

## Review of first session for Virtual Meeting of West Africa Sweetpotato Breeding/Seed Community of Practice

The session was opened with encouraging words by Dr. Marian Quain speaking on behalf of the DG for CSIR, followed by the enthusiasm of Dr. Koussao Some from INERA-Kamoinse from Burkina Faso. The 35 participants were then welcomed by Dr. Ted Carey who emphasized the opportunity created by initiating this joint CoP and the objectives of implementing excellent comparable trials and an integrated regional breeding strategy to embed Sweetpotato into future national breeding programmes. Dr. Reuben Ssali introduced the vision and purpose of the CoP and the detailed structure of these five sessions.

Dr. Abdullai Jalloh, Director of Research and Innovation for CORAF, gave an excellent presentation embedding CORAF's current regional vision and strategy for 23 countries under its mandate, responding to the critical AR4D challenges across the region. He outlined the major achievements and accolades, the strategic and operational plans and key on-going and upcoming initiatives; most importantly the nine crop-specific centers of excellence, with roots and tubers in Ghana. His presentation generated much Q&A, in particular on the need to embed sweetpotato as a national priority crop, that it has been added to the regional catalog, the community of experts questionnaire and the opportunity to contribute to the Agripreneur TV and other communication and marketing strategies. His presentation was followed by a very persuasive science-based presentation by Dr. Hugo Campos on the difference operational excellence in breeding can make to effective breeding outcomes.

All recordings and presentations are available on CIP-COP West Africa MsTeam site in Files.

