

Assistant Director of Public Service lauds IITA's efforts to build capacity of young researchers in Tanzania



Msafiri Marwa, Assistant Director and IITA staff in a group photograph.

An Assistant Director at the President's Office, Public Service Management and Good Governance (PO-PSMGG), has praised IITA's effort to support the development of the agriculture sector in Tanzania, and its efforts to build the capacity of young Tanzanian researchers.

Msafiri Marwa, Assistant Director and Head of International Cooperation, PO-PSMGG, said this after he toured IITA's eastern Africa hub offices in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, towards the end of January. He was accompanied by two senior officials from his department, Juliana Masawe, Senior

Human Resource Officer, and Upendo Kavishe, Senior Administrative Officer.

The aim of the visit was to get to know and better understand IITA's activities in the country and its contribution to its development agenda and to discuss how to better support the institute, which was one of its clients. The ministry oversees the processing of work permits for foreigners in the country.

"It is our mission at the PO-PSMGG office to improve our relationship with our clients and create a good working atmosphere. The purpose of our visit is to understand your activities in the country and the challenges you face in processing work permits for your international staff and get suggestions on the best way to address these challenges," said Safari.

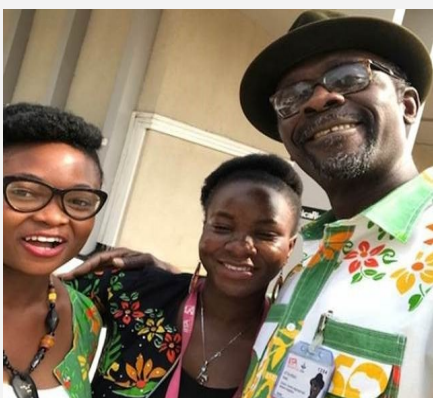
The team was received by Victor Manyong, Director of IITA-Eastern Africa hub; Eveline Odiambo, IITA Head of Finance and Administration; and other senior IITA staff at the hub and of hosted organizations—the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and the International Potato Center (CIP).

The team was briefed on IITA's research activities in the country and they also toured the various facilities including the Food, Molecular, Soil, and Pathology laboratories.



IITA scientists take guest on a tour around the lab.

IITA50 ankara post-celebration



The second 50-year cycle of IITA kicked off in January 2018. Despite officially ending the IITA50 celebration, Kwesi Atta-Krah, Director, Site Integration and Alignment, who was the chair of the IITA50 organizing committee, encourages all staff to continue wearing the IITA50 ankara to work this year.

Starting with this issue, Talking Drums would be featuring staff wearing the IITA50 ankara. If you have a nice selfie or groupie (group selfie), send the photo with a caption to h.adeniji@cgiar.org. We will select which photos go into Talking Drums. Thanks to Dr Atta-Krah for this story idea and for sending the first photo.

Left: A selfie taken by Kwesi Atta-Krah (right), Director, Site Integration and Alignment, who bumped into two lovely IITA ladies wearing the different colors of the ankara.

Children of employees in Cameroon receive scholarship award from IITA Women's Group



Scholarship award recipients Ntouda Ayo Corentin and Moune Jean Arsene flanked by parents, IITA Women's Group members, and IITA staff.

Children of two IITA Cameroon staff were recently awarded scholarships worth US\$400. The awards given to 16-year-old Ntouda Ayo Corentin and 12-year-old Moune Jean Arsene are part of an annual scholarship program organized by the IITA Women's Group at headquarters. The award ceremony took place on 17 January at the IITA conference hall in Yaounde and was attended by the students and their parents as well as several IITA-Cameroon staff.

During the ceremony, Fotso Apollin, acting OiC of IITA Cameroon, commended the IITA Women's Group for their significant contribution to children's education. He congratulated the students for their brilliant performance and challenged them to make good use of the scholarship. He also encouraged all eligible staff with qualified children to

apply for the next annual award exercise to increase the number of IITA-Cameroon recipients. He also called on the unit heads to assist the eligible staff to fill in their application.

In an interview, this is what the students had to say:

Ntouda Ayo Corentin (JSS) "J'ai reçu cet argent grâce à mon travail acharné et à ma détermination d'avoir cette bourse. Je suis très content parce que ça va m'aider dans mon école. J'avais demandé à mon père de m'acheter un ordinateur pour que je puisse faire mes devoirs à la maison. Je sais que mes parents vont utiliser cet argent pour faire tellement de choses pour moi. Je tiens à remercier les organisateurs de ce programme qui sont à l'IITA".

"I received this scholarship, thanks to my hard work and my determination. I

am very happy because it will help me in my school. I had asked my father to buy me a computer so that I could do my homework. I know my parents will use this money to do so much for me. I want to thank the organizers of this program who are at IITA."

Moune Jean Arsene (SSS) "I got this scholarship because I am good in school. I wish to say thank you to IITA and the main organizers of this scholarship program. They are the ones who employed my father. I will also like to work with IITA after my studies. IITA is an agricultural institution and I am a science student studying biology, chemistry, physics, and all the science subjects. I pray that the Lord bless the Women's Group of IITA so that they can organize another scholarship program again next year."

IITA-Abuja Station staff undergo training on security and safety

The staff of IITA-Abuja Station have been trained on diverse aspects of safety and security measures that will enable them to keep themselves, their work environment, and the Institute's assets safe.

The training, which was organized by the IITA Security Unit, was to raise awareness about safety of staff and assets. IITA's security superintendent, James Adedayo, who was the instructor, noted that "95% of accidents that occur are a result of human error," and advised that staff should apply caution at all times. Adedayo also mentioned that the training was practical due to the various safety threats staff face at work, at home, and even while driving.

During the two-day training with the theme "Security and Safety Awareness", participants were taught how to use a fire extinguisher, exposed to basic security threats, and immediate measures to forestall



Gbassey Tarawali demonstrates the use of a fire extinguisher.

attacks and threats. Adedayo informed participants that in a medical emergency, there are four major links in the chain of survival—Early access, Early CPR (Cardiopulmonary resuscitation), Early Defibrillation, and Early ALS (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) before calling for medical attention. The training was well-attended by staff.

"It is important for IITA staff to be aware of certain safety and security

tips to secure life and assets. I am quite impressed; the sessions are interesting, and the program well organized," the Head of Station, Dr Gbassey Tarawali, who was one of the participants, said after the training.

One of the elated staff, Uche Nwanze, thanked the Security Unit for organizing the training and encouraged the management to make the training a routine to update safety knowledge.

Commanding Officer, Diplomatic Protection Squadron, pays courtesy visit to IITA Lagos



SP Udu Moses Ogechi, his team, and IITA's Andrew Agbeso at IGH.

On 31 January, IITA hosted SP Udu Moses Ogechi, Commanding Officer, Diplomatic Protection Squadron Force Headquarters, Lagos, who paid a courtesy visit to IGH. Issues discussed included

strengthening relationships on Police security and 24/7 Police coverage of IITA offices in Lagos.

He was very impressed with the clean environment and the security structure in place after a tour of the facility. He was informed of the need for his men to be well equipped and always on the alert. He promised to address areas of concern and advised that we reach out to him to discuss issues relating to policing IITA in Lagos.

Andrew Agbeso thanked SP Ogechi on behalf of IITA Management for the visit and promised to continue to build on the standing relationship.

Spotlight: Mr Evans Ng'andu

Mr Evans Ng'andu is the first of six children. He has four younger brothers and a sister. His parents are members of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Being brought up in a Christian home has helped him to excel in his core duty. His father is a retired civil servant and lives with his mother at the farm in Kabwe—the capital of Zambia Central Province.

How long you have been with IITA? Briefly share with us your work experience and accomplishments.

I have always wanted to work for a humanitarian organization that helps people. IITA's first mission was to "nourish Africa" and currently we are "transforming African agriculture"; who wouldn't want to be part of such amazing visions?

I was motivated to apply for the role of Driver because I love to travel and I have a strong passion for field work. I also knew that this role would make me gain so much field work experience and help me contribute positively to the achievement of the goals of the organization.

I joined IITA in 2012 as a driver and field assistant, a position I have loved, cherished, and held for the past 5 years. I have gained a lot of experience with regard to field work and the core values of the organization. I am grateful to the organization and administration for



the opportunity to serve in this position.

My greatest challenge has been to make time for my son, who does not understand why his dad must be away from home during work trips. As he grows he is slowly understanding.

I am passionate about serving. I love to serve and go the extra mile in my work. I am also passionate about learning new things. I try to acquire more skills in everything I do. For example, if I have an opportunity to meet or host guests, I always ensure I learn as much as I can from them so that by the time they leave, I will have gained some new knowledge. For example, I had the privilege to work with the Director General of IITA, Dr Nteranya Sanginga. I have

learnt a lot from his humility and passion for his job and this has encouraged me to contribute and work harder in achieving my tasks.

I value integrity, honesty, loyalty, and hard work.

Share with us something (favorite pastime) only your close family/friends know about you that we may never know.

I am a serious Manchester United fan. I love attending church and I sing at church.

Tell us your favorite slogan!

The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their food in the summer (a sign of hard work).

Quotable quote

"Every experience in your life is being orchestrated to teach you something you need to know to move forward."

– Brian Tracy

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