

IITA and the Government of Zambia sign hosting agreement

On 25 June, [IITA](#) officially signed a hosting agreement with the Government of the Republic of Zambia. The signing ceremony took place with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honorable Joseph Malanji, signing on behalf of the Government of Zambia and the Institute's Southern Africa Hub Director, David Chikoye, on behalf of IITA.

In his opening remarks, the Minister welcomed everyone to the signing ceremony, which he considered to be a huge milestone that will allow for the commencement of IITA's operations in Zambia as a recognized international organization with privileges and immunities. "The decision to establish the regional offices in this country speaks volumes of your organization's confidence in the prevailing climate, in terms of being conducive to the various



The Director of Southern Africa Hub, David Chikoye (right), and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Joseph Malanji shake hands after signing the hosting agreement.

demands that an international office peaceful, and stable environment may require. Among these are a secure, capable of enhancing your normal

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P4D Special

Stakeholders propose development plans to transform Nigeria's agriculture sector

Stakeholders in the agriculture sector came together on 21 June at the [7th Annual ALP Seminar](#) to discuss challenges and opportunities affecting the transformation of Nigeria's agriculture and agro-allied sector. For the second year in a row, the focus of the seminar stayed on agriculture with keynote speakers addressing various aspects of different value chains including rice, cassava, and aquaculture.

In the keynote address, Executive Governor of Kebbi State Alhaji Atiku

Bagudu spoke on self-sufficiency in food production with a focus on rice production. He talked about the importance of collaboration between states to achieve food security in the country. Using Kebbi State as an example, he noted how they worked well with the Lagos State Government and were able to achieve great results in their rice farming project.

The first panel session continued this discourse, noting that agriculture is the way to achieve self-sufficiency and a thriving export industry in the country.

In response to questions during the interview session, the Governor outlined some of the challenges and opportunities facing their efforts. "As with many projects, what used to be imported is now sourced domestically, but there are supply chain issues. The state of our roads is an issue but we are overcoming that and by the time rail lines are finished, we believe that we will be able to deliver the right quantity to Lagos at lower prices," he said.

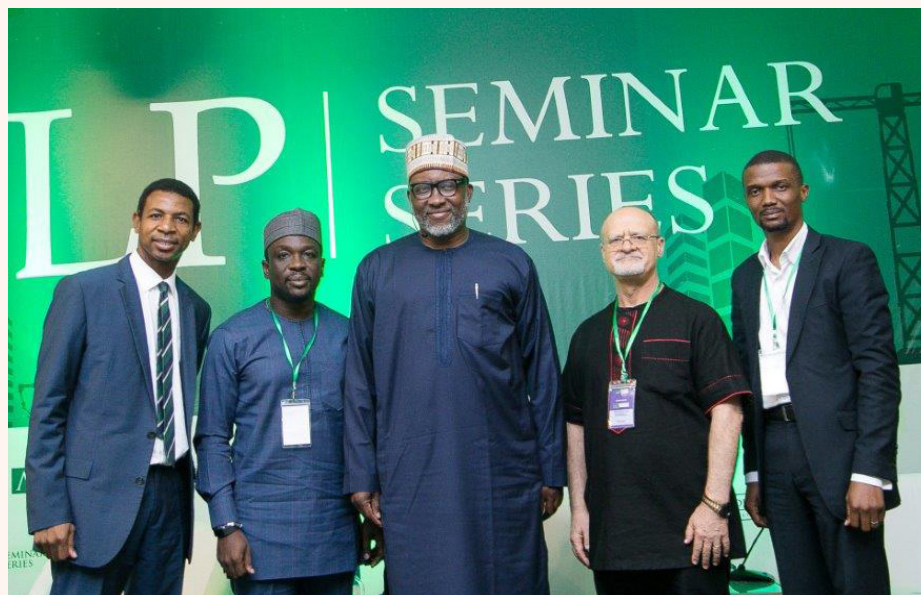
During the second keynote address, Managing Director and CEO of the

[Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing system for Agricultural Lending \(NIRSAL\)](#), Mr Aliyu Abdulhameed spoke about the business side of agriculture and how to de-risk investment in the sector. He talked about measures to tackle both the agricultural value chains and the agricultural financing value chain which would make investment in the sector a more attractive proposition.

The third keynote speaker was [IITA](#) Deputy Director General, Partnerships for Delivery, [Kenton Dashiell](#). He talked about the past and future contributions of cassava to the transformation of the agriculture and agro-allied sector of Nigeria. He said that cassava is mainly consumed for local consumption purposes, but also noted that there are great opportunities for industrial uses now which are starting to be exploited.

As has been the case with the adoption of high quality cassava flour (HQCF), Dashiell noted the importance of government in policy formulation and advocacy in actualizing this diversification. "Nigeria has an enormous potential for industrialization of cassava, and this transformation needs to be intensified with government policy on import substitution," said Dashiell.

He also proposed the development of a five-year plan for diversifying the



IITA DDG Partnerships for Delivery Kenton Dashiell (second from right) with other panelists and the organizer at the ALP Seminar.

use of cassava while also adopting a sustainable intensification approach to increase its yield in Nigeria. To this end he noted that "Proper land clearing is important to agriculture as it determines if you will still be using the land in a million years or not."

Dashiell also highlighted the use of high quality cassava peel (HQCP) in the manufacture of animal feed instead of just letting it to go to waste. This technology is already gaining traction and presents another opportunity for further diversification and expanded

impact of cassava.

Mr Ade Adefeko, Vice President, Corporate Government Relations at [OLAM](#) was the final keynote speaker. He spoke about investment opportunities in fish and poultry.

The ALP seminar series which began in 2012 is organized by [Akindelano Legal Practitioners](#) and focuses on different aspects of nation building to stimulate innovative strategies and outline pragmatic solutions for the Nigerian economy.

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operations to the benefit of all your beneficiaries," he stated.

He said he was particularly delighted that IITA's mandate is centered on the promotion of agriculture, which is considered to be the primary driver of Zambia's economic growth program under the seventh national development plan.

"As you are aware, the global agenda 2030 for sustainable development carries a similar mandate with poverty reduction being the overarching goal of the 17 development goals. Our people will not rise above the poverty threshold of US\$1.25 per day without improvements in agricultural production," he continued.

Honorable Malanji expressed hope that IITA will be able to collaborate with many relevant stakeholders in Zambia to unlock the massive potential of agriculture as a business for all.

To achieve the above, we will need facilitation with new technologies and management styles in the sector. I eagerly look forward to your contribution in this regard.

Speaking on the granting of diplomatic immunity and privileges to IITA, the Minister stressed that this carried with it responsibilities which any organization or other entity so granted must adhere to. He therefore appealed to the Institute to continue to project and protect their impeccable image.

Responding on behalf of the Institute, Director [David Chikoye](#) thanked the government of Zambia for agreeing to host the IITA regional office. He highlighted the celebration of IITA's golden jubilee anniversary in 2017 stating, "I am happy to inform you that IITA has been operating in Zambia for over 30 years. Our activities were governed by a memorandum of understanding with the Government of

Zambia signed through the Ministry of Africa."

"Over that period, we did not have a permanent address in Zambia; we operated in project mode, on a short-term basis and these projects were managed from the neighboring countries or headquarters."

Chikoye noted that the signing of the hosting agreement is a clear testimony that IITA is even now more committed to help Zambia and southern Africa transform its agriculture into a more viable sector.

"Although we have a regional mandate, I can assure you that the people of Zambia, will have more access to our technologies, facilities, and skills since we are based here," said Chikoye who also extended an invitation to the Honorable Minister to visit the IITA facilities so that he can be more familiar with the activities of the Institute.

Edo State and IITA explore areas of collaboration on cassava

The Edo State Government and IITA agreed to join forces to bring about transformational change in cassava, as the oil-rich state embarks on reforms to diversify its economy.

Edo State Governor, Godwin Obaseki, revealed his administration's plan to work with IITA after he gave a speech at the international conference on Water-Energy-Food Systems (WEFS) in sub-Saharan Africa organized by Pennsylvania State University in collaboration with IITA and the University of Ibadan, in IITA-Ibadan campus, 26–27 June.

In a meeting with IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga, Governor Obaseki said his administration's vision was to establish a cassava production zone of at least 50,000 hectares where cassava will be produced and processed with the active participation of smallholder farmers and the private sector.

Though the focus will be on cassava, the State is looking beyond cassava to other crops in which Edo State has a comparative advantage.

"We want IITA to give us a plan that is actionable," Governor Obaseki said.

Grown by over 3.3 million farmers in Nigeria, cassava has transformed from a food security crop to a cash crop in Nigeria, as most industrial companies are looking at the root crop as a source of raw material in confectionary, brewery, and pharmaceuticals.

Sanginga said the use of cassava today transcends gari—a grated and roasted form of cassava that is a source of food to millions of people in Africa.

"Today, companies are coming to IITA and asking us how we can support them in setting up cassava farms as a source of raw material," Sanginga said.



Governor Godwin Obaseki (left) and DG Nteranya Sanginga (center) discussed areas of collaboration between Edo State government and IITA.

Located in the oil-rich delta of Nigeria, Edo State is endowed with both agricultural and oil resources. However, like other parts of Nigeria, the State is confronted with unemployed youth.

Governor Obaseki said his plan is to create wealth, food security, and jobs from agriculture and put the state on the path of prosperity.

He said that his State's approach to agriculture was to treat it as a business that would bring economic and sustainable development.

Earlier at the conference on Water-Energy-Food Systems (WEFS) in sub-Saharan Africa, both Sanginga and Obaseki recognized the imperatives of the theme, as they spoke in the context

of limited/dwindling natural resources, a growing population, and a changing climate.

The two leaders agreed it was time to pay greater attention to the nexus between water, energy, and food systems so that the advancement of one component affects the other positively.

The conference organizers said the objective of the meeting was to build an alliance of partners committed to developing a significant Water-Energy-Food Nexus initiative in sub-Saharan Africa and to develop partnerships between institutions or individuals interested in immediate collaboration around specific research, education, or outreach projects.

Got a story to share?

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IITA and ILRI teams reflect on ongoing activities under the Crop–Livestock Integration Project

IITA-Kalambo Station, in April, hosted an [International Livestock Research Institute](#) (ILRI) team from the United Kingdom, Nairobi, and Bujumbura on a study visit to reflect on and learn from ongoing activities being implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They visited field sites at Mite and Kamanyola under the Crop–Livestock Integration Project (CLiP), a project funded by [International Fund for Agricultural Development](#) (IFAD) and the EU, and jointly implemented by ILRI and IITA in Burundi and DRC, respectively. The ILRI team was led by Dr Peter Thorne.

Before the field visit, IITA staff presented an overview of project activities by outputs and briefed visitors on ongoing activities following the Annual Review and Planning Meeting held in November 2017 in Bukavu and approved workplan as submitted to the donors.

After the presentations, the team had very fruitful and constructive reflections and learning sessions to improve on the implementation protocols. Suggestions and recommendations were also provided to IITA staff.

The turning point for this session was based on the need for proper documentation of the partnership pathway, which has been a point repeatedly noted by IFAD following the country based business model agenda to align project interventions with country specific portfolios that promote and strengthen public-private partnerships.

The livestock ladder tracking system was also another topic of discussion during the meeting. Beneficiaries who received a small stock of animals, especially rabbits, pigs, and chickens, are closely monitored to ensure that farmers “climb the ladder” and that the solidarity chain is not broken. Linda Burume, DRC Mite Field Site Facilitator, said “We are now observing a few farmers who received the animals such as rabbits and pigs, sell and buy goats, and maintain the solidarity chain principle.”

The following day, the team visited the Centers for Agribusiness and Agro-Services (CAAS) established by CLiP in Katana and Kamanyola field sites. The team visited the different enterprises including piggery, poultry, maize and cassava processing units, vegetable



The ILRI team with some IITA-Kalambo staff and farmers during the visit to a field site.

and mushroom garden, and the selling point.

Recommendations to improve the mushroom production and the forage demonstration plots were formulated. The visits were highly appreciated by both farmers and the visitors. On behalf of CAAS, Pascal Buganza, the Katana CAAS Committee Chair, expressed his satisfaction by saying “We are pursuing our dreams with the establishment of these centers. We are growing slowly but progressively we will become real entrepreneurs. Please do not leave us before we fly on our own.”

Moved by the commitment and the enthusiasm of CAAS members, IITA-Bukavi OIC Chris Okafor said “This a journey we have started together and you are in the front line. If you walk, we will walk; if you run, we will run, but if you stop, we will stop. So be encouraged and do the good work.”

After the field tour, the team visited two individual farmers, namely Ferdiana and Fatuma in Katana and Kamanyola, respectively. These farmers shared their stories of how the integrated crop–livestock system has brought more cash and improved their livelihood. Ferdiana, who received six rabbits from the project has already given out 12 offsprings to three other farmers along the solidarity chain and has climbed the ladder from rearing rabbits to goats. On the other hand, Fatuma said she realized that agriculture can provide a decent life

when it is taken seriously. She built a big house and pays for her son’s fees for his master’s degree abroad from the income generated from her maize farming system.

The evaluation team expressed their appreciation of the ongoing work, the commitment of CAAS members, and appreciated the agro-vet network as well as the ICT platform. Voicing his satisfaction, Thorne committed to fully support the CAAS initiatives and expressed his appreciation by saying: “I have visited this center twice, but this time around, I am impressed by the idea of putting in place a network of agro-veterinarians to provide veterinary care to farmers facilitated by the ICT platform.” Before winding up the meeting, Dr Vincent Muhigirwa, the Inspector of the Inspection Provinciale de l’Agriculture, Pêche et Elevage (IPAPEL), expressed the engagement and full support of the CAAS in general and the agro-vet network in particular to ensure animal health and safety.

Mrs Kijana Ruhebuza, the Director of the Institut National d’Etude et Recherche Agronomiques (INERA) closed the session by saying “I visited CLiP’s sites and was particularly impressed by the work that the project is doing and the commitment of its beneficiaries who contributed their money to start up their business. I am confident that together we can achieve our goals.” The team then proceeded to Burundi where they wrapped up the meeting.

Supporting farmers in Tanzania to cope with climate change

“Soil erosion is a big problem in this area and we are therefore demonstrating construction of contour ridges along the hillsides. We are also demonstrating the use of tie ridges as well as *chololo* to help conserve water in the fields for the crops and the use of improved varieties of sorghum, pearl millet, cowpea, and Bambara nut. These are hardy crops that tolerate drought and are therefore suitable for semi-arid conditions,” says Dr Fidelis Myaka, a Senior Field Manager at [IITA](#).

IITA has established three demonstration sites in Dodoma region to showcase to farmers appropriate Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices for arid and semi-arid areas. CSA practices aim at increasing agriculture production and resilience to climate change while reducing agriculture’s contribution to climate change such as emission of greenhouses.

Setting up these demonstration sites on CSA practices for various agroecologies across the country is one of the main activities of the Building Capacity for Resilient Food Security Project in Tanzania initiated in 2017 to strengthen the country’s capacity to respond to the challenges posed by climate change to the agriculture sector.

The project is targeting Tanzania’s Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries (MLF) and Zanzibar’s Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, Livestock and Fisheries (MANRLF), Tanzania’s Meteorological Agency (TMA), and the President’s Office of Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG) as well as regional training centers.

It is led by the Government of Tanzania in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is being implemented by IITA, the [World Agroforestry Centre](#) (ICRAF), and UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The project is funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Tanzania Mission.

Demonstrating and communicating CSA practices

“Climate change has brought many challenges to our farmers. In one season,

they are grappling with too much rain and in another with too little rain. This project, which creates awareness on appropriate CSA practices among farmers, including suitable varieties to grow, will help them to adapt and cope with these challenges,” says Ms Shakwaananda Natai, Head of Environment Management Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture.

In the project, IITA has been tasked to build the capacity of the government to demonstrate appropriate CSA practices for the major agroecological zones as outlined in the country’s National CSA Guideline and to create awareness among the different stakeholders from farmers to policymakers on CSA.

The Government of Tanzania officially launched the national CSA Guideline in 2017 and its aim is to guide the agriculture sector and stakeholders in identifying practices and technologies that are specific to each agro-climatic zone to support crop, livestock, and fisheries production to cope with climate change.

Feedback from farmers

The project has organized farmers’ field days in the two sites, inviting farmers to the demonstration plots to expose them to the technologies and practices and to get their views on which technologies they would readily adopt. The farmers are happy with the project and technologies, acknowledging that climate change was indeed one of their major challenges.

“Farming is our main source of livelihood and our soils are fragile. We need to use these CSA technologies to increase our yield and in turn our incomes. If we follow these technologies, for sure our lives will get better,” says Sina Mde, Head of Nghumbi village.

His village is one of the sites in Dodoma region in which IITA is demonstrating CSA practices suitable for semi-arid areas in partnership with Hombolo Agricultural Research Institute.

Forty-one-year old Martha Paulo, also from Nghumbi village, is among farmers who are already applying some of these CSA practices, having learned from the demonstration plots.

“When we were making these *chololo* pits and tie ridges in this (demonstration) farm, I found the technologies labor intensive. However, I still went ahead and tried them on my farm. Now I am very happy with the results. The crops are doing very well and weed management was very easy. First the weeds were few. All I did was pluck them out,” she said.

As part of the project, IITA will also work with the trainers in the country’s agriculture tertiary institutions to develop material on CSA for inclusion in the country’s agriculture training programs. FAO and TMA will disseminate easy-to-use weather information using appropriate technologies including mobile phones while ICRAF will quantify the trade-offs and benefits of these CSA practices for decision making.



Farmers looking at the improved sorghum varieties intercropped with cowpea at their demonstration site.