



IITA HRS conducts Institute-wide gender awareness seminar series

As part of efforts to enlighten staff on mainstreaming gender into IITA's corporate entity, policies, operations, programs, and activities, the Human Resources Service in collaboration with [Ylva Hillbur](#), DDG Research for Development, organized an Institute-wide gender awareness seminar and workshop on 1–4 September at IITA headquarters in Ibadan.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness and educate members of staff about their roles in contributing to effective gender mainstreaming at the Institute. Topics covered included the application of gender analysis to specific work activities/projects; the exploration of gender mainstreaming tools likely to generate deeper levels of gender-aware and gender-sensitive knowledge in specific fields; the application of



Jane Bennett addressing members of staff during the gender awareness seminar.

gender analysis to the complex working environments of participants, as well as the exploration of strategies to deepen gender sensitivity within all areas of the participants' working environments.

[Jane Bennett](#), Director African Gender Institute (AGI), University of Cape Town, facilitated the workshop. More details about the workshop will be reported in Talking Drums.

New Africa RISING geospatial maps show cropping patterns and land use changes in Mali

Africa RISING and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics (ICRISAT) Geospatial Unit in Patancheru, India, have developed land use maps of Africa RISING project intervention sites in southern Mali.

The new maps, which were produced in mid-August 2015, will ease the process of identifying and visualizing different crop domains and possible natural resource management (NRM) sites within the Africa RISING intervention villages in

Mali. The maps were produced using high resolution imagery from [NASA](#) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([NOAA](#)).

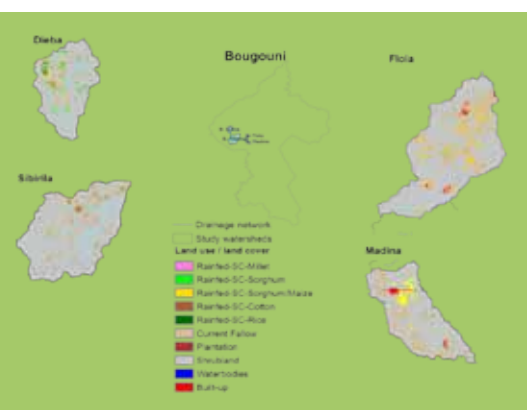
"These maps will show us where to focus our sustainable intensification efforts in Mali; they will also guide preparation of country strategies for sustainable primary productivity," explains Birhanu Zemadim. "We will use the ground survey data they provide to prepare geospatial products associated with land use/land

cover, crop intensity, length of growing periods, land use changes over the period, and NRM technologies," he adds.

Satellite-based mapping of major cropping systems requires verification of crop information on the field. The team that prepared the maps, led by Murali Gumma, Birhanu Zemadim, and Cedrick Guedessou, traveled to all the intervention villages by road to cover most of the land use/land cover types and locate the validation sites. They also conducted farmer interviews to understand the local practices and information on cropping intensity and water availability.

The mapping work in southern Mali started in March this year.

Geospatial products, such as these maps, will help agriculture researchers in the Africa RISING project in identifying major crop domains, intensities, and priority sites for natural resources management interventions.



IITA pay courtesy visit to new Burundi Minister of Agriculture

On 15 September, IITA Burundi paid a courtesy visit to Deo-Guide Rurema, the newly inaugurated Burundi Minister of Agriculture and Livestock (MINAGRIE). [Emmanuel Njukwe](#), [Nester Mashingaidze](#), and Jean Prosper Kanyaruguru represented IITA.

The purpose of the visit was to congratulate the new minister on his appointment, update him on ongoing research-for-development activities in Burundi, and seek his continuous collaboration and support. Prior to Rurema's appointment, he was the Head of Cabinet in the Second Vice President's office and he facilitated the IITA DG's meeting with the Government of Burundi on 18–20 August 2014 and the IITA Directors retreat in Bujumbura on 31 March to 4 April 2014. Rurema was a former researcher at IITA in Benin where he obtained his PhD as an entomologist with Tamo Manuele.

The IITA delegation gave an overview of ongoing projects in Burundi such as the [Humidtropics](#) program aiming to help poor farm families to boost their income and livelihoods; the management of



L-R: Deo-Guide Rurema, Burundi Minister of Agriculture (first), with the delegates from IITA.

critical pests and diseases through risk assessment, surveillance, and understanding of the impact of climate through enhanced modelling with the installation of 27 weather stations; regeneration of genetic material of cassava and banana to overcome diseases for increased production and market opportunities; biological control of aflatoxin contamination in key staples; the introduction and dissemination of yellow-root cassava to enhance nutrition; and capacity building for National Agricultural

Research Systems, project partners, farmers, and students.

The Minister commended IITA for its activities especially in the area of capacity development that has improved agricultural practices and production in Burundi and urged IITA to call on him anytime his support is needed as a partner in research for development. He also emphasized the need to provide evidence of improvements in farmers' livelihoods as a result of [IITA's R4D](#) activities.

IITA Bioscience center conducts second capacity building workshop for partners

In pursuance of the goal to expand and support national development in biosciences, the [IITA Bioscience Center](#) conducted its second training workshop series organized in collaboration with [inqaba biotec](#), West Africa, for 24 participants from various universities and research institutes in Nigeria from 17 to 21 August.

The training is a periodic activity organized by the Bioscience center to build the technical capacity of national partners to use molecular techniques proven to be widely effective in addressing some of the agricultural challenges in sub-Saharan Africa as

well as establishing fruitful exchange relationships.

Bamidele Ajilore, one of the trainees comments, "What a beautiful and well organized workshop and the best of its kind! ...the workshop is a kind of national orientation program bringing all the major ethnic groups together. I will always remember the facilitators, organizers, and all the participants".

[Ylva Hillbur](#), DDG- Research, presented certificates of participation to the trainees at the end of the workshop.



Trainees observing an experiment in the laboratory.



Participants at the IITA lake side in Ibadan.

Announcements

- **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](#).

Partners discuss management strategies for cassava diseases in Rwanda

The Rwanda Agriculture Board ([RAB](#)) in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)) organized a cassava stakeholders' workshop on 2–4 September in Huye District to find ways to contain Cassava Brown Streak Disease ([CBSD](#)) and other threats to cassava. Discussions focused on how to explore synergies among actors to generate and distribute disease-free planting material as an approach to sustainably manage CBSD.

The meeting brought together officials from RAB, FAO, IITA, local leaders, agronomists, the private sector as well as representatives of cassava farmers and cooperatives. IITA was represented by [Emmanuel Njukwe](#), Associate Scientist, IITA-CIALCA, Burundi and Solange Zawadi.

[Cassava](#) is a key food security crop in Rwanda and is increasingly offering opportunities for income. However, its production is constrained by two main diseases, Cassava Mosaic Disease ([CMD](#)) and CBSD.

To overcome CMD, improved varieties were introduced and considerable success has been achieved with the release and dissemination of CMD-resistant varieties. This is supported by the development and implementation of the Quality Management Protocol ([QMP](#)) which provides a system for assuring the quality and health of varieties promoted through multiplication schemes.

During this period, CBSD was recognized as an important disease of cassava in coastal East Africa as well as the shores of Lake Malawi but was rarely observed in parts of East Africa at altitudes higher than 1000 m above sea level. It was observed in Rwanda in 2009. Since then, CBSD has ravaged cassava in parts of Rwanda, particularly the Southern Province which is the biggest cassava producing area. This has left some farmers opting for other crops but they are worried about their food security with little or no alternative source of income.

As an emergency response to CBSD, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal



Cross section of participants during the workshop.

Resources ([MINAGRI](#)) and RAB with support from the FAO introduced cassava variety [NASE 14](#) from Uganda in February 2015 for large-scale multiplication and distribution. Over seven million cassava cuttings were planted in 723 hectares in twelve districts by 272 seed multipliers.

Telephore Ndobamenye, Head of Crop Production and Food Security at RAB projected that they expect to generate 100 million cassava cuttings from the already planted 7 million in November/December which could be grown on 35,000 hectares in the 2015/2016 planting season "A" and probably increase to 80,000 hectares in season "B".

As medium and long-term strategies, cassava clones introduced by [IITA](#) and RAB undergoing evaluation in Rubona station will be assessed in October and promising varieties subjected to high CBSD pressure and evaluated in four agroecological zones for agronomic, IPM, and palatability tests under farmers' condition for selection. Adapted and preferred varieties will undergo mass propagation for distribution in 2016 while MINAGRI will invest in capacity development in breeding.

To ensure proper follow-up of introduced NASE 14, Attaher Maiga, FAO Rwanda country representative together with

FAO colleagues and Emmanuel Njukwe met with [Geraldine Mukeshimana](#), Rwanda Minister of Agriculture and Charles Murekezi, the DG for Agriculture Development to explore opportunities for collaboration to mitigate CBSD and to invest in local capacity for breeding.



Wondering cassava farmers.

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).