



## New Year messages

### **Nteranya Sanginga**

**T**hank you all for your hard work and dedication in 2015. Over the past four years we have worked together as a team and this approach will continue to be the major factor in our continued progress and success. Challenges lie ahead as always but as we embrace change and adapt, we have a bright future ahead.



As we continue in our strength of delivering improved knowledge and technologies through partnerships to the end users, we will be evaluated on how people's lives are being improved and we must be able to provide the clear evidence that we are achieving impact at scale. Demonstrating this impact by working with private and public partners will determine our future. Being successful in both these areas is a priority and it is critical that the organizational structure of IITA supports our ability to achieve both of these major objectives.

One important area that IITA will focus on in 2016 is helping the African Development Bank in achieving its vision for Africa by modernizing agriculture.

African leaders had met at a conference, Feeding Africa – An Action Plan for African Agricultural Transformation, in October 2015 in Dakar, Senegal, to kick-start agriculture as an engine of growth.

A roadmap was developed that involves a two-pronged approach based on raising food productivity and reorganizing markets to create greater incentives and better trade conditions.

The creation of the Business Incubation Platform (BIP), the newly added cassava and soybean processing centers, and the Youth Agripreneurs at IITA have all made a significant contribution to Nigeria's quest to diversify its economy by accelerating the agricultural development sector. Many of these IITA innovations are being replicated and expanded in countries like DRC, Tanzania, and Zambia.

I believe my role in the future of IITA will be more in the area of achieving impact at scale by working with private and public partners and especially the youth. I am working to help IITA become the organization that all the other organizations working to improve agriculture in Africa want to partner with.

Let's work together on this. I wish all staff the best for 2016.

### **Kenton Dashiell**

**F**irst, I want to thank you all for your contributions to the progress of building strong partnerships and increasing our capacity development activities last year. As we enter 2016, let's build on our achievements, especially now that the



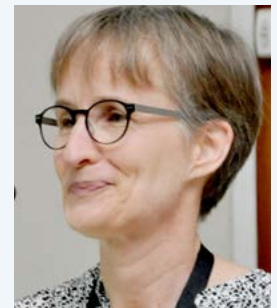
Business Incubation Platform is fully operational and getting increasing demands for Aflasafe, Nodumax, and breeders seeds of all our major crops.

Also, the success and expansion of our IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA) model is helping to raise IITA's profile and visibility throughout Africa. With your strong dedication to work and commitment to improving agriculture we will continue to establish new partnerships with all levels of government and with the private sector in pursuance of IITA's goals. I wish everyone a fruitful year ahead.

### **Ylva Hillbur**

**I**want to express my sincere gratitude for the contribution you have all made in 2015 to the continuing achievements of IITA. The teamwork of staff at all levels and across all units has meant that IITA has continued to succeed in a time of financial problems for CGIAR.

The quality of our science remains the bedrock on which this success is based and a major foundation of the impact of IITA on the lives of the people of Africa. I am sure that your efforts will continue just as strongly in 2016, which is the year of open access and E-Research in IITA. I enjoin everybody to support the implementation of open access and E-Research initiatives and ensure that the Institute becomes fully open access-compliant by 2018. I wish you all a happy new year.



## Kwame Akuffo-Akoto

As we enter the new year, I would like to commend you all for your hard work and dedication throughout 2015—we have worked well together to keep IITA strong and healthy despite challenges and difficulties. We have coped with the challenges and they have only served to make us stronger and more resilient. We are confident that the coming year will bring us opportunities to work harder and more efficiently towards achieving success, both in our personal lives, and towards the mission of IITA.

Wishing you and your families peace,



prosperity, and happiness and all the best for 2016. Happy New Year! Bonne Année!

## Shalewa Sholola

It's that period again when we take stock of our accomplishments and challenges during the year. The year 2015, no doubt, was full of excitement—successes and failures; positive and negative occurrences; drawbacks and breakthroughs, etc. The year has not been all rosy globally, and for donor-dependent institutions like ours, the financial crisis proved very turbulent.

Many of our sister CGIAR centers felt the impact of the wave occasioned by the duo budget cuts during 2015. However,



IITA weathered the storm, looking even stronger as evidenced by IITA's current top rank among other CGIAR centers in terms of funding; and also probably one of the few Centers managing a pay raise in the ongoing financial crisis. This was because we held together, like the Finance Directorate slogan says - Together we are stronger!

My humble message to you all is of gratitude to all that made it happen. I would like to appreciate all IITA staff members for your continued hard work and strong belief in what you do to deliver on IITA's mission and strategy. My deep appreciation goes to your spouses, our partners, and other stakeholders for their contributions and unalloyed support to IITA.

I take this opportunity to wish you all a healthy, prosperous, and successful 2016. We look forward with hope for greater accomplishments in 2016.

## Agriculture stakeholders in Tanzania hail CGIAR move on integration

Stakeholders in the agricultural sector in Tanzania support the move by [CGIAR](#) to integrate the activities of the different centers and research programs (CRPs) and to better align with the country's priorities in developing its agriculture sector.

The stakeholders agreed on this at a national consultation workshop on CGIAR "site integration" that was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 4 December 2015 organized by IITA on behalf of CGIAR and CRPs working in the country. The aim was to discuss how CGIAR/CRPs can work better together and align their activities and research agenda to the country's priorities. This was the second such workshop organized by IITA for CGIAR; the [first](#) one was held in Abuja, Nigeria, in November 2015.

The participants were drawn from the different ministries, national agricultural research systems (NARS), universities, NGOs, the donor community, the private sector, and farmers' groups.

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives, Sophia Kaduma, said that integration across the different CRPs and with a wide range of national partners and stakeholders in the agricultural sector can enhance the outcomes of CGIAR's research agenda.

She noted the potential of the agriculture sector in Tanzania's efforts to reduce poverty and achieve its developmental goals of shifting to a middle-income economy by 2025, and reiterated the role of research and development to improve agriculture and combat climate change and her government's commitment to R&D.

Representatives from the donor community including the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), [Irish Aid](#), [USAID](#), and the [World Bank](#) also support the move, which is expected to lead to more efficient use of donor funding and reduced duplication of efforts.

"Integration" and "alignment" were viewed as important in ensuring that development projects focused on the country's priorities and not the donors'/centers' whims.

Representatives from the farming communities and the private sector were also at the forum and highlighted some of the challenges they faced. "Farming has to be profitable. As farmers, we face many issues including poor extension services. The extension staff are few, without resources. We are therefore unable to access new technologies from research. Therefore the integration should look at how to support extension to reach farmers," said Omary Mwaimu from the [AMSHA Institute](#). Participants at the event identified areas where CGIAR/CRP support was needed:

- Dissemination and adoption of new technologies from research.
- Business and enterprise development to enable farmers to make money from farming.



Participants at the CGIAR Site Integration Workshop, Tanzania.

- Capacity building of local researchers especially in areas such as biotechnology.
- Value addition and management of postharvest losses.
- Productivity improvement with focus on climate change — one of the major challenges facing smallholder farmers who need support in terms of what crops to grow in the face of climate change.
- Sustainable intensification of smallholder systems to increase agricultural production and productivity on the same land size but at the same time taking care of their natural resources.

At the end of the workshop, participants came up with a framework for site integration that could help identify the issues and sites as well as suggestions on how to govern and implement the

integration, how to monitor and evaluate impact, and communicate both between the partners in the integration framework and with external audiences and partners.

For site integration to work, participants agreed that adequate resources should go into its implementation, and ensure that all the partners are able to see the benefit of being part of the integrated approach.

## IITA celebrates with AfDB President on conferment of honorary doctorate degrees

The Director General of IITA, [Nteranya Sanginga](#) and the [IITA Youth Agripreneurs](#) (IYA) joined other well-wishers to celebrate with [Akinwumi Adesina](#), President of the [African Development Bank](#) (AfDB), the conferment of honorary doctorate degrees of science award (DSc, honoris causa) by the [Obafemi Awolowo University](#) (OAU) Ile-Ife, Osun State and [Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba](#) (AAUA) in Ondo State on 12 and 19 December, respectively.

OAU recognized Adesina's contribution to the development of science and research in Africa. Adesina is a former researcher at IITA, where he worked from 1995 to 1998.

Other people who were honored by the institution were the Emir of Nupe, Alhaji Yahaya Abubakar, who became the 8th Chancellor of the University; Prof Jacob Kehinde Olupona, Director, African and African-American Studies at Harvard University who bagged the honorary doctorate award of Letters (D.Litt.); and a successful lawyer, Barrister of Law and Solicitor of the Federal Supreme Court of Nigeria, Chief Alex Duduyemi, who was also awarded a Doctor of Business Management (DBM).

Responding on behalf of the awardees, Adesina thanked the University for building the foundation of what he has become in life. Adesina is an alumnus of the University, graduating from the Department of Agricultural Economics with first class honors in 1981.

Adesina urged the 2015 graduating PhD students of the University to be of worthy character and to contribute to society's development.



*Dr Akinwumi Adesina receiving his cap and gown during the conferment ceremony.*

“Go out, compete, and win. Failure is not an option. We have faith in you, so rise up, and shine. In the course of doing this, do not forget those who helped you along the way especially your parents and teachers”, he said.

Also at the ceremony, the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission, Julius Okojie, who represented President Muhammadu Buhari, congratulated the awardees and the graduating students.

He said the government has mapped out strategies to review agriculture policies that will provide employment for youth in the agricultural sector. He said that with the dwindling price of crude oil, agriculture should become the backbone of the economy.

The IITA Youth Agripreneurs made use of the opportunity to showcase their products at an exhibition stand during the event.

Meanwhile, speaking at the AAUA convocation during the institution's 6th convocation ceremony, the Governor of Ondo State, Olusegun Mimiko, stressed the need for partners to invest more in education to enhance research and productivity in tertiary institutions.

Presenting the graduating students to the governing council of the university, Vice Chancellor Igbekele Ajibefun urged the students to remain good ambassadors. He stressed that the university has resolved to continue to produce globally competitive, technology savvy, entrepreneurship-driven, and socially responsible graduates who are problem solvers in a resource-challenged world.

Other awardees included Oba Fredrick Obateru Akinruntan, the paramount ruler of Ugbo Kingdom in Ondo State who was honored with the Doctor of Letters and Chief Bisi Ogunjobi, the former AfDB Vice President who was also honored with a Doctor of Science.

Got a story to share? Please email it with photos and captions every Wednesday to Katherine Lopez ([k.lopez@cgiar.org](mailto:k.lopez@cgiar.org)), Jeffrey T. Oliver ([j.oliver@cgiar.org](mailto:j.oliver@cgiar.org)), Catherine Njuguna ([c.njuguna@cgiar.org](mailto:c.njuguna@cgiar.org)), or Adaobi Umeokoro ([a.umeokoro@cgiar.org](mailto:a.umeokoro@cgiar.org)).

# IITA, CFIL launch the first reality TV show on agriculture

IITA and its partner, the Corporate Farmers International (CFIL), organized a press conference at IITA headquarters in Ibadan in December 2015 to [announce plans](#) for Nigeria's [first agribusiness television reality show](#).

The reality TV show aims to promote and attract youths to get actively involved in agriculture and agribusiness using the reality show platform as a means of engagement.

In his welcome address, [Kenton Dashiell](#), IITA Deputy Director General, Partnerships and Capacity Development, said that the reality show will expose the various opportunities inherent in agriculture. He said that the right platform can help agriculture become a sector for development that will actively engage youth.



*Dr Nteranya Sanginga speaks at the press conference in IITA.*



*Boason Omofaye of CFIL explains the rationale behind the reality TV show.*

During his keynote address, IITA's Director General, [Nteranya Sanginga](#), said now is the time for everybody to embrace agriculture with the dwindling price of crude oil in Nigeria and other parts of the world. He said the best way to revive the agriculture sector is to actively involve the youth who have the techniques and skills to bring the needed change in the sector.

He added that IITA has experimented with this approach in the last three years and will not hesitate to support others who want to use the IITA model.

The head of communication and strategy at CFIL, Boason Omofaye,

said the show will provide answers to where and how to engage the youth in agriculture. He added that the concept of the show will attract the corporate world to invest in young farmers.

Also Seyi Ifelaja, an agribusiness consultant with CFIL, emphasized that the show will use the IITA Youth Agripreneurs as a case study for the show. The show is expected to commence within the premises of IITA in the second quarter of 2016. The winner of the first season will go home with a grand prize of about \$25,000.

## Welcome!

Stephen Kiingi, a US Citizen, has joined IITA Abuja team as Agribusiness Specialist for the Support to Agricultural Research for Development of Strategic Crops



in Africa (SARD-SC) Project. He holds a Masters degree in International Public Policy, Africa Studies, and International Development from the Johns Hopkins University – Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies. He had earlier earned a degree in Economics and International Development from the University of Maryland College Park (1987).

Before this appointment, he was a Senior Consultant at Deloitte; an Agribusiness Specialist at the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (September 2012 to October 2013); Senior Advisor at International Resources Group (IRG, 2010); and Senior Program Officer Africa at CNFA (2008 to 2010). E-mail contact: [s.kiingi@cgiar.org](mailto:s.kiingi@cgiar.org)

## Announcements

- **World Conference on Root and Tuber Crops;** Nanning, China, 18–23 January 2016.
- **Joint World Cowpea and Pan-African Grain Legume Research Conference 2016,** co-organized by IITA

and the Feed-the-Future Legume Innovation Lab, Livingstone, Zambia, 28 February to 4 March 2016. For more information, visit the conference [website](#) or download the conference [announcement](#).

- **7th International Nitrogen Initiative Conference,** Melbourne, Australia, 4–8 December 2016. More details on the conference are available [here](#).