



## Of “super” farmers and integrated farming systems

In far-flung Seloto Village, Babati district, Manyara Region, Northern Tanzania, a trail-blazing farmer participating in the Africa RISING project shows researchers how farming system integration works. Farmer Andrea Mayi is successfully integrating crop, livestock, and tree farming in his 6-acre (4.2 hectares) farm consisting of 1.2 hectares (3 acres) each of crops and livestock farming systems, and a tree farm

Andrea, 58, who is also a village leader, is one of the early farmer-adopters of innovations introduced through the Africa RISING project. In a recent visit by the USAID and Africa RISING teams to research project sites in Babati and Kongwa districts, Tanzania, Africa RISING researchers showcased ongoing research in the different work packages and highlighted the work with selected farmers from several project intervention villages.

Farmer Andrea practices a mixed intensive farming system that shows how to optimally merge crop growing and



“Super” farmer Andrea Mayi (middle, in light blue shirt) shows visitors his farm where he had applied some of the technologies from Africa RISING.



livestock production with tree farming. Every inch of his farm is used to the optimum, with an area planted to crops

that include maize and legumes, and trees; a space for raising pigs, goats, cattle, and  
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## Africa RISING establishes a partnership platform for technology adoption by farmers in Tanzania

The partners of the IITA-led Africa RISING project from one of its sites, Babati District, Manyara Region, northeastern Tanzania, have formed a research-for-development (R4D) platform to support the uptake of the project’s technologies and to ensure sustainability of the project. This was at a two-day meeting attended by over 60 participants including farmers, government officials, extension workers, nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, and policy makers. Each group selected two members to represent them at the R4D platform.

The meeting was officially opened by the Manyara Regional Commissioner, Hon Erastus Mbwilo. He assured the project of his support as its aim of improving the livelihoods of small-holder farmers in the region was well in line with the government’s development goals.

He was particularly happy to note that the Africa RISING project was working to improve the production of both crops and livestock through modern farming methods.

“Livestock is very important for our farmers in Babati. There are over 1.4 million heads of cattle in the district without

counting the goats, donkeys, and chickens. Unfortunately, many development partners often neglect livestock and focus on crops only. Therefore the livestock sector faces many challenges including pests and diseases, poor breeds, lack of feed, and overstocking, and the farmers are not able to maximize on their livestock to increase their income,” he said. “If these challenges are tackled through these research efforts, then the project will surely make a difference in improving the livelihoods of

the farmers in Babati.”

He further commended the Africa RISING approach of conducting research together with the farmers through demonstration plots which he said will ensure the new technologies developed get to the farmers. He urged that the research findings be scaled up and out beyond Babati district to include the whole of Manyara Region.

Also speaking during the opening of the workshop, Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon,  
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Manyara Regional Commissioner Erastus Mbwilo (left) opens meeting in Babati, Tanzania, with Africa RISING project coordinator Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon (right).

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chicken; and a tree farm that grows fuel and fodder wood species. From the animal manure he makes biogas that supplies energy for home cooking. Crop residues are fed to the livestock or composted to be added to the soil. Andrea’s farm is only one of about 12 farmer trial sites in the two regions in Tanzania visited by the team.

The USAID team was composed of Jerry Glover, Senior Sustainable Agricultural Systems Advisor, Office of Agriculture, Research & Policy, Bureau for Food Security; Laura Schreeg, Science and Technology Policy Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science/USAID; and Elizabeth Maeda, Research and Production Advisor at USAID, Tanzania.

The Africa RISING team was led by Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon, Coordinator

of the West Africa and East and Southern Africa (ESA) components of the project, and Mateete Bekunda, Chief Scientist of ESA. IITA DDG for Research, Ylva Hillbur, also joined the visit to the Babati and Kongwa project sites.

Farmers with scientists and researchers from IITA, other CGIAR centers, and partner organizations leading and working on the various work packages were on hand to talk about their experiences and trial results.

The visit afforded the team an opportunity to interact with other farmers’ groups in the project sites in Seloto and Long Villages in Babati, and Chitego, Kibaigwa, and Laikala in Kongwa, and to see what was actually happening in farmer-installed and managed trials, and how the project is impacting farmers in the project sites.

In one village visited, the women welcomed the team with a song in the local language praising the project and describing the benefits of participating in project activities. Farms visited showcased work being undertaken on Maize Lethal Necrosis Disease, postharvest handling and mycotoxin management, crop management efficiency, traditional postharvest storage system, climbing beans, fodders and feeds, maize-legume intercropping, vegetable and maize, pigeon pea, and livestock and water management(?).

The Africa RISING project in Tanzania builds upon results of implementing the 2012-13 research plan. Africa RISING promotes an integrated approach that is based on technological innovations addressing context-specific improvements.



*Africa RISING visitors check out the biogas pit constructed by Farmer Mayi.*

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the Africa RISING Program Coordinator, said the R4D platform is very important in ensuring the sustainability of the project’s impact. She said that the platform will help solve some of the factors that limit the uptake and adoption of new technologies by farmers and which are beyond the scope of the project.

“Africa RISING cannot tackle all the challenges faced by farmers in their livestock and crop production alone, hence the need for an R4D platform. Furthermore, significant change in farm productivity will not happen through the few individual farmers who will adopt the technologies developed. Rather, it will depend on the simultaneous changes in all interdependent stakeholders including policies, infrastructure, and private-sector engagement among others,” she said.

Also present at the workshop were Victor Manyong, IITA Director for Eastern Africa and the chair of the Africa RISING Eastern and Southern Africa project Steering Committee, and Ivan Rwomushana from the Association for Strengthening

Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), another committee member.

Manyong noted that the Africa RISING research efforts needed to translate into better income and improved welfare for the farmers: “We want to see change. Therefore take ownership of the project and be in the driving seat. IITA and all other partners in the project will support you,” he informed the partners. “We especially want to see young people get engaged in agriculture so they stop running off to urban areas.”

He also briefed them on IITA’s efforts to engage the youth in Africa in agriculture to tackle the high rates of unemployment. The youth in Babati would also be included in the initiative, he said.

Africa RISING is a five-year initiative, launched in 2011, funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of the US Government’s Feed the Future (FtF) initiative. It is aimed at combating global hunger. It has three regional projects based in West Africa, the Ethiopian Highlands, and in East and Southern Africa.



*Women farmers welcome visitors from Africa RISING team and USAID with a song and dance.*

The earlier work packages conducted discipline-specific baseline studies to understand major constraints to improved livelihoods and identify opportunities for targeting research options.

Several innovations of inputs at the level of crops, livestock, and farm technologies were tested or initiated, mainly as potential components of integration during subsequent studies. According to Mateete, lessons from these studies showed the need to integrate tested innovations and led to the merging of some and redesigning of other work packages.

The redesigned work packages now address crop management efficiency, livestock and watershed/landscape management, prevention of mycotoxin contamination along food and feed value chains for maize, improved postharvest handling, and human dietary diversification through integration of vegetables into cereal based systems. New work packages are being included to address the maize lethal necrosis disease outbreak, integrated management of the most common livestock (poultry) in the farming systems, connecting farmers to external markets, and introducing innovations related to institutional arrangements (R4D Platforms).

After the visit, Glover of USAID said: “I am very happy to be involved in Africa RISING as the voice of USAID, and excited about the multidisciplinary systems approach of doing research evolving from this project—we need a new model for agricultural science and development, and Africa RISING can be that model.”

However, he also said that if the project wants to come up with a coherent program, “we need to address the issue of data management; we cannot leave the individual scientists to curate, aggregate, and manage their own data. We will develop a way to curate data so the information is accessible, managed, stored, and archived for future use.”

## Governments urged to tap agriculture for job creation

Director General Nteranya Sanginga has called on Governments to make use of the potential of agriculture to create wealth and jobs.

In his address delivered to stakeholders at the Oyo State Economic Summit, Dr Sanginga said there were opportunities for the youth to start small businesses in seed production, input supply, weed control, and processing, among others.

Represented by Dr Kenton Dashiell, Deputy Director General for Partnerships & Capacity Development, Dr Sanginga further explained that the youth could also be farmers and use modern methods that reduce the labor required, raise yields, and increase income.

Citing the model of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs as an example, Dr Sanginga said that there was a need to change the mindset of the youth.

He explained that the Youth Agripreneurs project—the first of its kind in the CGIAR—engages young people from various educational disciplines and through mentoring and training transforms them into “agripreneurs”. Making agriculture into a business is at the core of the program.

“This project has so far been successful and we need to scale up,” he said.

The economic summit attracted industrialists including the Chairman of First Bank of Nigeria, Oba Otudeko; the Chairman, Nigerian Economic Summit Group and Executive Chairman, Philips Consulting, Mr Foluso Philips; and the Director General of the Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON), Dr Joseph Odumodu. The Governor of Oyo State, Abiola Ajimobi, in his welcome address said the State was ready to offer incentives and partnership to investors willing to explore opportunities in the agricultural and industrial sectors.

He commended the partnership the State was enjoying with IITA, noting that plans were under way to train young people in agriculture.

The Governor solicited more synergies from other foreign bodies in the human and capital development of the State.

Unveiling data from the private and public sectors, the Governor spoke about several opportunities that abound in various sectors and the efforts his administration had undertaken to make Oyo an investment destination of choice.

His list of opportunities included infrastructural development, urban renewal, peace and security, training and

retraining of civil servants and political appointees, and accountability.

Governor Ajimobi called on investors and private sector players to avail themselves of these opportunities. He listed as part of the attraction the large market in Oyo State, the huge working population, peace and security, proximity to Lagos, and good governance.



The IITA exhibition, representing the agriculture sector, showcased IITA's work and opportunities for agribusiness and drew a lot of visitors.

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IITA exhibits showcase agriculture and agribusiness opportunities...continued from page 3



## Welcome, new staff

**Medson Chisi** has joined IITA-Zambia as the SARD-SC Maize Country Coordinator for Zambia. A Zambian national, Medson received a PhD in Agronomy from Kansas State University in 1993, an MSc in Plant Breeding from Texas A&M University in 1988, and a BSc in Agronomy from the University of Zambia in 1982.



Medson worked as Deputy Director, Zambia Agricultural Research Institute from 2010 to 2011 and was Chief Agriculture Research Officer—Crop Improvement and Agronomy for the same institute. He was a Senior Agriculture Research Officer, Mutanda Research Station (1988 to 1996); and coordinated INTSORMIL activities in Southern Africa until 2011. Our new colleague can be contacted on [m.chisi@cgiar.org](mailto:m.chisi@cgiar.org); office address: IITA, 32 Poplar Avenue, Lusaka, Zambia; and telephone number +260 966 748094.

**Marcelo Precoppe** has joined the IITA-Tanzania team as a Postdoctoral Fellow—Improvement of Cassava Processing Efficiency. He was born in Brazil and studied Forestry at



the University of Sao Paulo graduating in 2003. While working on agroforestry he soon realized the importance of adding value to the products grown by small-holder farmers and the lack of suitable equipment for them motivated him to pursue an MSc in Agricultural Science in the Tropics and Subtropics at the University of Hohenheim, Germany. Just after concluding it in 2008 he started his PhD in Agricultural Engineering at the same university, obtaining his degree in 2014. His research was on developing technology suitable to village-based drying. At IITA he will be working on the optimization of machinery used to process cassava.

He can be reached on [m.precoppe@cgiar.org](mailto:m.precoppe@cgiar.org) or via his office address: Coca-Cola Road, Mikocheni B, PO Box 34441, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

**M u h a m m a d u**

**Salaudeen**, from Nigeria, has assumed duty at IITA-Ibadan, Nigeria as a Visiting Scientist—Maize Virology. He has a PhD in Plant Pathology (2008–2012) from the University of Ibadan. He obtained his MSc in Crop Protection (2005–2007) from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and his B. (Agric) Tech. General Agriculture (First class) from the Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State in 2003.



Prior to this appointment, Muhammadu

worked as an Assistant Lecturer (2004–2007) with the Federal University of Technology, Mina. He was Lecturer II (2007–2011) and Lecturer I (2011–2014) for the same university. He has attended several national and international conferences and workshops.

He can be reached on [m.salaudeen@cgiar.org](mailto:m.salaudeen@cgiar.org). His office is in the Virology Unit, building 401 and his mobile number is +234 8063330183.

**Nester Mashingaidze**,

from Zimbabwe, has joined IITA-Burundi as a Postdoctoral Researcher in Farming Systems Analysis. She obtained her PhD (Agronomy) from the University of Pretoria, and MSc (Crop Science) and BSc (Agriculture) from the University of Zimbabwe.

Recently, Nester worked as a Chairperson/Lecturer (2011–2014) with the Midlands State University, Zimbabwe. She was a PhD Research Fellow at ICRISAT-Bulawayo (2007–2010) and prior to this a Scientific Officer in ICRISAT's Global Theme Agro-Ecosystems (2004–2007).

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