

Reaching Agents of Change (RAC) Project



Strengthening Advocacy & Technical Capacity for Successful Nutrition Investments Using OFSP



■ Rock star Bono celebrating OFSP with farmers in Mozambique (credit A. Naico)

The Reaching Agents of Change (RAC) Project advocates for increased investment in orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) to combat vitamin A deficiency among young children and women of reproductive age. RAC also builds institutional capacity to design and implement gender-sensitive projects to ensure wide access and utilization of OFSP in selected African countries. Its efforts contribute to the broader Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative (SPHI) which aims to improve the lives of 10 million African families by 2020. The three year project (2011-2014) operates in three principal countries: Tanzania, Mozambique and Nigeria and in two secondary countries: Ghana and Burkina Faso.

RAC is implemented by the **International Potato Center** (CIP), which has expertise in OFSP breeding, production, use and promotion; and

Helen Keller International (HKI), an NGO with experience in food-based nutrition and health interventions to combat vitamin A deficiency and advocacy.

✦ What do we hope to achieve?

The RAC Project seeks to:

Generate new investments and policy change: Through development of strong advocacy efforts at country level, RAC will generate new investments by governments, donors, and NGOs to scale up adoption of OFSP in the five target countries. A team of African advocates will seek to influence leaders in the agriculture, nutrition, and health fields as well as NGOs and donor organizations to expand investment in the promotion of OFSP, as a means to combat vitamin A deficiency and improve food security. The change agents will advocate for creation of favorable policy environments for food-based interventions to combat vitamin A deficiency at country level.

Include OFSP in regional/sub-regional policy agendas: The project will foster a cadre of African advocates who will ensure inclusion of OFSP as an integral part of strategies endorsed by regional and sub-regional bodies in Sub-Saharan Africa to address food insecurity and malnutrition. OFSP ambassadors will target policy makers in regional and sub-regional bodies such as the African Union (AU), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Build institutional capacity for OFSP programming: RAC will build the capacity of national implementing agencies to design and implement technically strong, gender-sensitive





■ Participants at a RAC stakeholders consultation workshop in Tanzania (credit P. Omari)

and cost-effective programs that drive uptake of OFSP. The foundation of this effort is the establishment of an annual “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sweetpotato” course in Mozambique, Tanzania, and Nigeria.

✦ Success Targets

The Reaching Agents of Change Project has three major goals to achieve by 2014:

- At least \$18 million devoted to OFSP programs in the five target countries mobilized.
- Substantial progress made in ensuring the use of OFSP as an integral part of strategies that address food insecurity and malnutrition at regional and sub-regional levels in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Technical capacity developed for successful



■ RAC Staff visiting permanent secretary of agriculture, in Nasarawa State Nigeria (credit Mr. Yusuf)

project implementation and continued awareness raising, resource mobilization, and change agent training in each sub-region in Sub-Saharan Africa (East and Central, West, and Southern Africa).

Project impacts will be demonstrated by a general increase in policy action in the national arenas of food production and nutrition, as well as increased diversification of diets, vitamin A intakes and food security at the household level due to efforts made by programs initiated under RAC.

Advocate for Investing in OFSP for Health and Wealth



■ Vice Minister of Mozambique speaking at RAC launch event (credit D.Matale)

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