

IITA scientist highlights healthy diets at World Food Day seminar

World Food Day (WFD) is celebrated annually on 16 October and dedicated to tackle hunger across the globe. The global community observes this day to commemorate the founding of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which raises awareness about problems in food supply, distribution, and security.

The theme for this year's observance is "Our Actions are our Future; healthy diets for a #Zerohunger world." [IITA](#) took part in this year's observance with a seminar on nutrition and a "walk for a purpose" by IITA staff across all hubs.

The increasing number of undernourished people across the globe is a major concern and IITA's mission to facilitate agricultural solutions to overcome hunger and poverty makes WFD very significant to the Institute. According to the 2019 global hunger index, "Levels of hunger are "serious" or "alarming" in 47 countries and "extremely alarming" in one: Central African Republic."



Busie Maziya-Dixon presenting a seminar on healthy diets.

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Creating awareness on reporting climate smart agriculture and nutrition

[IITA-Tanzania](#) organized a media awareness session on "Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) and nutrition" in commemoration of World Food Day 2019. It aimed at increasing the knowledge and understanding of the media on issues around climate change and its impact on agriculture and rural communities. In addition, it focused on understanding the concepts, principles, and approaches of CSA, and gender and nutrition; and to deliberate on the role of media in Tanzania in creating awareness and advocacy on issues around gender and nutrition-sensitive CSA.

The session took place on 18 October at IITA-Tanzania offices in Dar es Salaam. Thirty-three journalists from 17 media houses attended. Also present were



Dr Francis Modaha making his presentation during the media awareness session.

government officials from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC), and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) who participated and presented different topics on CSA and nutrition.

During the session, journalists were taken through the causes of climate change and its impact on agriculture, principles of climate smart agriculture, policy issues around CSA in Tanzania, Nutrition and CSA, examples of CSAs, and lessons from the Building Capacity for Resilient Food Security Project.

While giving an introduction to the CSA concept, [Frederick Bajjukya](#), a Senior Scientist at IITA said, “CSA has three pillars—sustainable increase of agricultural productivity and incomes, adaptation and resilience to climate change, and reducing or removing greenhouse gasses to mitigate climate change.”

During her presentation on policy issues around CSA in Tanzania, Evelyn Kagoma from the Environmental Management Unit in the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) noted that agriculture is the mainstay of Tanzania’s economy employing 77.5 percent of the country’s population and contributes about 95 percent of national food requirements.

“In its efforts to address climate change in the agricultural sector, MoA has developed policies and guidelines on climate change including the Agriculture Climate Resilience Plan (2014–2019); the National Climate-Smart Agriculture Program (2015–2025), and Climate-Smart Agriculture Guidelines to guide the country’s strategic interventions. In addition, environmental and climate change issues have been incorporated into the Agricultural Sector Development Program Phase Two (ASDP II) under component 1 (Sustainable water and Land Use Management),” she said.

Despite all these efforts, the sector still faces challenges in implementing CSA practices and technologies. Kagoma said one of the major challenges is inadequate education and awareness among farmers on issues related to climate change.

During his presentation on Nutrition and CSA, Dr Francis Modaha, Senior Scientist from the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC), said that climate change affects nutrition because of occurrences such as increased drought, leading to reduced agricultural yields of crops, livestock, and fish, thus diminishing food security.

He added that climate change could also diminish water supply through changes



Participants in a group photo.

in temperature and rainfall patterns, thus resulting in reduced income among people involved in the value chain (farmers, traders, processors, etc.) as well as diminished agricultural yields that led to decreased government revenues to finance nutrition.

Modaha suggested steps to reduce the impact of climate change on nutrition including integrating nutrition into agricultural investment plans and other sector policies, strategies, and programs, as well as strengthening production, preservation, and consumption of locally produced crops.

The participants also had the opportunity to learn about Agroforestry and CSA especially the benefits of agroforestry from Emmanuel Temu of ICRAF. Temu also presented on agroforestry technologies implemented by the project which include shelterbelts, contours, woodlots, and tie ridges.

Senior Reporter from the Guardian Newspaper, Gerald Kitabu highlighted the role of media in communicating CSA. “As journalists we know our role in providing education helps leaders and the public to decide what can be done about climate change. Let us contribute to improve food security in the country by passing

information on climate change and CSA to farmers and the public at large,” he said.

Ashura Kazinja, a Reporter from Mtanzania Newspaper based in Morogoro Region, said the awareness session on climate smart agriculture and nutrition was important to her as an agriculture and science reporter.

“Through this session, I have learned a lot about climate smart agriculture and nutrition. I believe that I will be a good teacher to the public to educate them on climate smart agriculture, which can also increase their productivity and income,” she added.

The event was organized by the Building Capacity for Resilient Food Security in Tanzania project, an initiative of the Government of Tanzania in partnership with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), funded by USAID-Tanzania. It aims at building the country’s capacity to effectively respond to the challenges climate change poses to the agriculture sector.

In this project, IITA, ICRAF, and FAO are working with the Government to enhance various identified capacities geared towards building agricultural resilience and food security.

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It is reported that these numbers are even higher in regions across sub-Saharan Africa due to problems of extreme weather conditions, declining crop yield in some regions, and affordability, accessibility, and availability of healthy foods.

Speaking at the seminar, IITA Food and Nutrition Scientist [Busie Maziya-Dixon](#) gave a clear indication of the role a healthy diet plays in achieving a zero hunger world. While lack of food and hunger are widely reported on, Maziya-Dixon outlined the consequences of an inadequate diet and called for more to be done to address hidden hunger, which is a less obvious form of malnutrition.

She highlighted several non-communicable diseases, such as cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity, and noted that these are often related to and caused by wrong diet and that people can have control over them through what they eat. "Consuming a healthy diet throughout your life will help prevent malnutrition and these non-communicable diseases," she said.

She gave dietary advice for both adults and children, which people should consider when planning their

meals including consumption limits for different nutrient types.

She spoke of some of the factors associated with hunger and undernourishment. According to FAO, these include "the move from seasonal plant-based and fiber-rich dishes to diets that are in refined fats, sugar and heavily processed foods, lack of home-made foods, and sedentary diets (FAO, 2019)."

Maziya-Dixon encouraged the seminar participants to promote healthy dietary habits individually as this is one way

to achieve food security in the larger society.

Speaking before the walk, IITA Deputy Director General, Partnerships for Delivery, [Kenton Dashiell](#) noted that the World Food Day is important to the Institute, as the idea surrounding the observance is an integral part of IITA's mission. "One of our main goals is to do work that will help everyone in Africa have healthy diets. And that is why we work on our mandate crops; we work not only to produce crops, we work to produce healthy food," he said.



IITA staff participating in the World Food Day Walk for a Purpose.

ATASP-I sorghum outreach green mini field days showcase various production technologies

The [International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics](#) (ICRISAT), under the Sorghum Outreach implementation activities of the Nigeria Agricultural Transformation Agenda Support Program – Phase 1 (ATASP-1) for 2019 held green mini field days in seven communities and Nana Asma'u Girls Secondary School, Kamba, Dandi Local Government Area (LGA) all in Kebbi-Sokoto Staple Crops Processing Zone (SCPZ). The field days were held on 3 to 9 October on different categories of fields, which included extension agent-managed demonstration plots (Varietal demonstration), farmer-managed plots (Community seed production), a student-managed demonstration plot (Young Farmers Club), and ICRISAT's Research Technician- managed demonstration plot (Fertilization strategy) showcasing various sorghum production technologies.



Farmers participating at the field day.

The technologies demonstrated were in addition to good agronomic practices (GAP), which the participants appreciated, particularly at Makata'i and Sabon Guguwa communities of Ngaski LGA. When the demonstrations at Makata'i and Sabon Guguwa communities were first established, the farmers in the communities were skeptical. Some of the concerns raised included the crop not growing well; "stem borer" pest will devastate the crop; this was not the way to plant sorghum; the spacing was too short; etc.

The farmers were delighted by the outcome during the field days. They commended the Sorghum Outreach for the positive performance of the crop and

the demonstrated technology, which they had criticized initially. Members of the communities, including the elderly and male and female children, came out in large numbers during the field days. A breakdown of the attendance showed a total number of 244 male and 127 female participants.

At Nana Asma'u Girls Secondary School, the field day was held on the Young Farmers Club's varietal demonstration plot (Improved Deko and ICSV 400). Farmers from the host community as well as Young Farmers Club members from Government Secondary School, Kamba, were invited to participate in the field day to witness what

the female students have learned regarding sorghum production.

The principal of the host school, Hajija Sa'adatu Adamu, who was recently posted to the school, appreciated and commended the efforts of ICRISAT/ ATASP-1 for involving schools in their program of activities and for building the capacities of the students in both sorghum production and processing. Sixty members of the Young Farmers Club in the host school, 10 members of the Young Farmers Club from the invited school, 27 farmers from the community, and eight teachers of the host school were present during the field day.

Events

- 1st Aflasafe for Africa Conference**, Arusha, Tanzania, 4–5 November
- Food Security Synthesis Caravan Conference**, IITA headquarters, 5 November
- International Plant Protection Congress (IPPC) 2019**, Hyderabad, India, 10–14 November
- 5th Nutritious Food Fair**, IITA headquarters, 13–5 November
- Board Meeting and R4D Week**, IITA headquarters, 18–22 November



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IITA launches new Bibliography

To fulfill its open access mandate, [IITA](#) has launched an upgrade of the Institute's research and knowledge output repository, the IITA Bibliography. The new version was unveiled on 14 August as part of the IITA Communication Open House, which took place in Ibadan, Nigeria.

The new IITA Bibliography is built on the open-source [DSpace](#) software; it is a groundbreaking change in how IITA makes information available to its community and the public. DSpace is used extensively in the open access community, powering over 2,000 open repositories, and is interoperable with other repositories. It supports optimal discoverability and reusability of the content by complying with Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) standards and all its metadata are exposed through the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH).

In a presentation outlining the features of the new platform, IITA Digital Librarian, Soji Oloyede noted that the new IITA Bibliography prioritizes research visibility with better search engine indexing and accessibility to materials in the repository. It makes provision for altmetrics, which is one way research outputs become more

visible through social media, citations, and article downloads. With this, the number of potential users has increased as more people can find the data using search engines such as Google Scholar.

The new IITA Bibliography contains thousands of research works including journal articles, books, and book chapters, conference proceedings, training and extension materials, theses, and other publications from 1972 to the present time. These are frequently updated with new content and legacy records.

The new platform has a responsive design which optimizes the experience for all users as the site automatically adapts to the user's device whether it is a desktop or mobile device. With optimized navigation for all screen sizes, users can browse through the repository quickly and easily by collection, author, year, subject, and title. Advanced Search is available and search metadata such as title, abstracts, keywords, etc. A variety of filters for narrowing search results are also available, such as filtering content by Author, Date, Topic, Content-Type, Keyword, Region, or Country.

The new IITA Bibliography offers several helpful features and content for users, including:

- Citation information for each work, including a permanent uniform resource identifier (URI), which allows researchers to properly cite and link back to all works used in their research



Soji Oloyede outlining the features of the new Bibliography.

- Author profiles with biographies and other published works
- Links to citations in Google Scholar
- Icons for publications that have undergone Academic Peer Review
- Related Items such as other titles in a series
- Title suggestions based on what other users have downloaded
- Chapters or books published by external (non-Bank) publishers, once the publisher's embargo (if applicable) has lapsed
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The URL to the new IITA Bibliography is <http://biblio1.iita.org>.

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