

Sanginga reiterates his commitment to lead the IITA “football team”

Winning or losing, we shall stand together. I am your rapporteur and you will arm me with your opinions so that when I speak to the Board, I will be speaking for you. This was the message of Dr Nteranya Sanginga during this year’s edition of Meet the DG—an annual event instituted by the DG as part of his policy on promoting openness since assuming office on 1 November 2011.

Dr Sanginga, on 17-18 November, convened and met all member staff at the Conference Center in Ibadan to keep everyone updated on accomplishments, strategies, and vital reforms affecting the institution, and to aid effective communication at all levels.

“My mission here is to make you know what I, the Board, and Management know and also to relay your opinions to the Board during the meeting in Kampala on 25-28 November ...I will come back to inform you of the resolutions at the end of that meeting.”

This year’s presentation was entitled Repositioning IITA for impact in Africa. In his talk, the DG noted that he was happy with the morale of staff and the favorable impacts that our research outputs are producing.

Through Aflasafe and our success in seed yam we have shown that exciting



During the Meet the DG 2014 edition at IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria, DG Nteranya Sanginga tells the staff: “You should know what I know, and vice versa.”

science can be used to solve farmers’ problems and create lots of impact. The technologies are simple yet exceedingly effective.”

He further noted that the future looked bright for the institution and that through the decentralized Hubs, IITA’s presence and impact are established in the areas

where they are located and the neighboring countries. “IITA has steadily climbed the ladder of success since 2011, rising from number 13 to the second place in terms of budget allocation ...as DG, I have formulated a strategy to ensure impacts which are evidence-based at the farm levels. Our focus is not on the number of people who have adopted our technologies but on the resulting changes.”

The important future of IITA. IITA is creating businesses in different forms. The Business Incubation Platform and the IITA Youth Agripreneurs will be the areas where the jobs are going to be—the future of IITA. “I am proud of what our Agripreneurs have become. We started off with a modest budget and today, they have generated about \$1.5 million. They have diversified into fish production with nine ponds and they are currently working to get a \$160 million grant.”

What next. In his closing remarks, Dr Sanginga enjoined all to stay focused on the vision of IITA. He advised, “We all have to be responsible for something. Shun complacency at all levels, and be accountable for the outcomes of your specific tasks.”



Meet the DG is an annual event that provides an opportunity for the DG to talk to staff about achievements, updates, and challenges for the year and to get feedback from staff.

Got a story to share? Please email it with photos and captions every Wednesday to Andrea Gros (a.gros@cgiar.org), Katherine Lopez (k.lopez@cgiar.org), Jeffrey T. Oliver (j.oliver@cgiar.org), Catherine Njuguna (c.njuguna@cgiar.org), or Adaobi Umeokoro (a.umeokoro@cgiar.org).

IITA to collaborate with ADPs in extending PICS bags for legume and cereal storage to farmers in Nigeria

To halt postharvest losses, increase incomes, and reduce susceptibility to pest damage in stored grains for rural farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, IITA, Purdue University, and national partners in the Purdue Improved Crop Storage (PICS3) project conducted a Training of Trainers workshop on 8-9 October for extension agents, entomologists, and economists in Nigeria. The topic was “Hermetic storage technology for grains using the PICS bag”.

The hermetic technology is an effective, chemical-free grain storage technique using air-tight containers. The technology being promoted in this project is the PICS bag, a three-layered plastic packaging. This completely seals up stored produce, prevents air entry, and kills insects that damage stored grains. In fact, during the phase 1 of this project, the PICS bags were successfully promoted through demonstrations in more than 10,000 villages in Nigeria alone, and cowpea farmers have since begun using them as a cheap and profitable way of storing the crop. In the third phase, the bags are being promoted for storing cereals and other legume crops in addition to cowpea.

The novelty in the PICS bag lies in its ease of use, affordability, profitability, flexibility, and efficiency in storing both cereals and legumes. It offers a viable alternative storage option to many



Men and women farmers in the communities in Nigeria observe how the PICS bags works to control pests in stored cowpea seed.

resource-poor farmers who have hitherto lacked functional storage facilities and who, in a bid to prevent produce rot, are forced to sell their harvests when the market is flooded, thereby receiving low prices for their goods.

Dr Tahirou Abdoulaye, IITA’s Outcome and Impact Economist, said, “With this innovation, farmers are able to preserve the quality of their legumes and cereals for relatively long periods. They are therefore encouraged to produce other neglected legumes, such as Bambara nut, knowing that their produce could be effectively stored. They might even receive premium prices when they eventually take their produce to the market.”

PICS3 is aimed at increasing by 20% the total quantity of grain stored on-farm using hermetic technologies in target countries. It also seeks to reduce postharvest losses in cereal and legume grain and increase incomes leading to a general improvement in the food security of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. It intends to achieve these aims

by focusing on four cross-cutting areas of market development, supply chain development, monitoring and evaluation, and capacity building.

Dr Abdoulaye added, “The trained extension agents are expected to conduct demonstrations about the technology in 1500 villages in 21 states in Nigeria. In addition, demonstrations will be conducted in 75 selected markets and mass media strategies employed in reaching the target beneficiaries.”

In collaboration with State Agricultural Development Programs, IITA and the PICS3 project will operate in 21 States in Nigeria with awareness creation activities to improve access to hermetic storage. Project technicians will work directly with 1500 farmers to show them how to safely store their produce without using any chemicals. Through supply chain development it is expected that millions of farmers in Nigeria will be able to purchase these bags from private dealers for preserving their cereals and legumes.



The PICS bag uses a chemical-free grain storage technique.

What’s up next week?

IITA Fall Board Meeting, IITA Kampala, Uganda, 25-28 November 2014

FARA@15 celebration, Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Center, Boksburg, South Africa, 26-28 November 2014

Ebola update

- Total number of cases (12 November): 14,068.
- Total number of deaths: 5,147.
- Most affected countries are still Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea.
- Nigeria and Senegal remain EVD free.
- No new cases in Spain and USA.
- Three new additional cases and deaths in Mali recently.

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.

IITA celebrates Open Day with 5,000+ staff and family members in Ibadan



There was a mood of merriment and recreation as Management, staff, and their families converged in Ibadan on 15 November for Open Day. This year's Open Day—the fifth since it was started—featured for the first time the awards for long-serving members of staff across all Hubs. There were also awards for retiring members of staff, field exhibitions and demos, a dance competition, presentations from staff, and music. The children were not left out as there was a bouncing castle and Merry-Go-Round and lots of other treats for them.

The event, which was well attended, commenced with the planting of tropical trees by retirees and eight staff organization volunteers to mark the meritorious service of our retirees and, at the same time, improve biodiversity and increase plant conservation in the campus.

Kwame Akuffo-Akoto, DDG Corporate Services, in welcoming the IITA family, reiterated that the Open Day aimed to help staff to unwind and build lasting networks. "It is another day for us to keep work aside, relax, and bond as members of one big and happy family. Without you all, there would be no Open Day. All we will do today will be in the open," he said.

Scholarship awards. The Women's Group presented awards amounting to \$8,280 to 53 successful candidates in Nigeria as part of its annual scholarship initiative to assist staff with a token for school fees. Dr Feyi, a former recipient of the award who is now a medical doctor, was there to encourage the successful candidates. She said, "Sixteen years ago, I received this scholarship just like you. Today, I can say that with focus and painstaking hard work, you can be

whatever you dream of becoming. Make good use of this rare opportunity".

Raffle. Sumptuous prizes, such as IITA branded items, kitchenware, barbecue and pizza tickets for families, washing machine, refrigerator, and a host of other gifts were presented to staff in the raffle draw.

DG Nteranya Sanginga picked the winning ticket and announced that Friday Momoh, a member of staff from AfricaRice, had won the grand prize of a round trip for two to Nairobi, the capital of Kenya.

Dr Kenton Dashiell brought the event to a close; in his remarks he thanked everyone for coming and enjoined them all to expect an even better celebration next year.

Watch out for the Talking Drums issue featuring the Open Day celebration.



Survey results, project mapping, and monitoring tool are main focus at annual Africa RISING M&E meeting

Africa RISING program held its second program-wide monitoring and evaluation meeting on 13-14 November 2014 in Arusha, Tanzania. The meeting takes place annually to discuss the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation components of the program and focus on possible areas on improvements.

This year's meeting focused on discussing preliminary results from the Africa RISING Baseline Evaluation household and community Surveys (ARBES) data collection, fine tuning usability of the Project Mapping and Monitoring Tool (PMMT), and defining M&E activities for 2015 and 2016.

Results from the ARBES surveys in Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Malawi, and Tanzania generated a lot of interest and discussion among participants during the two-day meeting because for the first time since the start of the program, a comprehensive data set about the economic, human, environmental, social, and productivity situation in the Africa RISING program action sites were available.

"These results show real promise for the direction we can head to in terms of sustainable intensification. So we see this framework as a possible way of linking across geographies and also across dimensions. This is a big step for the sustainable intensification concept,"



noted Dr Jerry Glover, Senior Sustainable Agricultural Systems Advisor at USAID.

Regarding the utility of the PMMT, a web-based tool to share and deposit project-related data, scientists suggested that the capability for uploading data even in circumstances where Internet connectivity is a problem would greatly enhance usability of the system in such areas. More capacity building for research teams was also proposed as a strategy

for improving usability of the PMMT. To address the challenge of irregular uploads of data into the system, it was proposed that a longer term solution could be to employ specific staff with direct responsibility for data input. Data sharing and access to data through PMMT will be regulated through a recently developed Africa RISING data management policy which is in line with the CGIAR policy on open access to data.

Akinyele Local Government Chair visits IITA

Akinyele is the Local Government Area where IITA-Ibadan is located. On 19 November, the Hon. Ope Salami, the chairman, and 21 members of the council of the LGA paid a familiarization visit to the campus. In the process they called for synergies between the LGA and the Institute to ensure the achievement of a shared goal of creating a conducive environment where people, government, business, and institutions thrive.

The delegation was received by Dr Nteranya Sanginga, IITA Director General, who in his address noted that it was very important that the Chairman of the LGA where IITA resides should visit the Institute and tap into all that IITA is offering. "This campus has hosted notable personalities, such as the Governor of Oyo State, Governors of other States, the former President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, and many other dignitaries. I am especially delighted that our own host LGA is visiting us today."

Hilde Koper, Head, Project Administration Office, in representing Dr Kenton Dashiell reaffirmed IITA's commitment to work with the LGA, and said, "In November 2013, through the

Youth Agripreneurs, IITA submitted a proposal to the LGA to train 250 young people and link them to companies that would provide them with good seeds after the training. We will be happy to help in

this regard."

The visitors were also taken on a guided tour of the campus where our scientists and staff were on the ground to explain various activities.



The Akinyele Local Government Area Chair and his entourage visiting IITA's yam barn.