

IITA partners with Oyo State government and others to promote agribusiness

Under the [Oyo State Agribusiness Development Agency \(OYSADA\)](#), the Oyo State Government collaborated with [IITA](#) and other partners to organize a summit with the theme “Oyo Agribusiness Summit 2021.” The summit, attended by representatives of some financial institutions and ambassadors from other countries, took place on 25-27 October and provided a platform to showcase and promote agribusiness.



*Left: Governor Seyi Makinde explaining the importance of agribusiness to Oyo State.
Right: DG Nteranya Sanginga highlighting some IITA activities tackling youth unemployment.*



In his welcome address, OYSADA Director General [Dr Adebowale Akande](#) highlighted Oyo State’s passion for promoting agribusiness as it is “the way to go” for economic development. Akande noted that Oyo State has adequate land for agriculture to meet the needs of the increasing population and growing middle class. “We will leverage the comparative agricultural advantage such as youth, talented workforce, and strategic location as a pathway to millions of consumers in domestic and regional markets to become sub-Saharan African agribusiness hub,” he said.

In his remarks, IITA Director General [Dr Nteranya Sanginga](#) spoke about unemployment as one of the challenges facing the Nigerian youth and how

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Open access: Promoting right and accessible knowledge



Central Africa Hub R4D Director Bernard Vanlauwe gave the keynote address.

[IITA](#) joined the international community in celebrating Open Access Week from 25 to 29 October as the Institute continues to promote the global mission of openness. The theme of the week-long event was “It matters how we open knowledge: Building structural equity.”

The Data Management Unit (DMU) embarked on an awareness campaign, with scientists sharing their opinions about open access throughout the week. The DMU also organized a webinar to share knowledge on the importance of open access and how to achieve it. Olayemi Oluwasoga, Open Access/Open Data Administrator, moderated the webinar.

In his keynote address, IITA Central Africa Hub Research for Development Director, [Bernard Vanlauwe](#), spoke of the importance of open access, highlighting the five focal principles. He emphasized the advantages of open access, such as increased research visibility and citations of IITA scientists and the enhanced use and impact of IITA's research. Because it addresses the lack of access to articles, open access positions IITA as a major source of trusted, free, and fair data related to agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa. It also boosts international communication, supports collaboration, and increases donor trust in IITA as the

Institute complies with open access policy for public-funded projects and research. "In summary, open access makes African research more accessible and visible," he said.

Molecular Geneticist [Ranjana Bhattacharjee](#) talked about the reasons for and ways of making knowledge accessible. She explained that scholarly research is usually not freely available under the traditional model of subscription-based journals; hence research is not disseminated as widely as possible. However, everyone is now embracing open access, leading to increased open access policies. "Nine hundred and ninety-six open access policies and mandates are currently included in the Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies," she said.

Soil Scientist and IITA Cameroon Country Representative [Cargele Masso](#) spoke on participatory research and capacity building and how they can

contribute to open access. Masso pointed out areas to focus on in participatory research, emphasizing working with partners to build on existing knowledge and involving key stakeholders in identifying knowledge gaps and co-managing research. He noted the need to mobilize human and financial resources and build capacity to address the priority knowledge gaps. "We can co-generate wealth from participatory research," he said.

IITA Institutional Data Manager Obileye Olatunbosun spoke on the technical infrastructure for opening knowledge. He said opening knowledge requires data application for renewed insight. However, without valid data, there would be wrong knowledge, he said. He advised that when putting out data, the data provider must know and have the proper license to go with the data so that the work can be recognized and credit given for the open knowledge. "We can only be open when our outside community sees us as acceptable," he said.



Left: Institutional Data Manager Obileye Olatunbosun speaking on the technical infrastructure for opening knowledge. Right: Open Access/Open Data Administrator, Olayemi Oluwasoga, moderating the webinar session.

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the different programs of IITA had changed the mindsets of teachers and youth by introducing them to value addition in agriculture. He also commended the Executive Governor of Oyo State, His Excellency [Seyi Makinde](#), for promoting agribusiness in the State. He urged him "to build a legacy by giving more support to the sector and young people to alleviate poverty and unemployment in the state and Africa."

Governor Makinde gave a speech on "Re-engineering Agribusiness in Development in Oyo State." He noted that business could be a catalyst for agriculture to lift people from poverty to prosperity. He highlighted the State's drive to increase agricultural

investment through tax incentives that he expects to remain in place for many years. "Oyo State has vast arable land, and request people and investors to partner with the State to grow this investment for mutual benefit," he stated.

Representing African Development Bank ([AfDB](#)) President, Dr Akinwumi Adesina, AfDB Director for Agriculture and Agro-Allied Sector, Dr Martin Fregene, noted that improving agricultural development in Oyo State would make the State attractive to other states and countries. He highlighted competitiveness, a clustered ecosystem, local capacity building, and climate adaptation as attraction points for Oyo to consolidate.

According to Heirs Holdings Chairman Tony Elumelu, financing agriculture is a direct investment in poverty eradication and job creation. He further explained that agriculture is central to our development as a continent. He pledged his foundation's support in scaling up agribusiness in Oyo State.

The summit had private sector leaders and government officials in attendance including His Excellency [John Donnelly](#), Australian High Commissioner to Nigeria; Her Excellency Emmanuelle Blatmann, French Ambassador to Nigeria; WEMA Bank CEO Ademola Adebise; First Bank Group Managing Director Dr Adesola Adeduntan; and representatives of the United Bank for Africa and Fidelity Bank leaders.

PDAU co-facilitates project development and management training for senior ABUAD staff

The [IITA](#) Project Development and Administration Unit (PDAU), represented by [Kayode Awobajo](#), co-facilitated a training program for senior academic staff of Afe Babalola University (ABUAD), Ado-Ekiti on 4-8 October. Participants at the “International Project Proposal Development and Management Training” cut across Colleges of Sciences, Engineering, Social and Management Studies, Law and Medicine, and Health Sciences.

ABUAD’s team of the Youth Employment in Agribusiness and Sustainable Agriculture (YEASA) project, led by Prof. Amos Onasanya, organized the training as a hybrid onsite and online workshop.

The YEASA project is funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and led by ABUAD, in partnership with IITA, Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice), and the

University of Abomey-Calavi Benin Republic.

The overall objective of the training was to improve and upgrade the project proposal development and management skills of selected senior academic staff across colleges in ABUAD. During the interactive workshop, Awobajo delivered presentations covering the full spectrum of PDAU’s activities.

Prof. Amos Onasanya also facilitated sessions focusing on practical experience across proposal development and implementation stages related to the ongoing YEASA project.

Analyses of overall training evaluation by participants indicated that the set training outcomes were satisfactorily met. At the end of the training, the Founder and Chancellor of the University, Aare Afe Babalola, expressed his gratitude and excitement based on the successful outcome of the training.

He sent his appreciation and goodwill message to IITA’s management team, led by Director General [Nteranya Sanginga](#), for the ongoing collaboration. He also called for more such support and engagement between researchers and administrators in the two institutions.



Workshop attendees with training facilitators.

Milking the opportunities left behind

Youth migration from rural to urban areas is often attributed to a lack of employment in the rural areas. Statistically, more youth crowd up the cities searching for better opportunities, and those who stay back may find opportunities for income and livelihood in excess. In Kyotera District, Uganda, just like in many other countries, this is the case.

In 2020, Diana Nikum and Sumaiah Nakate were caught up in the COVID-19 pandemic-induced lockdown that caused many schools and organizations to shut down. They took the opportunity to participate in livestock training through the youth compact of the [Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation \(TAAT\)](#) project.

After the training, both women purchased five exotic breed sheep. They herded the sheep on a massive expanse of land abandoned by those who went to cities searching for opportunities.

Eight months later, they had grown their enterprise from five to 105 sheep,

with a projection to have up to 130 sheep before the end of the year. With very minimal input, both ladies are running a profitable business. "There is so much grass around for the sheep to eat, and we get free vaccines from other herders in the community," Diana said during an interview. The women have the vision to diversify into value addition as the enterprise expands further.

Apart from the technical training, the youth compact, also known as ENABLE-TAAT, also renders business development services. Diana and Sumaiah have now developed their business plan and have received funding from Equity Bank Uganda to expand the enterprise.

TAAT is sponsored by the African Development Bank (AfDB) as part of its Feed Africa Initiative. Its main objective is to improve the business of agriculture across Africa by raising agricultural productivity, mitigating risks, and promoting diversification and processing in 18 agricultural value chains within eight priority intervention areas.

Led by [IITA](#), ENABLE-TAAT provides capacity building and technical assistance to establish and expand youth-led agribusiness enterprises along TAAT value chains, such as high iron beans, cassava, fish, maize, small livestock, rice, and orange-fleshed sweet potato.



ENABLE-TAAT livestock training participants, Diana and Sumaiah from Rakai, in Kyotera District, Uganda.

Take responsibility! Stop the spread of COVID-19!

Always clean your hands; practice physical and social distancing; wear face masks properly; avoid crowds and public places; keep a 2-meter distance from the next person; and practice general sanitation and hygiene.

Got a story to share?

Please send your story with photos and captions every Tuesday to iita-news@cgiar.org or Katherine Lopez (k.lopez@cgiar.org) and Uzoma Agha (u.gha@cgiar.org) for headquarters and Western Africa, Catherine Njuguna (c.njuguna@cgiar.org) for Eastern and Southern Africa, and David Ngome (d.ngome@cgiar.org) for Central Africa.

