakeholders.
2. Gather feedback, clarifications and inputs from advocates on the OFSP advocacy strategy.
3. Reach agreement on the OFSP advocacy strategy and
4. Clarify the role of advocates and stakeholders in the operationalization of the OFSP advocacy strategy

In the introductory session handled by the RAC Consultant/Facilitator, the participants wrote out their workshop expectations which include consolidating on the knowledge of OFSP, negative effects of Vitamin A Deficiency, work plan towards achieving the objectives of the RAC Project, acquisition of more knowledge on advocacy strategies for the implementation of RAC project, Advocacy on Training of trainers, Advocates should have a focus for their states, a timeline chart for the implementation of different activities among others

The Consultant pointed out the key concerns from HKI which would pivot the workshop deliberations as

- To tone the behavioral change component of the previous workshop outcomes down because of the limited budget allotted to it
- To influence policy implementation for the present outcomes

The Consultant also stated the revised goal as

“The goal of this strategy is to influence policy implementation and generate substantially increased investments and commitment to the dissemination and use of orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) as a means to combat vitamin A deficiency (VAD) and food insecurity in Nigeria. “

The modified objectives presented to advocates to adopt were

1. To raise awareness of the benefits of OFSP among key decision-makers in government, the private sector, civil society and the general public.

2. To promote resource allocation by government, the private sector and donors at national level and 3 States for OFSP production, processing, marketing and utilization (value chain) by December 2014.
3. A) Promote visibility of national and state – level policies that support increased programming on OFSP at all levels.

OR

- 3 B) Advocate for integration (inclusion) of OFSP in relevant national and state-level agricultural, nutritional and health policies, plans and programmes at levels (urban/rural).
E.g. inclusion of OFSP

Chapter 2

Presentation: Day 1

RAC Promotion Expert, Mary Umoh, gave the Welcome address on behalf of the Country Director, who was unavoidably at a Meeting in Conakry, Guinea and could not be present at the Workshop. The RAC Promotion Expert gave a recap on the RAC objectives and Process in Nigeria, and also a report of the advocacy analysis workshop held in May 2012

RAC Objective is to increase investment in OFSP through **Advocacy** and **Capacity Building**.

- Implementation of RAC Objective is to be carried out through Partnership with HKI and CIP based on expertise
- HKI will implement through advocacy and CIP through capacity building.
- Principal countries of operation are Tanzania, Mozambique and Nigeria due to research and dissemination activities
- Secondary countries are Ghana and Burkina Faso
- RAC Objective 1 which is Advocacy, to be handled by HKI, has 2 components ; Country level Advocacy and Regional Advocacy which will focus on resource mobilization for the 3 project countries and regional advocacy for use of OFSP as a means to combat VAD and achieve food security
- Objective 2 to be handled by CIP is to build the capacities of implementing agencies on research and extension as well as offer technical backstopping to OFSP projects built.

The PE went on to remind the participants about the RAC advocacy process as

Identify → Train → Support which means that RAC will identify the advocates then organize trainings for them and also offer support.

The Promotion Expert also pointed out to the participant advocates that in the RAC Start up Process, the current activities were at the fourth level of the Operational Planning Workshop having previously gone through the Situation analysis, Participatory Advocacy Analysis workshop and Drafting of Advocacy Strategy by the Promotion Expert.

It was also pointed out that in respect to the outcomes of the Situation Analysis workshop; the regional office had modified some of the agreed objectives based on the primary focus of RAC activities which is on Advocacy for new investment and policy change with an allowance for awareness raising activities on a limited scale as opposed to “behavior- change focused objectives” agreed on at the Situational Analysis workshop held in May 2012.

The modified objectives were adopted by the advocates with option 3 (B) as the third objective.

The advocates gave 3 major concerns that needed to be addressed at the workshop as

- The need for more knowledge of OFSP and Vitamin A deficiency
- Budgetary allocation to the 3 pilot states of Kwara, Benue and Nassarawa
- Facilitators/ Organizers to be more accommodating to all.

In response to problems and issues raised by advocates, the PE, speaking on budgetary allocation, indicated that no budgetary allocations were provided for states; rather there was the need to work hand in hand with advocates, nutritionists and all other stake holders with the hope to sharpen skills for advocacy. She also stressed the importance of the advocates sourcing for revenue from ministries for funding and support as well as from their state governments.

She continued by reminding the advocates that the expected funds to be raised by the end of the RAC project is \$18 mill therefore there is the need to advocate and mobilize resources from stakeholders, private investors etc.

On the need for advocates to be more knowledgeable about OFSP and VAD, the PE said another round of Training for the advocates had been scheduled for later this year. She also gave an elaborate explanation about OFSP and the importance of advocacy.

She ensured participants that all their views will always be regarded as important and encouraged all to be open minded and receptive to all contributions made by other advocates.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

- Advocates suggested that State level MOUs should be presented early enough to the pilot states to give a proper understanding of what the project entails to enable easy access to grant funds.
- In respect to the time frame for the project with one year of the three years timespan gone by, it was suggested that instead of continued advocacy for the OFSP, other varieties of sweet potatoes should be promoted extensively as well. This stems from the fear that the three year project period may lapse without the OFSP being in the market.

The response to this from the PE was that the need to advocate for the OFSP is needed despite the project's time frame.

Two presentations by the PE followed preceded comments.

The first presentation focused on "Sweet Potato Enhancing Nigeria's Health and Wealth" detailed the following

- Understanding of sweet potatoes particularly the OFSP highly rich in Vit A being a nationwide crop and gender sensitive project focusing on women.
- As a food security crop, SP grows on any type of soil and therefore can be grown in all 36 states of the federation because it is drought resistant with a high beta carotene level; a precursor of Vit A.
- All types of sweet potatoes contain Vit B, C, E and K containing a high dietary fiber and which has been known not to increase the blood glucose level of diabetic people as it digests slowly in the system.

- Investing in OFSP is more sustainable since Vit A capsules support provided by donors could end at anytime.
- OFSP can achieve whatever cassava, yam and other tubers can such as in agro processing of chips ,flour for bread and biscuits etc
- Several economic benefits of the crop such as creating jobs for women and youths bring about value change.

She went ahead to list key stakeholders involved in the project such as...

The second presentation was on” Reaching agents of Change” (RAC).

She spoke on the three countries where OFSP is being advocated; Mozambique, Tanzania and Nigeria. A greater awareness and much work have been done in Mozambique on OFSP where 15 varieties have already been released. Tanzania has three released varieties while Nigeria is at the final stages of the on farm trials and is yet to have any released variety.

Comments and Questions

Advocates wanted to know

- If there is toxicity in excess Vitamin A consumption?
- Why FMOH was not included in the list of stakeholders. If the FMOH is not a stakeholder, the State components will also be missing; documentation is very critical. In response, the PE said in practice the FMOH and SMOH were not included in the presentation and it had been noted for editing and will be subsequently included.
- About the increase and maximization of SP yields. Currently Nigeria’s yield is estimated at 7 tonnes compared to country like China which has a greater yield of up to 20 tonnes.
- How the farmers’ capacities will be built in the area of vine protection and multiplication since Potato protection is limited by availability of vines.
- How funds can be sourced from donors in respect of regional advocacy
- What the modalities are for reimbursing of advocates expenses (there should be a master plan)
- If processed sweetpotato which can be too sweet if eaten on its own, can be used to fortify other products like cassava flour or yam flour.

After lunch, strategy modifications were considered and advocates were divided into three groups each to deal with the areas in the 3 objectives to be modified. The presentation of the group work was scheduled for day 2.

The issues involved were

- Policy change which was not indicated in the initial goals
- Among the initial objectives, the importance of raising awareness on the benefits of OFSP among key decision makers in the government, private sectors, civil society and general public needed to be modified to include specific persons and not just a generic classification.
- The second objective was not also specific on who the donors would be
- Policy change and influence need to be a part of the objectives

The workshop was brought to a close at 4:08pm with an appreciation speech from the PE and the RAC agronomist, Dr Jude Njoku who spoke on the essence of all advocates effectiveness to meet deliverables.

Chapter 3

Presentation: DAY 2

The PE commenced the session with an appreciation to the entire guest on the previous day attendance and contribution to making the workshop a success. She also requested for

- a feedback to the group presentation and
- a recap of the previous day activities

Hajia Lawal, Deputy Director, Nursing, Kwara State Ministry of Health and the PM, Nassarawa State, ADP Mr Naphtali Dachor took the audience through the recap.

An advocate from Benue State, the Director of WIA, Mrs Dinah Adeh had a question on if OFSP was a genetically modified food or seed as well as concerns for yield which had been brought to her attention by some farmers in her state.

In response, the PE said the OFSP was not a genetically modified crop but a land raised crop, she stressed further to say that HKI will not introduce any food to the country that will cause harm to the people. On yields, she said a meeting will be set up with breeders of OFSP for further enlightenment.

The facilitator DR EJIRO came on board at 9:48am to take the presentations of the three groups.

Each presenter had 5 minutes presentation time.

The first presenter was Bulus Garba he came on to speak on the **objectives, target audiences, approaches, activities, critical risk**

At the end of group 1 there were no questions, observations or criticisms to the presentation and so group 1 presentation was adopted.

Mr Amedu was presenter for group 2 after the presentation there were neither questions nor criticisms for their work.

The last presentation by Hajia Amina, the SNO, Nassarawa State, for the third group brought the presentation to a close.

For group 3, an observation was made to include relevant information into the activity column which was absent in their presentation.

The facilitator DR EJIRO commended on all three group presentation and went ahead to speak on the day's activity which was a continuation of the previous day's work.

A different template was filled with specific task that needs to be achieved not so many details were required but major tasks that needed to be done sequentially for the project.

The templates include

- Objective column which can be replaced by their objectives they had already from the first presentation.
- The Activity column which should be specific with what activity needs to be done, by whom, with whom and so on.
- The third column should include the timing of the activity in terms of the number of months needed to complete a task.

After a break, the session resumed back for the presentation of the second templates that were issued.

Group 1

Group 1 presentation was done by Hajia lawal (please see attached table)

Comments

- Dr Momah commended the work of group 1 but went further to say from their work, it was not clear who the term 'community' referred to. Indeed the radio jingles can reach anybody but will the groups meet to reinforce what has already been advertised on radio. Her opinion however to who the community could be includes the traditional rulers where meetings or town hall meetings can be organized to enforce the project and making the strategies for the project to be cost effective.

The response by the Group focal person was that they are looking at the community as being the women, youths, farmers, and marketers all in the community that needed mobilization. Contributing to this an advocate suggested that after the media awareness is done it is important to reduce the population into a pilot, so that the community can take ownership of the program for it to be more effective.

Group 2

The second presentation was done by Mr. Amedu

Comments

After the presentation, the PM from Nassarawa commented that the capacity building aspect of the project is to be handled by CIP. The Facilitator's response to this was that CIP is involved and the need for advocates to be trained for specific skills will be discussed at the next meeting.

Group 3

Group 3 presented lastly on how to get the policy makers engaged in the project

Comments

- The observation from the facilitator, DR EJIRO on group three presentations was that it suggested that HKI would be doing the bulk of the work as observed from their strategies in the presentation. She further explained that advocates are to take the lead, HKI is involved in doing the ground work afterwards the advocates should be actively involved in achieving this project. She informed advocates that HKI cannot do all the advocacy work; advocates need to do more work as all participants advocates were drawn from several sectors in each state and nominated to push forward the OFSP advocacy.
- An advocate commented on the need to source for existing policy documents that can aid OFSP advocacy for each representative in their states and various sectors. And suggested advocates in each state to return back to have group meetings on issues concerning OFSP.
- Dr Momah also suggested the incorporation of OFSP advocacy during the next Maternal Newborn and child care week coming up next November to December 2012, where Vit A is offered to women of child bearing age and malnourished children. OFSP can be used as complementary food for these groups of people.

Chapter 4

Updates from the States

An advocate from Kwara spoke about being able to get OFSP on radio programs, jingles were already being run and he had also met with some farmers who showed enthusiasm about OFSP and were already asking for vines which for now are not available. The PE also spoke on how she paid a visit to the state and got to get on air in a radio talk show generally on what HKI was doing and had the opportunity to also speak on the OFSP project.

Nassarawa state media representative mentioned that the OFSP program was aired in a TV and radio package program for 25 minutes. Jingles were also being run.

The PM of Nassarawa indicated that relevant reports on OFSP had been sent to relevant ministries and he also had an opportunity to meet with the State Governor and was able to intimate the Governor on OFSP and had a letter from the Governor to HKI concerning the OFSP project

From Benue, the media person Nancy Orshi spoke on how she got the HKI CD to speak on OFSP and Vit A. on air.

She mentioned that the management of Radio Benue is requesting to know their stake in the OFSP project and secondly she would require a follow up letter to be sent to her DG on OFSP as this will clear the air of any suspicion that she's on this project for any personal financial benefits.

After the short brief on updates, the PE requested that all jingles and write ups that are to be aired should be sent to HKI for verification before being aired to ensure that the right information is fed to the public.

Chapter 5

Next Steps and Recommendations

At the end of the workshop the PE and DR EJIRO thanked all the groups for their presentations and contributions to the success of the workshop and explained that all presentations will be analyzed and harmonized into one template and a subsequent implementation plan issued.

The next line of action were agreed as follows

- Each state is to give an update on the post workshop meetings held when they return back to their various states on what deliverables they were able to achieve.
- All jingles should be standardized for the States.
- An advocacy/courtesy call will be made to the FCT commissioner for Agriculture by the RAC project
- An introductory letter will be sent to the DG Radio Benue from HKi and a follow up visit to all stakeholders in Kwara state should be done by the advocates. Stakeholders to be visited are: The Executive Governor, The Commissioners' for Agriculture, Health etc.

In his conclusion, Dr Njoku mentioned that OFSP vines are available but the varieties for the OFSP are what is being worked on to determine the best variety that will be adequate in both size, yield etc and the varieties will be nominated from different states and hopefully released later this year 2012.

In her closing remark, the PE emphasized that advocacy work should be done as a group and not individually. She wished the advocates a safe trip back to their various destinations.

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