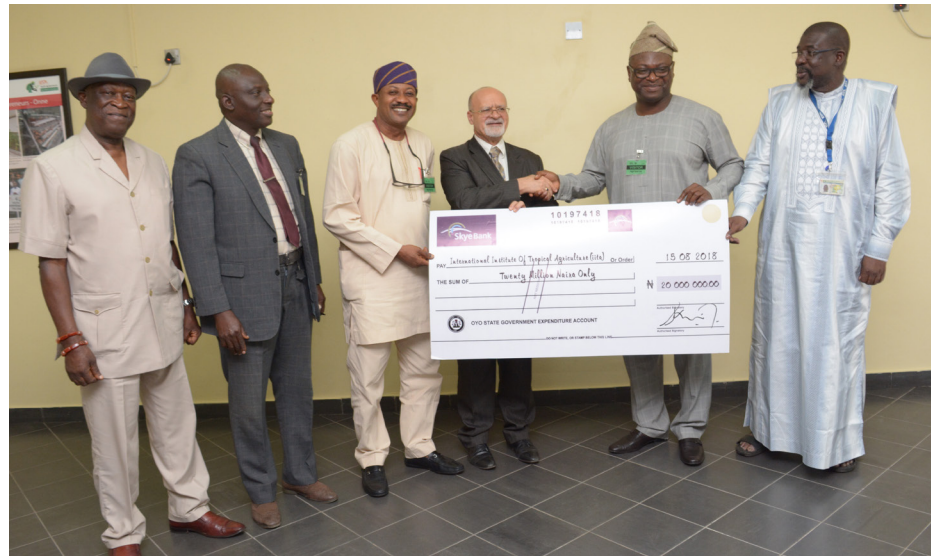


Oyo State partners with IITA and NISER to develop agricultural policy and establish agribusiness park

The government of Oyo State has formally signed the release of funds to [IITA](#) for the development of a 20-year agricultural policy roadmap. This signaled the immediate start of the development of the framework, which is a collaboration between IITA, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), and the Oyo State Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development.

The official check handover ceremony was held at IITA in Ibadan on 15 August and attended by a delegation from the Oyo State government led by the Honorable Commissioner of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development, Prince Oyewole Oyewumi; the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Victor Atilola; and the Special Adviser on Agriculture to the



DDG-P4D Kenton Dashiell (center) receiving one of the checks from Honorable Commissioner Oyewole Oyewumi.

Governor of Oyo State, Prof Oluwasegun Adegunle.

In his welcome address, IITA Deputy Director General, Partnerships for

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What's for lunch?

IITA canteen: Providing much more than regular food

The staff lunch has been a staple at IITA, Ibadan, for the longest time. Did you know that IITA in Ibadan had been providing free lunch to more than 1400 staff every day?

Charity begins at home, indeed, and through this, IITA, seeks to promote the welfare of its staff, continuously devoting resources to ensure that staff members are properly nourished by providing lunch to staff at the canteen.

[IITA](#) is not just known as a leading partner in research and development; it also looks after the well-being of its staff, neighboring communities, and sub-Saharan Africa at large.

The staff canteen at IITA-Ibadan has been in existence for more than 30 years, with the beneficiaries including staff of Pay Grades 1–10, IT students, Interns, and National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) members. Recently, due to the growing population of staff, the Institute commissioned a second canteen to reduce congestion and make staff more comfortable while having their lunch.

In an interview, Senior Cook John Gregory Udoh said that they maintain a high level of cleanliness and hygiene by ensuring that meals are prepared in good and safe environmental conditions suitable for human consumption, as the well-

being of the staff is their major priority.

“Being advocates of safety and the eradication of hidden hunger, IITA has made strides in making sure that a balanced diet is provided. They have gone a long way in ensuring that staff remain healthy, safe, and sound because a healthy body is one of the foundations of a safe work environment. Challenges such as time constraints have been faced in the past, but now, with the help of dedicated staff, we are able to meet up with the 11:30 start time for lunch,” he added.

As an international organization, IITA

has been working for the past 51 years to meet Africa's pressing challenges of malnutrition, hunger, and poverty and has practically demonstrated that "charity begins at home." This has given staff a sense of belonging and has shown them that their welfare is important to the Institute.

Commending Management, Canteen Supervisor Muraina Adelodun said, "Before now, staff carried their plates of food in their hands while eating. As a result, staff tried to come early to get a seat. But now, no matter what time they come, there is always a seat for all. The most interesting thing is that they do not only enjoy their food, they also seize the opportunity to look at the TV monitors and see what is happening in IITA and in the entertainment world as most of them might not have time to watch television before the day ends."

Staff members have spoken positively about the benefits of lunch at IITA. Busayo Oluwole, Laboratory Technician in Genetic Resources Center (GRC), sees the lunch provided as a life saver. "Eating at the canteen saves me the stress of leaving the campus in search



Staff members enjoying their lunch at the IITA staff canteen.

of what to eat. I am grateful to IITA for this kind gesture and for helping me save cost."

Adejumoke Aluko, Industrial Training (IT) student had this to say: "Comparing myself with my friends in other organizations, I would say that I am lucky to be in IITA. For me, the IITA canteen has gone beyond a place to eat. It is only during my lunch break that I see and network with my friends

in other units. I am so privileged to be a trainee in IITA and I especially thank the Institute for having the best food (rice and chicken) as part of our menu. After schooling, I wish to spend years of my career in IITA because it is really a nice place to be."

Watch 'A thousand meals' video on IITA Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/IITAPUBLISHING/videos>

Oyo State partners with IITA and NISER... [Continued from page 1](#)

Delivery, [Kenton Dashiell](#) stated: "We sincerely appreciate the strong support and partnerships we have with the government of Oyo State, who today is raising the bar of that partnership and collaboration to a whole new level that we haven't seen in 51 years. So it's quite a significant day."

Dashiell described the joint program as an excellent long-term vision of His Excellency, the Governor of Oyo State and his team because they have seen that it is important for the government to "have consistently good agricultural policies as a foundation for development. The development of the roadmap is the first task in this partnership, which when finished, can be used by the present government and hopefully by subsequent administrations."

The second major effort is to develop an agroindustrial park in two different locations in Oyo State. Dashiell also considers this aspect of the vision to be outstanding because it "will serve multiple purposes, one of which is

to develop a standard model farm and agro-processing center so that investors can come to Oyo State and see what is possible and be inspired to do more."

IITA Senior Agricultural Economist [Tahirou Abdoulaye](#) gave an overview of the processes that led to the development of the framework, which originated with a request for support from Oyo State Governor Abiola Isiaka Ajimobi to IITA Director General [Nteranya Sanginga](#).

From this, various conversations have taken place over several months, culminating in the invitation to both IITA and NISER to collaborate on developing the framework.

IITA Director of Development and Delivery, [Alfred Dixon](#), gave a breakdown of the second component of the Oyo State agricultural transformation—the development of the agroindustrial park. He said the park will attract private sector investment, which will improve



Group photo of attendees at the funds release ceremony.

Oyo State partners with IITA and NISER... [Continued from page 2](#)

the agricultural system in Oyo State, create jobs for the populace of the State, and alleviate poverty. "With the funding now available, we are getting into the field immediately to commence the soil and land survey and suitability assessment," he said.

Prof Adekunle expressed delight at the unfolding development. He described the framework document as the first of its kind in Nigeria and lauded Oyo State for living up to its moniker as The Pacesetter by being the first state

to collaborate with IITA and NISER to develop an agricultural roadmap.

Commissioner Oyewumi said that the government's collaboration with IITA has been long overdue considering the Institute has been in Ibadan for over 50 years. He said, "We cannot overemphasize the role that IITA, as a research institute, has been playing all across tropical Africa in terms of improving the quality and the quantity of our crop yield. Various farming groups and different practitioners

along the agricultural value chain have benefited tremendously from the outputs from this Institute."

Although this is seen as a long-term approach to agricultural transformation, the merits are immediately apparent. According to Dashiell, "I would say over the next one year that we should start to see the benefits of the improved policies and the reason for that is we will start to see investments come in at a faster rate than before."

Former VP and new VC of NM-AIST visit IITA Arusha

A former Vice President of Tanzania and the Chancellor of the [Nelson Mandela Africa Institution of Science and Technology](#) (NM-AIST), Honorable Dr Mohamed Gharib Bilal and incoming Vice Chancellor, Prof Emmanuel Luoga, visited [IITA](#) research facilities including the lab and field at the university.

The IITA team briefed them on the ongoing research activities to breed high-yielding and disease-resistant varieties of *Mchare*—a popular cooking banana in Tanzania under the [Breeding better bananas](#) project. The IITA facilities are open for the university's use in its training programs as part of IITA's efforts to build the capacity of future researchers.

The team, led by [Allan Brown](#), banana breeder and head of the IITA team at NM-AIST, highlighted the importance of *Mchare* banana as a Tanzanian natural resource that needs to be preserved for future generations and the significance of the work continuing beyond the life of the project.

"One of the areas we are keen on is to work with the university to develop a center of excellence for banana research," said Brown.

The Vice President and the incoming Vice Chancellor appreciated the work



NM-AIST delegation visiting the lab facilities.



Dr Allan Brown takes Dr Bilal and Prof Luoga on a field tour.

of IITA but challenged the team to extend its research to dessert banana

and support Tanzania to export dessert banana to the world.

Got a story to share?

Please email it with photos and captions every Wednesday to iita-news@cgiar.org or Katherine Lopez (k.lopez@cgiar.org) and Uzoma Agha (u.agha@cgiar.org) for headquarters and Western Africa, Catherine Njuguna (c.njuguna@cgiar.org) for Eastern Africa, and David Ngome (d.ngome@cgiar.org) for Central Africa.

IITA participates in annual National Farmers' Exhibition in Tanzania

IITA participated in the annual Farmers' Exhibition in Tanzania held 1-8 August. The exhibitions, popularly known as *Nane nane*, take place annually in the different regions of Tanzania along with a single national event that is hosted on a rotating basis across all the regions, and showcase different value chains. The national exhibition this year was held in the Simiyu Region.

[IITA](#) featured several projects in the regional exhibitions in Dodoma, Morogoro, Mwanza, and Mbeya regions and in Zanzibar. IITA showcased its technologies and innovations from its research to farmers and other stakeholders in the agriculture sector including policymakers, development partners, and actors in the private sector.

In mainland Tanzania, IITA exhibited alongside an important partner, the newly created Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), while in Zanzibar the Institute collaborated with the Zanzibar Agricultural Research Institute, another important partner.

Among the innovations and technologies featured was aflasafeTZ01, the innovative, safe, and effective biocontrol product for reducing aflatoxin contamination in maize and groundnut.

The registration of the technology in the country is at the final stage and IITA and partners are already charting the way forward for its commercialization and mass production so it reaches farmers through the [Aflasafe Technology Transfer and Commercialization](#) (aTTC) project.

IITA also demonstrated its work on soil health and agronomy including on cassava agronomy through the [Africa Cassava Agronomy Initiative](#) (ACAI). ACAI showcased the decision support tools it is developing to address various agronomy challenges. These include site-specific fertilizer recommendations; a fertilizer blending recommendation tool to optimize cassava root yield; a scheduled planting recommendation tool to ensure sustainable, year-round supply of cassava to the processing industry; and the high starch recommendation tool for optimum starch content in cassava roots.

The other decision tools include the intercropping recommendation tool



Group photo of IITA and TARI staff at the national exhibition.

for cassava intercropped with maize and sweet potato, and the best planting practices support tool.

IITA also used the exhibitions to create awareness on Climate Smart Agriculture through the Building Capacity for Resilient Food Security in Tanzania that is addressing the capacity gaps within the country to effectively respond to the challenges that climate change poses to agriculture.

This is an initiative of the Government of Tanzania in partnership with [United States Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA), supported by USAID–Tanzania. IITA is an implementing partner alongside the [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) (FAO) and [World Agroforestry Centre](#) (ICRAF). The project took part in the exhibitions in Dodoma and Zanzibar, which are among its project sites as well as in Simiyu. In Dodoma, IITA and project partners had demonstration plots for Climate Smart

Agriculture technology and practices.

IITA, TARI, and the [Menonite Economic Development Associates](#) (MEDA) showcased efforts to set up a clean cassava seed system in Tanzania through the [Building an Economically Sustainable Seed System for Cassava in Tanzania](#) (BEST Cassava). This project is led by MEDA and IITA, and has TARI as a major partner.

The IITA-led [Africa RISING](#) project also took part in the exhibition in Mbeya Region, which is one of its project sites and showed technologies on sustainably intensifying agricultural production to increase production with minimal or no negative effects on the environment.

The [Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs](#) also exhibited their processed products including high quality cassava flour and snacks made from it such as *chin-chin* and *titbits*.



The Aflasafe exhibition stand.