A U G U S T 2 0 1 8

Viable Sweetpotato Techologies in Africa (VISTA) Mozambique

23,000 farmers (50% females) received quality planting material from October 2017 to June 2018. During the same period, 22,765 children under five years of age and 16,371 women of reproductive age were reached with nutrition messaging. We also completed a nutrition monitoring survey on 426 women to understand the impact of nutrition on intake of vitamin A rich foods. In addition, crop-cut yield estimation was conducted on 127 Decentralised Vine Multipliers (DVMs) production fields.

Fig. 1 Women learn how to integrate of OFSP into local food preparation (Credit V. Bechame)

What is the problem?

Drought and rainfall variability is a major challenge in increasing the adoption of nutritious orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) in rural communities in Mozambique. However, current food insecurity and lack of awareness of the benefits of sweetpotato especially in Nampula province, can be addressed through increased production, consumption and marketing of sweetpotato varieties. This will in turn contribute to improved nutrition, food security, and income of smallholder households.

What do we want to achieve?

The Viable Sweetpotato Technologies in Africa (VISTA) Project Mozambique contributes to improved nutrition, food security and incomes of smallholder farming families through increased production and better utilization of nutritious OFSP varieties. The project is funded by Feed the Future/USAID for US$ 12 million over seven years (2014-2021). By 2021, we target to reach more than 100,000 direct beneficiary households, and 375,000 indirect beneficiary households with our interventions.

Where are we working?

We work in eleven districts in Nampula Province (Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, Malema, Mogovolas, Angoche, Larde, Moma, Mucuburi, Nampula City, and Murrupula) and five in Zambezia Province (Alto Molócuè, Gile, Nicoadala, Mucuba, and Gurúè), covering about 490 communities.

How do we make it happen?

We multiply and distribute 15 farmer-preferred and drought tolerant OFSP varieties. VISTA also applies the Agriculture-Nutrition-Marketing integrated approach to sustainably improve food security, nutrition and income of smallholder families. Apart from improving access to quality planting material, we use nutrition messaging and campaigns on the integration of OFSP into local food preparation (Fig. 1) and infant feeding. Furthermore, the project improves awareness of pregnant and lactating women on the importance of postnatal and antenatal healthcare, breastfeeding, and eating a balanced diet. The project has three components:

Agriculture: *Increased production of OFSP through use of productive, locally adapted varieties, quality planting material, and sustainable agricultural practices.* This is achieved through multiplication of planting materials of improved OFSP varieties; the 'Mother-Baby-Trial' approach to select farmer preferred varieties; increased marketing and distribution of quality planting materials; farmer training on sweetpotato agronomy and conservation tech-

VISTA
VIABLE SWEETPOTATO TECHNOLOGIES FOR AFRICA

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A CGIAR RESEARCH CENTER

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Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative
Reaching 10 million African households by 2020

Partners

- The Mozambique Agrarian Research Institute (IIAM)
- The District Services of Economic Activities (SDAEs)

nologies (Fig. 2) and improving implementation by conducting operational studies.

Nutrition *Increased consumption of OFSP by children under five years of age and women through:*
Training health workers on nutrition education and counseling; development and promotion of recipes and guidelines for household-level OFSP utilization as a healthy food for all – with specific focus on children under five; broad education campaigns on nutrient-rich foods.

Marketing: *Increased agricultural incomes among at least 10,000 HH from sales of OFSP roots, vines, leaves, and OFSP-processed product. This can be achieved*: by training and equipping farmers and traders on improved handling, packaging and transport of fresh roots and leaves; by facilitation of OFSP market days to increase visibility of OFSP and other nutritious foods grown locally; production and promotion of OFSP puree for use in school and community demonstrations and educational activities; and demand creation and consumer education campaigns to promote OFSP and derived products for healthier diets.

What have we achieved so far?

We have distributed quality planting material to 23,000 farmers (50% females), making the total number of families that had received planting materials about 60,000 in October 2017-June 2018. In 2018, the project designed an integrated inclusive intervention approach of reaching families both with agronomic trainings and nutrition education; each family receiving vouchers after completion of two trainings and redeeming the vouchers for vines. During the same period 22,765 children under five years of age and 16,371 women of reproductive age were reached with nutrition messaging (Fig. 3). We also completed a nutrition monitoring survey on 426 women to understand the impact of nutrition on intake of vitamin A rich foods. In addition, crop-cut yield estimation was conducted on 127 Decentralised Vine Multipliers (DVMs) fields. We also trained 27 technicians on everything you need to know about sweetpotato in coordination with the University of Eduardo Mondlane.

What's next?

The project will continue expanding its activities into new and remote districts by establishing ten new decentralized vine multipliers (DVMs) and implementing Mother-Baby-Trail technology in 13 districts to identify best varieties selected by farmer. Ten more field coordinators will be dispatched to be based in the remote districts to better serve the communities and assist with project implementation. About 250 individuals will be trained on vine conservation technologies and other OFSP topics, using modules adopted from the 'Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sweetpotato' Training of Trainers' course (Fig. 4). About 170 health professionals will receive refresher training on the basic nutrition modules. To support project implementation, we will conduct studies on efficient vine multiplication and determinants of OFSP consumption.

Fig. 2 Farmer training on using the Triple S method for vine generation (Credit O. Jeque)

Fig. 3 Children eating orange-fleshed sweetpotato in Mozambique (Credit R. Alberto)

Fig. 4 Net tunnel training Nampula (Credit V. Bechame)

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