

IITA-YIIFSWA launches FCT Yam Development Forum (YDF) in Abuja



Members of the YDF and researchers in Abuja

The YIIFSWA project has launched the Federal Capital Territory Yam Development Forum (YDF) on Thursday 12 December, bringing key stakeholders across the yam value chain to a common platform with a view to enhancing the fortunes of yam farmers. The establishment of YDF builds on YIIFSWA's community outreach that was held in August 2013, involving yam farmers and stakeholders in all the six local government areas.

In his opening speech, YIIFSWA Project

Manager, Dr Norbert Maroya pointed out the importance of yam and Nigeria's role as the world highest producer of yam. He said that it was paramount for research to improve yam productivity despite its challenges to ensure food security in Africa and assured farmers and other stakeholder of YIIFSWA's support.

FOSCA Lead Coordinator, Mr Fadel Ndiame commended the effort of the FCT yam farmers for being the first YDF to be formally inaugurated and encouraged

them to improve the yam value chain in Nigeria and West Africa at large.

During his goodwill remarks, the FCT Director of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Abubakar Sani Pai called for concerted action from various partners to join hands in empowering farmers through the promising YDF. He said that the MDGs Unit of the FCT would support in postharvest technology to improve yam storage and marketing.

The Council Secretary, Mr Usman Yahaya inaugurated the 12-member committee and expressed his appreciation for the YDF initiative.

In his acceptance speech, the Chairman of the FCT YDF, Alhaji Yahaya Garba Gigbe on behalf of his team, thanked the participants for the confidence reposed in them and indicated their readiness to lead a productive YDF that would facilitate constructive discussions to move the yam trade forward in the FCT and beyond.

In attendance also were the representatives of the ADP Executive Director, FOSCA's Lead Coordinator and Objective 2 Leader, Mr Fadel Ndiame, YIIFSWA Seed Specialist and Objective 3 leader, Dr Beatrice Aighegi, and NRI representative of Objective 4, Dr Louise Abayomi.

IITA-Kano station hosts SAS training



Participants at the SAS training in Kano

IITA Kano station in collaboration with ICRISAT Nigeria hosted a week's training on Statistics and Statistical Computing Course with SAS. The participants were drawn from IITA, ICRISAT, and other partners from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; and Bayero University, Kano. There were also participants from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, the Agricultural

Research Council of Nigeria, and the Lake Chad Research Institute.

The training was facilitated by Mr Sam Ofodile and Mrs Olayemi Oluwasoga of the Biometrics Unit in IITA-Ibadan who coached the 27 participants from Monday 16 to Friday 20 December 2013.

In his opening speech, Dr Alpha Kamara, IITA Station Representative urged

participants to pay attention to the training and highlighted the importance of the training to scientific writing.

The one-week intensive training taught participants how to:

- Use Genstat – Introduction to the software
- Write SAS codes and complex data management
- Generate descriptive statistics and explore data with graphs
- Generate and interpret sample statistics using the UNIVARIATE and MEANS procedures
- Detect associations among variables
- Perform analysis of variance and apply multiple comparison techniques
- Perform linear and multiple regression and assess the assumptions
- Fit a multiple and binomial logistic regression model
- Perform multivariate analysis

The training was formally closed on Friday afternoon with the presentation of certificates by Mr Ado Rabo, IITA Station Administrator.

Military command pays courtesy visit to IITA

The Commander of the Nigerian Air Force Detachment, Ibadan, Air Commodore K.E. Adediji paid a courtesy visit to IITA on Friday and sought areas of possible collaboration between IITA and his command.

Adediji, who assumed office in Ibadan, last year, said the visit to IITA was significant in view of the strategic importance of IITA to Nigeria and Africa in general.

Receiving the Commander, the Acting IITA Director General, Dr Kenton Dashiell explained the vision and mission of IITA, adding that IITA would be willing to partner and support the Nigeria Air Force in the area of food security.

Dr Dashiell commended the Nigerian Government for her support over the years, stressing that the Institute was in support of the Nigeria's Agricultural Transformation Agenda.



Dr Dashiell (3rd from left), Adediji (4th from left), and officials of the Nigerian Air Force Command, Ibadan with IITA officials

FOSCA/YIIFSWA consultative meeting at IITA Ibadan



FOSCA/YIIFSWA stakeholders meeting in Ibadan

Component leaders and partners involved in the implementation of the YIIFSWA program in Nigeria met on 9 December, in IITA Ibadan for a two-day consultative meeting with the Farmer Organization Support Centre (FOSCA).

The meeting examined options for updating the database and ICT platform that will host YIIFSWA data and assist researchers and partners in the implementation of YIIFSWA.

According to YIIFSWA's Project Manager, Dr Norbert Maroya, the objective of the meeting was to discuss and develop a system towards 'synchronizing in a

single database all data and information on YIIFSWA project beneficiaries engaged by the various component objectives'.

FOSCA's Lead Coordinator, Mr Fadel Ndiame, who started the session with a presentation, stated that it was important to consider the required format preferences of the various objectives and partners in consolidating the YIIFSWA database. The database consolidation process requires inputs from all Objectives to contribute information towards institutional set up and define parameters for its sustainability and usefulness beyond the life of the project.

Components and Coordinators of Objectives 3,4,5,6, and 7 also gave presentations on the data collated and to be collected on farmers and other beneficiaries. Each highlighted information needs and discussed how to capture and incorporate it into the soon to be developed YIIFSWA database.

Action points were then set up for further interventions. They include the development of a roadmap for a seed system, the submission of datasets to the FOSCA Team for upload by all the Objectives, the development of a knowledge protocol and typology of production systems and farmers, and the production of a concept note on the Yam Development Forum.

Help conserve electricity!

Before leaving the workplace at the day's end, 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.