

# IITA-Sierra Leone Office gets facelift

IITA-Sierra Office is wearing a new look, as the team in that country embarks on a renovation exercise.

Specific reconstruction activities at the office include the expansion of the meeting room, the walkway, and the fortification of security.

Braima James, Manager, IITA/USAID project (UPoCA) says the office now has four rooms as offices, a meeting room that can accommodate a few participants during seminars, and two toilets. The office has also been equipped with furniture, providing the right atmosphere and relaxed ambience for business.

Located on Tower Hill in Freetown, the office serves as the base for IITA's activities in that country.

James says IITA activities in Sierra Leone include the UPoCA project and the IITA-CFC project which are promoting cassava as a crop for poverty alleviation and economic growth.

According to him, the IITA team in Sierra Leone has stepped up awareness on the Institute's activities especially with regards to



R-L: James discussing with Lateef Sanni at the renovated walkway while Onadipe Peju (far left) looks on

improving crop productivity and livelihoods among the poor farmers.

To this end, the Institute is in talks with several stakeholders including the Sierra

Leonean government, international agencies and the private sector with a view to creating partnerships that will join forces in improving livelihoods and generating wealth.

## Library Services update

### IITA Google books:

Hits statistics (20–26 December, 2009):

740 book visits

7083 pages viewed

Top 5 IITA publications viewed:

1. Challenges and opportunities for enhancing sustainable cowpea production edited by C.A. Fatokun et al.
2. Maize revolution in West and Central Africa edited by B Badu-Apraku et al.
3. Evaluating the marketing opportunities for shea nut and shea nut processed products in Uganda by R.S.B. Ferris et al.
4. Postharvest technology and commodity marketing: proceedings ... edited by R.S.B. Ferris.
5. Advances in cowpea research by B.B. Singh et al.

For more information please contact [e.ezomo@cgiar.org](mailto:e.ezomo@cgiar.org).



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*May the coming year bring all of us health, wealth and happiness.*

*Here's wishing everyone...*

**A HAPPY & PROSPEROUS 2010!**

# Varieties and hybrids to meet farmers' needs released in Nigeria

Improved maize varieties that will help boost the fortunes of maize production in West and Central Africa have been released.

The varieties were developed by IITA in partnership with the Institute for Agricultural Research (IAR) of the Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria and the Institute of Agricultural Research and Training (IAR&T).

They were released on 3 December 2009 by the Nigerian National Variety Release Committee after a 3-day meeting.

The varieties released include 13 open-pollinated varieties of extra-early-, early-, intermediate-, and late-maturity with resistance to *Striga hermonthica* and stem borers. The varieties are also tolerant of drought and have good adaptation to suboptimal soil nitrogen. Also four hybrids with drought tolerance were also released.

The committee also released two *Striga* resistant and four white and yellow productive hybrids identified from the IITA regional trials by Premier Seeds Nigeria



Menkir on a maize research field

Limited for production and marketing.

The release of these stress tolerant varieties and hybrids will promote the rate of adoption of improved maize cultivars by farmers in Nigeria, which will contribute to productivity increases in maize and also improve food security, says Abebe Menkir, IITA Maize Breeder.

It will be recalled that the maize breeding program at IITA develops open-pollinated maize varieties and hybrids with high yielding potential and resistance to the major diseases prevailing in the humid

forest, moist savannas, and mid altitudes of West and Central Africa.

Every year, the Institute distributes improved open-pollinated varieties and hybrids to the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) and the private sector in and outside of West and Central Africa through regional trials. These trials have been used as vehicles for selecting promising varieties and hybrids adapted to specific conditions in the different countries for extensive testing and release.



A positive outlook for maize production with the release of improved maize varieties

## Frances Onyango, IITA Regional Administrator, passes on



Frances Onyango, IITA Regional Administrator for East and Southern Africa based in Tanzania, has passed away. Onyango had a heart attack while traveling by road from her home town in

Uganda to Dar es Salaam on Tuesday, 29 December 2009. She was rushed to a nearby hospital but could not survive the attack.

Born on 23 December 1966, Onyango joined IITA Uganda as an Administrative Officer in 1993 and later became the Station Administrator for Uganda in 2003. She was moved to IITA Tanzania as the Regional Administrator for East and Southern Africa region in 2007.

She will be buried in her home town, Mbale, in Uganda.

While commiserating with the family of the deceased, Lakshmi Menon, Deputy Director-General (Support), said she would be remembered for her commitment, and loving and caring disposition.

The DDG (Support) also prayed that the family would have the fortitude to bear the loss.

### 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.

