

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SWEETPOTATO



TOPIC **10**

## Marketing and Entrepreneurship

Reaching Agents of Change Training of Trainers (ToT) manual

October 2018



**Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sweetpotato. Topic 10 - Marketing and Entrepreneurship**

Reaching Agents of Change ToT Training Manual

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This team has brought together and shared their many years of experience of working with sweetpotato systems and farmer learning processes across Sub-Saharan Africa to compile this *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sweetpotato* resource. None of this experience would have been gained without the partnership of many sweetpotato farmers and other stakeholders (extensionists, national researchers, traders, transporters, NGO staff, nutritionists, media and donors) across the region. We thank you, and hope that this resource can in return offer you support in your sweetpotato activities.

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This manual was originally produced as part of the Reaching Agents of Change project in 2013 and updated by the Building Nutritious Food Baskets project in 2017/2018 – both projects funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>Als</b>	Adequate Intakes
<b>AVRDC</b>	The World Vegetable Centre
<b>BNFB</b>	Building Nutritious Food Baskets
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CIP</b>	International Potato
<b>DAP</b>	Days After Planting
<b>DFE</b>	Dietary Folate Equivalents
<b>DONATA</b>	Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa
<b>DVM</b>	Decentralised Vine Multipliers
<b>dwb</b>	Dry Weight Basis
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
<b>FW</b>	Fresh Weight
<b>HH</b>	Household
<b>HKI</b>	Helen Keller International
<b>IBPGR</b>	Bioversity International
<b>IPM</b>	Integrated Pest Management
<b>IPPM</b>	Integrated Pest & Production Management
<b>K</b>	Potassium
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Areas
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MAP</b>	Months After Planting
<b>m.a.s.l.</b>	Metres Above Sea Level
<b>Mm</b>	Mass Multiplication
<b>MSC</b>	Most Significant Change
<b>N</b>	Nitrogen
<b>NARO</b>	National Agricultural Research Organisation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organisations
<b>NHV</b>	Negative Horizontal Ventilation
<b>NRI</b>	Natural Resources Institute
<b>OFSP</b>	Orange-fleshed Sweetpotato
<b>P</b>	Phosphorous
<b>PMCA</b>	Participatory Market Chain Approach
<b>PMS</b>	Primary Multiplication Site
<b>PPP</b>	Public Private Partnership
<b>PVC</b>	Polyvinyl Chloride
<b>QDPM</b>	Quality Declared Planting Material

<b>QDS</b>	Quality Declared Seed
<b>RAC</b>	Reaching Agents of Change
<b>RAE</b>	Retinol Activity Equivalents
<b>RCT</b>	Randomised Control Trial
<b>RDA</b>	Recommended Daily Allowances
<b>RE</b>	Retinol Equivalents
<b>REU</b>	Reaching End Users
<b>RH</b>	Relative Humidity
<b>SASHA</b>	Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa
<b>SMS</b>	Secondary Multiplication Site
<b>SP</b>	Sweetpotato
<b>SPCSV</b>	Sweetpotato Chlorotic Stunt Virus
<b>SPFMV</b>	Sweetpotato Feathery Mottle Virus
<b>SPKP</b>	Sweetpotato Knowledge Portal
<b>SPVD</b>	Sweetpotato Virus Disease
<b>SSA</b>	Sub-Saharan Africa
<b>ToT</b>	Training of Trainers
<b>TMS</b>	Tertiary Multiplication Site
<b>Tshs.</b>	Tanzanian Shillings
<b>TSNI</b>	Towards Sustainable Nutrition Improvement
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollar
<b>Ushs.</b>	Ugandan Shillings
<b>VAD</b>	Vitamin A Deficiency
<b>WAP</b>	Weeks After Planting
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WTP</b>	Willingness to Pay

## Foreword

During the past decade, interest in sweetpotato in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has expanded, the number of projects utilizing sweetpotato has increased, and the demand for quality training resources, training development practitioners and farmers has subsequently risen. Sweetpotato scientists at the International Potato Center and national research centres often received these requests and frequently held 1-3 day training sessions, drawing on whatever training materials they had or could quickly pull together.

The Reaching Agents of Change (RAC) project in 2011 changed that situation. Jointly implemented by the International Potato Center (CIP) and Helen Keller International (HKI), RAC sought to empower advocates for orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) to successfully raise awareness about OFSP and mobilize resources for OFSP projects. RAC also sought to build the capacity of public sector extension and non-governmental organizational personnel to effectively implement those projects to promote the dissemination and appropriate use of vitamin A rich, orange-fleshed sweetpotato. The Building Nutritious Food Basket (BNFB) is a three-year project (November 2015 to October 2018) that followed on from the RAC project. The project is implemented in Nigeria and Tanzania and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The goal of the project is to accelerate and support scaling up of biofortified crops for food and nutrition security and to help reduce hidden hunger by catalyzing sustainable investment for the utilization of biofortified crops (OFSP, PVA maize, high iron beans and vitamin A cassava) at scale. BNFB develops institutional, community and individual capacities to produce and consume biofortified crops. The objectives of the project are to strengthen the enabling environment for increased investments in biofortified crops and to develop institutional and individual capacities to produce and consume biofortified crops.

RAC/BNFB goal of developing and revising the Training of Trainers (ToT) manual on *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sweetpotato* was to see *sustained* capacity for training senior extension personnel about the latest developments in sweetpotato production and utilization in each of the major sub-regions of SSA: Eastern and Central Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa. Hence, CIP identified local institutions to work with in Mozambique, Tanzania, and Nigeria to host an annual course entitled: *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sweetpotato*. The course has progressed from initially having CIP scientists working closely with national scientists to implement it, to national scientists and partners independently organising and conducting the course. In subsequent years, institutions in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi and others have been capacitated in conducting the course.

In developing the course content, a long-time collaborator of CIP, Tanya Stathers of the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Greenwich, worked with CIP Scientists to review the existing training material, added in new knowledge from sweetpotato scientists and practitioners, and designed the course with a heavy emphasis on learning-by-doing. The CIP personnel who contributed to the development of the initial manual include, (Robert Mwanga, Ted Carey, Jan Low, Maria Andrade, Margaret McEwan, Jude Njoku, Sam Namanda, Sammy Agili, Jonathan Mkumbira, Joyce Malinga, Godfrey Mulongo), Adiel Mbabu and HKI nutritionists (Margaret Benjamin, Heather Katcher, Jessica Blankenship) and an HKI gender specialist (Sonii David) as well as NRI colleagues (Richard Gibson, Aurelie Bechoff, Keith Tomlins). Some of the materials were adapted from the DONATA project training materials, the Reaching End Users project and many others. After practitioners had used the course and the manual, a review was held in 2012 and the manual and course were subsequently updated, and a standard set of accompanying Power Point presentations created. In 2017-2018, the Building Nutritious Food Baskets project led a further review of the manual working closely with Tanya Stathers, the above mentioned CIP teams again plus Robert Ackatia-Armah, Kwame Ogera, Srinji Rajendra, Julius Okello, Fred Grant, Joyce Maru, Hilda Munyua and Netsayi Mudege to update the content of topics 3, 4, 5, 12 and 13 which cover: sweetpotato varietal selection; nutrition; seed systems; monitoring, learning and evaluation; and using the 10 and 5 day ToT course.

This manual is designed to potentially serve a wide variety of audiences (nutritionists and agronomists, policymakers, extension workers, community development workers, leaders of farmer organizations, farmers etc.). Not all the materials will be relevant to all audiences, but facilitators can adapt the content to their audience and facilitation best practices. To ensure sustainability and wide reach; a cascading approach in the delivery of training is recommended; where key experts (agriculturalists, nutritionists, health workers, marketing and gender experts) will attend more detailed ToT workshops. The experts trained will then become primary facilitators and drive the agenda for OFSP. This group will in turn deliver shorter version courses and step-down the training to various levels of audiences (secondary and tertiary) – based on needs identified. This trend will continue until the training cascades down to “farmer trainers” who finally train the end users in their communities.

The original version of the manual has also been translated into Swahili, French, Portuguese, and Amharic are available online at <https://www.sweetpotatoknowledge.org/learn-everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-about-sweetpotato/> with the intension of translating the revised chapters as soon as resources permit. We envision the course to continue to be improved as new knowledge comes in. In this way, we expect the vibrant and knowledgeable sweetpotato community of practice to continue to grow in the coming years. The *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Sweetpotato* course will help us to achieve the major objectives of the Sweetpotato Profit and Health Initiative (SPHI). Launched in October 2009, the SPHI seeks to improve the lives of 10 million sub-Saharan African families in 16 countries by 2020 through the diversified use of improved sweetpotato varieties.



Jan W. Low, Leader of the Sweetpotato for Profit and Health Initiative, International Potato Center  
October 2018, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.



## How to Use This Guide

This guide was designed to be used in two ways:

- As self-study material, or
- As a facilitator's guide for classroom training sessions

For each topic we have provided:

- A handbook (this volume)
- A PowerPoint presentation, and
- A handout for classroom training participants

If you plan to deliver this as classroom training, then we would encourage you to read the **Facilitator's Guide** (separate volume) prior to planning your lessons.

## Introduction: Marketing and Entrepreneurship

### Topic Objectives

Upon completing this module, participants should be able to:

- Give an overview of the marketing of fresh sweetpotato roots and sweetpotato products in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).
- Explain the basic concepts and best practices of marketing and entrepreneurship.
- List and describe the five marketing pillars.
- Discuss the sweetpotato market value chain.
- Defend the benefits of cooperative marketing for sweetpotato farmers.
- Describe the obstacles to marketing processed sweetpotato products in SSA.
- Explain gender and diversity issues around sweetpotato marketing and entrepreneurship.

### Synopsis

Marketing and entrepreneurship focuses on the concepts of marketing, market orientation, entrepreneurship, and the 5 pillars of marketing (product, price, place, promotion and people) are discussed in relation to fresh sweetpotato roots and sweetpotato products.

## Unit 1- Marketing of Fresh Sweetpotato Roots in Sub-Saharan Africa

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe sweetpotato supply chains, both locally and internationally, and explain why they are usually short.
- Identify the players in the sweetpotato supply chain.
- List the characteristics urban consumers in SSA use when choosing sweetpotato.
- Explain why consumers fear damaged produce.
- Describe unfilled market openings for sweetpotato chips or flour, or for roots kept fresh with economical storage technologies.
- Explain barriers to trade and conditions that cause rough handling and product damage.

### Key Points

- **Urban areas in Southern and Eastern Africa are able to source sweetpotato from different regions for a fairly steady supply throughout the year. However, quality and market price vary greatly from harvest season to off-season.**
- **Small farmers may take their produce to sell to market traders, but traders and larger-scale agents may also travel to find produce for sale in urban markets.**
- **In non-Muslim areas, most sourcing is done by men while consumer interaction is handled by women.**
- **Consumers prefer medium sized undamaged roots.**
- **Increased mass processing of sweetpotato into chips or flour, or improved use of pits to keep roots fresh, could increase yearlong availability.**
- **Barriers along the value chain—such as high transit costs and the expense of transportation—foster poor handling habits, which damage produce; the use of technology to check market prices is in its early stages, and little sweetpotato is exported internationally from SSA.**
- **Traders can help grow the market and build the value chain.**

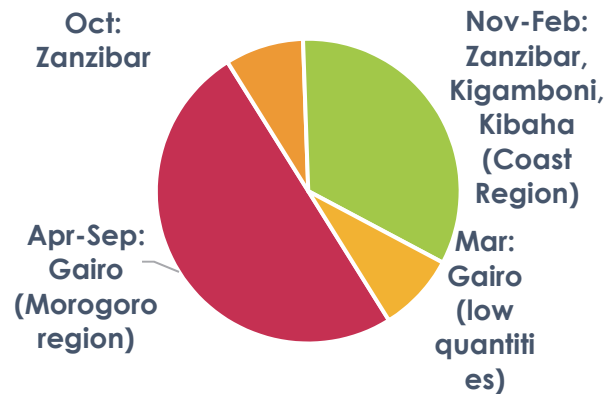
### Marketing of Fresh Sweetpotato Roots in Sub-Saharan Africa

Within Southern and Eastern Africa fresh sweetpotato roots are widely traded and usually available in urban markets throughout much of the year. Numerous small producers from different geographical areas sequentially provide the roots, creating a fairly continuous year-round supply in large urban centres (see the above chart, Calendar of sweetpotato sources). Sweetpotato marketing investments typically occur in areas where sweetpotato is consumed as a primary staple food as opposed to areas where it is a secondary staple.

Sweetpotato supply chains tend to be short (both intermediary wise and distance wise) because of the bulkiness of the crop, its short shelf-life and its relatively low value/ profitability. Traders, who sell produce in markets to consumers, often travel to rural areas by bicycle or to other markets by road transport to source produce. Small-scale traders sell only a few sacks a week. Additionally, farmers may take their produce to sell to market traders. Bicycle traders may take their own produce or that purchased from other farmers to sell to retailers. Large-scale wholesale traders

move sweetpotato in trucks, and often there are agents in the field who locate the sweetpotato and make sure it is bulked up in a convenient location before the truck arrives. In many Sub-Saharan African countries, in non-Muslim areas, the actual retailing of the sweetpotato roots in the markets and interaction with customers is mainly done by women, while men are the ones who travel to rural areas to source the roots.

Studies in Kenya suggest that rural consumers use the sweetpotato root's size, colour, taste, texture of the skin, price, shape, fibre content, health and freshness as the main selection criteria before they buy sweetpotato roots. Size is their most important factor: as an indicator of whether the root is immature or not, and because medium sized roots are easier to cook and package, while larger roots have to be cut up before cooking. Roots are mainly consumed after boiling or steaming without peeling, making them a fast and easy to prepare food; they may also be mashed and mixed with beans. Small and medium roots can also be more easily shared, e.g. one root per household member. Urban consumers were more likely to choose sweetpotato roots based on the skin colour and area or region where root was grown, then size (preferring medium size), then damage, especially weevil damage (consumers fear damaged roots as they may taste bad, and there are concerns that unclean water may have been used for washing the produce and may have entered the root through the damage sites), then shape and freshness. Boiled roots are often taken with a cup of tea in the morning, especially when they are cheaper than bread. Wealthier households in urban areas also prepare chips and doughnuts from sweetpotato.



However, from the perspective of farmers in less favoured locations (with limited road and market linkages), marketing fresh sweetpotato roots is problematic. Markets are often located far away resulting in high transport costs or farmers having to take whatever farm-gate price the sole trader buying from their area offers. Local rural markets are typically oversupplied during the harvest season.

Due to sweetpotato production being so seasonal, the quantity and quality of supply is not smooth throughout the year. This results in large price variations. In Kenya and Tanzania, the commercial value of sweetpotato is highest during the month of Ramadan as sweetpotato roots are often used to break the fast.

To date, there is little commercial processing of sweetpotato into chips or flour, which would have a longer shelf-life and could help encourage year-round consumption of sweetpotato in stiff porridges, bread or other products. In order to try to supply sweetpotato roots for a longer period of the year, farmers practice staggered planting, as most are unaware of or inexperienced in the use of fresh root pit stores (see Managing Fresh Storage of Sweetpotato Roots).

Marketing costs of sweetpotato are high due to its bulkiness, perishability, discontinuous and geographically fragmented supply. The high transport costs and tax structure of urban markets in East Africa have resulted in sweetpotato being jammed into large extended bags, which are difficult to carry and therefore result in the bruising and damage of many of the roots inside them. This practice lowers the quality of the roots and shortens their shelf-life. These varied market problems highlight the need for improvements to be made across the value chain.

Farmers usually rely on traders or neighbours for market price information, although the use of mobile phones for checking prices is increasing. Sweetpotato prices are rarely available at the national level.



Although usually not recorded, sweetpotato plays a major role in informal, cross-border trade and ensuing food security within Africa. Examples include trade from: Uganda to Kenya (via the Busia border) and to Sudan via the north; and from Mozambique to Malawi via the Mulanje border.

Transformation of the value chain could be brought about through successful promotion of the nutritional benefits of consuming orange-fleshed sweetpotato or use of products from processed orange-fleshed sweetpotato, or sweetpotato as animal feed. Extending the period of the year when fresh sweetpotato roots are available is another option. Given the very different natures of markets across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), there is unlikely to be a simple solution, and any strategies will need to be adapted to the specific conditions.

### *Involving Traders*

The positive role played by traders in the value chain is sometimes downplayed by organisations purporting to assist farmers. However, traders can be used to help develop the orange-fleshed sweetpotato market; traders need to be trained so they have the necessary understanding regards its nutritional benefits in order to be able to help promote and drive market demand for it. In a project in Zambézia province in Mozambique, a market development strategy was developed to:

- Inform retail sweetpotato traders of the health benefits of consuming orange fleshed sweetpotato, (OFSP) (creating a willingness-to-buy from farmers),
- Train farmers and traders on appropriate postharvest handling and transport of roots,
- Tell the traders where they would find sources of supply and help facilitate the initial linkages between traders and farmers,
- Explain how traders could make a higher margin from trading OFSP, even if they had to pay farmers more for it (OFSP, when available, retailed for a higher price),
- Raise urban consumers' awareness through radio advertising and promotional signs in markets, about the advantages of eating orange-fleshed sweetpotato—particularly due to its pro-vitamin a content and its sweet taste—over other types of sweetpotato,
- Inform consumers of where orange-fleshed sweetpotato was being sold,
- Provide farmers with simple marketing training, and
- Link farmer groups to traders.

This approach led to a rapid growth in the commercialisation of orange-fleshed sweetpotato.



### *Export of Sweetpotato From Africa*

Very small amounts of sweetpotato are exported from Africa. In 2010, Africa exported 14,785 tonnes of sweetpotato with a value of USD \$9.7 million. This is ~7% of the global total sweetpotato exported, which is estimated to be 205,845 tonnes with a value of USD\$ 149.5 million. Egypt and South Africa are the main African sweetpotato exporting countries, exporting 11,725 tonnes and 2,603 tonnes respectively in

2010. Small amounts (65-225 tonnes) were also exported in 2010 from Cameroon, Madagascar and Rwanda, and even smaller amounts (1-28 tonnes) from Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, Swaziland, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Niger and Cote d'Ivoire. Globally the USA, China, Egypt, Syria, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Dominican Republic and Italy export the largest amounts of sweetpotato.

### Review Questions

1. What characteristics of sweetpotato are preferred by rural consumers?
2. What are some of the barriers to trade?

## Unit 2 – Marketing and Market Orientation

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- Explain the people-related concepts behind marketing and give a few standard definitions.
- Define social marketing.
- Compare the mindset of businesses with a sales orientation to those with a marketing orientation.
- List the five key tasks of managing a market-oriented business. Describe the five pillars of the marketing mix.

### Key Points

- **Organisations succeed by meeting people's needs.**
- **A market-oriented business carefully researches people's drives and desires.**
- **Social marketing aims to both be competitive and to improve people's well-being.**
- **A sales-oriented organisation chooses a product first and then tries to sell it. A market-oriented organisation bases its operations around the desires of the market.**
- **Market analysis helps businesses focus on the right customers and opportunities for their product. Market research helps businesses understand the dynamics of their chosen markets.**
- **To ensure continued success, a business needs to stay on top of technology and market shifts and continually work toward meeting people's needs and wants.**

### Marketing and Market Orientation



Make sure your business is market orientated and meeting consumers' needs and wants.

Marketing is about meeting the needs and wants of customers; it is about understanding customers and finding ways to provide products or services which customers demand. Marketing is a business-wide function, not something that operates separately from other business activities.

There are many different definitions of marketing, including:

*“The all-embracing function that links the business with the customer needs and wants, in order to get the right product to the right place at the right time.”*

*“The achievement of corporate goals through meeting and exceeding customer needs better than the competition.”*

*“The management process that identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably.”*

*“Marketing may be defined as a set of human activities directed at facilitating and accomplishing exchanges.”*

*“Marketing is a social and administrative process through which people and groups obtain what they need and want, creating products and values and exchanging them with third parties.”*

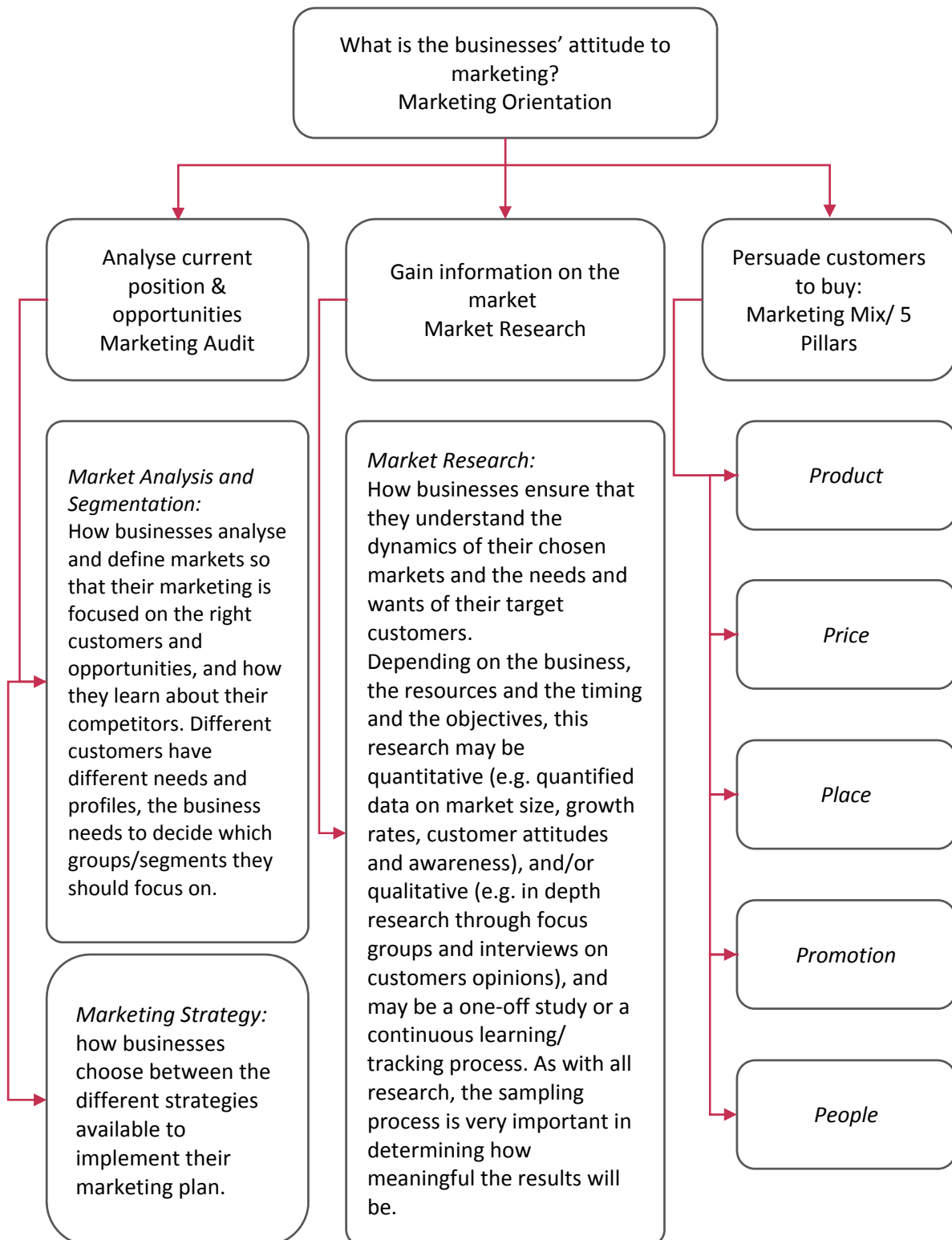
It is a fundamental idea of marketing that organisations survive and prosper through meeting the needs and wants of customers. This important perspective is commonly known as the marketing concept. Market orientation is generally regarded as the implementation of the marketing concept (see figure below). The 5 Pillars (5Ps) of marketing are often known as the marketing mix, which represents choices the business has to make in order to implement its marketing strategy; they are discussed in section 10.4.

A business that is market oriented, produces goods and services that are carefully researched and designed to attract the clients in the market. The customer’s needs drive the process, the business must develop the skills to identify the needs and decide which ones it will try to satisfy.

Social marketing is a form of marketing which aims to improve the well-being of consumers and of society. Businesses engaged in social marketing determine the needs, wants and interests of their target markets, and have to operate with greater effectiveness and efficiency than their competitors.



### Key Elements of Marketing



The alternatives to a marketing orientation are a sales orientation (as shown in the table below), production orientation and product orientation.

### Comparing Sales Orientation to Marketing Orientation

Sales Orientation				Marketing Orientation			
Starting Point	Focus	Means	Goal	Starting point	Focus	Means	Goal
Factory/product	Existing products	Sales and promotion	Profits due to volume	Client	Integrated satisfaction	Profits due to needs	Marketing Client
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products are emphasized</li> <li>• Company first makes product then tries to sell it</li> <li>• Management focuses on sales volume</li> <li>• Planning is short-term according to current products and markets</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients desires are emphasized</li> <li>• Products are made according to market needs</li> <li>• Management focuses on profits</li> <li>• Planning is long-term in terms of new products and markets</li> </ul>			

The sales-oriented business pays little attention to customer needs and wants and does not try particularly hard to create suitable products or services.

A production-orientated business is mainly concerned with making as many units as possible. By concentrating on producing maximum volumes, such a business aims to maximise profitability by exploiting economies of scale. In a production orientated business, the needs of customers are secondary compared with the need to increase output. Such an approach is probably most effective when a business operates in very high growth markets or where the potential for economies of scale is significant.

A product-orientated business is “obsessed” with its own products. Their products may start out as fully up-to-date and technical leaders. However, by failing to consider changing technological developments or subtle changes in consumer tastes, a product-orientated business may find that its products start to lose ground to competitors.

### Managing A Market-Orientated Business Consists of Five Key Tasks

1. **Market research** - collection of information on the current and potential needs of customers in their target markets, including how customers buy and what competitors are offering
2. **Product development** – develop products which meet needs and wants sufficiently to attract target customers to buy
3. **Marketing mix/ 5Ps** – after identifying the target markets and developing the relevant products and developing relationships along the value chain, the price, promotion and distribution methods must be determined. To offer value to the customer, to communicate the offer and to make it accessible and convenient.
4. **Market monitoring** – In addition to attracting customers businesses need to retain them, in order to do this and to develop new products it is important to obtain customer feedback over time, and to recognise that the competitive environment can change very rapidly.

### Long-Term Focus Businesses Need to Regularly Look for New Products and Markets for Future Growth, There Are Four Main Ways in Which Growth Can Be Achieved

1. **Market penetration** – increase sales of an existing product in an existing market
2. **Product development** – improve present products and/or develop new products for the current market

3. **Market development** – sell existing products into new markets (e.g. developing export sales)
4. **Diversification** – develop new products for new markets

### Review Questions

1. What are the key tasks of a market-oriented business?
2. What are the 5 pillars of the Marketing Mix?



## Unit 3 – Entrepreneurship

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- Define entrepreneurship.
- Name the key traits of successful entrepreneurs.
- Explain the key behaviours behind successful entrepreneurship.
- Describe the role entrepreneurs play in the economy.

### Key Points

- **An entrepreneur devotes his or her time, investment, risks, and effort toward creating something valuable and new for consumers.**
- **A good entrepreneur is self-motivated, prepared for unpleasant tasks, hungry (driven), able to make good decisions, resourceful, personable, adaptable, and persuasive.**
- **To be a successful entrepreneur, you should do what you love, be radical but follow the rules, manage your time well, use the Internet, take care of yourself, find a mentor, and use teamwork.**
- **Entrepreneurship is rewarding but risky and can turn out very badly. However, it is a key engine of economic growth.**

### Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with a value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying risks, and receiving the resulting rewards.

Entrepreneurs are innovators or developers who recognise and seize opportunities; convert those opportunities to marketable ideas (products or services that can be sold); add value through effort and skills; assume the risks of the competitive marketplace; and realise the rewards or losses.

Entrepreneurs can be people who enter new or established markets, and through their ingenuity find creative ways to add to their own wealth, power and prestige. Entrepreneurs vary widely, however most of them have the following behavioural characteristics: initiative taking; assertive; organising and re-organising/adaptive strengths which enable them to turn opportunities into practice and to learn; committed; an acceptance of risk and failure. More traits are described in the table below.

#### Traits of Successful Entrepreneurs

Traits	Comments
Self-motivated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No-one will be breathing down your neck to check you are working, you will need to motivate yourself to work</li> <li>• Owning a business requires you to do tasks you may not like, you need to find strategies for organising and motivating yourself to ensure they get done</li> </ul>
Hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunger pangs help create the drive necessary to get your business off the ground and growing</li> <li>• Many of the great business success stories come from disastrous circumstances</li> </ul>

Decision-making ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will need the ability to make decisions intelligently after carefully weighing up several options or alternatives, including those that involve risks</li> <li>You may have the drive, and remarkable ideas in your head, but if you cannot make sound decisions these will be wasted</li> <li>When starting-up you need to be aware that despite all your planning there is a great deal of risk inherent in your venture, you will need to make decisions almost daily that involve some gamble. As your business grows so will the impact of your decisions</li> <li>Your decision-making will need to balance present and future aspects. Monitor your businesses performance accurately so you can base present performance and projections on reality and valid assumptions</li> <li>Intelligent decisions involve understanding: the context, your objectives, the alternatives and your criteria</li> </ul>
Resourceful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you start-up there will not be enough funding to pay for all the things the business needs</li> <li>Stepping out of your comfort zone to enlist friends and family to help market your business can cut costs</li> </ul>
Personable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In most businesses you deal with people on a regular basis</li> <li>Customers will not return if they had an awkward interaction with you</li> <li>Customers will pay more or even accept lower quality if they trust you</li> </ul>
Adaptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A positive attitude and willingness to roll with the punches will take you far</li> <li>When faced with a problem, look for a solution not who to blame</li> </ul>
Persuasive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will need to be able to influence other people's buying decisions</li> <li>It is much easier to be persuasive about something you truly believe</li> </ul>

Entrepreneurs may start their entrepreneurial activities for different reasons. It could happen out of necessity, e.g. if they have been made redundant they need to find a new livelihood. It could happen through someone identifying an opportunity, e.g. the possibility of using locally produced sweetpotato flour to replace imported wheat flour. Part-time activities or hobbies may become successful enterprises, new opportunities may be seen for doing business through mobile phones or the internet. Tips on how to be an entrepreneur are given in the table below.

Entrepreneurship comes with challenges and risks, including: an often-uncertain income, risk of losing the entire investment; long working hours; hard work; lower quality of life until the business gets established; complete responsibility; discouragement, disillusion and difficulties; family, social, career and psychological risks.

Entrepreneurship is a major mechanism of economic growth. Countries with higher levels of entrepreneurial activity are showing greater economic growth. Various factors can contribute to making the environment enabling or disabling for entrepreneurship, these include: culture, education and societal history; finance availability; location; government policies; institutions (NGOs, labour market, openness etc.).

### How to Be an Entrepreneur

Instructions	Comments
Do what you love	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most successful businesses have one factor in common.</li> <li>Their owners love what they do – so choose a business idea that aligns with your interests, no matter what they are.</li> </ul>

Know what you want	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you willing to leave your job if your business takes off? Or do you envision your business as a side project?</li> <li>• Answering these questions will help you organise your time and priorities.</li> </ul>
Be radical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not be afraid to try something that no one else has ever done.</li> <li>• Create an off-the-wall product or shake up an existing market by changing factors such as a service or delivery model that established companies take for granted. E.g. Jollyken Ltd in the Kenyan flower industry, OFSP based biscuits in Rwanda.</li> </ul>
But follow the rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure you register your business, keep records, pay taxes and health requirements to save problems later.</li> </ul>
Manage your time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand what is required of you in your separate roles as an employer and a business owner.</li> <li>• Use planning and organisational tools, e.g. a well-maintained appointment book, Microsoft outlook calendars and contacts, filing systems.</li> </ul>
Find a mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Befriend a local entrepreneur or business leader with a record of achievement to be your business mentor.</li> <li>• They can help you understand the risks and challenges of business, provide a sounding board for your ideas, help you find investors/ financial support for your company.</li> </ul>
Exploit online resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can access hundreds of online resources for entrepreneurs. Use them to help inspire, direct and motivate you.</li> </ul>
Be good to yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will get overwhelmed at times. If this happens step back from your work and do whatever relaxes you.</li> <li>• Stay healthy – eat, sleep and exercise well - it will help you maximise your performance.</li> <li>• Keep a check on the state of your mental health, remind yourself you are not competing against anyone but yourself, and that life is a journey.</li> </ul>
Use team work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn to delegate, but delegate in a managed way by giving clear instructions and taking time to train and check on those you are delegating to. This will free-up time for you to create new opportunities.</li> </ul>

## Review Questions

1. What are some of the traits of successful entrepreneurs?
2. What are some of the factors that contribute to enabling or hindering entrepreneurship?

## Unit 4 – Understanding the Five Pillars (5P's) of Marketing: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- Understand the five pillars of marketing (5P's).

### Key Points

- **Product:** The first of the five marketing pillars is product. Every business must choose the right product to sell for their market.
- **Price:** Businesses must choose a price that is high enough to make a profit, but not so high that they struggle to move items.
- **Place:** Knowing where to go to get products to consumers is also critical.
- **Promotion:** Businesses must know how to draw attention to their product. Promotional activities need not be costly; a well thought out promotion can be very cost effective.
- **People:** Often forgotten, the final P involves getting the right people involved in your organization to make it smooth running, pleasant, and successful. From a marketing perspective, the People who are consumers are also important to keep in mind.

### Understanding the Five Pillars (5P's) of Marketing: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People

Planning how you will market your product is crucial. Marketing is not just about selling, it consists of various issues. It involves determining what the customer wants and developing that product, working out a price that is profitable and attractive, delivering the product to a place where the customer will see it in order to purchase it. Additionally, it involves informing the customer about the product and identifying who will be involved in the transactions during the sale of the product, and what knowledge they need to have.



People talk about the 5 pillars of marketing, and how these 5 pillars need to work together in order to create a strong foundation for marketing efforts. So what are these 5 pillars of marketing?

#### Product

What to sell? The product can be either a tangible product (a sweetpotato root, or a packet of sweetpotato flour, for example), or an intangible service (such as agricultural extension advice, nutritional information, weeding), or a mixture of the two. Decisions regards what product or service to sell must be based on meeting the customers' needs, at the quality, quantity and value that customers demand (for sweetpotato this includes the size, colour, variety, taste, freshness of roots). It should be noted that sometimes customers are not always aware of their needs, for example many people are not aware they are deficient in vitamin A. Competing crops and products must also be taken into consideration, to understand the market context and competition. For example, is it





cost-effective to substitute some wheat flour with sweetpotato flour or sweetpotato puree? Can farmers with access to water earn more from horticultural crops than sweetpotato vine production? Are people willing to pay more for undamaged roots than slightly damaged ones? Are OFSP preferred to white sweetpotato roots?

### Price

How much to sell for? The price point needs to be right; good products at the wrong price will struggle to achieve success. The price has to be both profitable and attractive and should be set and adjusted based on: production and marketing costs; the profit margin over costs; and prices of competing products. Understanding seasonal supply and demand changes and determining which criteria (e.g. root size, shape, variety, geographical source, skin colour, quality, price, convenience) most influence customer purchases is important. It is important to set a price that buyers can realistically afford. It is important to know the competitors' prices. In markets where there is limited purchasing power (poor consumers only have a small amount of money to spend), sweetpotato sellers often keep the same price and adjust the quantity sold in heaps when there are real changes in the price.



### Place

Where to sell? Includes both the physical location (e.g. home, farm, local market, under a tree stand, urban market, as well as how to display it on perhaps on a raised platform, middle of the shelf etc., how to make sure the place is clean to encourage buyers to visit) and customer's access to information about the product, e.g. how easy is it for a customer to contact the producer or sales person to find out the necessary details about the product. Will you work with middlemen? Consider the transport costs, methods and duration of journeys and storage. Decide on whether to work with farmer groups or form a farmers' association to bulk sales and provide a more continuous supply. Often sweetpotato is found in the least desirable parts of the market and part of changing its image is to negotiate with the traders and the market managers to change its location.



### Promotion

How to draw attention or create interest in the product and build demand for it? Advertising/ promotion is important in order to tell consumers about the availability of products or services, their benefits, and why customers should make a purchase decision. Promotion strategies need not be expensive, but if they are well thought out they will attract consumers to your product. To be effective, promotion has to reach the customers you want to target at the right place and time, through a combination of media channels, and to convey information that is compelling enough to persuade them to act. Advertising could include cardboard signposts, product labels with descriptions, attractive packaging, radio spots, posters, flyers, loud speaker messages at markets, painted market booths, signposts about orange fleshed sweet potato availability and price. Other forms of promotion could include: giving out samples of orange-fleshed sweetpotato roots together with nutritional information, adding a free sweetpotato root when someone purchases a different product, training market traders on the benefits of consuming orange-fleshed sweetpotato, exhibiting at field days or



special occasions, and creating a brand or positive image about orange- fleshed sweetpotato. Remember consumers are not a

bland homogenous group; there are lots of differences amongst them, such as: age, wealth, gender, cultures, formal and non-formal education levels. You may need to use different promotion approaches to reach different consumer groups. We have found that after consumers learn of orange-fleshed sweetpotato's nutritional value and its importance, they are willing to pay a slightly higher price for orange-fleshed roots over white.



## People

Who are the people involved in the producing, selling and buying of your product? They are our market value chain actors: farmers, extensionists, brokers, retailers, wholesalers, processors and consumers (e.g. individuals, schools, factories and barracks). The actions, attitudes and knowledge of those involved in the selling of the product (e.g. traders, farmers, vine multipliers) can be influential in whether the consumer has a positive purchase experience that they would wish to repeat or share with other people or not. Being responsive to feedback and evaluating and then making the necessary changes is important.

In service organisations, people are part of the product itself, e.g. health care.



## Review Questions

1. What are the types of products that could be sold to the market?
2. Who are the people involved in the market chain?

## Unit 5 – Exploring Your Sweetpotato Market Value Chain

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- Name the participants in the sweetpotato field-to-table value chain and describe their roles.
- Describe the proper role for a sweetpotato project facilitator in the value chain.
- Define market linkage.
- Name the main areas where key opportunities to improve the market value chain are usually found.
- Explain the Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA).

### Key Points

- **Typically, the sweetpotato value chain begins with the farmer or producer, who sells to a broker/assembler, who sources sweetpotato in the region from farmers' collection points or roadside points; then the product is passed to wholesalers and transporters, who move the produce to markets, where they finally pass through retailers to the consumer.**
- **“Traders” refers to retailers, brokers, and wholesalers.**
- **Other actors include agribusiness service providers (equipment suppliers, banks), traders, and processors/ millers.**
- **Scale is not homogenous at any link in the sweetpotato value chain: like farmers, some traders are large with a complex organisation, while others are small and work for themselves.**
- **Projects aimed at building the sweetpotato market value chain need to help link and empower the actors rather than inserting themselves into a bulking or selling role.**
- **When analysing a sweetpotato market value chain, several specific areas tend to offer good opportunities for market building. These include: production; postharvest practices such as caring for, storing, and transporting fresh roots and processed sweetpotato; marketing ideas such as nutritional messaging, and pricing and logistics; and interaction with agribusiness service providers, such as credit providers and advertising firms.**
- **Relationships in the supply chain range in formality from agreements to alliances to contracts.**
- **The Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA) is a four-phase process for creating trust and connections between different links in the market value chain.**

## Exploring Your Sweetpotato Market Value Chain



The sweetpotato farm-to-market value chain is the chain of actors and institutions that move sweetpotato along from the point of production to the point of consumption—from the farmers to the consumers.

The people involved in the different parts of the value chain are often referred to as the value chain actors. They include farmers/ producers, agricultural service providers, traders, processors/ millers, transporters and consumers.

The different levels of traders are typically defined as follows: those who buy in small volumes (retailers); those who buy in large volumes (wholesalers); those who play a linking/ negotiating role in return for a fee or commission (brokers). The actors in the value chain need to work together to survive in business; they each have an important role to play and are interdependent. The roles of the different actors in the value chain are shown in the figure below, Roles of Different Actors.

Projects involved in working with value chains need to be careful that they play a facilitative role in helping to better link the different actors, as opposed to themselves getting involved in the value chain as a bulking or selling actor. The aim should be to help develop a more sustainable system, by empowering the different actors as opposed to taking on the role of any of the actors, this fact should be made clear to the farmers involved right from the start of the project. That being said, at the beginning of a project, it is often necessary to facilitate the first links to bring the actors together because often traders are risk-averse when it comes to getting involved in a new value chain or financially subsidizing a new concept, like grading roots and getting a higher price for quality roots.

By exploring and analysing the sweetpotato value chain in your target areas, you can help identify the weak links in the chains, and pinpoint opportunities for strengthening them. The analysis typically involves analysing prices, volume data, and operations at each point on the value chain, while considering relevant cost factors (labour, inputs, transportation, taxes etc.) and returns on produce marketed. This information is then used in scenarios of increased volumes sold and prices realised from improvements in production yields, product quality, postharvest improvements, processing, market diversification, etc. Following this, the opportunities for upgrading activities and improving returns at different points along the chain are studied. For example:

### *Production*

Enabling farmers to respond to market demand by improving quality, supply dependability, increasing volumes sold, or diversifying their product offerings, while simultaneously lowering unit production costs and boosting revenues through the introduction of improved, low-cost technologies and sustainable farming practices.

### *Postharvest Improvements*

Reducing product losses after harvest by understanding the importance of careful harvesting and avoidance of wounds, curing (wound healing), careful packing and transport at all levels to maintain root quality, temporary and longer-term storage practices, and potential benefits of working in groups. By implementing other improved postharvest practices such as sorting and grading, packaging, and possible value adding and transformation into new products.

### *Marketing and Logistics*

Facilitating marketing arrangements between smallholder groups and private partners such as traders, institutional customers, wholesalers and processors, which lead to increases in volumes



sold. Such arrangements often involve the provision by these partners of market information, technical assistance and inputs to their farmer suppliers, in return for the assurance of receiving consistent quality and supply. The result is the increased integration of smallholder suppliers into the farm-to-market value chain. Training traders about orange-fleshed sweetpotato so they can promote it knowledgeably to their customers often provides a fairly simple opportunity. Trader training materials are available at <http://sweetpotatoknowledge.org/adding-value/training-communication>. In Mozambique, the training for traders constituted one model that incorporated seven main messages:

1. The importance of traders in marketing OFSP;
2. How OFSP is different from white and yellow sweetpotato;
3. Why vitamin A is important;
4. How a trader can increase consumption of OFSP (promotion);
5. Different ways to cook and prepare OFSP;
6. Retail selling (grading, sorting, treating as a high-value product); and
7. Marketing costs and margins.

### *Agribusiness Service Providers*

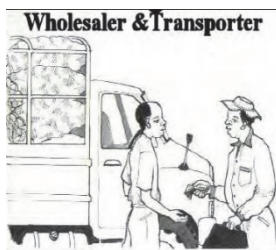
Availability and quality of services (e.g. extension advice, credit and savings organisations and market information) and inputs (e.g. planting materials) in the target production areas.

Market linkage is the process of bringing together different actors in the sweetpotato value chain in order to improve their business. Farmers may be linked directly to retailers, or to wholesalers and brokers, or just to brokers, or to all of them. Subsidised or free inputs such as planting materials can be important initial market drivers. But care should be taken to prevent farmers assuming that those who provide inputs will also purchase the products, as is often done with cotton, tobacco and soya.

In Mozambique, once traders started to ask farmers for orange-fleshed sweetpotato and started to visit rural areas looking specifically for it and offering higher prices for it, farmers realised they could earn additional income by growing it. Farmers began to replace their white-fleshed varieties with orange-fleshed varieties and to take better care of their crop and paid more attention to vine conservation. Most farmers planned to increase their orange-fleshed sweetpotato production because of the market demand. In Uganda, in addition to the good market demand for both the roots and vines of orange-fleshed sweetpotato, the fact that children and grandchildren expressed a strong preference for orange-fleshed sweetpotato was an important driver of adoption. Barriers to marketing included lower yields, which affects profitability, and the fact that some orange-fleshed sweetpotato varieties cannot be stored as long in the ground and do not lend themselves to piecemeal harvesting.

### Roles of Different Actors in the Sweetpotato Value Chain

- Produces sweetpotato roots (and vines)
- Sells to different value chain actors depending on location



- Contacts the wholesalers to buy sweetpotato from the area
- Distributes empty sacks to farmers and pays harvesters, packers and transporters from farms to trading centres or main roads
- Assembles sacks from different farms and areas
- Makes payments to farmers

- Brings the money for buying sweetpotato
- Searches for sweetpotato in districts
- Hires truck and organises transportation to town
- Distributes sweetpotato to retailers in different markets
- Pays market fees for off-loaded sweetpotato
- Brings/ owns trucks or bicycle, usually works with wholesaler or broker



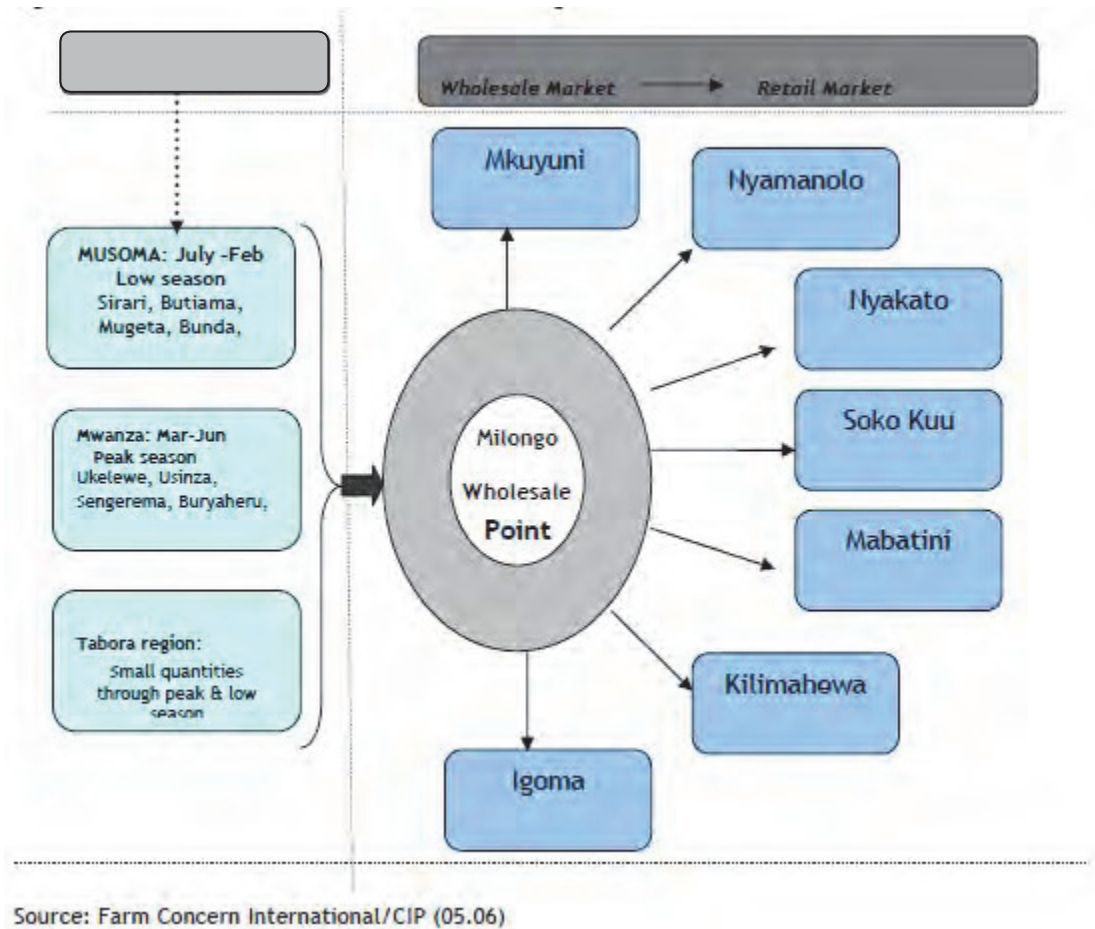
- Unpacks the sacks into heaps
- Takes sweetpotato close to consumers in different locations like small kiosks in trading centres

- Buys sweetpotato for home consumption, or sales as chips



A study of sweetpotato value chains in Tanzania in 2006, investigated the sweetpotato market networks of the different regions. The following example is from Mwanza, Lake Zone (see chart below).

Sweetpotato Sources and Market Networks in Mwanza Region, Tanzania



The study mapped the costs associated with sweetpotato roots at each stage of the value chain, and these are detailed in the figure below.

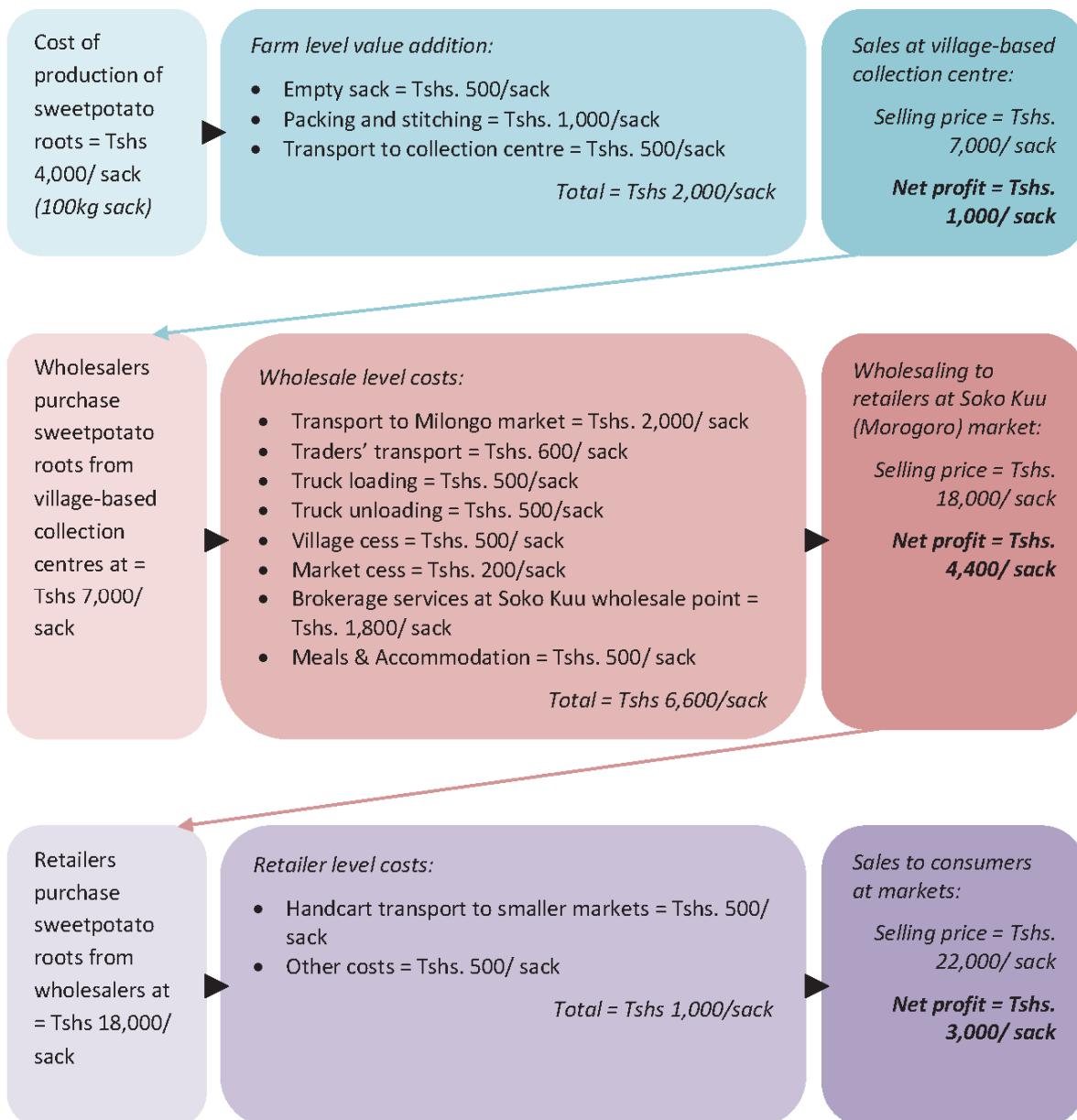
The average cost of production of sweetpotato roots was estimated at Tshs. 4,000/ sack. Farm level value addition, including packaging materials, weaving and transportation was estimated at Tshs. 2,000/ sack. Selling price at village-based collection centre was Tshs. 7,000/ sack, generating a net profit of Tsh1,000/ sack. The estimated weight of the sack was 100kg.

Wholesalers typically purchase sweetpotato at Tshs. 7,000/ sack from farmers' collection points or road side points. They then offload the sack and sell to retailers at Tshs. 18,000/ sack, making a net profit of Tshs. 4,400/ sack after having deducted the costs of transport, loading and unloading, cesses, brokerage, meals and accommodation. Retailers pay Tshs. 18,000/ sack and incur Tshs. 1,000 for business development services such as transport and market fees and sell the roots from each sack at Tshs. 22,000 generating net profits of Tshs. 3,000.

At retail level, the roots are arranged in piles of 4-7 fresh roots, with prices ranging from Tshs. 200 to 1,000 depending on the size of the pile. During the high supply season, the number of roots per pile increase but the price levels remain the same. For example, a Tshs. 200 pile would have 3 roots during the low supply season and 6 roots during the high supply season. During the low supply season most of the sweetpotato retailers diversify into selling cassava which is available all year round.



**Costs Along the Mwanza Sweetpotato Value Chain (2006)**



Source: Adapted from Farm Concern International and CIP (2006)

Commercial relationships exist between the different stakeholders/actors in the value chain. Commercial relations typically fall into three categories: Agreement – an informal type of relationship in which the exchange is conducted if the terms of sale are acceptable to both parties. Alliance – a more formal type of relationship in which there is a certain level of commitment between both parties. Contract – a formal relationship in which a legal document has been signed by both parties.

To improve how the market chain functions, consider using the Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA) (see figure below). PMCA brings the different market chain actors together, using facilitation techniques to build trust between the actors so that they begin working together to improve the product they have selected to market. Improving the product could involve all kinds of changes, for example: more continuous supply, grading and sorting the product based on quality standards, better packaging, increased advertising, lengthened shelf-life. Refer to the *PMCA manual for details on how to implement the method*.

## Review Questions

1. Who are the different actors of the market value chain?
2. What are the three phases of the participatory market chain approach?

## Unit 6 – Why Work as a Group to Market Your Sweetpotato?

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- List the advantages of cooperative sweetpotato marketing.
- Explain the problems associated with long-term contracts between farmers and institutions and suggest ways to improve loyalty.

### Key Points

- **Working with other farmers to market sweetpotato can help farmers open up sales outlets, as they are able offer large volumes and a steady supply to traders. Cooperation also opens doors to extension services.**
- **Cooperative marketing improves farmers' bargaining position, relationships with traders, and incentives to provide quality sweetpotatoes.**

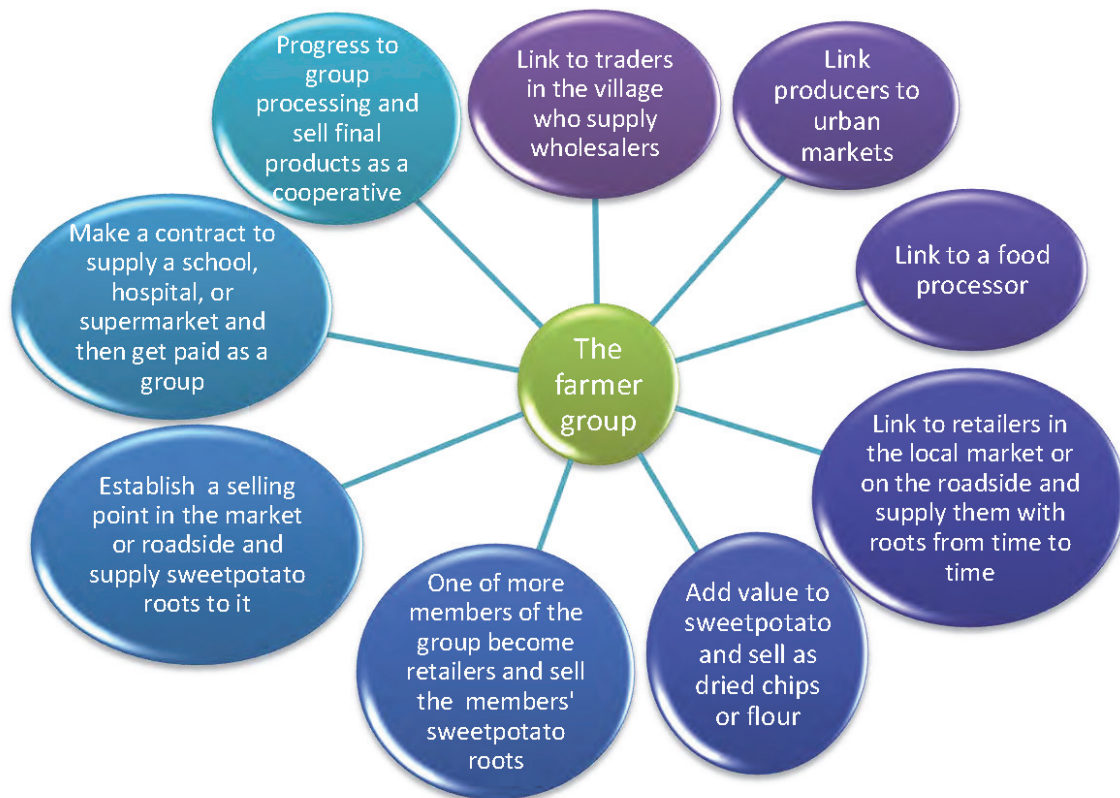
### Why Work as a Group to Market Your Sweetpotato?

There are several reasons why a farmer might work in a group with other farmers to market their sweetpotato. These include:

- Being able to supply a larger volume. Traders do not want to spend their time and money collecting small volumes of sweetpotato from lots of different locations.
- Being able to supply sweetpotato consistently. If many farmers are involved and some stagger their planting dates, some irrigate, and some store, seasonality in supply can be significantly reduced. Organized groups often come up with production calendars among their members to help stagger their planting and harvesting dates.
- To gain a better bargaining position. If farmers work as a group they can negotiate with the trader so that they get a good set price for all members, which would not be possible if farmers were selling individually.
- To help build a good relationship with traders so that they will continue to buy from the group.
- To improve the quality of their products. The group will have to work at having a uniform quality of product from all members in order to keep their relationship with their trader.
- To take advantage of extension services who typically work only with groups so that they can reach more clients per extension agent. Focus on learning how to engage with sweetpotato as a business.

Whether marketing individually or as a farmer group, the 5 pillars of marketing can be used to help in planning. Group marketing systems can operate in many different ways, some examples are given in below figure.

### A Selection of Group Marketing Functions



### Linking to Institutional Buyers

Linking farmers to institutions as long-term assured outlets for sweetpotato has obvious advantages. However, the idea also comes with some large caveats, as procedures such as supplier registration and payment can be extremely slow. In helping to facilitate contracts between buyers and farmers, it is important to remember that in Sub-Saharan Africa it is difficult to enforce a contract if one of the parties chooses not to honour it. Hence, buyers need to be willing to pay slightly higher than the local market price if they want farmers to honour the contract over time. When they do not, the practice of *side-selling* emerges, whereby farmers often claim they have lost part or all of their crop, when they really have just sold it elsewhere. A good approach to keep farmers loyal is to offer additional services such as loans on anticipated sweetpotato yield, which is then repaid when the farmer harvests his crop. Processors can offer farmers, who supply roots or dried chips to them, technical support services or inputs which are properly monitored to help maintain loyalty.

Another model to consider is a lead out grower model. In this model, there is a large farmer who is not interested in being part of a group, but he or she is willing to buy roots from surrounding farmer groups or neighbours and re-sell to his/her regular buyers or market directly. Sometimes such farmers are willing to serve as quality vine multipliers and/or demonstration sites for their area.

### Review Questions

1. What are some of the advantages of working as a cooperative?
2. What are some of the issues with long-term contracts?

## Unit 7 – Can You Make A Profit from Selling Fresh Sweetpotato Roots?

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- List the expenses a farmer must record to calculate whether selling fresh sweetpotato roots can become profitable.
- Tell how to calculate farmer profit at a particular selling price.

### Key Points

- **Farmers need to calculate production costs to negotiate a profitable price.**
- **All expenses and crop losses must be calculated against the available selling price to find the return on the family's labour. Subtract all costs from gross revenue.**
- **A study in Mozambique found that range-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) generally commands a 15% higher price from the consumer than white or yellow sweetpotato, but this is not always passed on to the farmer.**
- **Market training should encourage families to produce enough to eat plus a surplus to sell.**

### Can You Make A Profit from Selling Fresh Sweetpotato Roots?

To negotiate effectively, commercially oriented farmers need to understand their costs of production. Encourage farmers to keep a notebook with 4-6 pages reserved for each field to record all associated cost and sales incomes. You may need to support the farmers in their record keeping during the first season to help them understand how important it can be for them and their families (see the box below). Many farmers have no experience of keeping records.

#### Calculating Sweetpotato Costs of Production and Returns

##### Farmers should record:

1. What they pay for inputs: such as purchased vines, chemicals, sacks, land hire, and especially what they pay for hired labour for each task (clearing, ridging, planting, weeding, hilling-up, harvesting, packing, carrying).
2. What they pay for transport, this includes tips given to those assisting to move bags or help in hiring transport.
3. What they pay for marketing fees and staying over in the market, if they sell the crop themselves.
4. How much they harvested in kgs, and what amount can be taken to the market (marketable roots) and what was left at home as it could not be sold (unmarketable roots). If they harvest in sacks or other standard unit, they should know the weight of that sack or standard unit when it is filled with sweetpotato. Estimate the area of the field (10,000 square meters equal 1 hectare) and determine yield (1,000 kgs = 1 ton) in tons per hectare. If they are growing more than one variety, they should grow each variety on a separate ridge so that results for each variety can be easily recorded separately.

5. How much they sold in kgs, when they sold it, where/to whom they sold it and the price they sold it for.
6. Keep track of the amount of sweetpotato that is lost (number of roots or kgs) - either at harvest time (poor quality) or during storage. Estimate that 4 medium size roots are approximately 1 kg.
7. Then they should calculate their gross revenue: (total amount harvested (kgs) minus total amount lost (kgs)) X average sale price of their sweetpotato. They can also just calculate the value of the amount sold.
8. Then they should add up all of their costs and calculate their net return to their family labour: Total revenue minus total cost. If the area of the field is known, this can be done on a per hectare basis as well. Net returns per hectare can be compared to those for other crops.

Encourage farmers to note any problems they encountered during the season and what they did to solve them. Then they can begin to see how their business management ability grows over time.

Calculating whether you can make a profit from sweetpotato is not just about knowing the difference between your sales price and your production, marketing and transaction costs. You also need to know that there is sufficient demand for your product, and in some cases being involved in helping to increase demand through awareness creation strategies. The case study below provides some examples for raising awareness regards marketing orange-fleshed sweetpotato roots.

### Mozambique, Zambézia Province Case Study

Sweetpotato roots are typically consumed as a secondary staple for breakfast, and as a snack food. The sweetpotato marketing system is well developed, particularly in the south for supply to Quelimane and cross-border to Malawi.

To create a self-sustaining market the project used a strategy of informing retail sweetpotato **traders** of:

- The advantages of consuming orange-fleshed sweetpotato (to create a willingness-to-buy from farmers).
- Where they would find sources of supply.
- How they could make a higher profit margin from trading orange-fleshed sweetpotato, even if they had to pay farmers more for it.

And simultaneously raising **urban consumers'** awareness through radio advertising of:

- The advantages of eating orange-fleshed sweetpotato – particularly its pro-vitamin A content and its sweet taste.
- Where orange-fleshed sweetpotato was being sold.

And supporting sweetpotato farmers with marketing training and on how to form marketing committees and establish links with traders. Families need to be encouraged to produce enough to eat (so the family gets the vitamin A and food security benefit) and a surplus to sell. The project held events to promote orange-fleshed sweetpotato to consumers and local leaders where nutrition extensionists explained the nutritional benefits and demonstrated different ways orange-fleshed sweetpotato could be prepared and gave out samples for consumers to taste.

The active promotion of the product, led to rapid organisation of orange-fleshed sweetpotato marketing in Gurue town markets within just one season. Most orange-fleshed sweetpotato was sold where there were existing marketing channels and where it could be easily substituted for

other varieties. Additionally, many innovative farmers became involved in finding and creating new markets. Building trust with the traders is key for a project aiming to create demand for a new product.

In the four main markets in Zambezia, orange-fleshed sweetpotato commanded a 15% premium in the sales price compared with white fleshed varieties. However, this price increase was not always passed onto the farmers. In all urban markets, traders reported that orange-fleshed sweetpotato sold faster than white or yellow fleshed varieties. Traders would break off the tip of the root to indicate the 'orangeness'.

## Review Questions

1. What are the key areas to cover when training farmers?
2. What are the key records that farmers are encouraged to keep?



## Unit 8 – When Does It Make Sense to Develop A Processed Product?

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- Describe the processed sweetpotato market in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).
- List the factors that limit development of processing.
- Relate the findings of market studies on sweetpotato products.
- Explain the conditions and actions that can make a processed sweetpotato product a profitable venture.

### Key Points

- **Supply, quality, price, technical, and organizational concerns limit the production of processed sweetpotato.**
- **Many processing techniques destroy much of the beta-carotene in sweetpotato; chips fetch a lower price than fresh sweetpotato, and storage losses can harm profitability.**
- **Finding a target consumer and tailoring products, prices, and packaging to them increases the chances for profit.**
- **Sweetpotato flour is more expensive than wheat flour, but studies show that consumers in SSA prefer baked goods made with some sweetpotato flour or puree, and sweetpotato goods are more nutritious.**
- **Snacks, crackers, cereals, and juice are all potential profit-makers.**

### When Does It Make Sense to Develop A Processed Product?

Few processed sweetpotato products are currently marketed in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Key supply issues limiting processing include unreliability of supply, poor quality of chips due to poor drying techniques and high labour inputs required to wash, peel and chip. Farmers complain about the low price of sweetpotato chips compared to the price of fresh roots. In addition to the technical aspects, there are also organisational and market development constraints.

Some drying and storage techniques reduce the beta carotene content, which then limits the nutritional value of orange-fleshed sweetpotato as a processed product (see the topic, Nutrition and Orange Fleshed Sweetpotato). Low-cost, direct sun drying on a raised tray or platform can result in beta-carotene losses of 20% if you do not over-dry. Make sure the drying process is relatively fast, not more than two days in order to maintain the drying quality. Insufficient drying may lead to poor quality flour that becomes mouldy when stored, check the moisture content of the chips before milling. If you leave the orange-fleshed sweetpotato to dry for too long (over-drying), you can lose a lot of the beta-carotene and the dried chips will hardly look orange at all.

However, storage *after drying* can lead to even higher losses of beta-carotene content in orange-fleshed sweetpotato chips. It is therefore recommended that orange-fleshed sweetpotato chips are only stored for a maximum of 2 months, otherwise the beta-carotene content is greatly reduced (e.g. by more than 70%).

Food preparation methods can also reduce the beta-carotene levels. But in most cases, if 25% or greater of the wheat flour is replaced with a medium to dark-intensity orange-fleshed sweetpotato in puree or flour form, there are significant amounts of pro-vitamin A in the product.

While there is a huge range of delicious processed products that can be made from sweetpotato, how many of these products make commercial sense? Before spending lots of time making a wide range of products, figure out which ones are likely to be attractive to consumers and profitable.

Below, we use the development of *Golden Bread* in Zambézia Province in Central Mozambique as an example.

## How to Select the Best Product to Try

The first step is to understand which consumers you are targeting. Is it the poorer consumer that is likely to be more at risk of vitamin A deficiency (VAD), or the middle-to-upper class consumer more able to purchase more expensive products? In Zambézia Province, the majority of the population was poor and at risk of VAD and that was the targeted group.

Once you have decided on your target consumer group, find out what products (bakery, fried, juices) they are already consuming and what they are paying for those products. Then investigate what it costs the agro-processor to make those products and identify the ingredients that could be substituted by sweetpotato. In the major urban market in Zambézia, it was found that most products were produced by a single individual who made a batch and sold it before making the next batch.

The majority of processed products on the market had wheat flour as an ingredient. Wheat flour was expensive, particularly because it was imported into the Province from the coast over 500 kms away. The major constraint faced by product makers was the low purchasing power of consumers. No unit price of a product sold exceeded US\$ 0.04 (in 2003). Net returns to labour were calculated for all products and bread and fried doughnuts had the highest net returns per unit sold. The project focused on bread, because fried doughnuts required oil as well as wheat flour.

## How to Develop the Sweetpotato Product

One of the first questions that normally arises when developing a sweetpotato processed product is whether one should use flour or puree (boiled and mashed sweetpotato). Flour is convenient to store but requires drying and milling. Puree is easy to prepare, but more difficult to store once made. It often requires a processor to have a refrigerator or freezer or alternatively, to store the fresh roots and prepare when needed. The major consideration in making this choice is purely economic. One must also consider access to electricity; in many areas of rural Africa this is not available, meaning that whatever product you select must be able to be made with an alternative electricity source and still give quality products. It takes 4-5 kgs of fresh roots to make one kilogram of sweetpotato flour. It takes 1.25 kgs of fresh roots to make one kilogram of sweetpotato puree. In most Sub-Saharan African countries with sweetpotato yields ranging from 5-15 tons/ha on farmer's fields, sweetpotato flour is usually more expensive than wheat flour. That means, for most products where you are going to use sweetpotato to partially substitute for wheat flour, puree makes economic sense.

Sweetpotato flour can usually only be considered if you are targeting a food or feed processor or wealthier, health conscious consumers or if you are sourcing your sweetpotato from highly productive commercial operations producing 40-60 tons/ha.

In Zambézia Province, the project started with the recipe that the bakers were already using and tested the substitution of different amounts of orange-fleshed sweetpotato puree for wheat flour. They also increased the amount of yeast. Products were tested with consumers in different forms (round, elongated) as well as with different levels of sweetpotato substitution, with the idea of maximizing the amount of sweetpotato so that the pro-vitamin A content could be pushed as high as

possible. They found that consumers liked Golden Bread in which 38% of the wheat flour by weight had been substituted with puree. The other major modification made to the baker's recipe was to reduce the number of risings of the dough from two to one. Further research established that it is also important not to add too much salt, because salt reduces the final volume of the bread.

Consumer studies found that the consumers preferred Golden Bread over white wheat bread because of its heavier texture (*"it fills the stomach"*), superior taste, and attractive golden appearance.

The Golden Bread was analysed for beta-carotene content. According to United States Food and Drug Administration guidelines, a product can be considered an excellent source of vitamin A if it contains 20% or more of a daily value of a reference amount. It can be considered a good source if it contains 10 to 19%. A 110-gm bun of Golden Bread was found to be an excellent source of vitamin A for children and non-pregnant women and a good source for all other adults.

Equally important, was that bakers in Zambézia saw profit increases from 54% to 92% by substituting 38% of wheat flour with orange-fleshed sweetpotato puree. As a rule of thumb, the price of wheat flour must be at least 1.5 times greater than the price of fresh sweetpotato roots to consider substituting sweetpotato puree for wheat flour in bread.

The challenge in developing any processed product is to ensure continuous supplies of roots to the processor. In countries with two or more sweetpotato growing seasons per year, the continuity of root supply will usually be better than in places with only one main growing season. Although, if farmers all plant and harvest their crop at the same time, there will still be supply continuity problems. Staggered planting and fresh root storage can help to avoid this problem, but processors may need to work with growers on planning of timing and inputs to help ensure they can access the continuous supply they require. In countries with only one major growing season, investments need to be made in fresh root storage or off-season irrigated sweetpotato production. One must always be aware that if fresh root market prices are high, agro-processors will be less inclined to use sweetpotato roots in their products.



## Sweetpotato Products with Commercial Value

Currently, the orange-fleshed sweetpotato products with the most commercial potential being produced in Sub-Saharan Africa are:

1. Fried products, such as chips, crisps, chapatis, and doughnuts
2. Baked products, such as breads and biscuits
3. Juice



Recipes for these products are provided in the topic, Process and Utilisation. However, it should be remembered that the healthiest way to eat your orange-fleshed sweetpotato is to boil and mash it and add just a teaspoon of oil to increase vitamin A absorption. Deep fat fried products (chips, crisps) are much less healthy than boiled or baked products. When making the juice, the key is to use clean, boiled water.

The Zambesia project's experience suggests product training efforts should focus on people already engaged in selling products

or in businesses like restaurants that serve products. They are more likely to make the products on a regular basis than farmers, unless the latter are already making chapatis or other products in their households. Women's groups looking for an enterprise may also adopt these products.

In Rwanda, the sweetpotato Superfoods project is working with large-scale processors to produce orange-fleshed sweetpotato biscuits and mandazi, and improved packaging.

*Sweetpotato biscuits and mandazi being produced in a factory in Rwanda, and nicely packaged sweetpotato products being promoted at a trade fair.*



In China there are many commercially sold sweetpotato products, see the topic *Process and Utilisation* for more examples.



*Cornflake breakfast cereal made from sweetpotato and corn flakes, sweetpotato snacks and crackers*

## Review Questions

1. What are some of the issues with offering processed products?
2. What processed sweetpotato products are currently available in SSA?
3. What are the potential profit-makers in processed sweetpotato products?

## Unit 9 – Gender and Diversity Aspects of Sweetpotato Marketing and Entrepreneurship

### Objectives

By the end of this unit, participants should be able to:

- Describe the gender and diversity issues around sweetpotato marketing and entrepreneurship.

### Key Points

- **Development workers must understand the roles people play in the sweetpotato value chain, including decision makers and beneficiaries.**
- **If some groups are under-represented, advocates should try to find out why and remedy the cause.**
- **Development workers should be sensitive to male control and involve men in decision making even when they are not directly involved in labour.**

### Gender and Diversity Aspects of Sweetpotato Marketing and Entrepreneurship

A thorough discussion of gender and diversity aspects in relation to sweetpotato is presented in the topic, Gender and Diversity Aspects. Key gender and diversity issues relevant to sweetpotato marketing and entrepreneurship include:



- It is important for development workers to understand who is typically involved in which aspects of the sweetpotato value chain, as well as what these players do, when and how, and what constraints they typically face. In addition to understanding who does which tasks it is also important to understand who makes the decisions, and who reaps what benefits at each stage of the value chain. A gender sensitive value chain analysis can be a useful tool in building this understanding.
- If particular groups of the community (e.g. a particular religious or ethnic groups, poorer people or women) are under-represented in the value chain it is worth probing to find out why this is, and what the constraints to their involvement are. For example, a participatory exercise on the benefits and challenges of women playing the different roles in the sweetpotato value chain could be very enlightening for all involved. The project may be able to develop innovative ways of working which help widen access to the different roles in the value chain.
- Attention needs to be paid to postharvest gender roles and how processing may impact on them, including appropriateness of equipment and in what ways the introduction of machines or new products will affect gender roles and income benefits.
- The above factors are all relevant for a project in deciding what type of information to share, who to share it with and when. The perceived importance of the sweetpotato value chain crop in the different stakeholders' activities will influence the investment levels in terms of the time and resources that they are prepared to make.
- As with all training, attention needs to be given not only to imparting appropriate and practical information to the target beneficiaries, but also to those who make decisions and control access to the raw materials. Timing, duration, location, delivery language, approach and participant composition of training events need to be considered to ensure certain

- groups are not unintentionally prevented from accessing training.
- In most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, men are considered the owners of assets such as land and buildings and make decisions regarding their use. It is critical for development workers to be sensitive to male control over resources and ensure that men are consulted about project activities even where they are not directly involved.

## Review Questions

1. Before deciding what type of information to share, who with and when, that kind of information should be collected?



## Activities

These learning-by-doing activities will provide hands-on discovery opportunities for participants.

### Activity 10.1 Market Trip

Take a research visit to a market with half the group working on fresh root marketing margins and issues and the other half on processed products, find out about characteristics and constraints of each including any gender issues. Back at training centre groups summarise findings into a presentation followed by discussion.

#### Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Understand the opportunities and challenges in sweetpotato fresh root marketing.
- Understand the opportunities and challenges in sweetpotato processed product marketing.
- Be aware of how to select an appropriate process product.

#### Time

4.5 hours plus travel time

#### Materials

- Nearby market
- Transport
- 5 measuring cups
- 5 plastic containers (~2kg root capacity)
- Notebooks and pens
- Flip charts
- Markers
- Advanced Arrangements

Organise transport, facilitator should make a pre-visit to the market to find out where the sweetpotato root traders are and whether any sweetpotato processed products are being traded, and if not to look at which processed products the participants could study.

#### Suggested Steps

1. Split the participants into 2 main groups and then into sub-groups of 4 persons each. Each sub-group should have one person assigned to ask the principal questions. All other participants should take notes. One group will be tasked with learning about fresh sweetpotato root marketing, and the other group about processed products.
  - **Fresh root group:** Brief the 'fresh root group' on the fact that they will be visiting the market and will have 1.5 hours to find out everything they can from small-scale and larger scale sweetpotato traders regards their activities. In the market they will probably want to work in pairs or fours, and they should write down what they learn as they will then make a presentation about it to share with the other group. This should include:
    - a) How they got into sweetpotato trading, what factors influenced their decisions?
    - b) An understanding of the different places they source sweetpotato from during the year and whether this is due to production seasonality or other factors?
    - c) When the low season and high season are, and what the traders do during the low season

E.g. Do they diversify into different products?



- d) Their view of who the different actors in the value chain are from producers to consumers?
  - e) The typical quantities of sweetpotato that the traders sell each day and week?
  - f) The size of the sack they buy, and the size of the heaps they sell?
  - g) Observe their sales 'place' and style what do you notice about it, is it clean and encouraging to customers, which section of the market is it in, how could it be improved?
  - h) Do they do any 'promotion' of their roots, if so, how?
  - i) Do they sell a range of different varieties, and why or why not? Do they sell other crops or products alongside sweetpotato?
  - j) Do they sort or grade the roots they sell in anyway, if so, in what ways?
  - k) The price that they buy a sack of sweetpotato for, what costs do they then have to pay, what sales income do they earn, what their profits are?
  - l) How they manage risks?
  - m) How their profits from sweetpotato compare to those earned for selling other crops?
  - n) Observe which type of people are selling sweetpotato, e.g. Is it only women or only men, do they also grow sweetpotato, are they typically young or middle aged, or is it a wide range? Why does it tend to be these people?
  - o) What do they know about orange-fleshed sweetpotato?
  - p) What the main problems and constraints they face are (this should include probing on quality aspects of sweetpotato roots as well as other constraints)?
  - q) What information they would like to learn related to sweetpotato trading?
  - r) Ask a few consumers what the main factors are that they use when deciding whether or not to purchase sweetpotato, and which sweetpotato roots to purchase?
- **Processed product group:** Brief the 'processed product group' on the fact that they will be visiting the market, and will need to find out everything they can from traders selling either a sweetpotato processed product (if there are any), or a product that might be able to use sweetpotato as a major ingredient, e.g. bread rolls, mandazi (doughnuts), chapati, juice, chips made with Irish potato or compete with sweetpotato products, e.g. a coconut sugar bar. The group might want to work in pairs and thus be able to cover several products. The group should carry a measuring cup, to help the product makers estimate actual amounts of ingredients used in case they can't remember. Remind them that they should write down what they learn as they will then make a presentation about it to share with the other group. This should include:
    - a) How they got into trading this product, what factors influenced their decisions?
    - b) How do they make their product, step by step, including:
      - i) The amount of each ingredient they use
      - ii) How much they pay for each ingredient and where they buy it from
      - iii) How many units do they make at a time (batch)
      - iv) Whether they hire any labour to help and what that costs
      - v) Any other expenses they may have associated with making the product
    - c) How much they sell the product for and why don't they sell it for a higher price?
    - d) How many customers do they get in a day and how long does it take to sell a batch? How many batches do they make and sell in a week?
    - e) Do they or members of the family eat a part of the batch?
    - f) What do they see as their profit margin per batch?

- g) Observe their sales 'place' and style what do you notice about it, is it clean and encouraging to customers, which part of the market is it in, how could it be improved?
  - h) Do they do any 'promotion' of their products, if so, how?
  - i) If they sell other products, how their profits from different products compare?
  - j) Observe which type of people are selling these products? E.g. Is it only women or only men, are they typically young or middle aged, or is it a wide range?
  - k) What the main problems and constraints they face are (this should include probing on quality aspects of raw ingredients as well as other constraints)?
  - l) What do they know about orange-fleshed sweetpotato?
  - m) Have they ever considered using any kind of sweetpotato as an ingredient in their product?
  - n) Ask a few of their clients what the main factors are that they use when deciding whether or not to purchase the processed product, and which processed product to purchase?
2. Travel to the market, preferably by foot if it is nearby.
  3. Visit the market, the fresh root group and the processed product group will speak with different traders about all the issues listed above as bullets.
  4. Return to the training centre.
  5. Each group makes a chart comparing what they have learned from different interviews
  6. Ask the two groups (fresh root and processed products) to each spend 45 mins discussing what they learnt and preparing a presentation (which could involve role play) about the trading activity they focused on (including gender aspects), which they will share.
  7. Presentation.
  8. *Discussion:* Following both the presentations facilitate a discussion on the trading activities observed, differences between fresh root and processed product trading and key characteristics and constraints of each (including gender aspects). Ask the participants to think about how they might involve traders in a sweetpotato project, and what opportunities they saw for improving different aspects of the value chain.

## Activity 10.2 Calculating Your Profit Margin

Using a farmer case study, participants will work out the profit margins at each stage of the value chain.

### Objectives

Participants will know how to calculate marketing margins for fresh root trading.

### Time

45 mins

### Materials

Enough photocopies of the Case Study on Esther (Box 10.3 below) for each person to have a copy.

### Suggested Steps

1. In pairs participants are given a written case study describing farmer Esther's costs of producing and marketing sweetpotato roots at each stage of the value chain. Note there are different options described. They need to work out how to present the information in a visual way that they can then use to calculate the costs and profit margins at each stage of

- the value chain. Highlighting any risks or opportunities they have noticed.
2. Ask each pair to join another pair, and to explain to each other their value chain calculations using the visual diagram they have prepared.
  3. In a whole group discussion, ask them to discuss any difficulties they had in interpreting and presenting the case study, any differences between their understanding of the value chain and its costs and profits and that of the pair they joined with, and brilliant ideas they saw or had for presenting the information visually.

### Activity 10.3 The Five Pillars of Marketing

Role play to get participants to explore marketing issues.

#### Objectives

Participants will understand the five pillars of marketing

#### Time

55 mins

#### Materials

- 20 orange-fleshed sweetpotato roots
- Stickers/ post-its
- Marker pens
- Flip charts
- Masking tape
- Presentation 10b on the 5 pillars of marketing

#### Suggested Steps

1. In order to explore their existing knowledge of the 5 pillars of marketing, organise a brainstorming followed by group discussion on the key aspects of marketing.
2. Ask for 6 volunteers to create a role play using the orange-fleshed sweetpotato roots to depict a typical market scene with people buying and selling sweetpotato roots. Give them 5 minutes to plan a 5-minute performance. The other participants will be observers.
3. At the end of the role play, ask the participants who were observing to comment on key marketing issues they saw. Note down key observations on a flip chart as the discussion continues. If necessary the facilitator should subtly probe to get the participants to mention aspects related to all the 5 pillars of marketing, and to bring out gender and diversity aspects.
4. The facilitator should then make a presentation about the 5 pillars of marketing, using questions to involve the participants and get them to share their experiences of the different pillars, and the importance of all the pillars.

### Case Study: Esther's Sweetpotato Costs and Returns

Esther wanted to prepare her sweetpotato field and hired men to help (Ushs40,000), she then ploughed the field twice at a cost of Ushs30,000 per ploughing, and then hired women to help make the mounds to plant her sweetpotato on. They made 10,000 mounds, which cost a total of Ushs 200,000. Esther didn't have enough planting materials, so she went to the swamp to buy some from Josfat, she bought 10 bags of vines at a cost of Ushs15,000/ bag. She hired bicycle transport to take them to her field at a total cost of Ushs 3,000. She hired labourers to help her plant, this cost a further Ushs 30,000.

Fortunately, the rains were good, and her crops grew well, but so did the weeds, so she twice had to hire labourers to help her weed, each weeding cost her Ushs60,000. Soon it was time to harvest, the yield was good, so she hired labourers to help her harvest. They harvested a total of 60 bags of roots, and she paid the labourers Ushs1,500 per bag for the harvesting, and the empty bags cost her Ushs800/bag.

Esther was planning to sell her roots, and she knew in order to sell them she needed to grade and sort them, which cost Ushs500/bag, and package them @ Ushs1,000/bag. She couldn't decide whether to take them to the market and sell them at Ush20,000/bag or sell them from her home at Ush15,000/bag.

If she took them to the market she would incur additional costs, such as transport (@Ushs5,000/bag), loading and off-loading (@Ushs1,000/bag), market fees (@Ushs500/bag,) and agents' commission (@Ushs600/bag). She would also end up having to stay over at the market and this typically cost Ushs20,000.

Help Esther work out:

1. What her production costs per bag of sweetpotato roots are?
2. What her marketing costs per bag of sweetpotato roots if sold at home are?
3. What her marketing costs per bag of sweetpotato roots if sold at the market are?
4. What her minimum per bag selling price if sold at home should be?
5. What her minimum per bag selling price if sold at the market should be?
6. What her profit margin would be per bag of sweetpotato roots if sold at home?
7. What her profit margin would be per bag of sweetpotato roots if sold at the market?

Discuss:

- What risks she might face by selling from home, and what risks she might face selling at the market?
- What the impact of grading and sorting the roots might be? Could she bargain for a higher sales price?

## Answers to Review Questions

### Unit 1

1. What characteristics of sweetpotato are preferred by rural consumers?
  - *Large root size; Colour; Taste; Texture; Fibre content; Price; Shape; Freshness*
2. What are some of the barriers to trade?
  - *High costs due to Bulkiness, Perishability, Discontinuous and geographically fragmented supply; Transport costs; Taxation; Sweetpotato stuffed in large extended bags makes them Difficult to carry and Causes bruising and damage, which lowers quality and shortens shelf-life; Reliance on traders and neighbours to check market prices.*

### Unit 2

1. What are the key tasks of a market-oriented business?
  - *Market research, product development, marketing mix, market monitoring.*
2. What are the pillars of the Marketing Mix?
  - *Produce, price, promotion, place, people.*

### Unit 3

1. What are some of the traits of successful entrepreneurs?
  - *Motivation, discipline, decision-making, resourcefulness, building trust, ability to adapt, persuasiveness.*
2. What are some of the factors that contribute to enabling or hindering entrepreneurship?
  - *Culture; Education; Societal history; Finance availability; Location; Government policies; Institutions: NGOs, labour market, etc.*

### Unit 4

1. What are the types of products that could be sold to the market?
  - *Tangible, intangible (services), mix of the two.*
2. Who are the people involved in the market chain?
  - *Farmers, extensionists, brokers, retailers, wholesalers, processors, consumers.*

### Unit 5

1. Who are the different actors of the market value chain?
  - *Farmer, broker/assembler, wholesaler, transporter, retailer, consumer, agribusiness service provider, traders, processors/millers.*
2. What are the three phases of the participatory market chain approach?
  - *Get to know different actors; 2) Analyse potential joint business opportunities 3) Implement joint market innovations.*

### Unit 6

1. What are some of the advantages of working as a cooperative?
  - *Supply a larger volume (product); Supply sweetpotato consistently (promotion); Gain a better bargaining position (price); Build good relationship with traders (people); Improve the quality of products (product); Take advantage of extension services (place).*
2. What are some of the issues with long-term contracts?
  - *Procedures like supplier registration and payment can be extremely slow; Facilitating contracts between buyers and farmers can be difficult to enforce in Sub-Saharan Africa, side-selling can emerge.*

## Unit 7

1. What are the key areas to cover when training farmers?
  - *Keeping records, calculating production costs, producing enough to each and sell the surplus, noting problems during a season*
2. What are the key records that farmers are encouraged to keep?
  - *Cost of inputs, Transport costs, Marketing costs; How much harvested in kgs; How much sold; Amount of sweetpotato lost; Gross revenue; net return to family labour: Total revenue minus total cost*

## Unit 8

1. What are some of the issues with offering processed products?
  - *Unreliability of supply; Poor quality of product; High labour inputs for washing, peeling and chipping; Low price compared to fresh roots; Lack of technology; Organizational constraints.*
2. What processed sweetpotato products are currently available in SSA?
  - *Chips and flour*
3. What are the potential profit-makers in processed sweetpotato products?
  - *Snacks, crackers, cereals and juice*

## Unit 9

1. Before deciding what type of information to share, who with and when, that kind of information should be collected?
  - *Who is involved; What these players do, how and when; What constraints they face; Who makes decisions; Who reaps what benefits.*

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