



## National Learning Alliance prioritizes climate change policy action in Tanzania

A [National Learning alliance](#) was created at the end of last year to facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge, and experiences as well as carrying out joint policy engagement action on climate change particularly in relation to food security in Tanzania. The Alliance has identified key priority areas to focus on and further developed an action plan to help meet its objectives.

The one-day workshop was held on 31 March in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. During the event, various case studies for policy engagement were presented and discussed including on climate change financing mechanisms, institutional capacity needs and entry points for mainstreaming climate change adaptation into development planning, water use efficient

technologies and approaches for climate, among others.

The learning alliance is sponsored by the [Policy Action for Climate Change Adaptation \(PACCA\)](#) project of the [Climate Change Agriculture and Food Security \(CCAFS\)](#) of CGIAR and led by [IITA](#). It is being implemented in both Uganda and Tanzania. In Tanzania, the project is coordinated by the Environmental Management Unit (EMU) of the [Ministry of Agriculture Food Security and Cooperatives \(MAFC\)](#) as well as the [Vice President's Office](#).

The project is being implemented in collaboration with the [International Livestock Research Institute \(ILRI\)](#), [International Centre for Tropical Agriculture](#)

([CIAT](#)), [Biodiversity International](#), and [World Agroforestry Centre \(ICRAF\)](#).

Speaking at the meeting, the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Vice President's Office, Engr Angeline Madete, said the National Learning Alliance was an important platform to strengthen climatic change policy action in the country from national to local levels especially for developing climate resilient food systems.

She therefore urged all the actors in the Alliance to continue sharing their knowledge and experiences on policy action to support the farming community cope with climate change, to develop a climate change communication strategy as well as guidelines for monitoring and evaluation of

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## DG visits partners in Japan

Director General [Nteranya Sanginga](#) is visiting Japan this week and meeting with partner institutions and potential collaborators to explore new areas of collaboration.

His first stop was the [Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences](#)

(JIRCAS) where he was met by JIRCAS president, former IITA Board member and Director General of CIMMYT, Dr [Masaru Iwanaga](#). Dr Iwanaga also visited IITA last 4-6 February to get deeper insights into the impact of CGIAR reforms on IITA and to understand the working mechanisms between the systems-based CGIAR

Research Program on Humidtropics and IITA as a research institute. Dr Sanginga and Dr Iwanaga discussed further collaboration between JIRCAS and other universities and research centers in Japan.

The full story will be featured in next week's bulletin.



*Sanginga makes a presentation at JIRCAS.*



*Dr Sanginga with host-partners under a cherry blossom tree in front of JIRCAS HQ building.*

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initiatives addressing climate change in the country.

Perez Muchunguzi, a multistakeholder specialist with IITA based in Kampala, said the goal of the learning alliance was to bring together all the different climate change actors in the two countries (Uganda and Tanzania) to identify opportunities and policy gaps.

Muchunguzi said the Tanzania learning alliance, at its formation, had settled on four thematic areas to work on based on the major gaps and challenges identified in the country related to climate change and policy action. These are financial resources, capacity building, institutional arrangement

and policy issues, and information sharing and knowledge management.

“By the end of the meeting, each of the four groups came up with action plans for policy engagement. They varied from short-term issues such as putting together a climate change adaptation database to developing climate change policy,” he said. “It is important for the groups to prioritize and start with doable actions so the Learning Alliance members can be motivated as we continue learning together.”

He added that one of the targets of the national learning alliance was to set up at least two district learning alliances to

get closer to the farmers and to where policy implementation takes place. “This will enhance effective implementation of proposed policies at district level,” said Muchunguzi.

The selected districts for setting up District Learning Alliances are Lushoto and Kilosa in Tanzania.

The meeting was attended by members of the learning alliance drawn from climate change actors from central and local governments, national and international research organizations, civil society including farmers’ organizations, the private sector, and the media.



Climate change actors from government and nongovernment organizations at the workshop. At center (in blue suit) is the guest of honor, Engr Angelina Madete, Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Vice President’s Office, Tanzania.

## WAAPP-Nigeria commends IITA on the inclusion of AIP to meet partnership goals

Professor Damian Chikwendu, WAAPP-Nigeria National Coordinator, has commended IITA for prominently featuring the dynamic Agricultural Innovation Platform (AIP), also known as the Cassava Platform, in channelling technologies to farmers and investors. He described the initiative as “more effective than other conventional systems.”

Prof Chikwendu also observed that, to a very large extent, the AIP which is based in

Umuahia, Abia State, had been performing very well in the cassava value chain and had now been extended to eight other States in Nigeria. “The World Bank is very impressed by this extension outfit and I urge IITA to request additional funds as may be needed to foster an all-encompassing development for farmers.”

WAAPP-Nigeria has been engaging IITA since 2012 as a major partner in the implementation of regional projects

on cassava, yam, and maize. When Dr Gbassey Tarawali, IITA’s Representative in Abuja, and Dr Beatrice Aighewi, IITA Yam Seed Systems Specialist, made a recent visit to the WAAPP Office in Abuja, Prof Chikwendu showed interest in continuing the ongoing projects and also in exploring new areas. To facilitate this, an interactive session between both organizations was held on 2 March where IITA scientists shared new ideas and made presentations on the final reports for the ongoing projects and proposals for a second phase.

New areas to be explored in the proposed second phase include an oil initiative, the involvement of the youth in agribusiness, and the use of aflasafe to combat aflatoxin contamination on maize fields. As a first step, Dr Kenton Dashiell, DDG-Partnerships and Capacity Development, has urged IITA scientists to prepare at least six proposals to this effect. He also enjoined the scientists to work with Dr Robert Asiedu, Director R4D, and Kristina Roing de Nowina, Proposal Development Coordinator, in carrying out this assignment.



WAAPP delegates and IITA scientists tour the facilities at the Abuja atation.

# Sierra Leone seeks to deepen ties with IITA

Sierra Leone is seeking to deepen the relationship with IITA as the country aims to boost its agricultural productivity to create wealth and jobs for the youth.

To achieve this objective, a delegation from the West African nation held a meeting with IITA in Ibadan, 5-8 April, to review past and present collaborative efforts, identify successes made and lessons learned. Discussions were also centered on exploring new areas that might be beneficial to the two parties in future.

Dr Joseph Kargbo, Director General of the Sierra Leonean Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI), said IITA was a strategic partner to Sierra Leone's agricultural transformation efforts. He stressed that the Institute's contributions over the years had led to the development of human capital/ personnel most of who are currently contributing to the agricultural development of the country. In addition, technologies developed at IITA have been adapted to Sierra Leone's conditions and released to farmers.

Kargbo, who took over from Dr Alfred Dixon (now IITA Head of Partnership Coordination Office), wanted to see a more prosperous country, producing food and adding value to it.

"For us to achieve our goals, we need to work with you more than ever before," Kargbo said.

Dr Kenton Dashiell, IITA Deputy Director General, Partnerships & Capacity Development, welcomed the delegation and reiterated IITA's commitment to working with Sierra Leone.

He pledged that ongoing initiatives would be strengthened and sought Sierra Leone's cooperation, especially on the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP).



SLARI delegates (first four at left) present partnership request to IITA top management.

Dr Dashiell's position was echoed by Dr Robert Asiedu, the Director for West Africa, who commended the support from Sierra Leone especially for hosting the Institute's station and for working together on WAAPP, SARD-SC, and other projects for the benefit of farmers.

Francis A. Sankoh, Director General, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS), committed to work on areas of concerns raised with a view to ensuring that an extension was accommodated for the success of the WAAPP in particular.

Sankoh lauded IITA for the training of Sierra Leonean students, some of whom were on scholarships, adding that the initiative contributed to addressing the skills gap in the country.

Apart from Kargbo and Sankoh, other members of the delegation were Daniel Fornah, Project Development

& Management Officer, SLARI; Prof Alpha K. Lakoh from Njala University; and Sulaiman S. Sesay, Project Coordinator, WAAPP – SL.

Dr Dixon led the team on a tour of IITA. Places visited include the Yam Barn, cassava breeding and end users' assessment center, Business Incubation Platform, IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA), Genetic Resources Center, International House, and the Geospatial Laboratory.

The team was excited about the IYA program, particularly at the fish hatchery and ponds and soymilk processing unit where young men and women displayed their passion for agriculture.

They also expressed interest on the value addition of cassava, particularly confectionery, at I-House, the sharing of genetic resources, and technology transfer in the area of cassava processing at the Yam Barn.



Group photo of IITA and SLARI teams.

# The SUN rises for maternal and child health in Zambia

In many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, governments and communities are adopting innovations that improve the lives of millions through better agricultural production to diversify household diets and enhance nutritional status especially of poor subsistence-based farming households. In Zambia, IITA is helping bring this about by introducing farm families to technologies that give them more crop-based choices to improve their health and nutrition.

With a local partner, Development Aid from People to People ([DAPP](#)), IITA is implementing a nutrition-sensitive agriculture-based intervention. This is named SUN – or *Scaling-up Nutrition: the first 1000 critical days from pregnancy until a child turns 2 years old*. The SUN project aims to enhance the nutrition and health status of children under 2 years and pregnant or lactating women through increased production of different crops, dietary diversification, and the consumption of these nutrient-rich crops in poor smallholder farming communities in Luapula, Eastern, and Northern Provinces of Zambia.

The project is being supported by [UK Aid](#), [Irish Aid](#), the [Government of Sweden](#), and the [Zambian Government](#) through the [Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock](#).

In an interview, Mrs Elizabeth Tembo, a project beneficiary and a mother who recently gave birth in Kapara, Chipata, in the Eastern Province of Zambia, said she was grateful to the SUN project from IITA/DAPP. She had learned a lot about improved farming practices that integrate high-yielding varieties of nutritious crops, such as cowpea, soybean, and legumes, as well as fruits and a variety of green, leafy vegetables. She also related how the project taught



Farmers weeding soybean plots at a SUN demo site in Kasama, Northern Province, Zambia.

her how to prepare a variety of tasty dishes that use the crops she grows in her own field.

“My family really likes these dishes, and I know that they are good for them as well as for me and my baby since I am still breastfeeding him,” Mrs Tembo narrated.

Apart from growing and using the nutritious crops, Mrs Tembo also learned traditional pest control methods which she is applying on her field. She said she was teaching other women in her community about the things she has learned from the SUN project to help to reduce the high prevalence of malnutrition and stunting among children.

In Lundazi, Mrs Lyness Zimba says that she has been regularly attending the weekly training given to women like her in her community by agricultural and health specialists working under the SUN project. “They teach us the basics of nutrition, the importance of feeding our children nutritious foods,

and how to cultivate and use various nutrient-rich crops in our homesteads. The project also gave us cookery recipes that make use of the crops.”

“Apart from the obvious health benefits of the crops being espoused by the project, the simple act of gaining knowledge about nutrition for my family is empowering,” she added. “I will definitely continue to practice what I have learned even after the project, for my sake and the sake of my children.”

SUN participants in Kasama and Mansa in the Northern Province of the country also aired their appreciation of IITA/DAPP for bringing the project in their communities. They indicated that they had benefited a lot and would adopt the practices they had learned to reduce malnutrition and stunting in their families.

The SUN project continues to provide participating farmers in its project areas with training on improved agronomic practices, seed multiplication, the need for timely planting and weeding, cultivating diverse crops rich in protein and vitamin A, and the utilization and processing of the crops. IITA and DAPP have also linked the farmers to other organizations that are training them on improved crop storage and preservation.



SUN farmers in an orange maize demo site in Mansa, Northern Province, Zambia.

## Help conserve electricity!

Before leaving your workplace at the end of the day, make sure that you have:

1. Powered off all unnecessary electrical office/ lab equipment;
2. Turned off air conditioners; and
3. Switched off all lights.