



## DG tours Tanzania; shares new ambitions for IITA and agriculture in Africa

IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga has just concluded a two-day visit to IITA's Eastern Africa's office in Tanzania where he met the Institute's staff and shared his priority areas of focus for his second term as the head of the Institute.

He said he had identified three areas that he was passionate about which had grown in leaps and bounds in his first five-year tenure which ends in a few months.

These are strengthening IITA's internal corporate services which are crucial to supporting and delivery of the science, the Feed Africa initiative with the Africa Development Bank (AfDB), and building on the success of the youth Agripreneurs program whose objective is to create jobs and income for young people in Africa through agribusiness.

"I have been thinking seriously about this in the last six months: What will I focus on in the next five years if I seek another term as DG? From my experience, a second term is usually very tricky and I wanted to make sure I have new ambitions that will take me out of bed excitedly every morning," Sanginga said while addressing the staff at the hub.

"We are doing very well in our science; and we have great partnerships from the grassroots all the way to the top level. We have built donor confidence and our business incubation platform is up and running processing aflasafe and NoduMax and we are thinking of adding aeroponics and tissue culture. We now need to strengthen our internal corporate services – finance, HR, and IT. So my second term will focus more inwards to ensure more efficient services.

Feed Africa is a major initiative of the AfDB to transform agriculture in Africa and with it, the Bank was keen to work with CGIAR centers with IITA playing a key role, Sanginga said. "In this regard, we are having a major summit at Headquarters bringing together



*Dr Sanginga*

all the CGIAR centers working in Africa and major donors to kick off the initiative and discuss its implementation."

He noted that the Agripreneurs program that IITA, under his leadership, started three years ago was already well established in five countries – DRC, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda – and getting a lot of support. For example, in Nigeria, the government was providing support to replicate the program across the country to more states. The AfDB supports the initiative and is keen to take it across the continent. Recently the University of Michigan had expressed interest to work with the group and conduct research on changing the mindset of the youth towards agriculture.

Singinga also spent time talking to and mentoring the youth in Tanzania as well as visiting their processing center that had been constructed with support from the AfDB. He reminded them that agriculture is one of the sectors that had real potential to create employment and that IITA scientists and researchers were ready to share knowledge and the technologies they are developing.

"Believe in yourselves. Through agriculture and this initiative you can create your own jobs and even employ others."

He also told the youth that IITA will be counting on them to encourage other youth to go into agribusiness. "We are receiving a lot of support from policy makers in different countries wanting to adopt the program. The AfDB is also keen to start investing in youth in agribusiness across 23 countries in Africa using the IITA model. So we will be counting on some of you to help in this initiative to help change the youth's mindsets in agriculture in many countries."

Singinga was in the hub as part of efforts to keep the staff in the region updated with the latest developments and future plans and keep abreast of what is happening at the hub. He was well received by the team at the hub led by the Director for Eastern Africa, Victor Manyong.

## IITA adopts data and information management policy on Open Access

IITA has announced the development and adoption of a data and information management policy on Open Access, and has also instituted guiding principles detailing the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved to ensure compliance. The policy demonstrates the Institute's commitment to research excellence and became fully functional recently. It also supports IITA's strategic objectives to ensure that data, information research findings, and



output gain the widest possible and free access by the general public.

To protect copyright and intellectual property rights, the Policy has been aligned with the [CGIAR Open Access and Data Management Policy](#) and the [CGIAR Principles on the Management of Intellectual Assets](#). By adopting this policy, IITA expresses its support to the principles of open access to publicly funded research outputs, as well as to:

- Promote open access to data and information produced at IITA to facilitate data and information discovery, sharing, and collaboration.
- Clarify responsibilities so that researchers and research support staff understand what is required from them.
- Set out the Institute's obligations including the provision of facilities

for the management of data and training, support, and guidance on good practice in data and information management.

- Improve access, discoverability, usability, and visibility of the Institute's research outputs, documents, and knowledge products, innovations, and technologies.
- Protect the legitimate interests of the Institute and of other parties.
- Ensure that data and information are protected from unauthorized access and avoid the risks associated with the theft, loss, misuse, damage, or abuse.

Under this policy, scientists, students, and all staff members are under obligation to publicize all data and information from projects led by IITA as well as those solely implemented by the Institute.

Researchers are also encouraged to negotiate copyright terms with publishers in the event that the publisher does not allow archiving, reuse, and sharing of data. Where the Institute is involved in any collaborative research project, the policy enjoins researchers to ensure that collaborators are aware of the obligation to publish results in Open Access. The agreement must consider and make arrangements to manage the intellectual property, the ownership of equipment, research data and primary materials, and the authorship and publication prior to the commencement of the research project.

The policy also supports the publication of materials under the [Creative Commons](#) licenses to promote the sharing of knowledge and the creation of open research data and outputs, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

This year is also the Year of Open Access in IITA.

## Top six highlights from the first World Congress on Root and Tuber Crops

The first World Congress on Roots and Tuber Crops has come and gone, but the lessons from the convergence in Nanning, China linger. In a recent blog by [Graham Thiele](#), Program Director, CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB) entitled "Six steps forward for root and tuber crops". Thiele highlighted six key take-home messages from the gathering.

The conference, held 18–22 January, brought together partners and initiatives already engaged in the root and tuber crop value chains and R4D organizations operating at national and international levels to deliberate on a common vision aimed at strengthening various components of the selected crops.

The post highlighted findings by IITA's [Morag Ferguson](#) on the origin of resistance to cassava brown streak disease, and the possible implications

for breeding pest- and disease-resistant varieties that will address the yield gap in Africa. Read the full blog post [here](#).



## Announcements

- **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](#).
- **Training of Trainers (ToT) on ITC's Trade Intelligence Tools** (Market Access Map, Standards Map, Trade Map), 10-13 May 2016, IITA Ibadan. For more enquires, contact [info@ieom-ng.org](mailto:info@ieom-ng.org); [op.akande@gmail.com](mailto:op.akande@gmail.com); [IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org](mailto:IITA-TrainingUnit@cgiar.org).
- **7th International Nitrogen Initiative Conference**, Melbourne, Australia, 4–8 December 2016. More details on the conference are available [here](#).

# USAID delegation visits Aflasafe project at IITA-Ibadan

A delegation of three from the US Agency for International Development (USAID), IITA's foremost donor and co-funding agency of the AgResults Aflasafe pilot project, recently concluded a field visit to IITA-Ibadan to better understand the Project and the planned Africa-wide commercialization of Aflasafe™.

The one-day visit, which took place on 4 February, comprised a briefing session on project development and achievements followed by a tour around IITA, in particular, the Business Incubation Platform (BIP) where Aflasafe™ is produced and stored for distribution.

[Kenton Dashiell](#), Deputy Director General, Partnerships and Capacity Development, welcomed the representatives to IITA and thanked the American taxpayers for their continuous support through the Agency of IITA's research and development activities and emphasized IITA's commitment towards involving the private industry for sustainable and progressive development of the agricultural sector.

"We want to say a big thank you to the American taxpayers for contributing to the good work that IITA is doing and has been doing for 49 years...Over the last four years we have placed much emphasis on liaising with the private industry and we are firmly behind the concept that for agriculture to be progressive and to really have an impact on the lives of people across Africa, the private sector has to be strategically involved to provide inputs like Aflasafe™. That is our philosophy," he stated.

One of the biggest barriers to technology transfer in Africa is the limited private sector engagement in agriculture due to the perception of insufficient markets for products. According to [Debo Akande](#), AgResults Aflasafe™ Nigeria Pilot manager, the AgResults project uses the pull mechanism to encourage the adoption of technologies by smallholder farmers where there are market failures.



USAID delegation visiting the aflasafe and BIP facilities in Ibadan, Nigeria with IITA staff.

The Project provides incentives to aggregators or implementers for every ton of Aflasafe™ maize produced and aggregated.

In the briefing session, [Ranjit Bandyopadhyay](#), IITA Pathologist and Aflasafe project leader, highlighted research developments on identifying regional strains and the development of regional products as well as success stories of the biocontrol product across African countries where it has been piloted, tested, and adopted by farmers.

At the BIP, the USAID representatives were shown samples of [Aspergillus flavus](#) strains grown in petri dishes as well as maize grains and groundnut with and without aflatoxins. [Abuelgasim Elzein](#), IITA's biocontrol specialist, explained the processes used to identify atoxigenic genotypes and to develop the biocontrol product. The representatives also got to see the production of Aflasafe™. Benito Zeledon, Aflasafe™ production supervisor, took the team through the process of Aflasafe™ production.

The USAID representatives were also able to inspect the new Aflasafe™ laboratory that is being built through funding from the AgResults Project,

where IITA scientists will expand work on identification of candidate atoxigenic isolates for biocontrol, monitoring of applied biocontrol products in treated fields, as well as understanding factors influencing aflatoxin contamination in maize and groundnut to develop improved aflatoxin biocontrol technologies.

[Aviva Kutnick](#), USAID lead representative of the AgResults Steering Committee, said: "Although I came for other USAID project-related activities, I knew I had to reserve time to come to Ibadan to see the IITA campus, see the Aflasafe™ production site and laboratory, and to meet the scientists and program managers involved in the process. The US Government, USDA, and USAID more recently have been supporting the development of Aflasafe™ for many years. It is important to us as a government and USAID as an agency to continue that support."

USAID is part of a multi-donor steering committee for AgResults which is a multilateral initiative that provides incentives and rewards high-impact agricultural innovations that promote global food security, health, and nutrition through the design and implementation of pull mechanism pilots.

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)).

# SARD-SC rice component launches GEM parboiler facility for women processors

Grain quality enhancer, energy efficient and durable material ([GEM rice parboiling technologies](#)) were recently installed for women rice processors in the irrigated rice ecology of northern Benin Republic. The rice component of the Support to Agricultural Research for Development of Strategic Crops in Africa ([SARD-SC](#)) project in collaboration with [AfricaRice](#) and the National Institute of Agricultural Research, Benin ([INRAB](#)) donated the equipment to boost the efforts of stakeholders in the Malanville Innovation Platform (IP).



Women working at the Malanville Innovation Platform.

The formal launch of the Malanville IP on 9 February attracted almost 1,000 women and witnessed the presence of policy makers such as the mayors of Malanville and Gaya, Niger. The launch also provided additional policy incentive to the operationalization of the IP.

To efficiently use and manage the GEM facility, 538 women rice parboilers including 10 from Gaya in Niger, were trained on processing and adding value to locally produced rice. Over a period of two months, these women learned skills on rice parboiling and value addition as well as the management of the GEM parboiling facility.

The training alone resulted in 8 tons of quality parboiled rice which is already attracting consumers within and outside the Malanville community. As part of the

IP process, 12 youths (10 male and 2 female) are learning various skills on rice processing, adding value, and operation of equipment and farming tools.

The formal opening was attended by the [IITA/SARD-SC](#) Coordinator, Chrys Akem.

He remarked that in general, the SARD-SC project has challenges in effectively addressing gender equity or the active involvement of women in project activities. The deployment of the GEM rice parboiler in the Malanville IP has fully demonstrated that pairing gender-sensitive technological innovation with institutional change can significantly bring about gender mainstreaming in agricultural productivity programs and projects.

The Malanville IP also received a milling machine and other farming equipment from AfricaRice through the Japan

Emergency. One youth of the Malanville IP who was trained on the use of farming equipment indicated that with appropriate machinery, rice farming can be enjoyable and not a burden. He was encouraged to start his own rice farm.

To date, over 1,000 women households have been reached through the GEM technology and innovations in two IPs in Benin. GEM is being rolled out in combination with enhanced packaging and branding of locally produced rice to attract urban rice consuming households and also contributes to raising incomes of women and employment opportunities for youth in the rural economy. Already, Nasarawa in Nigeria and Gaya in Niger in consultation with their respective research institutes, have requested the GEM technology and innovation and these will be deployed in Nigeria and later in Niger.

## Online anthology “African farmers in the digital age” launched

A special edition anthology, published in partnership with *Foreign Affairs*, brings together the views of 20 leading thinkers on all aspects of food systems, smallholder farming, and the transformative opportunity presented by digital technology. An infographic explaining this process is available [here](#).

Co-curators Kofi Annan, Sir Gordon Conway, and Sam Dryden assert that “The combination of digital technology and human creativity in deploying it will revolutionize life for Africa’s farmers by overcoming isolation, speeding up change, and taking success to scale.”

Sam equates the transformative potential of the digital revolution to the electrification of rural Kentucky in his childhood. He illuminates the role that unique IDs, invisible

to most of us, play in making each of us visible to others, and he challenges future leaders to put these in place for every single African farmer.

Don’t miss the rare personal stories shared by the authors at the end of each essay. View and download the Foreign Affairs anthology [here](#). A PDF compilation of all the essays is also available [here](#).

