

## KARI strengthens partnership with IITA on agriculture research



*IITA DG Nteranya Sanginga and KARI DG Ephraim Mukisira sign a memorandum of understanding at KARI*

IITA has formalized collaboration on agriculture research with the Kenya Agriculture Research Institute (KARI) as part of efforts to find sustainable solutions to the problems affecting the agriculture sector in the country.

The Directors General of the two institutions signed a memorandum of understanding that spells out the various areas of collaboration at KARI in Loresho last 24 March.

Speaking at the event, Dr Ephraim Mukisira, KARI Director General, noted that Kenya faces immense agricultural challenges that the institute is seeking to address through science and technology.

He said that partnership with an international research institute such as IITA would go a long way in complementing and building on these efforts.

Dr Mukisira cited some of the areas of collaboration that are making a difference, which include efforts to reduce aflatoxin contamination in maize, the key staple in the country, and controlling diseases of cassava and banana.

“With this new partnership agreement, we will go even further in our efforts to secure food and livelihoods of small-holder farmers,” he said.

Meanwhile, IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga noted the importance

of partnership with national agriculture research institutes such as KARI in achieving IITA’s target of lifting 11 million people in sub-Saharan Africa out of poverty.

He said that IITA is committed to the collaboration and that concrete action should follow the signing of the MoU in areas such as training, capacity building, and joint research projects. Afterwards, he tasked the Directors for Eastern Africa and Central Africa, Victor Manyong and Bernard Vanlauwe, who were at the signing ceremony, to ensure that concrete action is taken in the next few months to keep the momentum going.

The MoU provides a framework that spells out how the two institutions will work together. Other areas of collaboration included sharing of scientific information, technologies and material, and undertaking joint agriculture research projects, among others.

The signing of the MoU was witnessed by important guests such as Dr Florence Wambugu, Director of Africa Harvest, and Dr Dennis Kyetere, head of the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), and IITA and KARI staff.

Wambugu hailed the collaboration, saying it was “a new dawn for agriculture research in the continent through IITA’s new revitalized and refreshed strategy and the CGIAR reforms. She said that partners are now seeing new and better partnerships.

## IITA Agripreneur program in Tanzania takes off

IITA’s vision to set up youth agricultural entrepreneurs or “agripreneurs” in all four hubs is making good progress as the first group of 20 young men and women came together at the IITA-Tanzania premises to start the program in Tanzania under the guidance of IITA’s value chain specialist, Adebayo Abass.

Meeting the group during his visit to Dar es Salaam for the Consortium Board meeting last week, IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga assured the youth of IITA’s commitment to addressing the unemployment problems of large numbers of educated youth in the continent by



*The new IITA Agripreneurs in Tanzania with DG Sanginga (center in striped shirt).*

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involving them in agriculture as a profitable enterprise.

Sanginga briefed them on IITA's initiative to attract young people to agribusiness to help them become self-employed and also become employers through its Youth Agripreneur program. The program was first started at IITA headquarters in Nigeria. The program has since made significant achievements in 18 months.

"We are spreading the successes we have achieved in this program to our three other hubs in Africa where large numbers of educated youth are unemployed. We see a lot of potential in the agriculture sector through agribusiness such as through

processing and value addition, and sale of planting materials and fresh produce to keep the youth engaged and to make money through use of science and improved technologies," he said.

He said he was happy with their interest to join this program and assured them of IITA's commitment if they too would commit themselves.

"Our scientists have developed a wide range of science and technology solutions for improving agricultural production to markets and they will support you to apply these in any of the areas you want to go into," Sanginga said.

## **Youth conference in Nigeria**

DG Sanginga added that IITA is organizing a conference in Nigeria in April focusing on youth in agriculture with partner organizations with support of donors who are keen on the issue. He therefore asked the group to select their representatives to the event. He also informed them that he would send some of the Agripreneurs from Nigeria to share their success with them.

The youth selected their representatives to the conference and also identified cassava production and processing, and production of soybean, maize, and groundnuts as areas they were interested to work on.

## **Researchers, other stakeholders plan messages to increase the adoption of high quality cassava flour in Sierra Leone**



*Stakeholders participated in a message development workshop that would promote adoption of high quality cassava flour in Sierra Leone.*

Scientists from IITA and partners held a three-day meeting in Sierra Leone developing messages and storylines that would spur the adoption and use of high quality cassava flour in the country.

The meeting, organized by the Support to Agricultural Research for Development of Strategic Crops (SARD-SC) cassava project and facilitated by the partner organization Advocacy Action for Sustainable Development (AASD), a Sierra Leone-based national nongovernmental organization in collaboration with IITA, Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Institute (SLARI), and the Sierra Leonean Chamber of Agribusiness Development (SLeCAD), attracted participants from Fourah Bay College, farmers, processors, marketers, and the private sector.

To better understand key issues in cassava production, researchers gave presentations on the value chain of cassava in Sierra Leone and also shared production experiences from other parts of the world including Nigeria, Brazil, and Thailand.

Addressing participants on Thursday, Sylvanus Fannah, Agronomist/Natural Resource Manager, SARD-SC Cassava Project, commented that although cassava is a key crop in Sierra Leone, its value chain has not been fully exploited.

He gave a presentation highlighting the contributions of IITA and partners such as SLARI and SLeCAD to the agricultural development in Sierra Leone, citing the introduction of improved varieties and the construction of cassava microprocessing centers as some of the Institute's successful interventions.

Dr Richardson Okechukwu, Coordinator of the Cassava Transformation Agenda at IITA, shared experiences from earlier work done by IITA under the Unleashing the Power of Cassava in Africa (UPoCA), the Common Funds for Commodities (CFC)-funded project on cassava, and the Nigerian transformation experience.

He emphasized that a break from subsistence farming to agribusiness, the involvement of youths, mechanization, and the involvement of policy makers

in the cassava value chain are steps that could trigger transformation of cassava and farmers in the country. His views were corroborated by Godwin Atser, Communication Officer for IITA West Africa who also stressed the need for partnership among the agricultural value chain players.

The three-day workshop, implemented under the leadership of Dr Braima James, IITA Country Representative for Sierra Leone, was funded by SARD-SC. The key objectives of the workshop were to:

- Popularize the value chain of cassava to promote the use of high quality cassava flour.
- Popularize the local content policy using cassava as an entry point to promote commercialization among small farmers for wealth creation.

Ambrose James, AASD Director, said that messages developed would be shared with radio/TV stations country wide, and used for drama, video documentaries, and jingles to promote technology adoption.

# Welcome, new staff

**Samuel Adjei-Nsiah** from Ghana is the N2Africa Country Coordinator for Ghana. He holds a PhD in Production Ecology and Resource Conservation (2006) from Wageningen



University and Research Centre in the Netherlands. He received an MPhil in Crop Science (1996) from the University of Ghana, Legon, and a BSc in Agriculture (1991) from the University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana.

He was an Associate Professor, Senior Research Fellow, and Research Fellow at the Forest and Horticultural Crops Research Centre, Kade, Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR), University of Ghana, Legon (October 1999 to January 2014). He worked as a Research Associate with IITA/West Africa Plantain Project, Accra, Ghana (1994–1999); and Research Assistant (National Service) at the Forest and Horticultural Crops Research Centre, Kade, IAR, University of Ghana, Legon (October 1991 to September 1992). He has 34 scientific publications in refereed journals and chapters in books on soil fertility management and agricultural innovation systems.

Samuel is married to Charlotte and they have four children. He may be contacted on [s.adjei-nsiah@cgiar.org](mailto:s.adjei-nsiah@cgiar.org).



**Edward Baars** has joined the IITA station in Abuja, Nigeria, as Senior Business Development Officer of the N2Africa Project. Edward, a Dutch citizen, has an MSc degree in

Irrigation and Soil and Water Conservation in tropical and subtropical areas (1992) from Wageningen Agricultural University in the Netherlands. He did his thesis combining the disciplines of Irrigation, Marketing, and Marketing Research, and based on this he published several scientific papers.

Edward worked as Regional Agribusiness Cluster Coordinator, East and Southern Africa Division, International Institute for Soil Fertility and Rural Development (IFDC) in Nairobi, Kenya, from March 2011 until he took up his new appointment at IITA. He was Program Manager (2005–2011) and Consultant (2004–2005 and 2007–2010), Agronomist, Capacity Building Manager, and Senior Project

Manager (2002–2004) at the European Commission for Agriculture and Training (CEFA) in Nairobi, Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia. From 1993 to 2000 he was the Managing Director of Green Ventures (Kenya) Limited, engaged in the growing and exporting of fruits and vegetables. He has 20 years of professional experience in Africa within the agricultural sector.

Edward can be contacted on [e.baars@cgiar.org](mailto:e.baars@cgiar.org).

**Frederick Baijukya,**

a Tanzanian national, has assumed duty at IITA, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania as N2Africa Country Coordinator for Tanzania. He obtained his PhD in Production Ecology and Resource Conservation: Plant Production Systems (2004) from Wageningen University, The Netherlands. He received two MSc degrees at Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania, one in Soil and Land Management (specializing in soil microbiology) and the other in Agriculture (specializing in soil science).



He previously worked as a Consultant (Agrobiodiversity) with IITA from 2013 until his new appointment. Before this, he was a Scientist (Agrobiodiversity) with the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) (February 2010–October 2013); Consultant with the FAO on Transboundary Agroecosystem Management of the Kagera River Basin covering Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi (January 2007–January 2010); Senior Agricultural Research Officer and later Principal Agricultural Officer, Research Coordinator, and Head of Special Program at Maruku Agricultural Research Institute in Tanzania (August 1995–January 2007). He was also employed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Research Institute, Kilosa, Morogoro, Tanzania, from November 1991 to July 1995.

His e-mail address is [f.baijukya@cgiar.org](mailto:f.baijukya@cgiar.org) or [f.baijukya65@gmail.com](mailto:f.baijukya65@gmail.com) and he can be reached on +255 787188672.



**Friday Ekeleme,** a Nigerian citizen, has joined IITA-Ibadan as the Principal Investigator, Sustainable Weed Management Technologies for Cassava Systems

in Nigeria. He obtained his PhD in Weed Biology and Ecology and an MSc (Weed Ecology) and BSc (Botany) from the University of Ife, Nigeria in 1999, 1986, and 1983, respectively.

Recently, Friday worked as a Professor of Weed Science/Director, University Advancement (2004–2013) at the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike in Abia State. He was also a Senior Lecturer at the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. From 1989 to 2001 he worked as a Research Associate in Weed Science at IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria.

He is the current President of the Weed Science Society of Nigeria. He is married to Agatha Chigozirim Ekeleme and they are blessed with four children.

His office is in Building 401, Room 20D and he can be contacted on [f.ekeleme@cgiar.org](mailto:f.ekeleme@cgiar.org) or ext. 2762.

**Jeroen Huising**

has joined the IITA-Ibadan team as Project Leader and Senior Soil Scientist. He will lead the project supporting the Soil Health Consortia in West Africa and be responsible for the development of the soil health platform. He came from CIAT-Nairobi, where he had been employed since 2003. Until this appointment, he was the Project Coordinator of the N2Africa project, “Putting nitrogen fixation to work for smallholder farmers in Africa”, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and led by Wageningen University with IITA and CIAT as main collaborators. Before that he was a principal investigator for the AfSIS project (Africa Soil Information Services) and lead for the BGBD project (Conservation and Sustainable Management of Below-Ground Biodiversity).

From 1999 to 2002, he was employed as a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Remote Sensing and GIS Lab at the Institute of Environment and Natural Resources, Makerere University, on a contract funded by the Dutch Government. Before moving to Africa, he worked as a Senior Advisor at the Survey Department on application of remote sensing and photogrammetry for various applications, but coastal monitoring in particular. He has held several other positions.

Jeroen, a Dutch national, holds an MSc in Tropical Soil Science and a PhD on the application of GIS and RS for land



use inventory and monitoring of land use change, both obtained at the Wageningen Agricultural University, the Netherlands (1984 and 1993, respectively). He has done several training courses on project management and project planning.

Jeroen is accompanied by spouse Willemien Brooijmans. His office is room 37 in Building 400 with ext. number 2372. His home address is IITA Drive 1 on the IITA campus.

**Kande Matungulu**, from Congo, has assumed duty at IITA-DR Congo, Kinshasa, as Project Coordinator. He has a PhD in Agronomy (1992) from the North Carolina University, Raleigh, North Carolina, USA; an MSc in Earth Sciences from Liege State University, Belgium; and BSc (Agriculture) at Ingenieur Agronome, Faculte des Sciences Agronomique de Yangambi, DRC (1980).



Prior to this appointment, Kande worked as a Natural Resources Management Specialist and Mission Environmental Officer (2011–2013) with the USAID Mission in Kinshasa, Associate Researcher with the Kenya Agricultural Commodities Exchange (KACE) (2010–2011), team member for a mid-term review of a SADC-EU-funded project (July–August 2010), consultant with Food for the Hungry DRC, consultant with UN-ECA, and Team Leader for an AGRA/Agrisystems baseline survey in Nigeria and Niger (November 2009–February 2010). He has also worked in various capacities in many other organizations.

He can be reached on [p.matungulu@cgiar.com](mailto:p.matungulu@cgiar.com) and his office address is 4163 Avenue Haut Congo, Kinshasa Gombe, DRC. His mobile number is +243 812 901 103.



**Martin Mueller** has joined the Capacity Development Office at IITA-Ibadan as Database and Knowledge Management Expert. He has a Master's in Geoinformatics

from the University of Salzburg (UniGIS-network). He was the Technical Advisor (2009–2013) of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) in the Regional Office of the Ministry

of Lands and Resettlement of Namibia, responsible for land registration, GIS training, database design, data management, and land use planning. He also worked as a Scientific Assistant (2007–2008) for the Forest Research Institute, Baden-Württemberg.

Martin, a German national, will be responsible for technical coordination of the E-Research support activities of the Institute. He will take charge of setting up the E-Research platform that will enable management and access to datasets and related research outputs. He will interact with scientists and other staff and support them on issues related to data management to meet the challenges of implementing the Institute's 2012–2020 Strategy.

Martin's office is in the Partnership & Capacity Development Building (No. 8a) and he can be reached on ext. 2899, mobile: +234 803 978 4486, email: [m.mueller@cgiar.org](mailto:m.mueller@cgiar.org). He lives at 7 Tilbury on IITA campus, Ibadan.

**Pamela Pali** has assumed duty at IITA - Uganda, Kampala as Project Coordinator on Policy Action. Pamela, from Uganda, has skills in multi-stakeholder engagement, implementing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems into projects and programs, and project management.



She worked at the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) with communities to develop and implement community-based M&E systems in Uganda where she also completed her master's and PhD degrees. Pamela completed her PhD in 2008 in Natural Sciences at the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences (BOKU) in Vienna, Austria. Her six years of post-PhD experience have mainly involved strengthening learning from the implementation of results-based M&E systems and conducting formative evaluation and baseline studies.

As a postdoctoral fellow with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), she contributed to the development of the sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Program M&E strategy and the implementation of a generic M&E framework for innovation platforms. She later joined the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Kenya where she gained more experience in project

management, and she provided an advisory role on M&E to various projects through capacity building, development of M&E frameworks, and facilitation of project teams to conduct evaluation studies. She has been involved in several initiatives on natural resource management and crop intensification specifically under crop–small ruminant livestock intensification systems in West Africa.

Her e-mail address is [p.pali@cgiar.org](mailto:p.pali@cgiar.org)

**Emmanuel Sangodele**, a Nigerian national, has assumed duty at IITA Kano station as N2Africa Country Coordinator for Nigeria. Emmanuel is a plant breeder with research experience in seed development.



Over the years, he has worked as a consultant and specialist in several time-bound projects of international research centers and projects funded by the World Bank, United Nations, and USAID. He is well known in the Nigeria seed system for playing a leading role in the growth and development of viable agricultural input systems and establishment of the smallholder agro-industry. He has experience in establishing a network of rural farmers for improving market opportunities. Emmanuel has achieved a series of successes in Nigeria relating to the seed sector.

He obtained his PhD in Genetics and Plant Breeding at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, India (2013), an MSc in Botany (Plant Physiology) at the Bayero University, Kano State (2006), and a B. Agric. Technology (Crop Production) (1994) from the Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State.

Prior to this current appointment, he was a Consultant Rice Breeder/Seed System Specialist at the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Abuja, Nigeria. He was a Rice Breeder with the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, India (2010–2013), Senior Seed Technician, International Crops Research Institute for Semi-arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Kano, Nigeria (2008–2010), Seed System Manager, Makdel Agro Ventures, Kano (1996–2007), Landscaping Officer, Nigeria Engineering and Construction Company Ltd, Kano (1993–1996), and Research Assistant, Institute for Agricultural Research (IAR), Irrigation Research Station in Kadawa, Kano State (1991–1992).

His e-mail address is [e.sangodele@cgiar.org](mailto:e.sangodele@cgiar.org).