IITA Research to Nourish Africa
CGIAR
No. 2291 1-4 September 2015

THE BULLETIN

Korean agency and IITA explore areas of collaboration

The Korea-Africa Food and Agriculture Cooperation Initiative (KAFACI) has signified interest to work with IITA on cassava. KAFACI plans to work with IITA in 10 of their member countries in Africa with a focus on training and the testing and dissemination of agricultural practices that will boost yield and improve food security in Africa.

These intentions were disclosed by Cho Gyoung-Rae, Secretary General, KAFACI, during a courtesy visit to IITA last week.

The team was received by Director for Western Africa, Robert Asiedu; and Alfred Dixon, Head of Partnerships Coordination Office.

Asiedu welcomed the proposed collaboration, and promised that the Institute would support KAFACI in its mission to fight hunger and poverty.

He talked to the visitors about some of IITA's work on cowpea, banana and plantain, yam, maize, and soybean.

Dixon, meanwhile, assured the team that IITA will share its expertise on cassava. According to him, the proposed partnership can capitalize on existing IITA varieties developed and distributed by partners across the continent.

Visitors from KAFACI with IITA staff members.

The KAFACI team included Kwandal Ko, Director General, National Institute for Horticultural and Herbal Science, Rural Development Administration, Korea; Babasola Ayodele Adelaja, KAFACI Scientific and Technology Advisory Council and Adviser on Horticulture; and Mayowa Olubiyi, National Center for Genetic Resources and Biotechnolgy and KAFACI project investigator (*Development of Technology on Conservation of Genetic Resources in Nigeria*).

KAFACI is an intergovernmental and multilateral cooperation body aiming to improve food production, achieve sustainable agriculture, and enhance the extension services of African countries through knowledge and information sharing on agricultural technologies. It was inaugurated in 2010 in Seoul, Korea, with the participation of government representatives from 17 member countries.

AfDB delegates assure Kinshasa Agripreneurs of continuous support

IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga, and the Youth Agripreneurs in Kinshasa, DR Congo, hosted the visit of Chiji Ojukwu, Director, Agriculture & Agro-Industry Department, and Kadiata Bakach, of the African Development Bank (AfDB) on18 August.

The visit was organized to show AfDB the financial difficulties the youths encounter in increasing their scale of production, processing, and marketing agricultural products, and to also showcase some of the outputs of the group, including products from mushrooms, cassava, soybean and cheese invented by the Agripreneurs.

DG Nteranya Sanginga accompanies AfDB visitors Kadiata Bakach (right) and Chiji Ojukwu (middle).

The fight against poverty and unemployment especially among young university graduates in DR Congo is a priority in national policy. To help address these problems, IITA had pioneered an agribusiness initiative that offers young graduates support in generating income and creating jobs for themselves while contributing to food security in the region. "We want to assure the young 'agripreneurs' that we will support them and do everything to make the initiative take hold in the entire country," Ojukwu said. He also assured the youth that next year in Kinshasa, with the support of the Congolese government, a donor conference will be organized to find partners that can support at least 200 young scholars per year in agriculture.

Chiji also praised Sanginga for initiating the youth program which "allowed many university graduates to enter and participate in the emerging middle class in DRC."

In response, Sanginga urged the youths not to relent in exploiting options in agriculture because it is "a source of sustainable employment". He further encouraged the youth group to continue to see agriculture not as a backbreaking peasantry practice but as a viable business.

On the trail of adoption data:

Africa RISING embarks on study to evaluate use of improved technologies in northern Ghana

The Africa RISING West Africa project team recently trained (29 July - 2 August) field enumerators and supervisors who will be involved in data collection for a study that will monitor adoption of project technologies in northern Ghana.

Led by project agricultural economist, Bekele Kotu, the study, which started this month (until April 2016), is seeking to establish how and to what extent farmers are using technologies introduced by Africa RISING.

More than 460 randomly selected households in 16 project intervention communities will be involved, with interviews with household heads and family members. The households were selected randomly from 3,151 farm households in project intervention areas in northern Ghana.

"Africa RISING's goal of improving the well-being of smallholder farmers through sustainable intensification of agricultural production will be realized to the extent that our technologies are adopted by farmers, but such adoption is rarely a smooth process; we want to know the obstacles farmers experience," says Bekele.

"The study will also help us know how well the technologies are being applied by farmers and where, why, and how they are being modified," he added.

Africa RISING has been holding on-farm trials with smallholder farmers in northern Ghana since mid-2013.

According to Bekele, the study is part of an ongoing evaluation of the adoption process of Africa RISING interventions; the current study comes at a time when the project's first phase is coming to an end. Study results are expected to guide the design of improved strategies for enhancing adoption of technologies in the second phase.

"Several technologies have been identified and introduced in northern Ghana for intensifying smallholder agriculture to improve the well-being of people. This study will provide empirical data to monitor the change our work is having on the lives of smallholder families," explains Asamoah Larbi, chief scientist of Africa RISING West Africa and IITA-Ghana country representative. "Previous studies, some of which focused on adoption of agricultural technologies separately (e.g., improved seeds, fertilizer) provided only partial answers to sustainable intensification of smallholder agriculture. Therefore, this study aims to examine the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices and technologies in an integrated manner and will provide socioeconomic information which has, so far, been missing in the project," says Bekele.

Oscar Dong, a local farmers' group leader in northern Ghana. Farming trials were established on his land and he is anticipating excellent yields from improved crop varieties (Photo credit: Africa RISING/ Charlie Pye-Smith)

In future, similar surveys will be carried out in Mali, Tanzania, and Malawi.

Announcements

- **Mobilizing Youth within Phase 2 CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs),** co-organized by IITA, AfDB, and the CGIAR Consortium, 8-9 September, CGIAR Consortium Office, Montpellier, France. For more information, visit the workshop website.
- **TROPENTAG (day of the tropics) 2015,** Humboldt University, Berlin, 16-18 September. IITA will have a special session to present its research portfolio and an exhibition to showcase its work as a CGIAR research institution.
- **Africa RISING Program Strategy Workshop, Mali,** 6-8 October
- **Third Annual CEO Forum,** private sector and government assembly to end poverty and hunger in the world by 2030 in line with the overall aim of the Sustainable Development Goals, 7 October, Offices of Ford Foundation Lagos.
- **R4D Week, IITA Ibadan,** 22-28 November
- **Joint World Cowpea and Pan-African Grain Legume Research Conference 2016**, co-organized by IITA and the Feed-the-Future Legume Innovation Lab, Zambezi Sun Resort Hotel, Livingstone, Zambia, 28 February to 4 March 2016. For more information, visit the conference website or download the conference announcement.
- **The IITA Women's Group** is calling on all potential applicants to submit completed scholarship forms on or before 10 September. Ibadan Headquarters: Employee Services Officer, Human Resources, Bld. 500; Outside Hubs/Stations: IITA Regional Hubs: The Regional Administrator, IITA Stations: The Station Administrator.

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

Barriers to successful climate change policy implementation in Uganda

Overlapping mandates between various environmental actors, a lack of technical capacity among technical staff, and poor coordination between some policies and plans from the various governmental sectors have been identified as some of the barriers to successful implementation of policies on climate change in Uganda. Other barriers include a lack understanding of climate issues, uneven budget allocations, limited policy literacy at the local level, and little attention paid to local contexts.

This is part of findings of a study by the Policy Action for Climate Change Adaptation (PACCA) titled "*Barriers to successful climate change policy implementation in Uganda*" conducted in Rakai and Nwoya districts. The study looked at the political context, policy environment, and the broad institutional and policy framework in Uganda. PACCA is an IITA-led project of the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), which seeks to support effective implementation of policies to reduce the negative impacts of climate change on smallholder agriculture and food systems in Africa.

The study therefore recommends (i) more interaction between local actors and national policy formulators, (ii) stronger linkages and coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture and other environmental actors, and (iii) equal allocation of funding across district and subcounty levels to enhance effective policy development and implementation.

According to the researchers, local level planning is important in generating the uptake of climate change adaptation practices. District-level officials should thus be equipped with information about climate change issues such as impact and adaptive measures, and how these affect specific districts. Their local knowledge is key in ensuring that policies are adapted to various social and cultural contexts.

The study was conducted by a team of researchers that include Wendy Okolo and Jennifer Twyman from the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Edidah Ampaire, PACCA Project Coordinator, from IITA-Uganda, and Mariola Acosta, Research Fellow and PhD Candidate at Wageningen University.

The policies analyzed included the National Agriculture Policy 2011, Uganda Forestry Policy 2001 (including acts and regulations), the Uganda National Climate Policy 2012, and the Uganda National Adaptation Program for Action, the National Policy for the Conversion and Management of Wetland Resource, and the Rakai District Environment Management Bill.

BBTV field day held for farmers in Ogun State

On 2 September, IITA organized a field day for farmers and extension workers in Idologun, Ogun State, as part of efforts to control the recent invasion of the Banana Bunchy Top Disease (BBTD) in Nigeria. The field day aimed to demonstrate and deploy control measures for the eradication of infected plants and recovery of production in BBTD-infested areas.

Idologun is one of the BBTD-affected areas. It is part of the pilot sites benefiting from the control measures implemented through a project on BBTD control in Africa funded by the CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (CRP-RTB) and implemented by IITA, the Nigerian Agricultural Quarantine Services (NAQS), and the National Horticultural Research Institute (NIHORT), Nigeria.

Lava Kumar, IITA Virologist, led the team of experts from IITA, NAQS, and NIHORT to Idologun for the field day, with over 150 farmers and extension workers in attendance. The field day also served as an avenue to create awareness about the disease, and educate farmers on how to produce clean planting materials as well as learn about business opportunities for rural youth in production and supply of banana planting material through a model being developed in collaboration with IITA Youth Agripreneurs.

BBTD is the most destructive virus disease of banana caused by the *Banana Bunchy Top Virus* (BBTV). The disease spread in West Africa (Nigeria and Benin) was discovered in 2011. Since then, IITA scientists Lava Kumar and Rachid Hanna (IITA entomologist based in Cameroon), along with national partners have been spearheading control efforts. The disease spreads through infected planting material and through an insect vector known as the banana aphid.

"Without intensive control efforts, the disease will continue to expand in West Africa," said Charles Onyeani and Ogunfunmilayo of NAQS. "The supply of clean planting material is key to improving banana production in affected areas," says Akinyemi of NIHORT.

To protect banana from BBTD in Africa, the *Alliance for BBTD Control in Africa* has been established with the support of CRP-RTB, coordinated by IITA, Bioversity International, together with CIRAD and several national agricultural research systems in Bénin, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville, DRC, Gabon, Nigeria and Malawi.

A farmer shows BBTV infected plants in the field.