



# TALKING DRUMS

Issue 61 July 2017

## IITA@50 Special Sportsfest Edition



Dr Nteranya Sanginga and his wife commissioning Sanginga Road

This year's Sportsfest is unique as it coincides with IITA's 50th anniversary celebrations. The 2017 edition of Sportsfest commenced on 20 April with a bang as all teams danced from the conference center to the field arena. This year, all units were redistributed into teams of another color, namely:

**Red Team:** RFU, Hospitality and Travels, Supply Chain, PDAU, General Directorate, and Communication Unit – coordinated by Olubakin Yinka and Femi Adewale.

**Green Team:** FMS, GIS, Socioeconomics, BioScience, CTA, ATASP-1, ACAI, DIMU, and M&E – coordinated by Chris Ogunsiyi and Ebere Sunday.

**White Team:** Virology & GHU,

Security, Soil Microbiology, ILRI, Cassava Weeds, HRS, IYA, AfricaRising, Finance Directorate – coordinated by Oriade Tony and Segun Ajao.

**Blue Team:** Pathology and Aflasafe, Telecoms, IITA School, Computer & MIS, HarvestPlus, Internal Audit, CVC, Cowpea, Soybean, Banana & Plantain, Agronomy - coordinated by Eduviere Greg and Odukoya Tolu.

**Yellow Team:** GRC, Yam Breeding, CDO, SARD-SC, YIIFSWA, Go-Seeds, Insect Rearing, ASLAD, Africa Rice, Nematology – coordinated by Kofoworola Olatunbosun and Debo Agboola.

**Orange Team:** Nodumax, Cassava Breeding, CULAB, ICIPE, CRS,

RESAKKS, Systems & Site Integration, Biometrics, STMA, Maize, HQCF – coordinated by Toba Ojo and Ikpan Smith.

The following games have been finalized: Badminton, Table Tennis, Draughts, Chess, Scrabble, Monopoly, Ayo Olopan, Swimming, Dance, Golf, Lawn Tennis, 100-m race, Mini-distance race, and Volley Ball. The Football matches are at the semifinal stage. Watch out for the names of the winners and the medal table chart as well as the winning team as the Sportsfest gradually ends. IITA ...oyeh!



Team display at the sportsfest.



Green Football Team.



Participants of the dancing competition.

## Abuja Station Excited over DDG-CS visit



Abuja Station staff in group photograph with Ms.Hilde Koper-Limbourg in the middle

While on an official assignment in Abuja, Hilde Koper-Limbourg, Deputy Director General for Corporate Services (DDG-CS) visited the IITA station and said management was assiduously working to provide the best infrastructural and welfare packages for staff.

The visit, the first since Koper-Limbourg assumed office as DDG-CS, provided an opportunity for her to interact with all staff, including scientists on the general situation of their work within and

outside the station. She also had face-to-face interactions with individual members of staff, patiently listening to their needs.

The Head of station, Gbassey Tarawali, was full of praises for the visiting DDG-CS, noting that she had provided invaluable support to the station including approving the hiring of an administrator, farm manager, facilities maintenance officer, and cashier for the growing station.

Koper-Limbourg also had a meeting with the ATASP-1 team from the outreach and national offices to fast-track the clearance of the project's seventeen vehicles at the Lagos Port.

Before departing for Ibadan, Koper-Limbourg posed for a group photograph with members of staff and was conducted on a tour round the station where she saw all the buildings, laboratories, IHouse, fields, pond, and offices.

## HR holds 2017 Town Hall in Abuja Station

IITA's Human Resource Services has carried the 2017 edition of her annual Town hall meeting at the Abuja station. The one-day exercise brought together all the staff in the station to interact and find solutions to some of the HR needs of the station and personnel.

Speaking at the commencement of the interaction, The HR team was led by Wole Oladokun and supported by Wole Amusa, explained that the routine exercise was aimed at "improving IITA's HR processes and giving staff the opportunity to participate in the decisions that affect them."

The HR team assured the Abuja staff that IITA is a staff-friendly institute that is sensitive to staff concerns. Thereafter, the visiting team gave an update of the previous Town hall meeting at the station and the status of the issues that were raised in the 2016 edition. It was gratifying to note that over seventy percent of them have been addressed. Oladokun therefore, assured that the 2017 concerns will also be addressed before the 2018 edition with the swiftness it deserves.

The issues that were covered during the meeting include the improved security situation, leave, workplace

risks, web portal processes, punctuality to work, unprofessional attitudes, and IITA50 celebrations. The meeting also gave the HR team an opportunity to announce IITA's new Child Policy which will take effect soon.

The Head of Abuja station, Dr. Gbassey Tarawali thanked them for the speed with which they addressed the concerns of staff and for being "quite sensitive" to the welfare of staff including the unusual increment in staff take-home pay in 2017, as approved by the DG, Dr Nteranya Sanginga.



HR holds 2017 Town Hall in Abuja Station

# World Hepatitis Day 2017

Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver cells from various factors. Hepatitis affects millions of people worldwide, causing acute and chronic liver disease and killing close to 1.5 million people every year, mostly from hepatitis B and C.

The five main types of hepatitis are caused by Hepatitis A, B, C, D, & E viruses. Hepatitis can also be due to injury from various toxic chemicals. Globally, an estimated 257 million people were living with hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, and 71 million people with hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection in 2015. Hepatitis A is caused by consuming contaminated food or water. Hepatitis B is a sexually transmitted disease. Hepatitis C is commonly spread via direct contact with the blood of a person who has the disease. A person can only become infected with hepatitis D if they are already infected with hepatitis B. This tends to make that disease more severe. It is spread from mother to child and through sex. A person can become infected with the hepatitis E virus (HEV) by drinking contaminated water and it is mainly spread in Asia, Mexico, India, and Africa. Hepatitis that cannot be attributed to one of the viral forms of the disease is called hepatitis X. Hepatitis G is another type of hepatitis caused by a specific virus (HGV).

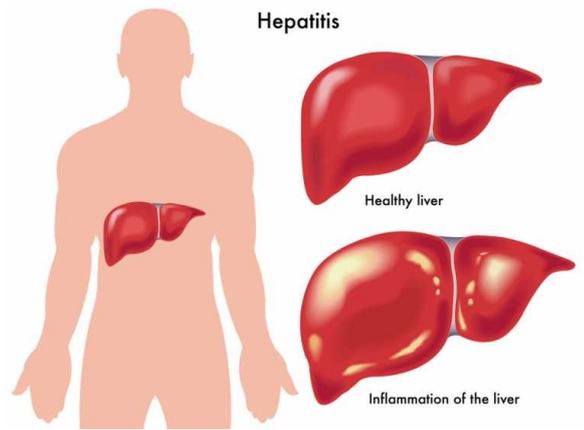
Symptoms of hepatitis: The initial symptoms are like mild flu and may include: diarrhea, fatigue, loss of appetite, mild fever, muscle or joint aches, nausea, slight abdominal pain, vomiting, and weight loss. As the patient gets worse, other symptoms may follow. Toxic/drug induced hepatitis may also result in circulation problems, dark urine, headache, dizziness, drowsiness, hives, itchy skin, light colored feces (the feces may contain pus), yellow skin, and yellow coloration of eyes and the tongue

(jaundice). An enlarged spleen may result from alcoholic hepatitis.

Diagnosis: Involves obtaining a patient's medical history on drug and medication use, alcohol consumption, family history, exposure to toxins, past surgeries, past travels, and liver palpation to examine if there are signs of liver swelling or tenderness. Appropriate laboratory tests will confirm incidence and type.

Treatment: There is no specific treatment for hepatitis A. Patients are advised to abstain from alcohol and drugs during recovery. The vast majority of patients with hepatitis A will recover spontaneously. A patient with hepatitis B needs to rest and requires a diet high in protein and carbohydrates; this is to repair damaged liver cells and protect the liver. There are prescription drugs and antiviral agents that can benefit those with Hepatitis B and C if diagnosed on time. So far, there is no effective treatment for either hepatitis D or E. Liver cell damage related to use of harmful and toxic substances may be arrested if the harmful substance's use is stopped.

World Hepatitis Day and Hepatitis prevention: World Hepatitis Day is 28 July in honor of the birthday of Nobel Laureate Professor Baruch Samuel Blumberg, discoverer of the hepatitis B virus and developer of the first hepatitis B vaccine. 2017 Hepatitis day's theme is "Eliminate Hepatitis". Key messages for this year's theme include: Avoidance of unsafe blood, unsafe injections, and sharing drug-injection/equipment; and demands for safe injections. Two million people annually contract hepatitis from unsafe injections. Using sterile, single-use syringes can prevent this. Hepatitis can also be prevented by vaccinating the exposed population or population at risk, especially children. A safe and effective



vaccine can protect from hepatitis B infection for life. Globally, only 8% of people with hepatitis B are treated. Over 95% of people with hepatitis C can be completely cured within 3–6 months. Individuals are encouraged to get tested and seek prompt medical advice if infected to prevent further complications. Those infected should not share toothbrushes, razors, and manicure equipment with those who are not. Practicing safe sex, avoiding drugs/alcohol abuse, good food hygiene, and basic practices such as hand washing can drastically reduce high mortality and susceptibility to hepatitis.

## Quotable quote

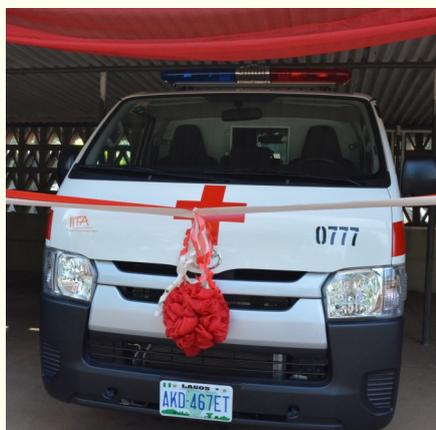
*I would like to see IITA as the Vatican or Mecca for transforming agriculture in Africa. Our vision is to be a preferred valued partner on the continent with 90% of our funding coming from Africa.*  
- Nteranya Sanginga Director General

## IITA Management launches a brand-new ambulance

The old ambulance which had become obsolete and less effective for necessary medical care has been replaced by the IITA Management. IITA Staff, dependents, Head, Human Resources, the Employee Services Manager, and the entire medical team led by the Head, Medical Services, joined the IITA management team represented by the DDG-Cooperate Services, Hilde Koper on Wednesday, 12 July for the commissioning of a new ambulance at the medical unit.

This gesture goes a long way to further buttress the commitment of IITA Management to the well-being of staff and their families.

At the event, a member of staff who had been a beneficiary and colleague to a beneficiary of the ambulance service at a crucial moment in their lives commented in the affirmative on their experiences in the usage and availability



of the ambulance while appreciating IITA Management for providing such a necessary tool to support the medical team in effectively carrying out their duties.

The DDG-Cooperate Services, Hilde Koper while commissioning the ambulance alongside HHR, Lilian Mendoza gave words of gratitude to the Director of Finance, Shalewa Sholola for making the purchase of the ambulance possible even though it had not been budgeted for. She said, she hoped the ambulance will make it easier for the medical team to efficiently perform their duty towards staff and their dependents.

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