

## Nigeria hosts consultative meeting on alignment of research and delivery to its agriculture agenda

Stakeholders in Nigeria's agricultural landscape attended a country consultation on alignment of research and delivery towards agricultural policies of the Federal Government, 10–12 April, in Abuja.

The 3-day meeting was attended by over 80 participants representing various stakeholder categories: government ([Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development](#) [FMARD – Project Coordination Unit, PCU], Ogun State Ministry of Agriculture; national agriculture research institutions [NARIs] ([Agriculture Research Council of Nigeria](#) [ARCN], universities); [CGIAR](#) centers ([IFPRI](#), [ICRISAT](#), [ICARDA](#), [CIP](#), [AfricaRice](#), [IITA](#)); development partners (donors and technical partners); farmer associations; and the private sector.

These diverse agencies in the country working on agricultural research for



Representatives of stakeholder groups at the Country Consultative Meeting in Abuja.

development include the national agriculture research systems (NARS), federal and state government universities in agriculture, international agriculture research institutions (e.g.,

CGIAR), and private sector institutions. Each of these institutions undertakes various research projects and programs in agriculture to improve overall

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## AgResults holds 5th-year implementer induction; fosters full sustainability in Nigeria



Debo Akande, AgResults Project Lead, giving a presentation at the AgResults Year 5 implementer induction and training workshop at IITA.

To obtain higher income, quality maize grains, and improve the livelihoods of farmers, the [AgResults Aflasafe™ pilot](#) project held its year 5 implementer induction and training workshop on 4–6 April, for both old and new implementers at IITA in Ibadan. The meeting aimed to educate, equip, and create a platform for interaction between the old and new implementers for knowledge sharing.

Speaking at the opening event, [Kenton Dashiell](#), IITA Deputy Director General, Partnerships for Delivery, commended the effort of the private sector in facilitating the adoption of [Aflasafe](#) and working with smallholder farmers to

increase the productivity and profitability of their aflasafe-treated maize. While reiterating IITA's commitment to supporting and providing solutions to farmers and ensuring global food security, Dashiell said: "The production, marketing, and commercialization of the product has been our major target, as the implementers have been supportive, not only by words but in action. I urge all participants especially the new implementers to learn, share knowledge, and exchange ideas so that by the end of this 3-day gathering, you will all be on the same level with the old implementers," he added.

Corroborating Dashiell's statement, [Debo Akande](#), AgResults Project Leader for Nigeria, stated: "I am quite impressed and elated because we are not only contributing to practice but also to robust knowledge sharing to enhance full implementation of the project. Although the project is coming to an end by next year, I am convinced that you all can drive the innovation delivery for better development impacts over a long period of time." He went further to describe the training as a unique model to advance the biocontrol of [aflatoxin](#) among Nigerian farmers through the involvement of market players, the private sector, and other key stakeholders in the maize value chain and ensure sustainability of Aflasafe adoption.

Aflatoxin contamination is a menace affecting over 4.5 billion people in developing countries. On that basis, the AgResults Aflasafe™ pilot is making specific interventions in the form of biocontrol mechanisms, to control and prevent aflatoxin contamination and pilot the dissemination of the Aflasafe product to key stakeholders. This approach significantly improves the security and quality of agricultural produce and increases trade opportunities for stakeholders all along the value chain.

During the plenary session, presentations were made on aflatoxins, Aflasafe and its benefits, preharvest management of aflatoxin and aflasafe management, maize agronomy for increasing productivity, postharvest safety precaution to maintain grain quality, linking the downstream to the upstream maize production, fostering a sustainable market for aflatoxin-reduced maize, and doing agriculture as a business.

The AgResults Aflasafe pilot implements a pull mechanism to encourage agricultural enterprises to adopt Aflasafe technology, towards the management of aflatoxin contamination in maize production. The project has successfully supported market-driven agriculture through private sector engagement in aggregation and marketing of 129,896 tons of maize which represents over 60% of the total production of 216,493 tons. The smallholder farmers also enjoy commensurate premiums arising from using Aflasafe, for better health and increased income and productivity.

While highlighting the importance of incentivizing the private sector, Akande said: "The project started with 4 implementers, and now has 32 implementers driving the adoption and application of Aflasafe among



*Kenton Dashiell, IITA DDG, Partnership for Delivery, addressing the implementers during the training workshop.*

smallholder farmers. By way of motivation, this project has made it possible for the implementers to access up to \$650,000 incentive as at last year, and will be given \$1.4 million this year as a result of their good performance. Aside from that, this has been a great contribution to the Nigerian economy which is diversifying from a mono-economy of oil to the agriculture-based economy. Without quality products like Aflasafe, we may not be able to diversify as is expected of us as a nation," he added.

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economic development, food and nutrition security, and the livelihoods of farmers and communities, among other goals. However, coordination, harmonization, and collaboration across the different institutions and sectors working on agriculture and related sectors in the country is limited. While some progress has been made in these areas, the impacts have been diverse and disjointed. This makes it difficult for significant impacts to be achieved in alignment with the country's strategic goals as set out in Nigeria's Agricultural Promotion Policy (APP or the Green Alternative).

In her opening remarks, Dr Aisha Ndayako-Mohammed, Head, PCU, FMARD, spoke about PCU's role in coordinating projects that support agriculture and noted that the purpose of the meeting was to "address the gap between research outputs and the



*Group photo of participants.*

linkage to Government policies and objectives." All levels of stakeholders from agricultural research institutes to extension to farmers were involved in the process of economic development

as part of the Government's Economic Growth and Recovery Plan (EGRP).

IITA's goodwill message was given by [Alfred Dixon](#) on behalf of the Director for



Partnerships for Delivery. He noted the desire for agricultural transformation in Africa was widespread because Africa's food import bill is \$35 billion and may rise to \$110 in 2025 if nothing is done to remedy this trend. "We are exporting jobs instead of food, so we need to produce food in ways that create wealth." He argued "The process of agricultural transformation has been ongoing, but we need the right approach and the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) program is one such approach. Key stakeholders need to work together to achieve the desired agricultural transformation and align with respective country goals. We may pursue agricultural transformation, but Nigeria has already started with its Green Alternative. We work together so we give what Nigeria wants."

[Kwesi Atta-Krah](#), Director, Systems and Site Integration, IITA, opened

the working sessions, stating the objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting. He gave an overview on the status of alignment and emphasized that alignment to country strategic goals was a key element in enhanced impact. He said that as things stand, they represent a "case of critical disconnect."

In a presentation by Cassava Breeder [Peter Kulakow](#), IITA research on cassava was given as a case study on the problems of aligning research to the Government's APP. An overview of the crop in Nigeria was given and a brief description of all IITA projects related to cassava. He said there are over 10 projects on cassava in IITA, covering the whole value chain. Although individual projects may align to government policy, they need to integrate. He said: "The challenge is how can IITA and our national partners come together more effectively to ensure projects

are aligned with national goals and outcomes are sustained." He added that research and delivery need to be linked with national institutions, extension, and the private sector and concluded, "Research needs to be integrated to deliver technologies."

At the end of the meeting, it was clear that an empowered Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria should be the driving force that would align agricultural research to the Government's Agriculture Promotion Policy. Support for the alignment process would also come from a Data and Knowledge Management platform, an M&E system, the OFMARD, the private sector, and a change in mindset and culture towards alignment to government goals.

The meeting was organized under the auspices of FMARD and led by PCU. ARCN and IITA are the technical implementers.

## Cassava peels transformation gets boost with Theory of Scaling workshop

Representatives of private sector organizations, government, NGOs, and research institutions met 5–6 April at the [IITA](#) Ibadan campus, to discuss ways to enhance opportunities to see High Quality Cassava Peels (HQCP) processed and used at scale in Nigeria. They had a shared interest in this because of potential positive effects it would have on the environment, on business opportunities, on livelihoods of small-scale processors, and on the availability of animal feed.

The workshop aimed to build relationships and understanding of how participants connect to the workshop topic as well as develop a shared understanding about the situational characteristics of wet cassava peels transformation and use. It also aimed to develop a shared vision for how change can happen towards wet cassava peels transformation to enable use at scale. Another goal of the workshop was to agree on ways of collaborating on research on wet cassava peels and high quality cassava peel mash used at scale.

While welcoming all participants to the meeting, IITA Cassava Breeder and



*Small group exercise: drawing a rich picture.*

Geneticist, [Peter Kulakow](#) noted that it struck him how quiet the room was when participants were there to talk about the future of 15–20% of the entire cassava crop. He said the focus of the meeting was to emphasize how to turn cassava peels into a useful product instead of just throwing them away as waste. He also said he was optimistic that the momentum was already

building for this developing industry in Nigeria and probably the rest of Africa.

He thanked all the participants, stating that they were there, "not only to advance this important part of the cassava crop, but actually to make money in the process because really this is a way to increase the value that we recover from cassava and make it

more profitable, and towards this end make the whole agricultural contribution of cassava to the GDP in the economy of Nigeria more important.”

In his opening presentation, Project Leader and Scaling Champion, Iheanacho Okike outlined the intention of the workshop as “To create a strong and shared basis for the next two years of engaging with scaling processes in relation to projects under the [CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas](#) (RTB) scaling fund, allowing for processes of shared learning throughout those two years and for sharing key elements from that learning beyond the scaling fund participants.”

A video summarizing the cassava peel project was shown to all participants, presenting a background on how an environmental problem has been transformed into a valuable resource for feed production. Watch the full project video, which showcases the process and details the various steps involved including gathering of high quality cassava peels, grating, dewatering, drying, etc. here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKDp8o0CmlQ>

Okike’s presentation detailed some of the problems associated with cassava peels, the production costs of transforming them to animal feed, the competitiveness versus maize in energy content, and the implications of scaling the innovation. He showcased the scaling progress made so far and the obstacles facing scaling of the



Theory of Scaling workshop participants.

innovation, while also highlighting a scaling strategy as well as key partners for scaling.

Participants were given a brief tour of the production facility of the [International Livestock Research Institute](#) (ILRI), where they saw first-hand how the grating of cassava peels was carried out and how to sun-dry the de-watered mash. They were shown the “toaster” for circumventing sun-drying, and the drainage/soak away system before being shown the final bagged products which were checked for proper dryness.

Other workshop activities included the development of ‘rich pictures’ showcasing both the current state and the possibilities offered by cassava

peel usage; the capturing of initial ideas on key opportunities and challenges facing the cassava peel innovation; and the interactive building of a shared vision of how processing and use of high quality cassava peel mashes at scale could happen.

The HQCP transformation project turns cassava peels into high quality animal feed ingredients that can be substituted for 15–60% of the maize in livestock or fish feed. It was among three projects selected for implementation under the [RTB Scaling Fund](#) for 2018/2019 with the Theory of Scaling (ToS) workshop being one of the initial activities.

The RTB Scaling Fund is a mechanism created by RTB dedicated to improving livelihoods at scale to achieve the greatest possible impact.

## Events

- **IITA Board Meeting**, 24–26 April, [Center for Development Research of Bonn University](#) (ZEF), Bonn, Germany
- **Special event on “African agricultural transformation: The IITA Agripreneur Approach to Job Creation”**, 26 April, ZEF, Bonn, Germany
- **7th International Food Legume Research Conference**, 6–8 May, Palais des Congrès, Marrakech, Morocco



2:30 pm	Welcome, registration, coffee
3:00 pm	Introduction: Video about IITA
3:15 pm	Talk and presentation by IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga about IITA’s Youth Agripreneur Initiative *
4:00 pm	IITA youth agricultural entrepreneurs from Africa talk about their work: Ms. Ibukun Agbotoba [Top Notch Poultry] ** Mr. Zaccheus Izua [Sorgi Enterprises] ***
4:30 pm	Discussion
5:00 pm	Cocktail, ZEF lobby

### ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

#### NTERANYA SANGINGA\*

Dr Sanginga has more than 30 years of experience in agricultural research and development, particularly in applied microbial ecology, plant nutrition, and integrated natural resources management in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia, having worked with the University of Zimbabwe and the International Atomic Energy Agency in Austria. Before joining IITA as Director General for his first term in 2011, he was the Executive Director of the Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Institute of the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (TSBF-CIAT) from 2003 to 2011. He played a major role in creating the Consortium for Improving Agriculture-based Livelihoods in Central Africa.



#### IITA AGRICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURS

**IBUKUN AGBOTوبا, Top Notch Poultry \*\***  
Top Notch Poultry (see [www.topnotchpoultry.com](http://www.topnotchpoultry.com)) is an agribusiness run by enthusiastic university graduates who were incubated in IITA’s Youth Agripreneur Program and are technically and financially supported by Stratadvance LP. Top Notch Poultry aims to grow a franchise network of small-scale commercial feed-to-fork broiler enterprises. Together with partners they plan to establish a reference-farm with feed mill, breeding, incubating/hatching, growing, processing and retail/food units for research, training, and demonstration in best-fit technologies and practices suitable for youth businesses.



**ZACCHEUS IZUA, Sorgi Enterprises \*\*\***  
The business was started in Abuja after incubation with IITA in 2015. The business found a niche in production and aggregation of sorghum grains, making its first sale in 2016. Sorgi aims to become the leading producers and suppliers of clean high-quality sorghum grains in West Africa. The enterprise is into grain supply, seed production, and consultancy. It provides seeds and grains to big private sector partners such as Honeywell Flour Mills and Guinness Nigeria Ltd., and to the IITA Business Incubation Platform.





## ACAI introduces ID cards for extension agents and cassava growers

The [African Cassava Agronomy Initiative](#) (ACAI) has introduced identity cards for cassava growers and extension agents (EA) involved in the project activities. The project started issuing the card at the onset of the baseline survey being conducted by the Monitoring and Evaluation team in Tanzania and Nigeria in January 2018.

The identity cards feature a unique barcode for every recipient that will be referenced to the bearer's details and demographic information. The cards will serve as a means to formally recognize the contribution of the farmers and extension agents to the project activities.

The introduction of the cards is a move by the project implementation team to capitalize on the knowledge of the extension agents and cassava farmers and integrate the knowledge into the development of decision support tools.

According to Mark Tokula from the [National Root Crops Research Institute](#) (NRCRI) in Abia State, Nigeria, the exercise of registering farmers and extension agents during the baseline survey with a photo capturing feature was especially successful.

"The ID cards have also been highly acceptable to both EAs and farmers. It actually helped in stimulating farmers' interest in participating in the survey. The respondents were very cooperative," said Tokula, who is overseeing the ACAI baseline survey in the region.

Same sentiments were shared by [Deusdedit Peter Mlay](#) of Agricultural Research and Development Institute in Tanzania, who commends the use of the cards, especially scanning to retrieve reference data saying they significantly reduce the amount of time used in running analyses.

More than 4,000 farmers and extension agents have been registered for the new cards in Nigeria and Tanzania. The number is projected to increase as ACAI intensifies activities around validation of the current versions of the decision tools in both countries.

Each card is integrated with the project open data kit (ODK) database and



*ACAI enumerator registering an extension agent in Benue State in Nigeria during the project baseline survey in March 2018*



*A sample of the ACAI ID cards being issued to Extension Agents and Cassava Growers.*

it is expected to help accelerate data analysis and learning through the standardized and harmonized data collection especially when repeating observations over time.

Farmers and extension agents in Tanzania and Nigeria have facilitated the setting up of cassava trial plots in their farms, rapid characterization survey, and collection of important research data. The use of cards in the ongoing baseline survey in both countries has improved data collection from the project sites and will play a

significant role in tracking progress and results from farmers' fields.

"ID cards have made it easier for us to record information with higher accuracy and observe the key indicators without difficulty as compared to the previous methods," explains [Theresa Ampadu-Boakye](#), ACAI monitoring and evaluation leader.

The ID cards are part of ACAI's integration of innovative technology in implementing the project focused on data collection, analysis, and presentation.

## CBSD Control Project in Rwanda and Burundi commended by partners

The IITA-led project to control Cassava Brown Streak Disease (CBSD) and Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD) held its first Annual Review and Planning workshop in Bujumbura, Burundi and Kigali, Rwanda between 19 and 23 March.

The team of scientists and development partners involved in the project met to review the progress made during the first year of implementation. The CBSD Control Project is funded by the [International Fund for Agricultural Development](#) (IFAD) and started officially in April 2017. IITA scientists led by [Silver Tumwegamire](#) are working closely with national cassava research scientists as well as seed regulatory bodies both in Rwanda and Burundi to deliver on the project's planned activities.

The project is implemented in Burundi and Rwanda, in partnership with the Institute of Agronomic Sciences in Burundi (ISABU) and [Rwanda Agricultural Board](#) (RAB).

“Our first priority has been to introduce elite cassava clones that show strong tolerance for both CBSD and CMD and then work with the national systems and development partners, including individual or groups of farmers to test them and later multiply the good ones for farmers,” said Tumwegamire, the project leader.

The project has so far successfully introduced 17 elite cassava varieties as virus-indexed plantlets which will form the basis for pre-basic seed multiplication after adaptive evaluations. The clones were selected from the 25 elite clones earlier tested in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda, and Malawi under the 5CP project. The clones had earlier been pooled by the same countries, cleaned at the [Natural Resources Institute](#) (NRI) in UK and micropropagated at the Genetic Technologies International Limited (GTIL) in Nairobi before sending them back.



*CBSD Control Project has helped install screen houses in Rwanda and Burundi with a holding capacity of 25,000 plantlets. They will serve as multiplication centers for basic and pre-basic seed.*

The project aims to combat the destructive CBSD and CMD pandemics that have ravaged cassava in Rwanda, Burundi, and some parts of Eastern DR Congo. In four years the project—working together with national cassava researchers and development partners—is expected to identify best clones resistant to both CBSD and CMD and enter them into a clean seed system—at least the pre-basic and basic seeds.

The CBSD project has helped install a new screen house for ISABU at Moso Research Station, and for RAB at Rubona research station with the capacity to hold more than 25,000 tissue culture (TC)-derived cassava plantlets. The screen house will later function as a pre-basic seed multiplication unit based on the virus-indexed TC plantlets.

ISABU's head of cassava research Simon Bigirimana expressed optimism in the gains the project has made within a short time. “In a few months we shall be releasing these new varieties for multiplication for the very first time in the country. This is a huge step towards

fighting the CBSD attack on our cassava farms,” said Bigirimana.

IITA through this project has provided training for RAB and ISABU technicians in tissue culture techniques and post-flask management to enable them to receive and manage the introduced germplasm.

“With the introduction of the elite tolerant clones, set up of the research and multiplication facilities, we are hoping to address challenges posed by CBSD in the near future,” said Dr Athanase Nduwumuremyi, the head of cassava research in Rwanda.

To tap into the existing diversity of germplasm in the two countries, the project has also spearheaded collection of local cassava germplasm to identify through genetic diversity studies parental cultivars with desirable traits and interbreed them with introduced elite germplasm. This will help countries to generate new clones that combine good traits from the local germplasm and CBSD tolerance from the introduced elite clones.

### Got a story to share?

Please email it with photos and captions every Wednesday to [iita-news@cgiar.org](mailto:iita-news@cgiar.org) or Katherine Lopez ([k.lopez@cgiar.org](mailto:k.lopez@cgiar.org)) and Uzoma Agha ([u.gha@cgiar.org](mailto:u.gha@cgiar.org)) for headquarters and Western Africa, Jeffrey T. Oliver ([j.oliver@cgiar.org](mailto:j.oliver@cgiar.org)) for Southern Africa, Catherine Njuguna ([c.njuguna@cgiar.org](mailto:c.njuguna@cgiar.org)) for Eastern Africa, and David Ngome ([d.ngome@cgiar.org](mailto:d.ngome@cgiar.org)) for Central Africa.