



Fig. 2 School meal vendors in Ila community expressing their acceptance of OFSP pottage for inclusion in the school menu (credit I. Oyerinde)

State, are lending their support to the effort. In September 2014, a visit by a delegation of the partners to the office of the Deputy Governor of Osun State resulted in high-level endorsement for the “carrot potato” and its inclusion on the menu. In anticipation of approval of the pilot effort, a nutritious and easy to prepare recipe (peeled OFSP root, cut into chunks, cooked with palm oil, pepper and onion, and served with fish provided by the government to ensure pupils’ intake of protein) was developed in consultation with the O-MEALS and PCD staff. A series of sensitization meetings was conducted, bringing together caterers, O-MEALS staff, headmasters and parents to discuss the benefits of OFSP and to present the recipe to the stakeholders, who deemed it good and approved its inclusion in the O-MEALS program (Fig. 2). Prices and delivery schedules were agreed upon in meetings of producers and caterers and in January 2015, we started piloting OFSP pottage in the school menu of eight schools in Osun State.

Additionally, several CIP-led projects contributed. The *Reaching Agents of Change* trained extension staff and helped to support trials that led to the official release of the OFSP variety, *Mother’s Delight*, which is used on the O-MEALS menu. Two on-going projects, *Sweetpotato for Health and Wealth in Nigeria* and *Jumpstarting OFSP through Diversified Markets in West Africa* are also working to ensure the success of the O-MEALS by developing seed systems and root production to meet school needs and by working with stakeholders to set up viable pricing and delivery arrangements, among others.

Fig. 3 (right) Elementary pupils in Osogbo town eating OFSP pottage at mid-morning break (credit I. Oyerinde)

Fig. 4 (right) Nigeria school meal vendors at Ila-Orangun peeling OFSP for pottage at the stakeholders’ sensitization (credit I. Oyerinde)

What have we achieved so far?

In September 2014, the inclusion of OFSP on the school menu received high-level endorsement following a visit to the office of the Deputy Governor of Osun State. This was followed by approval by education stakeholders to include OFSP pottage on the menu of all schools in Osun State once a week. Due to logistical reasons, a pilot was initiated in eight schools in January 2015. The 4,160 students are consuming 1.2 tons of OFSP per week, served by 60 caterers (Fig. 3 and 4). With increasing numbers of meals served each week, there is also a growing acceptance of the meal by students.

What are the next steps?

Both the nutrition and business case for OFSP in the O-MEALS programme are strong, and the O-MEALS programme is anxious to expand coverage. At this early stage in the program, close monitoring to ensure adequate supply of sweetpotato, and timing of production to synchronize with the school calendar are needed to guide planned expansion of the program to all schools in Osun State and other states in Nigeria in the coming years.

