

## IITA scientist to receive special award for work on nematology



Danny Coyne (rightmost) with IITA colleagues (L-R) Stefan Hauser, IITA DG Sanginga, and Haruki Ishikawa.

Leading nematologist and [IITA](#) Soil Health Scientist [Danny Coyne](#) has been selected to receive the [Organization of Nematologists of Tropical America](#) (ONTA) Special Award. His selection was approved by the current ONTA Executive Committee along with the 6-member Honors and Awards Committee comprising previous ONTA presidents.

A formal notification letter signed by the ONTA Honors and Awards Committee Chair, Dr Forest Robinson, stated: "Both committees are quite impressed with your achievements!"

Dr Robinson went on to appreciate Coyne's work over the years stating: "Congratulations, and many thanks for your contributions to the science of nematology."

Coyne has worked in tropical agriculture since 1989, specializing in nematology and doing a lot of extension and training work, whether at the farmer, technician, or academic level. He will be honored as part of proceedings at the [50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of ONTA](#) at Arequipa, Peru, on 19 to 23 August.

ONTA is a non-profit organization

founded in 1967 and comprises over 300 members worldwide who have an interest in the study of plant-parasitic, free-living, and insect-parasitic nematodes. This award is presented only intermittently to individuals who have worked in nematology under conditions of extreme hardship and have provided extraordinary services to ONTA. The organization's guidelines also state that the award can also be presented to other persons for outstanding accomplishments as deemed appropriate from time to time by the Committee.

# CARE Fellowship awardees equipped with relevant research skills to enhance agribusiness in Africa

On 2–6 June, [IITA](#) organized a workshop for the 20 successful fellows that qualified for the research grant for “Enhancing Capacity to Apply Research Evidence (CARE) in policy for youth engagement in agribusiness and rural economic activities in Africa,” funded by the [International Fund for Agricultural Development](#) (IFAD).

The workshop, attended by scholars from IFAD, identified priority countries (Benin Republic, Cameroon, DR Congo, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zambia) and provided an opportunity for supervisors and IITA scientists to review young scholars’ research proposals, and strengthen awardees’ research capabilities to deliver the expected outputs of their research projects on youth engagement in Africa based on the principles of qualitative research methods. This is expected to contribute to the development of a new paradigm for knowledge creation that will lead to the growth of effective policies and agribusiness development in Africa.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, IITA Director for the Eastern Africa Hub and Leader of the Social Science and Agribusiness Research Group, [Victor Manyong](#), stated that the training

targeted youth because they are the future drivers of Africa’s and the world’s food systems and markets. “They can only achieve this by improving their research skills and problem-solving competencies and developing abilities in research for development (R4D) to inform future action plans,” he said.

The knowledge gap in understanding factors influencing youth engagement in the rural farm and non-farm economy in Africa hinders the formulation of appropriate policies and investment plans. The main assumption is that investments targeting youth self-employment in Africa can have much greater impact by ensuring that data and information, evidence, experience, and lessons learned are used to influence policy and decision-making.

Studies and surveys have shown that most researchers in sub-Saharan Africa lack key skills needed for effective decision-making relating to youth participation in the rural sector. This exposure would enable the awardees to enhance their research skills to provide empirical evidence on factors influencing youth engagement in agribusiness and bridge the knowledge gap.

In giving an overview of the CARE scholarship and its usefulness, IITA Capacity Development Office Head, [Zoumana Bamba](#), emphasized that the training is beneficial and important to the scholars as it aims to improve the availability, exchange, dissemination, and use of research findings in the field of agribusiness to support economic growth and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. He added that this can be actualized by strengthening the capacity to generate, appraise, and disseminate evidence-based results to significantly increase the contribution of policies to economic growth and an enabling environment for rural youth.

During the plenary session, presentations were made on characteristics of good research design, sources of research problems and qualities of a good research problem, quantitative methods in economic and social research, introduction to data management, and introduction to open access. The session also incorporated the presentation of research proposals by the scholars after which discussions on ways forward were held with their supervisors.



Group photograph of the IFAD CARE training participants and their facilitators.

## New FMS building commissioned in Tanzania

IITA-Tanzania recently inaugurated a new office building for the Facilities Management Services (FMS) and archive for documents at its premises in Dar es Salaam. The event was presided over by [the IITA Eastern Africa Hub Director Victor Manyong](#) and the Deputy Director and Country Representative of IITA-Kenya [Leena Tripathi](#).

Manyong said the building will go a long way to decongest the current

administration building at the hub. “When we finalized the construction of the science building in 2013, we had plans to add a second building but at the time, we did not have enough resources. I am glad we have managed to save enough to construct this additional office in our premises,” he said.

The construction of the FMS building started in January 2018 and was completed in May 2018 at a cost

of approximately \$35,000. It has two offices, an archive, a store, a workshop, and a kitchen. The project was coordinated and managed by IITA Corporate Services under FMS.

The event was attended by IITA staff and partner institutions at the hub—the [International Potato Center \(CIP\)](#), [International Rice Research Institute \(IRRI\)](#), and [Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa \(AGRA\)](#).



*Leena Tripathi cutting the ribbon to officially commission the new FMS building in Dar es Salaam.*

### Got a story to share?

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# Forest Center continues to champion ecology awareness with IBA monitoring workshop

“Not many people are aware that [IITA](#) does not only lead in agricultural research for development but is also committed to the preservation of natural resources, habitat protection, and biodiversity conservation, which we are very proud of today,” said Professor [Shiiwua Manu](#), Director of the AP Leventis Ornithological Research Institute ([APLORI](#)) at the University of Jos, Nigeria. He made the remarks during the Important Bird Area (IBA) Monitoring Workshop organized by the [AG Leventis](#)-funded [IITA Forest Center](#), on 26–28 June.

The workshop, with the theme “Field techniques in forest bird ecology,” convened researchers, ornithologists, and resource persons from APLORI; members of the Ibadan Bird Club, School Conservation Clubs, and Nigeria Bird Atlas Project; conservation partners and rangers from the Emerald Forest Reserve and Okomu National Park; and students and lecturers from the [University of Ibadan](#) and [Ekiti State University](#), Nigeria.

The workshop created awareness and provided an opportunity for participants to gain first-hand experience in ornithological field techniques. Apart from learning how vegetation variables influence the distribution of birds, participants also acquired skills on how to map bird distribution through the [BirdLasser App](#), which is connected to the [Nigeria Bird Atlas Project](#).

There were presentations during the indoor session led by Adewale Awoyemi, IITA Forest Center Manager, who explained about the conservation initiatives of IITA such as reforestation, biodiversity monitoring, capacity building, and awareness creation. Professor Manu consolidated the practical session on bird census techniques, Dr Talatu Tende explained how to map bird distribution, whereas Dr Jacob Orimaye presented on the activities of the Nigeria Southwest Atlas Team (a subgroup of the Nigeria Bird Atlas Project).

In concluding the meeting, [Hilde Koper-Limbourg](#), IITA Deputy Director General, Corporate Services, presented certificates to all participants and wished them well as they implement the skills acquired during the workshop.

The IITA campus in Ibadan is one of the hotspots for birdwatching in Nigeria, holding over 270 bird species. The approximately 350-ha forest within the campus is reserved for conservation purposes and holds

67 bird species, including birds of conservation concern, [Ibadan Malimbe](#) (*Malimbus ibadanensis*) and [Baumann's Greenbul](#) (*Phyllastrephus baumanni*). This qualifies it as an IBA.



*Professor Shiiwua Manu, Director, APLORI, at the University of Jos, explaining to the participants the importance of field techniques in forest bird ecology, IBA workshop.*



*Some participants practicing the bird watching exercise using binoculars at the forest area of IITA.*