



IITA, partners hold workshop on Grain Legumes

This week, representatives of IITA and partner organizations gathered at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Lusaka, Zambia, to hammer out details of deliverables and activities related to the implementation of the CGIAR Research Program on Grain Legumes.

Dr Ylva Hillbur, IITA Deputy Director General for R4D, in her keynote address, highlighted the importance of partnerships especially with those “working on the ground” in achieving the objectives of the program.

“The vision of success of this global research program rests on the cooperation of our local partners, some of who are represented here,” said the DDG.

She was addressing representatives of the collaborating institutions and organizations who were participating at the workshop. These included the Zambian Agricultural Research Institute (ZARI), the University of Zambia, ZAMSEED, SeedCo, Zambia National Farmers’ Union, Seed Traders’ Union, Eastern Province Farmer Cooperative, Seed Control and Certification Institute, Ministry of Home Affairs, Savanna Agricultural Research Institute, Institut de l’Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles, Institut National des Recherches Agricoles du Benin, the Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

“Although we work in different fields, we have but one overarching goal – of helping grain legume smallholder farmers across the globe,” she emphasized.

Dr David Chikoye, R4D Director for Southern Africa, in his welcome



Participants in the Grain Legumes workshop discuss how partners could work better together under the new framework.

remarks, indicated that the CGIAR Research Program on Grain Legumes, also called Grain Legumes, is akin to a football team.

“In football, there are strikers and defenders with various skills and levels of competencies. And just like in football, we are one team regardless of nationality or institution or organization. And we are all aiming at one goal: reducing poverty and malnutrition not only in Africa but across the world,” he explained.

He also proudly announced that Lusaka will play host to the next World Cowpea Research Conference to be held in October 2015.

Godfrey Mwila, ZARI Chief Agricultural Research Officer, who spoke on behalf of the institute, expressed high hopes that Grain Legumes will not only benefit his institution but also the whole country.

“Through this global research program, we envision to develop ZARI into a world-class Center of Excellence in grain legumes research. If this comes

to fruition, we will be able to more ably help our smallholder farmers,” he remarked.

The workshop was facilitated by Dr Manu Tamo, IITA Focal Point Person for Grain Legumes. He explained that the purpose of the workshop is to fine-tune deliverables of IITA based on the various product lines outlined in the program.

“At the end of this workshop, we should have a better and clearer idea of the mechanisms of working within the framework of Grain Legumes. This will not be totally different from what we have been doing in a project mode, only that we need to see the partnerships under a different framework and levels of working relationships,” he said.

Apart from the technical sessions, the participants also went on a field visit of two grain legume projects that IITA is involved in: the Mwembeshi Open Prison Farm in collaboration with the Government of Egypt and the Ministry of Home Affairs of Zambia (*full story on the project in the next issue of the Bulletin*); and a cowpea-soybean trial site of the SIDA-funded MIRACLE project.

Grain Legumes focuses on improving chickpea, common bean, cowpea, groundnut (or peanut), faba bean, lentil, pigeonpea, and soybean crops grown by poor smallholder families in five regions: South and Southeast Asia, Western and Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Western Asia and North Africa. The Program aims to benefit 300 million poor by the end of its first 10-year cycle. It is a global R4D collaboration involving CGIAR centers such as CIAT, ICARDA, ICRISAT, IITA, and a host of other public and private institutes, organizations, governments, and farmers worldwide.



Group photo, Grain Legumes workshop participants, Lusaka, Zambia.

President applauds vegetable production scheme in Zanzibar

This week the President of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, H.E. Dr Ali Mohamed Shein, visited field sites where IITA is involved in a partnership with producers to improve vegetable production. Dr Danny Coyne, Project Leader of the BMZ/GIZ-supported IITA project *'Local Focus: safe and effective pest and crop management strategies to strengthen the vegetable value chain in the humid tropics'* represented the Institute and explained IITA's contribution to the scheme.

In Zanzibar, as with other coastal tropical areas, vegetables are plagued by pests and diseases. This is where the IITA vegetable project is focused, accurately identifying species, their incidence and distribution, towards reducing their impact and raising production. This includes working with several partners, including ZAIDI (Zanzibar Agricultural Investment

and Development Inc.) which had recently installed small greenhouse units, or Amiran Farmers Kits (AFKs), for producing vegetables. This public-private partnership intends to use its production units for training as well as agribusiness. IITA was contacted to help with technical training for farmers for pest and disease management, and improved agricultural practices within the partnership.

The President, accompanied by the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Affan Maalim and numerous dignitaries, visited the site in Zanzibar where ZAIDI is producing tomatoes and peppers using AFKs, and other vegetables using drip irrigation. The site will be used for training and demonstration of improved production practices. According to Danny, the President said that he will return to observe development but that in the



The President (second from right) with members of the presidential party and Dr Danny Coyne (second from left).

meantime he wishes to see speedy progress.

Africa RISING project implementers meet in Malawi

The Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) project implementers and stakeholders met this week in Lilongwe, Malawi, to discuss research issues and to visit project sites.

The co-learning workshop was attended by the project management team consisting of the project coordinators for West Africa and East and Southern Africa, and Ethiopian Highlands; regional project leads from IITA and the International Livestock Research Institute, International Food Policy Research Institute and USAID representatives, and partners from Wageningen University and Michigan State University.



The Africa RISING team members in intense discussions in Lilongwe.

The workshop specifically reviewed research outputs, some of the country strategies and work progress, monitoring and evaluation concerns, and other related issues.

Africa RISING is a 5-year USAID-supported program that consists of three multi-stakeholder agricultural regional research projects.

Dr Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon, who coordinates both the West Africa and East and Southern Africa project components, said that the workshop and field visits provided the team members the opportunity to see what is happening on the ground and to interact with implementing partners.

On this trip as well, Irmgard and some members of the team led by Jerry Glover, senior project advisor from USAID (Washington, D.C.), visited the USAID Malawi mission to explore potential collaboration.



The Linthipe project community in Dedza, Malawi, welcomes the IITA, USAID, and Michigan State University visitors to show off their maize and doubled-up legume intercrops.