The Sweetpotato Action for Security and Health in Africa (SASHA) is a five-year initiative designed to improve the food security and livelihoods of poor families in Sub-Saharan Africa by exploiting the untapped potential of sweetpotato. It will develop the essential capacities, products, and methods to reposition sweetpotato in food economies of Sub-Saharan African countries to alleviate poverty and undernutrition.

Orange-fleshed Sweetpotato

Super Foods
Sweetpotato Value Chains in SSA

Potential for food security and better vitamin A nutrition:
- Widely consumed, especially by the poor
- Substitute highly nutritious Orange-fleshed Sweetpotato (OFSP) - high in β-carotene for existing white-fleshed
  - 125 gm root (small) meets the daily recommended intake for a young child
- Grows in wide range of agro-ecologies and soil types
Challenges to realizing this potential at scale:

- Seasonality
- Limited storability, bulkiness
- Poor marketing capacity
- Weak value chain linkages
- Little investment in post-harvest
- Limited range of products/utilization
- Risk of women losing control of the crop as it commercializes

To reach urban consumers: Image change needed from a food of the poor to a healthy food for all
Sweetpotato Value Chains for Nutrition and Income

How can post-harvest investments help overcome these constraints?

4 types of value chains for nutrition and income

- **Fresh roots**
  - Affordable
  - Nutritious

- **More nutritious baked products**
  - Wheat flour substitution
  - Urban
  - High value

- **Highly nutritious foods for target groups**
  - OFSP-soy combinations
  - Weaning foods

- **Fried fast foods for income**
  - West Africa
  - Urban

Proof-of-Concept Project: ‘Rwanda Super Foods’
- high SP production (over 85 kg/capita)
- rapid urbanization,
- strong private sector investments in food economy
Rwanda Super Foods

- Part of BMGF ‘SASHA’ Program, 2010-2014
- CIP, Rwanda Agricultural Board (co-lead)
- Implementing partners: CRS, Imbaragga, YWCA & SINA Enterprises – commercial bakery (largest in Rwanda)

Hypotheses:
1. Private-sector led development of processed sweet-potato products results in increased farmer incomes
2. There is greater participation of women, especially poorer women, and profits for women participating in organized farmer’s groups linked to a private processors than among farmers with direct, individual contract with the private sector possible.
3. Effective marketing can establish OFSP as a high value crop in urban markets.
Testing Two Ways to Link Farmers to Markets

2 Value Chain Models

Model 1: **Contracted individual farmers** linked directly to processors
(SINA Enterprises has 37 farmers)

- Individual farmers supply raw roots directly to the processors

Model 2: **Farmer groups** with collective and individual SP plots linked to processors
(CRS facilitates 20 farmer groups in 4 districts)

- Farmer groups supply raw roots directly to the processors
- Farmer groups supply processed sweetpotato products to local markets

Processors develop new products for the urban market
Rwanda Super Foods – Emerging Insights

SINA Enterprises:
- 12 outlets in 8 towns;
- Selling 1,500 packets of “AKARABO GOLDEN POWER” biscuits per day

Local markets and small scale processing growing strongly;
Innovations in vine supply chain
Wheat substitution:
Puree – not flour

Sweetpotato puree + wheat flour + other ingredients

- Bread (30% OFSP + 70% wheat) + others
  - 7% decrease in per unit production cost

- Doughnuts (Mandazi) (40% OFSP + 60% Wheat) + others
  - 15% decrease in per unit production cost

- Biscuits (45% OFSP + 55% wheat) + other
  - 14% decrease in per unit production cost

Costs US$ / kg
- Wheat 0.53
- SP flour 1.20
- SP puree 0.30
Promotion Efforts Necessary to Create Awareness & Build Brand Name Recognition

For more information, visit www.sweetpotatoknowledge.org