



## IITA exhibition wins second top spot in 2013 Zambia Agric. Show

IITA's exhibition took second prize in the NGO Category of the recently concluded 87th Zambia National Agricultural and Commercial Show, held in Lusaka 2-5 August.

Working within the Show's theme Agriculture in a Changing Environment, the IITA exhibition focused on crop value chains, particularly those of cassava, soybean, and cowpea.

"The elements in our exhibition showcase how IITA's work on these crops is helping farmers to improve their lives in these changing times," explained Dr David Chikoye, IITA R4D Director for Southern Africa.

"We included elements that highlight every aspect of the crop value chain: for example, improved cassava roots and stems and soybean and cowpea seeds for increased productivity, some machinery and equipment for labor and input efficiency, and a sampling of high-value and nutritious products for enhancing income and health."

During his round of the Show grounds with his entourage, the Honorable Minister of Agriculture Robert Sichinga stopped by IITA's exhibition stand and praised the Institute's work. "You are doing a great job. I am especially impressed by the variety of products from cassava, soybean,



Minister Sichinga listening intently as Mugubo Himoonga, IITA/MIRACLE Project Staff, explains the importance of the processing machines.

and cowpea that you have here. I did not even know that you could produce these [products] from these three crops," he added as he tasted one of the cassava cakes on display.

"If this know-how is scaled out to our Zambian farmers we will be able to address three of the country's top rural challenges: income generation, health and nutrition, and food security," the Minister emphasized. "I am also very much impressed by the machinery and equipment for planting, harvesting, and processing cassava that you are promoting among our farmers."

"I would like to commend IITA on the marvelous job that it is doing to help our poor farmers. Rest assured that the Zambian government, particularly my Ministry, will always support you in your efforts. Keep up the good work!" the Minister concluded before he continued his tour of the other exhibition stands.

This is the third time that IITA has participated in the Lusaka Agricultural Show, considered to be one of the biggest, most successful, and longest-running annual agriculture and trade fairs in the Southern African region. This year more than 200 agricultural companies and organizations participated in the Show.

## IITA-led Humidtropics is launched in Uganda

The IITA-led global partnership program, Humidtropics, launched its activities in Uganda on 1 August. This CGIAR Research Program seeks to improve the livelihoods of smallholders in tropical Africa, Asia, and the Americas through the intensification and integration of their farm enterprises, while at the same time conserving the natural resource base.

The event was attended by key stakeholders from the public and private sectors. These included Hon Kasamba Mathias, the Member of Parliament for Kakuuto County who is also the Chair of the Agriculture Committee, and Hon Fred Badda, the MP for Bujumba County, a Committee member. They applauded the program for its partnership and holistic approach that focuses on the smallholder farmers

and their farming systems in an integrated way rather than on a single commodity or constraint.

"The systems approach is relevant in the Ugandan context as there are many smallholder farmers. The agricultural sector grew by only 1% in 2012. So if the systems approach succeeds, it could be used as a model for the country,"

said Dr Wilberforce Tushemereirwe, the Director of the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), one of the program's key partners.

"With the excellent research program of the NARO, Makerere University, and its



partners, Uganda is envisaged to play a pivotal role. The R4D program will build on the achievements of national agricultural research systems." Piet van Asten was speaking on behalf of the Humidtropics Director, Dr Kwesi Atta-Krah and the Director General of IITA, Dr N. Sanginga.

The workshop participants identified the research entry points and field sites for the program. The selected districts were Masaka-Rakai, Mukono-Wakiso, Kiboga-Kyakwanzi, and Luwero-Nakaseke. The next step will be to organize a series of inception meetings with local stakeholders at the field sites. These will include the establishment of a platform to provide a forum for the partners to work collectively on the livelihood challenges of smallholders.

Humidtropics is one of the 16 global research programs of the CGIAR that are designed to tackle development challenges through strong partnerships with national agricultural research systems, the private sector, farmers' organizations, and NGOs. It seeks to achieve four outcomes: reducing rural poverty; increasing food security; improving nutrition and health; and sustainably managing natural resources.

## IITA helps to establish processing centers in Malawi

MIRACLE is helping to establish crop processing centers in Malawi. Early this year, the Project Manager Melba Mussagy and Engr Oluwatobi Oluwasola had discussions with project partners from World Vision, extension officers from the Ministry of Agriculture, and lead farmers on plans to help groups or individuals with agroenterprises to own and run the postharvest processing plants. This is part of MIRACLE's goal: helping beneficiaries to achieve a successful transition to sustainable reliance on self-produced nutritious foods and income generation.

Engr Oluwasola is an agricultural engineer who specializes in processing and storage. He visited selected sites and shelters in Nkhatabay and Lilongwe districts to assess their suitability as locations for processing centers and other related engineering requirements; to meet local leaders and project partners to confirm community agreements and plans and share expectations with individuals or groups identified to run and manage the plant/s; and to provide construction designs.

Engr Oluwasola inspected sites in Sanga and Chikwina sections, Nkhatabay district,



Engr Oluwatobi Oluwasola (second from left) leads in taking structural measurements and dimensions with extension officers and the site owner in Sanga, Nkhatabay.

to give partners the structural designs and specifications. In Mpampa section in Nkhatabay district and Chilenje section in Lilongwe district, he gave the design recommendations after inspecting the available structures/shelters.

According to Melba Mussagy, it was encouraging that local leaders (for example, Traditional Authority Timbiri in Nkhatabay) were aware of the project and strongly welcomed and supported plans to contribute to poverty reduction in the area

through the provision of land or shelter, construction materials, and processing machines. The machines are directed at improving the quality of products such as cassava (*kondowole*) flour. They will simplify and reduce the processing time, thus helping to improve living standards. The volunteer and identified individuals and groups are very excited about the project. Some expressed their appreciation for the visits, saying that they could hardly wait for construction to begin.

## IITA participates in farmers' exhibitions in Tanzania

Farmers' exhibitions called Nane Nane are held across Tanzania every year on 18 August. IITA participated at both the national level at the capital city, Dodoma, and the regional level at Morogoro town for the Eastern region.

In Dodoma, IITA participated as one of the key partners of the Department of Research and Development (DRD) of the Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Cooperatives (MAFC). The exhibition showcased our various research activities including work on cassava, vegetables, and

aflatoxin management and aflasafe™.

The Institute interacted with different agriculture stakeholders from the public and private sectors, the donor community, and development arena. The visitors were especially keen on postharvest research including value addition to cassava and the management of aflatoxin contamination.

Dr Fidelis Myaka, the Director of DRD, cited the Institute's technologies on postharvest and storage which he said were very useful to the farmers in the country.

In Morogoro, IITA-Tanzania, through

the BMZ-funded project on vegetables, showed some of the pilot technologies on the production of healthy tomato and pepper seedlings. This was organized in collaboration with Bagamoyo district council, one of the project's sites.

The project supported the participation of four farmers trained on healthy seed production who related their experiences in using the technologies. Vegetable farmers have been trained in 12 sites in the coastal areas, 7 from the mainland and 5 from Zanzibar Island.



Nsajigwa Mwakyusa discusses IITA's work on nematodes with another farmer at the Dodoma farmers' exhibition.



Carol Mango from IITA-Tanzania explains to a farmer the technologies available for safe storage of grains.

# Nigeria releases two extra-early maturing white maize hybrids

Nigeria has released two extra-early maturing maize hybrids with combined resistance/tolerance to Striga, drought, and low soil-nitrogen.

The extra-early hybrids, originally known as IITA Hybrid EEWH-21 and IITA Hybrid EEWH-26, are now designated Ife Maizehyb-5 and Ife Maizehyb-6. They were developed by IITA and tested extensively in Nigeria in partnership with the Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (IAR&T) through the funding support of the Drought Tolerant Maize for Africa (DTMA) Project.

Other collaborating institutions involved in the testing include the Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR), the University of Ilorin (UNILORIN), the University of Maiduguri (UNIMAID), and the National Centre for Genetic Resources and Biotechnology (NACGRAB). The DTMA Project is executed by CIMMYT and IITA in 13 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Both extra-early hybrids have desirable grain cooking characteristics and outstanding yield and stability across environments in Nigeria ravaged by drought, Striga, and low soil-nitrogen. The potential yield of Ife Maizehyb-5 in



Maize hybrid.

Nigeria is 6.0 t/ha and Ife Maizehyb-6 yields 5.5 t/ha. Local varieties yield about 1.5 t/ha.

Hybrid development and promotion is a promising strategy to appreciably increase maize production and productivity and to revolutionize agriculture in West and Central Africa (WCA).

“Seed companies and farmers in WCA have been asking for stress tolerant extra-

early hybrids to reduce the instability of maize yields, especially in the savannas, as well as during the second season in the forest agroecological zone,” Dr Baffour Badu-Apraku said. He is a Maize Breeder and also a member of the team in IITA that developed the hybrids.

Other researchers in the team are Drs S.A. Olakojo, G. Olaoye, M. Oyekunle, M.A.B. Fakorede, B.A. Ogunbodede, and S.E. Aladele.

This is the first report on the release of extra-early hybrids with combined resistance to Striga and with genes that confer tolerance to low soil-nitrogen and to drought stress at the most drought-sensitive stages (flowering and grain-filling periods).

“The release of the two extra-early hybrids should contribute to a significant reduction in the instability of maize yields in Nigeria as well as in other countries of WCA,” Badu-Apraku added. The adoption and commercialization of these extra-early hybrids released in Nigeria and of others presently in the pipeline for release in Ghana, Mali, and Bénin should contribute significantly to food security and lead to improved incomes and livelihoods for farmers in WCA. “

## “Why results-based M&E for IITA?”

As part of the efforts to acquaint every stakeholder within IITA with the new monitoring and evaluation strategy, Mr Thomas Wobill, IITA’s M&E Specialist, gave a presentation on the results-based M&E strategy.

The presentation was part of the West Africa Seminar series. It underpinned the need for such a strategy as the Institute aims to create a greater impact through the continuum of its activities.

Specifically, the new M&E framework will help IITA to generate significant evidence about its performance, enhance credibility and stakeholders’ confidence, and support the shift towards greater accountability while focusing attention on achieving outcomes and impacts.

At the program/project level, it would provide trends on the status of projects and policies, help in developing and justifying budgets and, in the end, showcase promising programs and practices.

For managers, the results-based M&E becomes critical by helping in identifying and correcting the weaknesses of projects and establish key goals and outcomes.

Mr Wobill noted that developing an M&E strategy would entail the support of all the units in committing their time and effort. He stressed that he would build on the existing data management strategies within the Institute and consult with various stakeholders.



Thomas Wobill during the presentation.

## Welcome

**Dr Ishikawa Haruki** has been appointed Plant Physiologist and has been relocated to Ibadan. He was formerly a Postdoctoral Fellow (Cowpea Agronomist) of IITA based in INERA, Saria Station, Burkina Faso.



Dr Ishikawa is a Japanese national and his specialty is optical measurements. He lives at Tilbury apartment on the IITA campus. His office is in Building 401,

Room 39 with extension 2974. His e-mail address is [h.ishikawa@cgiar.org](mailto:h.ishikawa@cgiar.org)

Another Japanese national, **Dr Kanako Suzuki**, has joined IITA-Ibadan as Postdoctoral Fellow (Cowpea). Dr Suzuki obtained her BSc degree in Agricultural Civil Engineering from Iwate University, Japan, in 1999; her MSc in Agriculture (Soil Physics and Agronomy) in 2001 and her PhD in Agriculture (Soil Fertility and Agronomy) in 2008 from the Graduate School of Agricultural Development Studies, The University of Tokyo, Japan.

She was previously a Postdoctoral Fellow at



the Rural Development division of the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences, 2008 to 2013, and the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer/Rural Development

Facilitator at the Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2001 to 2003.

She lives at Apartment 3A on IITA campus. Her office is in the Bioscience Center, Room 4, with extension 2288. Her e-mail address is [k.suzuki@cgiar.org](mailto:k.suzuki@cgiar.org).