



IITA

Youth Agripreneurs

Agriculture is the future

BULLETIN

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IYA spin-off secures NAFDAC certification



DG IITA, Dr Sanginga during a monitoring visit to Frotchery Farms Limited

Frotchery Farms Limited is one of the foremost spin-offs of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs. The company which is into the value addition of catfish commenced operations in 2017 in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria.

The company is owned by three young graduates trained by the IITA Youth Agripreneurs- Ngozi Chituru, Hammed Oni ,and

Babatunde Ismail who concluded their incubation with IYA in 2017.

Since they started operations, the team had been seeking the approval from the Food regulatory body in Nigeria- the National Agency for Food & Drug Administration & Control(NAFDAC) to enable them to expand their market. The process which normally should take three months was

finally approved after 11 months.

Obtaining NAFDAC's certification has become one of the challenges encountered by young entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

Speaking on the certification process, the Production Manager of the company, Hammed Oni stated that the delay in obtaining the certification impeded meeting the demand of major clients, who showed interest in the product.

"Although we have been able to make a difference in sales in 2018 when compared to 2017 when we started, but we are sure we will be able to double sales with the certification. Many people like the product, they want to buy and take overseas to sell but how can we convince them that it is of good standard when we don't have a proof? This certification will serve as proof and will expand our scope," he said.

The team also stated that they would improve on their branding to meet the accepted standard.

The Frotchery Farms team appreciated IITA and other stakeholders who supported them in ensuring that they were given the approval.



Samples of products from Frotchery Farms

Examining the growth of IYA

The IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA) initiative has become one of the recognized model for engaging youth in agriculture. Not only that, it has remained one of the renowned models for assisting young people in creating decent, sustainable jobs, along the agricultural value chains.

The strategy adopted was to change the mindset of a multi-disciplinary team of unemployed graduates between the ages of 18-35 years towards adopting the much dreaded agriculture as a business.

IITA which served as the host institution and mentor for the recruited youth facilitated their trainings on various agricultural commodity value chains

and ensured that they imbibed with leadership, business, and entrepreneurial skills to change their negative perception about agriculture, and expose them to the opportunities available for them through the agribusiness incubation program.

The IITA Youth Agripreneurs model on establishment was focused on ensuring that at least 40 percent of the trained youths become self-employed owning their own agribusiness enterprises, 10 percent become employed by the Business Incubation Platform (i.e Goseed, Aflasafe, and Nodumax) of IITA, 10 percent become employed by the private and the public sector, 20

percent further their studies from the incomes generated from the operations of IYA, while 20 percent will continue to run the organization by conducting trainings, advocacy activities, resource mobilization through proposal writings, project implementations, etc

Within a space of five years, the group has expanded with replications in six countries across Africa, and the trained youths are excelling in their chosen career path in line with the set goals of IYA.



The mobilized youth for IYA with the DG in 2012.

Forty percent pursuing entrepreneurship track

The Agripreneurs who fall under this category started with the development of business plans on value chain of choice. The business plans were screened by experts from Ekimiks Nigeria Limited and approved based on perceived profitability, viability and sustainability, return on investment, and technological impacts of the agribusiness enterprises on livelihoods, food production and safety across the continent. Although some of the agripreneurs started their businesses with savings from the stipends paid to them during their incubation program, others were supported by projects that have components of assisting young people with seed capitals to establish agribusiness enterprises. Few were even fortunate to have secured

the interest of an angel investor who assisted them financially and technically in establishing their businesses.

Some of such projects that assisted the youth were the N2Africa, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; ENABLE-TAAT project, funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB), and Community Youth in Agribusiness Group (CYAG), funded by Chevron Nigeria Plc.

The N2Africa project gave about 127 young people the opportunity to independently establish agribusiness enterprises along the value chains of cowpea, soybean and groundnut in Borno State, the North-eastern part of Nigeria.

Also, the AfDB funded project,

ENABLE-TAAT through its agribusiness completion component has supported the establishment of 56 agribusiness enterprises along the value chains of cassava, maize, fish, beans, poultry, rice, and orange fleshed sweet potato in six African countries- DR Congo, Zambia, Uganda, Nigeria, Kenya, and Tanzania.

Through a public-private partnership initiative, the young people in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria were trained and also given the opportunity to start independent businesses along the value chains of plantain, cassava, and fish. The Community Youth in Agribusiness Group project, funded by Chevron Nigeria Limited gave 120 youths in Itsekiri and Ijaw communities the opportunity of becoming self-employed.

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One of the trainees of IYA, Nike Adigun (in red t-shirt) with her employees during the production phase of her product- Plantain Flour



A poultry Farm owned by Joshua Adewale, another trainee of IYA

Ten percent employed by the Business Incubation Platform of IITA

On assumption of office as the Chief Executive Officer of the Business Incubation Platform (BIP), Mr Frederick Schreurs hired nine agripreneurs who had served in different capacities while undergoing training under the IITA Youth Agripreneurs program to assist in the operations of BIP. Now serving under different portfolios in BIP, this set of young people assist in marketing, sales, client-service officers for the various sub-units- Goseed, Aflasafe and Nodumax. Others serve at different capacities as production representatives for BIP commodities like maize, cassava, vegetable, plantain and banana.



Some of the agripreneurs employed by BIP as key Account Managers.



Ifedayo Ibrinke (far right), a Project Manager for Chevron- funded project in Warri

Other Categories

A number of Agripreneurs are pursuing their Masters and Doctorate degrees in universities in the United States of America, Japan, and Germany. Some have even become research associates after completing their course work at universities.

The other set of agripreneurs who fall under the postulated 20 percent are currently running the affairs of the IYA model, which has evolved over time to become an institutionalized unit in IITA. These set of young people conduct trainings, develop proposals to secure funds for implementation of youth in agribusiness programs that will extend the opportunity of agribusiness to other unemployed young people, conduct advocacy activities and partnerships with stakeholders in the sector.

Beans can be naturally produced without using Insecticides

Bose Idowu, is one of the offshots of IITA Youth Agripreneurs. She has assured farmers and citizens that producing and, preserving beans can be done naturally without the application of insecticides.

Idowu, who is a producer of beans, yam flour, plantain flour and local rice, said that she produced clean beans without preservatives.

"Beans with weevils indicate that the beans were not preserved with any sniper or chemicals, so people should not be losing interest in buying beans with weevils, they are even the best.

"I buy at the right time when the farmers freshly harvest at the farm, after that I seal it properly in a purse bag developed by some scientists.

"The purse has thick nylon inside and the regular sacks cover outside, once one can properly seal it and store well, it can last for six months to even one year.

"My beans by God's grace are still one of the cheapest and best in market because I get them directly from the farmers immediately after harvest, they are clean and well stored," she said.

Idowu, the Chief Executive Officer of Gracevine Agribusiness Ltd., Ibadan, noted she was trained and empowered through IITA Youth Agripreneur (IYA) Programme.



Bose Idowu (2nd left) with her employees

"I joined agripreneur programme in 2012 and was trained on soya bean, maize and cowpea productions, from the token received from IITA then I saved N500, 000 and started my own business.

"Through the support of IITA and partners, the business scaled up. Since 2016, I cultivated, produced and packaged no fewer than five hectares of cowpea monthly. Now I have a factory to produce and sell cowpea.

"My products are of high quality and the prizes are affordable," she said.

Idowu, a graduate of Animal Breeding and Genetics, added that her factory could produce 120 tonnes of yam flour in a month, but was limited due to lack of market.

"From the fund that I received from IITA and donors, especially the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), I was able to buy all necessary equipment but the major challenge is that we lacked the market.

"Also, the company is still waiting for NAFDAC accreditation having applied for a long time. If they accredit us and there is market, we will meet our capacity which will surely boost food production in Nigeria and Africa at large," she said.

She, however, maintained that beans could still be stored without preservatives while urging the farmers to follow due process of producing, and preserving beans the natural way.

Culled from The Nations Newspaper

Youths in Malawi embrace soybean farming

Many youths in some of Malawi's regions will be actively engaged in soybean production in year 2019 through some of the platforms and opportunities to be provided to them by IITA station in Malawi.

IITA, through the Malawi Improved Seed System and Technologies (MISST) project is working with the Associated Centre for Agro-based Development and Entrepreneurship Support (ACADES) and other partners in Malawi. This is aimed at engaging youths in soybean seed production and marketing and stimulating entrepreneurship zeal in them. It will also address youth unemployment by creating income generating opportunities for the youths.

IITA is providing internship and training

opportunities for graduate youths to gain practical knowledge/experience to make them more employable.

Through the activity which is being conducted in two districts in Malawi, namely Lilongwe and Mchinji, youth groups will be supported to produce soybean seeds. They will be supported with inputs such as parent seed, inoculants, fertilizer, training in seed production to ensure that youths produce quality soybean seed. The project will also link them to seed quality regulatory services and seed markets.

The intervention, which had been on since 2016 has resulted to the engagement of over 90 youths in soybean seed production across the two

districts. The group in Mchinji produced 15 metric tons of soybean seed during the cropping season. The seed produced was sold to a seed company at MWK500/kg, valued at MK7,500,000(\$10,345).



Some of the youth with their produce at the local market.

The tale of a banker turned farmer

Rita is an accountant by training but has lots of passion for agriculture. She approached her parents after her studies at the university that she wanted to venture into agriculture but she was discouraged and was advised to search for white collar jobs. Rita was not ready for any limitation as she made use of the opportunity provided by IITA Youth Agripreneurs to achieve her dream. Read the excerpt below for her story.

My name is Rita. I am 28 years old and an accountant by training. I am passionate about farming and started at an early age, although my parents kept discouraging me from going into agriculture because they thought I would fare better with a white-collar job.

I had the opportunity of being trained by the IITA Youth Agripreneurs here in Uganda and decided to venture into piggery after trying my hands on a lot of things like horticulture- growing different vegetable crops.

This choice proved more profitable because with our peri urban location in Mukono, this meant that I have the Kampala and Mukono market.

My piggery farm is currently accommodating 30 pigs in number. I have 5 sows, 2 boars and 23 piglets ranging between 2-5 months.

For the past two years, I have been selling both mature pigs as well as piglets. I have now decided to take a business opportunity in pig slaughtering

and supply. I have been inspired into slaughtering these animals because I have recognized that I get more income than what I earn through selling of young piglets or as live mature animals ready for slaughter.

For instance I sell a piglet of 2 month at \$27, and a mature animal at an average of \$135.

My new model is to buy from other piggery farmers, slaughter and sell as finished product because most of the people that come to purchase pigs prefer to go with pork rather than live pigs. From this experience, I came up with a solution and constructed an abattoir and have been supplying my customers with clean and quality pork. The business was built on addressing the hygiene challenge, and the informality in the piggery supply chain in areas around Mukono.

Although I have been operating the business for some time now, but my linkage with IYA changed my orientation about business as I learnt how to prepare business plans, mobilize funds for my business and also adding a value proposition to my business.



Rita tending to some of her pigs

IYA and OFFERCentre partner to assist young people



Some of the Start-ups of IYA display their produce during an exhibition organized during their visit to OFFERCentre in Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria.

IITA Youth Agripreneurs is exploring areas of partnership with the Oluponna Fish Farming and Resource Centre (OFFERCentre) in Iwo, Osun State on youth empowerment.

To foster the partnership, the Director General of IITA, Dr Nteranya Sanginga and the team of agripreneurs visited OFFERCentre to understudy the activities carried out in the Centre, and further discuss means of synergizing the various agribusiness skills offered to young people by the two institutions.

OFFERCentre is an entrepreneurial development centre where young people are trained in agriculture, catering, hospitality, and crafts. IITA Youth Agripreneurs on one hand is a youth in agribusiness program where young unemployed graduates are exposed to agribusiness skills so they become self-employed and create jobs for others along chosen value chains.

Realizing the potential of working together as a team, Dr Sanginga stated that the two institutions would work together to assist many young people in achieving their dreams of establishing profitable agribusiness enterprises.

Giving an insight into the activities at OFFERCentre, the Rector of the Centre, FR. Macarius Olatunji said through a partnership with organizations like Total, Chevron, EKIMIKS etc, the institution has been able to train over 2,000 young people who have also established independent businesses in their areas of specialization.

While also giving an overview of the activities of IYA, Molayo Oweye, a representative of the group stated: "IYA focuses on changing the perception of young people about agriculture, exposes them to proven technologies which makes agriculture 'cool' and adopts the principle of

continuous coaching and mentoring to keep the agripreneurs on track."

Some of the trained youths from the two institutions also took turns to share their experiences, prospects, and challenges during the visit.

As a follow up to some of the discussions between the two institutions during the visit, the students from OFFERCentre also visited IITA to understudy some of the activities of IITA and IYA.

During the visit, they were trained on business plans developments and also given the opportunity to pitch their business ideas for funding opportunities.

The team from the two institutions will also develop a resource mobilization strategy to assist both institutions in reaching out to more young people.



ENABLE Youth Program trains YABIC coordinators



Dr Cargele Masso (farm right) answering questions on the ENABLE Youth Cameroon project

As Cameroon implements the ENABLE Youth program in the country, about 32 people have been trained to take up the responsibility of Coordinating the Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centers (YABIC).

The training titled: "Boosting Africa's agriculture to master the future, make it happen" was organized in partnership with the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVC-DP).

The objective of the training was to provide the coordinators with skills and tools necessary to enable them manage incubation centers and trainees.

The training which was facilitated by experts, like Mr Tosin Atewologun and Mrs. Stéphanie Mvodo, focused on: Managing a Training Center, Team Management, Group Reinforcement, Elaborating Business Plan, Value Chains, Added Value, ICT, Good Governance, and Social Responsibilities of an Enterprise, etc.

A study tour and group presentations at Institut Agricole d'Obala, a privately owned agribusiness incubation centre also exposed the coordinators to the practical aspects of managing incubation centres.

Young agripreneurs from Cameroon, Kenya, and Nigeria shared their experiences with the coordinators to give them insight into the expectations of young people who undergo incubation programs.

AfDB team evaluates ENABLE-Youth Cameroon

A team of experts from the African Development Bank (AfDB) visited Cameroon to evaluate the progress of the ENABLE Youth program in Cameroon.

The team, led by Aminata Sow, the Agricultural Projects Manager; was at the IITA station in November to discuss with the ENABLE Youth Coordination team in the country and assess the level of work done in the selection of sites for Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centres (YABIC), recruitment process of beneficiaries and the prospects of the project in year 2019.

While receiving and interacting with the AfDB team during their visit, the Coordinator of the ENABLE Youth program in Cameroon, Dr Cargele Masso, stated that the team has identified institutions that will serve as host for the proposed seven YABICs with an assessment of six additional ones to accommodate the interns.

He added that the ENABLE Youth team in Cameroon had also shortlisted 1,000 candidates out of 1,650 applications received from interested candidates for

the program. He stressed that a total of 512 young people with at least 40 percent women would be recruited in the first phase of the program.

To facilitate the smooth running of the YABICs, the team recruited Business Development, Value Addition and Marketing Officers.

To achieve the set objectives of the program, the AfDB team advised the program coordination team to partner with necessary stakeholders in the agricultural sector in the country to ensure that they assist in creating an enabling environment for the interns and their businesses to thrive.

The ENABLE Youth Cameroon program is aimed at creating wealth and decent jobs for unemployed university graduates through entrepreneurship training along the agricultural value chains. The program aims at training 1,536 agripreneurs, with the creation of at least 600 youth-led businesses, and 6,000 jobs for young people in Cameroon.



ENABLE-TAAT team intensifies effort in promoting Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato

Food basket outreach is one of the ENABLE-TAAT compact operations. It is key to good health as it focuses on improving human nutrition. For this reason, the IYA Imo Agripreneurs is set to promote the Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato – one of the food basket commodities. To this effect, a sensitization exercise was conducted in the heart of Owerri.

The sensitization which took place at the College of Advanced Professional Studies, Owerri, Nigeria recorded large turnout of participants who were eager to learn about Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP). Many of them indicated that they learnt of the OFSP variety for the very first time, sparking off the need to extend the sensitization to other parts of the state.

The team kicked off the training by raising awareness on the benefits of OFSP. Among the benefits highlighted was how OFSP has shown to be an extremely rich source of pro-vitamin A. This vitamin is largely retained when the sweet potato is boiled, steamed or roasted. According to

data, Nigeria, like other developing countries, has a high level of Vitamin A deficiency especially in children.

Jeremiah Omologbe, one of the Agripreneurs facilitating these seminars said: "there is the need to promote this potato in order to fight Vitamin A deficiency and ameliorate the problem of hunger."

The audience were also exposed to the untapped marketing potential of OFSP. Being a crop with so many nutritional health benefits, a low input and low risk crop; OFSP would be accepted with open arms in the marketplace. Hence, investing in the OFSP would immensely boost farmers' income and in turn strengthen the local economy.

Slices of uncooked OFSP were given to participants to taste and this was followed by a demonstration to show how OFSP vines are planted for both vine multiplication and root production.

Also, vines were distributed to participants to help them to establish their own farms in their respective homes and localities as well as to expand

agribusiness opportunities of the crop.

After the seminar, a number of enthusiastic Imo citizens hurried to the sales point to purchase the tubers with smiles on their faces.

The team has also commenced with the sales of the crop in markets and villages. They have partnered with out-growers and traders in order to ensure that OFSP gets to the nooks and crannies of the state. Farmers are excited about the new variety of potato being distributed in the area and have called on the team to expand their hectareage of production at Agbala. The team recently harvested and sold over 1.7 tons of OFSP.



ENABLE-TAAT trainer (in wine coloured t-shirt) giving out some samples of Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato

ENABLE-TAAT supports youth-led agribusinesses in Imo

Fruitful Vine and Crown Fish in Imo State are some of the beneficiaries of Capacity Building and Technical Assistance component of TAAT. They were supported by TAAT to establish youth led agribusiness enterprises.

Fruitful Vines is a poultry business situated in Imo State Polytechnic. This team of entrepreneurs are displaying excellent expertise, thanks to experience garnered from running the IYA poultry enterprise in Imo.

Over the years, the team has learned cost efficient and proper ways of rearing different types of birds (broilers and layers). They have over 2,200 layers stocked in their farm. The birds are now in their laying stage (18weeks). In a week or two, Fruitful vine will commence sales of eggs.

Crown Fish is the second enterprise supported through a similar platform. The business is situated in Imo and is into catfish farming. This team of entrepreneurs has started sales of their 1500 catfish which were stocked 4 months ago. The rationale behind this early sale is to make profit from the fishes while they are still in their smokable size. From past experience, they have learnt that attaining table size will increase their cost of production, thus taking longer time to reach break-even point.

They have also stocked 5000 fingerlings, which are currently in their post-juvenile stage and other plans for expansion are underway. The stocking of fingerlings plan is to ensure continuous production.

Both enterprises are in one location and constitute an Agricultural Park where schools and individuals have been visiting for trainings. These enterprises are used as incubation centres for the ENABLE-TAAT Agribusiness Incubation.



Birds at Fruitful Vine poultry facility



ENABLE-TAAT sensitization program conducted in Uganda

ENABLE-TAAT offers trainings to unemployed youth in rural communities

Opportunity is being given to more youth in Imo to get trained in agribusiness. Consequently, the team in Imo is supporting the unemployed youth in rural communities by organizing trainings on five commodities of TAAT. These commodities are: Poultry, Aquaculture, OFSP, Pro-Vitamin A Cassava and Maize. Currently the ENABLE-TAAT officers, with help from some business partners, have trained over 70 youths.

The participants comprise out-of-school young people and graduates. The two areas of the Agribusiness Incubation (Agriculture and Business) were treated extensively. The training exposed participants to business opportunities available in aquaculture.

IYA trainee wins 5,000,000Tsh



Edmond Ng'walago receiving the cash award from the organizers

A trainee of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Edmond Ng'walago has emerged as the winner of the 2018 Young Graduate Entrepreneurship award organized by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in collaboration with the National Empowerment Economic Council in Tanzania.

Ng'walago who was selected among 987 young people who applied for the award won the sum of 5,000,000Tsh after pitching his business idea on the use of rabbit urine as a major component of bio-pesticide.

The program is focused on encouraging young graduates from 2013-2018 and who are between the ages of 18-35 years to develop bankable business ideas which can be supported with start-up funds.

While appreciating the organizers of the award for the opportunity given to him, Ng'walago stated that the money given to him will be used in expanding his business and ensuring that the products are available in stores in Tanzania.



The launching of Bukavu Youth Agripreneurs Cooperative Society

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