

## IITA to name research station in Kalambo after longtime collaborator and Goodwill Ambassador

On 8 October, [IITA](#) will officially inaugurate the Institute's research station in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The event will also serve as the naming ceremony where the Kalambo station will be designated The President Olusegun Obasanjo Research Campus, in honor of the former Nigerian President and IITA Goodwill Ambassador.

President of DRC, His Excellency Felix Tshisekedi, will officiate the event alongside former DRC President HE Joseph Kabila and Dr Akinwumi A. Adesina, President of the [African Development Bank](#) (AfDB). Other Heads of State and dignitaries from DR Congo and the Great Lakes Region will also be attending.

IITA has been operational in DRC since 1974, when the government invited the Institute to implement the National Cassava Program (Programme National Manioc - PRONAM) to tackle all cassava problems, mainly cassava bacterial blight through research for development. IITA closely collaborates with the [Institut National pour l'Etude et la Recherche Agronomiques](#) (INERA) in the development of healthy, nutritious, and profitable technologies. In addition, the Institute partners with the National Extension Service (Service National de Vulgarisation [SNV]), for dissemination



*Dr Sanginga during his first visit with President Obasanjo.*



*New Tissue Culture building at the Campus.*

of technologies and the National Seed Service (Service National de Semences [SENASA]) for control and certification of seed.

For many years, the station in Kalambo operated in project mode but in 2011, the IITA Board of Trustees decided to elevate it to become the focal point of the Institute's regional hub for natural resource management in the Great Lakes. It now features a first-class tissue culture lab for the vegetative multiplication of cassava, banana, cocoa, yam, and potato.

The newly constructed science building will be dedicated to IITA and its partners' mission of fighting hunger and poverty in the continent and will contribute towards boosting agricultural productivity in DR Congo and the region. As IITA Director

General [Nteranya Sanginga](#) noted, it is also "a symbol of our dedication and commitment to building the research and development capacity in DR Congo and the Great Lakes".

As IITA Goodwill Ambassador since 2011, Dr Obasanjo has championed policies to advance agricultural research and fight food insecurity on the African continent. He is currently spearheading the Zero Hunger Initiative that has strong relevance to DR Congo.

In addition to these, naming this campus after him will honor the sacrifices he endured since 1961 when as a young Soldier he was part of the UN troops that was mandated to make peace in DR Congo after independence. He also made much effort to mediate peace in 2008 when rebels invaded the country.

# DRC-CBSD project holds activity planning workshop for 2019–2020

The IITA Actions to control Cassava Brown Streak Disease in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) project (DRC-CBSD Project), held its fourth workshop and final planning for year 2019–2020 activities. The annual meeting took place in the city of Mbanza-Ngungu in Kongo-Central, DRC, from 17 to 19 September.

Representatives of the [United States Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#), the [Institut National pour l'Etude et la Recherche Agronomiques \(INERA\)](#), and IITA, the three key partner institutions of the project, attended the event and welcomed participants in their opening remarks.

The three-day workshop was conducted in two parts: firstly, to review the activities implemented for the 2018–2019 fiscal year and assess the status of achievements in relation to project indicators as well as identification of the gaps and challenges. The second part was dedicated to the development of the work plan for the coming fiscal year.

The review of implemented activities included presentations by the national partners and discussions on different topics related to project outputs. Some activities in progress were labeled essential. These include the screening trials for resistance and tolerance of promising genotypes to two distinct pathologies, particularly CBSD in South Kivu and cassava root necrosis disease (CRND) in Kongo-Central; the strengthening the capacity of research partners and other service providers; and the continuation of socioeconomic surveys in the eastern provinces, namely North and South Kivu, and the province of Tshopo.

The highlight of the meeting was to segregate CRND and CBSD as separate constraints, as recommended last year in the planning meeting at Mbujimayi. CRND has been considered a viral infection for a long time, with similar necrotic symptoms in tuber roots to CBSD but was recently confirmed not to be a viral disease. A request was made for this to be considered in planning activities.

As a result, activities on CBSD should focus on the Eastern provinces and those related to CRND in the western and Central provinces. There have been reports of both diseases occurring in Tshopo Province.

The work plan was developed around project outputs by constituting four different working groups as follows:

Output 1: Disease, epidemiology/surveys, surveillance, and insect genetic diversity  
 Output 2: Crop protection and breeding/variety development  
 Output 3: Multiplication and quality management of planting materials  
 Output 4: Capacity building and awareness, monitoring and evaluation.

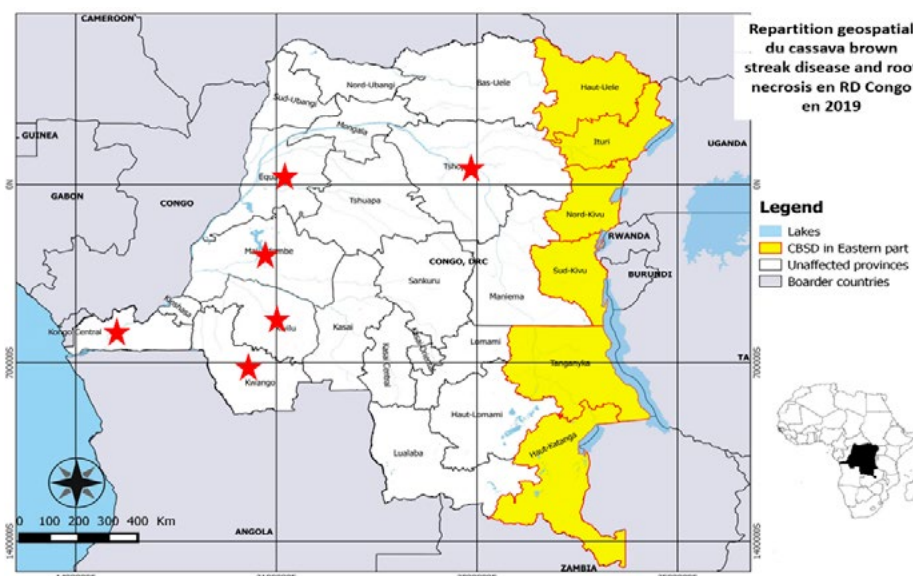
On the third day, a field visit of the activities was done at INERA-Mvuazi station, where breeding trials and multiplication of planting materials are conducted.

Participants at the workshop included USAID delegate, Mr Augustin Kadima, and delegates of the Agriculture Ministry services, in particular those of the National Seed Service (SENASEM), as well as the researchers from IITA-DRC (Kinshasa and Bukavu), those from INERA, and the Universities of Kinshasa and Kisangani (UNIKIN, UNIKIS). Other participants included the FAO, the

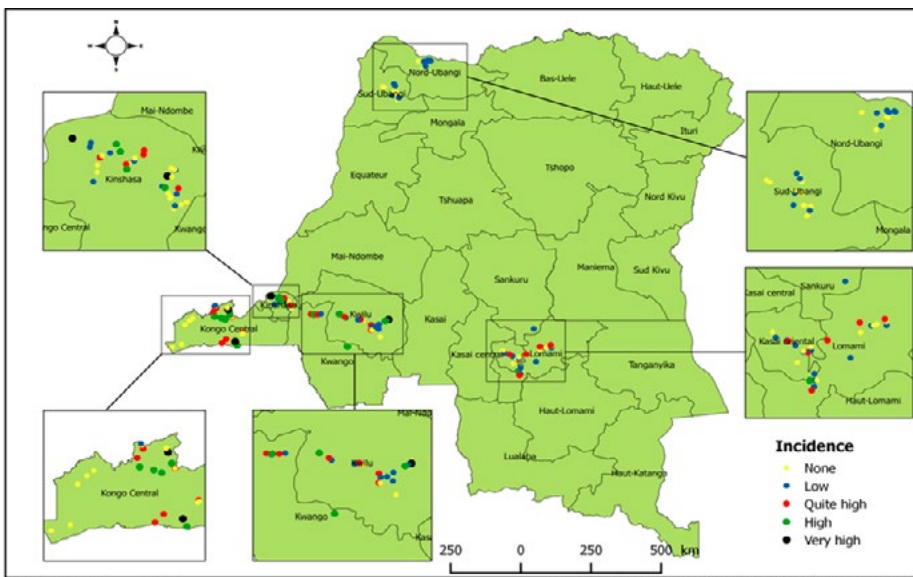


Displaying an infected root.

HarvestPlus Program, WAVE Project, Plant Clinic as well as some members of the private sector, including seed agri-multipliers.



Map showing CBSD spread in Eastern provinces of DRC.



Map showing incidence in Western and Central provinces of DRC.

## Review team commences visits to Africa RISING activity sites



Mark Powell (back row, second from left), Nancy McCarthy (front row, center), and Christine Negra (front row, right) together with some Africa RISING project partners in northern Ghana. Photo: Wilhelmina Ofori-Duah/IITA

After two months of document reviews (between July and August 2019), the team of three eminent scientists undertaking an internally commissioned external review (ICER) of the [Africa RISING](#) program have commenced visits to activity locations for the three regional Africa RISING projects in West Africa, Ethiopian Highlands, and East and Southern Africa.

The reviewers, Christine Negra, Nancy McCarthy, and Mark Powell, are currently visiting intervention communities in the Ethiopian highlands, having already visited activity sites in northern Ghana (15–21 September) and southern Mali (22–28 September). Visits by the team to project sites in Tanzania and Malawi will take place in February/March 2020.

This external review has been commissioned by the Africa RISING Program Coordination Team (PCT), which is made up of representatives from Africa RISING's three lead CGIAR centers—[IITA](#), the [International Livestock Research Institute](#) (ILRI), and the [International Food Policy Research Institute](#) (IFPRI) and the [United States Agency for International Development](#) (USAID) activity manager. It is expected that the exercise will yield valuable feedback, which the program implementers can use to make necessary adjustments (where needed) as the program comes to the mid-point of its second phase.

The scope of the entire review process is to evaluate the program's organizational structure; data management; monitoring, evaluation

and learning; research and development partnerships achievements; and the program's alignment with donor and country development strategies.

The site visits are part and parcel of a mixed methodology for information gathering that also includes extensive document reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, stakeholder analysis, and field visits.

This is the second ICER being carried out by the Africa RISING program. The first one was done between September 2014 and April 2015 during Africa RISING's initial five-year phase. The program is currently in its second five-year phase (2016–2021).

### Events

**Commissioning of Pres. Olusegun Obasanjo Research Campus**, IITA, Kalambo, Democratic Republic of Congo, 8 October

**Board Meeting and R4D Week**, IITA headquarters, 18–22 November



### Got a story to share?

Please send your story with photos and captions every Tuesday 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, Catherine Njuguna ([c.njuguna@cgiar.org](mailto:c.njuguna@cgiar.org)) for Eastern and Southern Africa, and David Ngome ([d.ngome@cgiar.org](mailto:d.ngome@cgiar.org)) for Central Africa.

# Senior team visits YIIFSWA-II project sites in Nigeria

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Senior Program Officer of YIIFSWA-II project, Lauren Good and the Project Leader [Norbert Maroya](#), YIIFSWA-II visited project activities in Abuja, the Nigerian Federal Capital Territory as well as sites in Ogun and Oyo states.

The field visit organized by the Project Leader presented an opportunity for the Program Officer to familiarize himself with ongoing seed yam research activities at [IITA](#) in Abuja and Ibadan and to interact with two private seed companies affiliated with the project on their seed production

and related research activities. The seed companies were also accorded the opportunity to showcase their achievements and share concerns with the project leadership.

Field visits were made to IITA Abuja station, Biocrops Biotechnology Ltd

located at the National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA), IITA Ibadan field trials, hydroponics system, vine cutting, and the Yam Semi-Autotrophic Hydroponic facility. On his way back he visited PS Nutraceuticals, a second seed company based at Wasimi in Ogun State.



YIIFSWA-II staff showcasing yam seed production research to BMGF Senior Program Officer, Lauren Good and Dr Norbert Maroya YIIFSWA-II Project Leader at IITA-Abuja station.



Mr Lauren Good, Dr Norbert Maroya, and YIIFSWA-II staff at minisett trial field at IITA Abuja station.



Shola Odusanya of Biocrops signs deal with NABDA to produce 100 million seed yam.



Success Pelemo explaining yam plantlet production and roll out to Mr Lauren Good at Yam SAH laboratory at IITA-Ibadan.