

IITA DG meets with Tanzanian PM, urges prioritization of cassava commercialization

Hartmann, IITA Director General, urged Tanzania to follow Nigeria's example and prioritize the commercialization of cassava as a way to attain food security, ignite economic growth, and create employment.

The DG aired this during a courtesy call to the country's Prime Minister, Honorable Mizengo Kayanza Peter Pinda (MP), in the latter's office in Dodoma.

The PM warmly welcomed the idea, adding that aside from promoting the crop for food security, especially in the drought-prone regions of the country, cassava also has great potential as a source of raw material for a wide range of value-added home and industrial uses.

He also said that his government had noted the success of cassava in Nigeria and was willing to learn the measures Tanzania needs to fully develop its cassava sector.

Hartmann indicated to the premier that for cassava to play its role in reducing poverty and unemployment, good leadership is vital in combination with the commitment of the country's highest authority, use of existing relevant science-based technologies from research institutions such as IITA, and the involvement of the private sector.

Before the meeting with the PM, Hartmann attended a session of the country's parliament. He was accompanied by Victor Manyong, R4D Director, Edward Kanju, cassava breeder, Catherine Njuguna, communications officer, and Bernadette Majebele, IITA consultant. The Speaker of the House acknowledged the presence of the team and warmly welcomed them.



IITA DG Hartmann in a lively discussion with Tanzanian Prime Minister Honorable Mizengo Kayanza Peter Pinda (MP) in the PM's office in Dodoma.

Hartmann also met with various stakeholders in a forum organized by the Permanent Secretary in the PM's office.

Present were top brass of various ministries such as Agriculture and Cooperative, Livestock Development, and Trade and Commerce.

Also at the forum were representatives of the private sector such as the Tanzania Investment Center, Confederation of Tanzania Industries, Tanzania Private Sector Foundation, and the Tanzania National Business Council, the Bank of Tanzania, and a number of NGOs.

All were receptive to the idea presented by Hartmann. They also look forward to IITA's guidance to realize the plan.

In the final leg of his two-week sortie in the country, Hartmann also met with editors and journalists of leading print and electronic media houses at a breakfast meeting organized by IITA-Tanzania.

During the meet, he urged them to help educate the public on the importance of agriculture in the country's progress.

He cited the role that cassava played in Nigeria as a result of a sweeping presidential initiative in 2002, which benefitted some eight million farmers, with the resulting cassava high-value products reaching an estimated 100 million consumers.



A clipping from a Tanzanian major daily showing Hartmann addressing journalists during the meet-the-press breakfast in Dar es Salaam.

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.

Biotech, GHU heads named



Dr Melaku Gedil, Head, Biotechnology

Effective 17 May 2010, Dr Melaku Gedil has been named the Head of Biotechnology, a function he will carry out concurrently as Molecular

Geneticist of the institute.

As Head of Biotechnology, Melaku will oversee and take the lead in biotechnology research across IITA. He will also manage the operations and supervise the staff of the Ibadan-based Biotechnology Laboratory, ensuring the effective delivery of related services and conduct of research.



Dr Lava Kumar, Head, Germplasm Health Unit

Lava Kumar has been appointed as the Head of IITA's Germplasm Health Unit (GHU). He would manage the GHU facility and its staff located at IITA-Ibadan,

ensuring that the international reputation of the GHU is maintained and enhanced. He will also represent IITA within the Inter-African Phytosanitary Council and other Regional Plant Protection Organizations.

Kumar will be handling the new role of GHU Head simultaneously with his position as IITA Virologist.

IITA-Uganda gets HIV/AIDS peer educators

Continuing with its spirited effort in the fight against HIV/AIDS, 15 Nationally Recruited Staff (NRS) from IITA-Uganda took part in a three-day training that saw them officially become peer educators charged with raising awareness and educating their peers at work and in the community about the disease.

The training, which took place in June, was conducted by the institute in collaboration with the Federation of Uganda Employers

(FUE), the Health Initiatives for the Private Sector (HIPS).

The trainees were taught how to effectively conduct peer education and counseling sessions, improve their communication skills and knowledge especially on HIV transmission and prevention, family planning, malaria control and tuberculosis management, and playing their role as peer educators, trainers and change agents in the fight against HIV transmission.

The training was opened by Suzan Katebalirwe, IITA-Uganda Station Administrator, who thanked the participants for taking time off their busy schedules to



The HIV/AIDS peer educators' training participants during one of the workshop's group exercises.

attend the training and urged them to actively participate in all the activities as well share experiences and information.

The trainees were drawn from the three IITA locations: Kampala (3), Kawanda (4), and Namulonge (8).

Each received a peer educator's hand book with detailed notes on topics discussed, a Peer Educator's Diary to record information they would share with their peers at work and in the community, and a Certificate of Completion. They were then officially declared peer educators and urged to fully utilize the knowledge and skills gained to contribute to the struggle against HIV/AIDS.

New IITA Web site goes live!



The IITA Communication Office (CO) announces that the "new" IITA Web site (www.iita.org) is now up and running. The site sports a refreshing new look and feel.

The new site went live after about four months in the beta, or testing, phase. Its content and structure was extensively revised based largely on a useability survey and feedback the CO obtained from staff and other users during this evaluation period.

The previous version of the IITA Web site could still be accessed via the "old IITA.org site" link located on the new site's home page.

Users are encouraged to view and give feedback about the new site to the CO. Comments and suggestions could be sent to Ms Katherine Lopez, Head of the CO, at k.lopez@cgiar.org.

The new site is based on the open-source platform Liferay, and is part of an institute-wide initiative aimed at more effectively delivering information and resources about IITA and our work through digital and Web-based media.

Announcement

Revised Library extension hours

The IITA Library Services announces that effective 2 August 2010, the Library's evening operating extension of one hour will now only be on TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS.

The Library will maintain the regular opening hours of 7.30am to 4.30pm daily for all categories of users.

This initiative aims to enhance our efficiency and enable us to serve staff better.

For comments and suggestions about this new schedule and other library services, please contact Ms Elsie Ezomo, Library Services Manager, at e.ezomo@cgiar.org.