

Transformation of OFSP vines to Pottage: The case of School Feeding in Osun State, Nigeria

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Background

- ▶ Orange-Fleshed Sweetpotato (OFSP) was brought to Nigeria under the Reaching Agents of Change (RAC) project (2011-2014)
- ▶ RAC came with the aim of raising investments and advocacy for the crop
- ▶ RAC successfully established and empowered vine multipliers in the 3 states in Nigeria
- ▶ The Vine multipliers succeeded in making the vines available but limited in taking it further by farmers and other stakeholders in the value chain
- ▶ This is probably because of limited funding and project timeframe

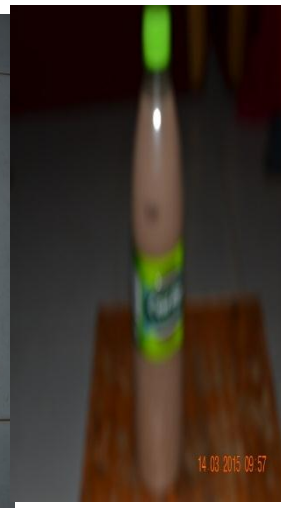


The Transformation



- ▶ Two other projects in Nigeria; Sweetpotato for health and wealth of Nigeria and Jumpstarting OFSP for Diversified markets in West Africa came to take it beyond the vines and transform it to healthy and commercial products .
- ▶ Farmers and processors were reached, encouraged and empowered to plant and use the vines and roots productively.
- ▶ Series of activities were carried out on product development for household consumption and commercialization
- ▶ Grassroots innovations were encouraged and promoted in processing; Women were enriching indigenous foods with OFSP puree
- ▶ Academic institutions partners were also empowered to come up with food products with potential economic benefits
- ▶ Such include development of wheat flour-OFSP puree composite bread and other pastries

We have been able to transform OFSP beyond 'boil & eat'.



- ▶ With the different products available targeting various end uses, the challenge of marketing and demand creation emerged.
- ▶ The projects again began to identify and follow up on outlets for OFSP demand formally and informally
- ▶ On formal market, school feeding program was identified and followed up with

About School Feeding in Nigeria

- ▶ In Nigeria, Osun state in the south west of Nigeria is the only state with successful school feeding program, providing a mid-morning meal to over 250,000 public school pupils in the elementary grades 1-4.
- ▶ One of the reasons for failure of the program in the other pilot states was use of imported foods, which was not sustainable.
- ▶ The home grown foods served are economically beneficial to local farmers while enhancing its sustainability.
- ▶ The program has enhanced school enrolment significantly and created educational and nutritional opportunities to reach the hungry and the poor.
- ▶ It has created job for over 3000 women who are the school vendors



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OFSP inclusion in the school Feeding- The Process

- ▶ School feeding was perceived as an outlet for creating demand for OFSP in Osun state so we set out for the opportunity.
- ▶ The government was approached on the inclusion of OFSP in the menu. This was achieved through dialogue with the policy makers, advocacy, state-wide sensitization of the school feeding program stakeholders-parents, teachers, etc.
- ▶ Choice of OFSP meal-this took a process as the program wanted a one-stop meal with everything as much as possible.
- ▶ Boiled OFSP, pottage, fried potato, etc. were presented but of all the pottage was considered as it is a single meal that was found easy to manage in term of cooking, serving and handling.

- ▶ Samples of the meal was presented and tested for consumer acceptability among teachers, community representatives, farmers, cooks, etc.
- ▶ OFSP pottage was acceptable to all and the feedback sent to the government that gave approval finally.



Implementation of the Inclusion

The inclusion started with a pilot of 8 schools of 4,160 pupils consuming about 1.2 tons weekly and ran for a term (3 months)

Base and endline surveys, which looked into acceptability and knowledge of parents and teachers on vitamin A and its content in OFSP.

Weekly monitoring of the exercise to ensure smooth process and delivery of the meal to the pupils

Results/Outcomes

- ▶ Increase in acceptability of OFSP pottage from 49-92% among the pupils
- ▶ Increase in households' knowledge of vitamin A and its importance to health from 62-89%
- ▶ Involvement of private schools in using OFSP pottage to feed their pupils
- ▶ Popularization and awareness of OFSP in the state
- ▶ Scale on coverage after a term to 17 schools of about 10,000 pupils consuming 3 tons of roots on weekly basis
- ▶ Raising of commercial farmers to serve the school feeding program

- ▶ Training of farmers on staggered planting and empowerment of farmers with irrigation facilities for all year round production especially during the school calendar year
- ▶ Provision of net tunnels to some vine multipliers for clean healthy planting materials
- ▶ Introduction of other processed products to the school feeding program and other end uses-OFSB Bread
- ▶ Use of OFSP bread to replace 100% wheat bread in the menu. The bread goes with beans thus providing another source of carotenoid intake by the pupils
- ▶ Other market outlets opened up for other user like the diabetic association, 'Boko Haram Internally Displaced Persons
- ▶ Bread being accepted and sold in some faith-based organizations thus increasing the awareness

Some of our Challenges

- ▶ Initial weak root supply chains
- ▶ Farmers and cooks' limited skills in calculating quantities of OFSP available roots and quantity required to serve a particular population of pupils
- ▶ Vine multipliers low capacity to meet the root demand due to approval of inclusion during dry season and farmers' doubt of approval.
- ▶ Problem of quality control of the meal among the cooks.

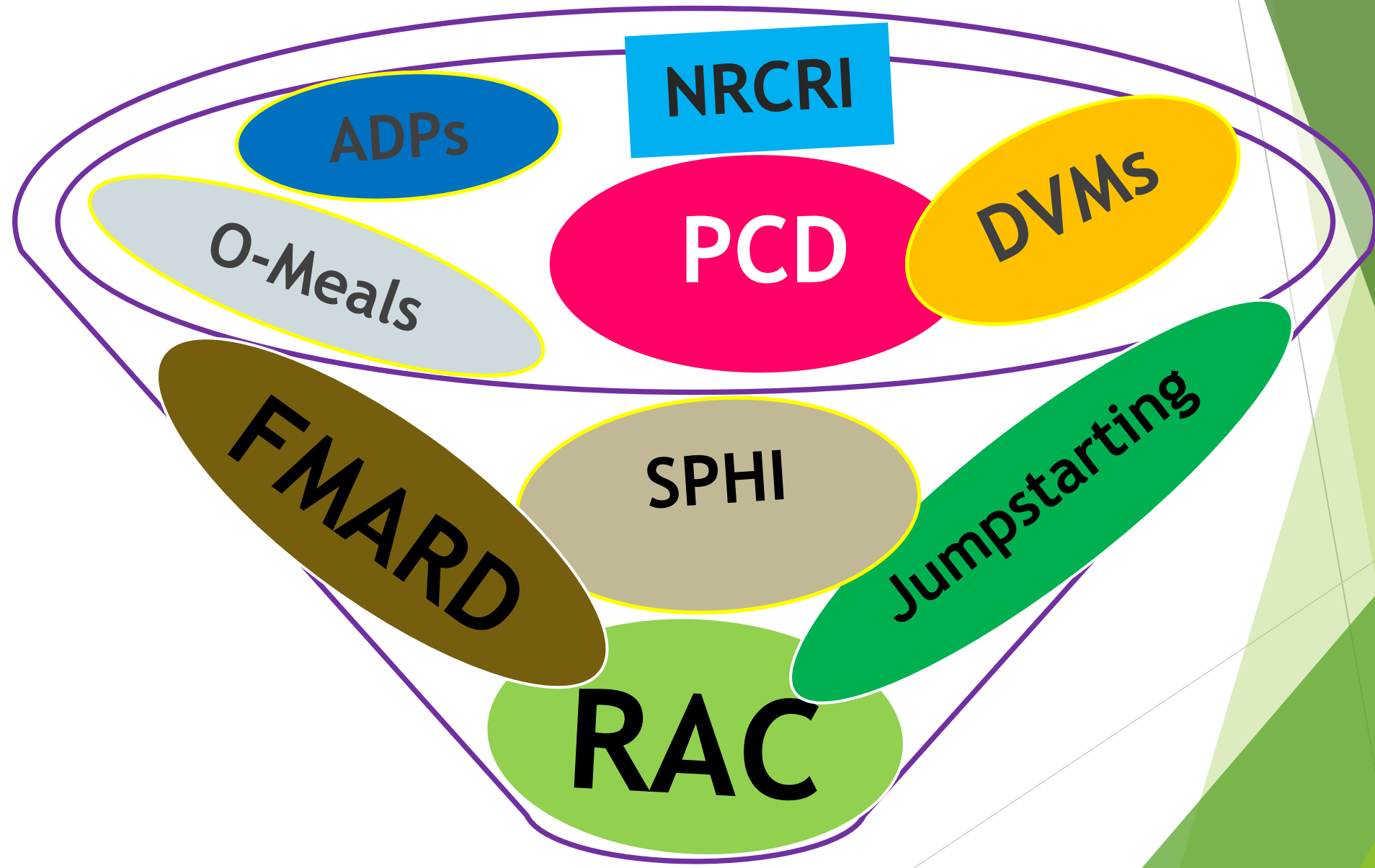
Lessons learnt

- ▶ Having commercial farmers primarily for school feeding was found much better than relying on vine multipliers to serve the roots needed for the program.
- ▶ Seasonality and school calendar were key considerable factors in balancing root demand and supply for the school feeding.
- ▶ Market identification and/or creation is a key motivator for farmers and processors

Way Forward

- ▶ Analysis of the pottage sample for beta carotene and other nutrients
- ▶ Appropriate technology on post harvest root storage
- ▶ Scale out and scale up on coverage-keying OFSP into the government mandate of school feeding program in all Nigerian states
- ▶ Promotion of OFSP bread in other LGAs schools
- ▶ OFSP demand creation beyond school feeding especially when pupils are on holiday

Acknowledgements



Thank you!!!!

