

## “We would emerge stronger from CGIAR reforms” - DG Hartmann



“Despite of the looming clouds of uncertainty brought about by the reforms happening within the CGIAR, these trying times actually present excellent opportunities for IITA. The future looks very positive; however, we all must strive harder together to come out stronger and leaner by better managing our resources.”

This was the statement made by Director General Hartmann to staff at the opening of the institute’s annual R4D Week on Monday, 22 November, in IITA-Ibadan.

He called on staff to work smarter and be more prudent in the use of financial and material resources. This is against the backdrop of the global economic crisis and the CGIAR reforms which are dramatically changing the way centers are being funded.

“IITA has been in this situation before, and we survived. We would come out of this as well. We would be a little bit scathed, but we would all be the better for it,” he emphasized.

As Hartmann expressed optimism at the future of the institute in the face of these circumstances, he also emphasized the need for discipline in managing available resources and inventories and in requisitioning new items.

According to him, one big area to extract savings is by having greater discipline in purchases.

“Please think one, two, or three times before you order anything,” he appealed to staff.

He invited scientists to make a commitment to preserve unrestricted funds in the next six months. The proposal elicited a positive response from the attendees, signifying endorsement of the DG’s appeal.

Earlier, Hartmann hinted on the new IITA strategy which would take effect starting January 2011. The 10-year strategy is a product of over three years of work by the Board of Trustees that highlights how the institute will operate in the next 10 years.

Though the goals of the strategies are



(Left) Hartmann addressing staff during the opening of R4D Week 2010. (Above) The DG fielding questions from the attendees. He emphasized the need to be more prudent in the acquisition and use of resources especially during these trying times.

fixed, Hartmann said the implementation of the strategy would be flexible.

The DG also used the occasion to introduce Dr Trine Hvoslef-Eide of the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, who joined the IITA board recently.

He also acknowledged the presence of Jennie Quinn from Irish Aid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ireland.

R4D Week is a yearly gathering of IITA scientists to review achievements and accomplishments of the past year and to develop workplans for the coming year. The activity is also a chance for staff to renew personal ties who otherwise work scattered across Africa.

For more details about this article and updates about R4D Week 2010 and other related news, please visit IITA’s News Blogsite at <http://iitanews.blogspot.com/>.

# IAPC-AU Director visits IITA-Benin, lauds ongoing work

The Director of the Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPC) of the African Union, Dr Jean Gérard Mezui M'ella, visited the IITA station in the Republic of Benin on 12-14 November as part of the IAPC's objective of assessing the phytosanitary status of cassava in Africa. The council is the pan-African body in charge of plant protection matters across the continent.

The Benin Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fishing (MAEP), through its Department of Agriculture (DAGRI) represented by Chabi-Gani Sare, Maurice Noudoufinin, Ibouaraïma Tiamiyou and Grégoire Adanve, called for a meeting to which all institutions, including IITA-Benin, involved in cassava production and protection were invited. IITA was represented by Désiré Gnanvossou and Honoré Dossounou on behalf of Rachid Hanna, leader of the Cassava IPM project, and Muaka Toko standing-in for Dr Manuele Tamo, IITA Country Representative to Benin.

Subsequently, Dr Mezui M'ella and the DAGRI team visited IITA-Benin's biocontrol facilities where parasitoids and predators of cassava insect and mite pests are being maintained. They also saw the on-station multiplication plots of IITA-improved cassava varieties, which were established in collaboration with the National Institute of Agriculture Research (INRAB) for distribution in Benin under the framework of the IFAD-supported project on cassava IPM.

At the end of the tour, the IAPC Director cited INRAB and IITA-Benin for the quality of on-going research on cassava to ensure food security in Africa. He also expressed his good impression of what he particularly saw at IITA-Benin. This prompted him to promise that upon his return at IAPC's Headquarter in Yaoundé that he would get in touch with Rachid Hanna, IITA's Country Representative in Cameroon, to further explore other possible areas of collaboration between IAPC and the institute such as research on fruit flies.



(Top) Dr Mezui M'ella, IAPC Director, looking at a diseased cassava leaf through a microscope at IITA-Benin laboratory. (Bottom) Discussing in the field with local staff.

## Its time for Africa: IITA to host 2013 global plant virus confab

IITA will host the 12th International Plant Virus Epidemiology (IPVE) symposium in 2013 in Arusha, Tanzania, said Lava Kumar, IITA Virologist, the organizer and Executive Committee member in the IPVE Committee of the International Society of Plant Pathology (ISPP). IPVE Committee has conducted 11 international symposia in different parts of the world.

The 12th symposium, first ever in Africa, focuses on 'emergence, epidemiology and control of native and new encounter virus diseases' to reflect on prevailing situation of virus diseases in the Africa and around the world (banana bunchy top, cassava mosaic, cassava brown streak, maize streak, cocoa swollen shoot, rice yellow mottle and many more) that are not only ravaging the crop production, but also affecting the international exchange of germplasm and commerce.

The symposium will provide a forum for exchange of latest knowledge and technologies to control virus diseases and pave way for an African and global strategy to combat emerging and reemerging plant virus diseases.

## IITA welcomes Ibukun Shodeinde, new Human Resources Assistant



The IITA Human Resources Unit welcomes to its fold Mr Ibukun Shodeinde as its new HR Assistant.

Shodeinde joins IITA from ENL Consortium Ltd (Apapa Port Terminal operator) in Lagos where he worked as a Human Resources Supervisor. He attended Obafemi Awolowo University where he obtained a BA in English. He is also currently working towards attaining his MBA. Shodeinde is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management.

Shodeinde will be dealing primarily with IRS benefits processing and leave applications and updates. He would also be providing support to the HR Manager.

His office would be at the HR Unit in Building 500, IITA-Ibadan. He could be contacted via his email address at [Ishodeinde@cgiar.org](mailto:Ishodeinde@cgiar.org) and his telephone extension at 2378.

## 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.