



IITA

Youth Agripreneurs

Agriculture is the future

BULLETIN

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Agripreneurs' Spotlight

Our spotlight of the month is on Joshua Adewale, a young poultry farmer. Joshua was one of the pioneer members of IITA Youth Agripreneurs. He was trained under the incubation program of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs and he is now making a difference through agribusiness. Below is a brief story on him:

During his internship at the IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA), Joshua was known for his exemplary passion for planting and growing plantain and banana. He was actively in charge of the pilot enterprise for plantain and banana sucker multiplication of IYA and this venture flourished well under his supervision.

Years after, he was transferred to the IITA station in Onne, Rivers State, to assist with the training of other young people in the State especially on plantain and banana farming. While he was at Onne, Joshua also participated in the establishment of the poultry enterprise for the incubation program at the station. This was where his interest grew in poultry production.

"While I was in Onne, I had the opportunity to relate with poultry farmers and I realized that one of the greatest challenges they encounter is sourcing for day old layer birds. Most of them end up buying layer birds that do not produce the expected number of eggs so I started thinking of how to help them and also make a living out of this", he said.

He left Onne in 2017 and relocated to Ibadan to start his poultry business under a registered company name known as Joshidop Farms. He started with 2,500 layer birds and sold 1,500 out



Joshua, 2nd from right with some of his staff

of them at 16 weeks and reserved 1,000 birds for egg production.

To expand his business, Joshua approached the community leader in Katafa village, Onidundun Akinyele area of Ibadan, Oyo state to source for land to establish his brooding facility. The land which according to him was provided at no cost now houses his 8,000 capacity structure for brooding day old layer birds to sell to farmers. He has stocked the brooding house with 7,000 birds to raise to the point of lay, and sell to farmers at 16 weeks.

"I have a market already for my birds and I am sure I will realize a good profit after sales. I bought each day old at the rate of N240 and will sell at N1000 each," he added.

Joshidop Farms recently acquired a van to ease logistics from farm to the market. He also has 5 young people working with him. His staff are accommodated at the farm house acquired by the company in Akinyele.

Joshua, is a computer science graduate of the Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke but his passion for agriculture evolves by the day.

"IITA played a huge role in what I have become today and I can boldly say that my perception about agriculture changed based on the orientation I had while I was with IYA and I can still apply my computer science skills to my business. I have to be distinct and not practice agriculture like our grand farmers. I will ensure I adopt some level of technology to increase my production, sales, and marketing", he stressed.

Joshua also offers consultancy services and training.



Joshidop poultry facility

Agricultural Insurance... a tale from lessons learned



Agroved structure after the rainstorm

Agroved Limited is owned by three young graduates trained by the IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA) in Abuja. David Adeiza, Victoria Okpachu, and Esther Nneji established the business in 2018 after their incubation program at IYA.

The business, which focuses on birds and eggs production with over 1000 capacity, is located in Gwagalada, a suburb of Abuja, North-Central Nigeria. The business partners through savings and support from friends and family

members, pooled resources together to rent a poultry facility for their business and were able to get technical support from ENABLE-TAAT, a project funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB).

Within the first year of operation, the partners were excited as they realized profit from their business and were looking forward to a more productive year in the second phase. To achieve this, the partners worked tirelessly, while taking the necessary precautions on the

farm to avoid disease outbreak, theft, and other unforeseen circumstances. But the unexpected happened.

The partners left the poultry on the evening of Tuesday March 5 with the intention to return in the early hours of Wednesday, March 6 to carry out their daily routine but this did not happen as a heavy downpour in the early hours of that day caused a major mishap.

The rainfall that was accompanied with heavy storms collapsed the poultry structure killing over 700 birds. When the partners got to the poultry farm after the rain, they found most of their birds dangling from the cages under the rubbles of the structure. They were devastated and faced the reality of the loss.

They needed some sort of compensation for the loss and realized that agricultural insurance was the only available option to mitigate their risk but it was rather too late. The team had not taken out any agricultural insurance policy to protect their farm and compensate them for the huge loss.

Many young farmers have experienced the same loss on their farms as the Agroved Limited team, but agricultural insurance is usually the last option for any farmer to consider as part of processes



One of the partners, Esther, moving eggs from the pen



Repair work ongoing at the Agroved poultry facility



A make-shift pen for the remaining birds

to mitigate against risk on their farms. Some are not even aware of the benefits while others do not see its relevance especially in Africa. Agricultural insurance is a financial tool to transfer production risk associated with farming

to a third party via payment of premium that reflects the true long term cost for the insurer assuming those risks.

It is an effective mechanism for reducing the losses farmers suffer due to natural

calamities such as floods, droughts, and outbreaks of pests and diseases. It provides the farmer with peace of mind and removes the worries, tension, fear and anxiety associated with farming making it possible for farmers to be more productive and creative with their farming business.

Agricultural insurance comes in different forms covering animal and crop production, farm produce, yield and weather index, farm equipment etc.

There is a gap between farmers and the insurance companies offering these services. This is one of the factors responsible for the non-commitment of farmers to some of the agricultural insurance policies. Insurance companies and the government need to do more to encourage and ensure that smallholder farmers in rural areas are aware of the benefits of adopting agricultural insurance.

IITA launches CSAT

The IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA), participated in the launch of the Climate Smart Agricultural Technologies (CSAT) for improved Rural Livelihood and Food Security project in Niger and Mali in March.

The project, which is funded by the Norwegian Embassy in Bamako, Mali, is targeted at introducing climate smart agricultural technologies and innovations in the Sahel, Sudan and Dry Savannah regions of the two countries to improve rural livelihoods, food and nutrition security.

It aims at enhancing farmers' adaptation to climate change, increasing productivity of crop and livestock production system, increasing household income and value chain efficiency, and enhancing agribusiness opportunities especially for youths and women.

These will occur through sustainable intensification of agricultural production, increased resilience of the production systems, more efficient value chains for key crops including livestock integration, and increased job opportunities for youths, women, and other marginalized groups that will help rural populations to adapt better to the complex effects of climate change.

The project launch held between 17-23rd of March and 24th-28th of March



Dr Tahirou addressing stakeholders at the launching

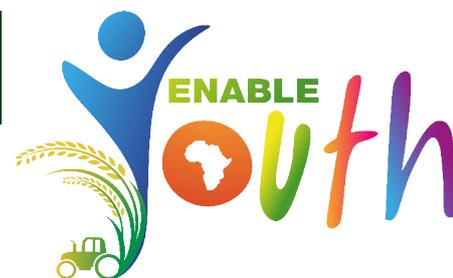
in both countries was an opportunity for all stakeholders to discuss means of implementing the project successfully.

While giving an overview of the project, Dr Tahirou Abdoulahi, IITA's Senior Agricultural Economist for West Africa, stated that the five-year project would focus on commodities such as maize, groundnut, millet, sorghum and cowpea. Animal production (poultry) and pesticides. It will be implemented in 32 communities in four selected regions, including Dosso, Maradi, Zinder and Tillaberi in Niger.

The proposed project will increase farmers' uptake of existing innovations and increase the options from which farmers can choose. Adoption of

improved technologies, coupled with youth and gender activities in the project, will not only increase productivity and incomes along value chains but also offer more opportunities to women and youth. Increase in economic opportunities for youths is especially expected to reduce their temptation to join crime related activities or dangerous migration attempts.

The project will be coordinated by IITA, in partnership with the national partner institution in Niger (INRAN), the International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). Other partners include extension service providers, seed companies, producer organizations, women and youth, and NigerienNonGovernmentalOrganization.



ENABLE Youth Cameroon and YABIC hosts discuss path to a win-win partnership



A cross section of some representatives of the YABICs host at the meeting

The implementation team of ENABLE Youth Program in Cameroon invited the representatives of the selected Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centers (YABICs) to further discuss modalities for the effective training of selected interns.

The aim of the meeting was to get a common understanding of the IITA approach, to share the vision of the Enable Youth program in Cameroon (EYC) and to agree on the collaboration agreement between ENABLE Youth Cameroon and the host institutions.

Forty-six participants from IITA-EYC, the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVC_DP) and host institutions of YABICs attended the one-day workshop.

While addressing the representatives of the YABICs, the Coordinator of the ENABLE Youth program in Cameroon, Dr Cargele Masso, shared the vision of the IITA Youth Agripreneur (IYA) model. He ensured that the representatives of the various institutions had a clear knowledge of the initiative and properly placed to adapt it to the Cameroonian context.

IITA, AVC-DP and the host institutions also identified the contribution and support of host institutions in the training program. Importantly, they agreed on the communication framework amongst key stakeholders of the project, and clarified pending issues related to the collaboration agreement.

The representatives of the YABICs also recommended the inclusion of civic education in the training curriculum in order to encourage civic responsibility among the youths.



Training of YABIC hosts

The selected YABICs which are spread across five regions of Cameroon are hosted by public and private-owned institutions. The project selected 16 host institutions to host the 14 YABICs where 1,536 Agripreneur interns of EYC will be trained in 3 years at 512 interns per year. The 14 YABICs are currently in 4 regions with the central region hosting 4; 2 in the Eastern region, the Littoral region has 5, and the Southern region is hosting 3. There is a possibility of additional YABICs in the South West during the AVC-DP lifespan.

EYC will strengthen the ability of youths to create wealth and decent jobs in agribusiness, following the IYA model.

Cameroon

ENABLE Youth Cameroon selects Agripreneurs, conducts training

The ENABLE Youth Cameroon (EYC) Program is progressing with the implementation team successfully selecting 512 interns that will participate in the program. The recruitment process resulted in the selection of 44 percent females, and 56 percent males.

The process carried out at different stages, started a few months back through the launch of a call for application by the Cameroon Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. This was accompanied by public announcements in National newspapers, social media, and recruitment platforms among others, to provide details on the program, its objectives and the application process.

To meet the gender requirement of the program, 600 men and 400 women were shortlisted following a test to determine their agribusiness and entrepreneurial skills.

The candidates were then invited for an oral interview in which the selection panel with representatives of IITA (i.e. EYC staff), the Agriculture Value Chain Development Project (AVC-DP), Youth Agribusiness Incubation Center (YABIC) Coordinators, YABIC host institutions, and MINADER further reduced them to 512. The interns were selected based on their agribusiness aspirations and entrepreneurial skills.



A cross section of the first batch of the selected Agripreneurs

The selected interns are presently being trained in 11 out of the 14 selected YABICs in the Country. Each of the YABIC will host 36 to 37 interns. At one of the YABICs - Institut Agricole d'Obala, some of the interns expressed their expectations towards the project.

Paule, a 24-year-old Agripreneur says the training would serve as an avenue for her to achieve her dreams to be gainfully employed. "I came here because I wanted to become an agricultural entrepreneur. I hope this training will give me the tools I need to achieve my dream and materialize the ideas I have in my head", she stated.

For Paule, like other candidates who applied for the program this year, EYC is the opportunity they lacked to engage in agribusiness, a sector dominated by negative perception, lack of skills and financial support. With the incubation, they are gaining access to training and skills in Business Development, Value Addition, Marketing of agricultural products, Modern production, and other necessary tools needed to propel their businesses. Most importantly, other trainings like Leadership and Self-Management will also help them in self-development and mindsets change.

The Agripreneurs will be opportuned to establish pilot enterprises at the incubation center and go for internships with successful agribusinesses. During the incubation period, they are mainly expected to develop bankable business plans which will be funded by partner financial institutions.

The program is being implemented by IITA, the Government of Cameroon, the MINADER, AVC-DP, as well as key development partners, particularly financial institutions.



Dr Cargele Masso lecturing the selected Agripreneurs during the orientation exercise

Update on ENABLE Youth Program

Kenya



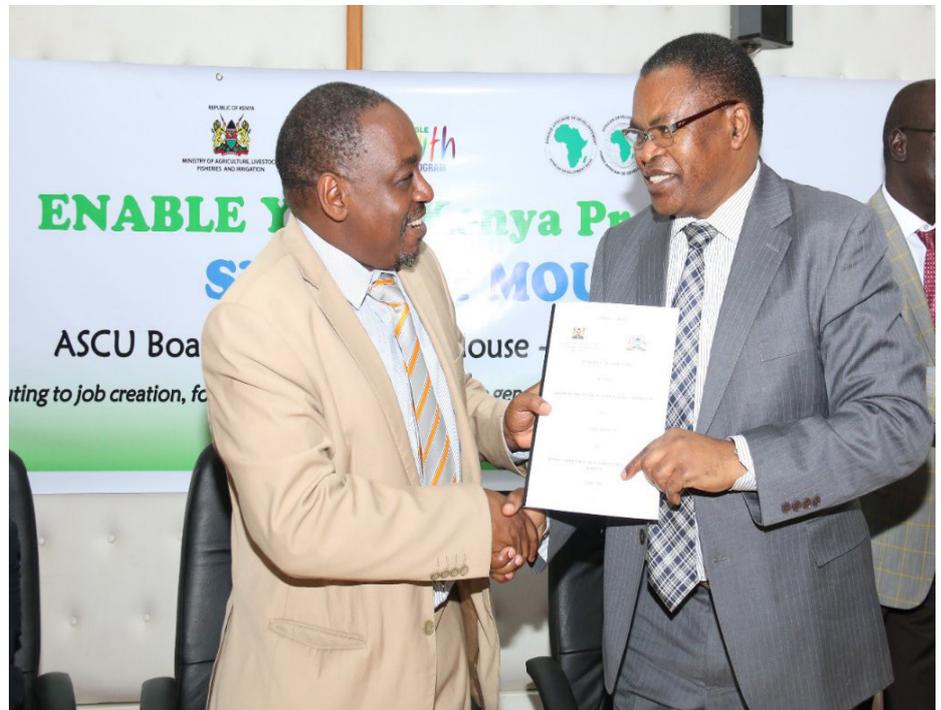
ENABLE Youth moves to Kenya

The ENABLE Youth Program will commence in earnest in Kenya. The Permanent Secretary, Research and Crops, Prof Hamadi Iddi Boga recently signed and exchanged the Memorandum of Understanding with the representatives of the Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centers (YABICs).

The program aims at creating agribusiness opportunities and decent employment for the youth along agriculture value chains.

The IITA Youth Agripreneurs program was adopted by the African Development Bank (AfDB), as a model for the implementation of the ENABLE Youth Program in African countries.

The program is currently being implemented in Sudan, Cameroon, with a pilot phase in Madagascar, Cote d'Ivoire, and Senegal. More details on ENABLE Youth Kenya will be published in the next edition.



The signing of MOU for ENABLE-Youth Kenya

Madagascar

First batch of youth graduates in Madagascar receive funding



Dr Victor Manyong (M) with the graduating Agripreneurs



Representatives of IITA and the Minister of Agriculture in Madagascar

The first batch of youths who completed their incubation program under the pilot phase of the ENABLE Youth Program in Madagascar received

cheques from Banque Nationale d'Investissement (BNI) to establish their businesses. The training of another set of 100 youths has commenced in

other centers within the country. IITA is providing technical assistance and backstopping the youths in Madagascar.



Youth engagement in Agribusiness is the future for employment opportunity in Africa - *Jennifer Blanke*



L-R: Dr Chris Akem, Dr Martin Fregen, V.P Jennifer Blanke interacting with the Agripreneurs

Jennifer Blanke, Vice President, Agriculture, Human and Social Development at the African Development Bank (AfDB) has stated that youth engagement in agribusiness is the future for employment opportunities across Africa. Ms Blanke stated this on Tuesday, March 26 when she visited the Youth in Agribusiness (IYA) office at the headquarters of the International

Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Ms Blanke who was accompanied by the Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry, Dr Martin Fregene on the visit, added that although many young people do not desire to practice agriculture like their parents and grandparents, they are more excited about being agripreneurs

- the new generation of entrepreneurs who are making a change in the agricultural sector.

She stressed that although the sector is huge enough to accommodate a large percentage of the population, the real benefit would be to find new opportunities and move up the value chain.

"If you look around the Continent, maybe 60 or 70 percent of the population are already working in the sector but the real benefit is to find new opportunities and move up the value chain. It is not necessarily about harvesting cassava but make exciting things with cassava", she said.

Ms Blanke also interacted with some of the young people who were trained under the ENABLE-TAAT program but have now become independent agribusiness owners.

IITA through its Youth in Agribusiness office is the lead implementing institution of the ENABLE-TAAT project, an Enabler compact under the Technologies for African Agriculture Transformation that is funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB).



V.P. Jennifer Blanke at the IYA fish pond



The Vice President in a group photograph with the DG IITA, Dr Nteranya Sanginga; DDG Partnership for Delivery, Dr Ken Dashiell; and the young CEOs

ENABLE-TAAT, an update from KHYG in Kenya

The Kibwezi Agripreneurs are now marketing the new Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato in Kenya!

An estimated 218 million Africans suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition. Promoting orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) varieties that are early maturing, high yielding, drought-tolerant and high in beta-carotene can contribute to increased dietary diversity, food security and household income in Africa.



Photo Credit: HKI

Food availability

- Sweetpotato provides higher yields per given area in a shorter time compared to maize or cassava
- The crop can be produced on marginal soils and easily integrated into many cropping systems
- Improved, early maturing sweetpotato varieties are ready in 3- 5 months

post-harvest techniques can improve storage life and access to fresh roots among urban consumers

- OFSP can substitute for potato in making some products and serve as a partial substitute (20-50%) for wheat flour which improves the accessibility and shelf life of this nutrient-rich crop

which is critical for child survival

- Both the roots and leaves of sweetpotato are highly nutritious
- Promoting OFSP can empower African women, who are often responsible for growing this crop, by improving their knowledge of nutrition and providing higher income from the sale of roots and processed products
- A wide range of OFSP-based processed products, such as bakery products, juice, chips, crisps, flour and noodles, can open up new markets for the food industry

Food access

- Sweetpotato has relatively low labour requirements compared to other crops
- Some varieties can be stored in the ground for some time. Improved

Food utilization

- Unlike white or yellow varieties, orange-fleshed sweetpotato provides significant amounts of vitamin A,

For information on obtaining OFSP tubers or cuttings contact Ms. Lorraine Mutinda by email at L.mutinda@cgiar.org (Nairobi Office) or Ms. Elizabeth Mwakali mobile number + (254)707-859015 (Kibwezi Farm)



OFSP cv. Irene
This is a drought tolerant sweet potato that is produced in Kenya for vines and tubers by the Kibwezi Hortipreneur Youth Group.



The Kibwezi Hortipreneur Youth Group (KHYG) continues its operations in eastern Kenya, and has adjusted to the need to accommodate the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) youth empowerment strategy. ENABLE TAAT Food Basket Outreach has resulted in the inclusion of several new crops at the farm, particularly Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP), High Iron Bean (HIB), vitamin A cassava, and drought tolerant maize.

Coupled with these crops is a greater reliance upon small-scale mechanization including hand tractors, paddle weeders, power sprayers and land augers. These tools have greatly reduced the labor requirements at the farm, allowing the team to expand their area of operations by another one hectare. This has also attracted additional youths to the group for training, more new applications to join KHYG through the

opportunities provided by ENABLE-TAAT are being received. Unfortunately, these applications exceed the ability to support new members given the ongoing agribusiness incubation revenues.

Nonetheless, the team is adding four more members who seem highly committed to careers in agriculture, in part to compensate for some current members who are in the process of starting their own independent agribusinesses.

Many thanks are due to ENABLE TAAT for pushing the group in new directions in such a short time. These changes have raised the profile of KHYG within the surrounding agricultural community, allowing them to link with other youth groups, new markets, agrodealers, and cooperative societies. KHYG is becoming a recognized force within Makueni County and they are developing relations with other

Kenyan government agencies as well.

KHYG is a Kenyan self-help group of enthusiastic youths that started its operations in 2015 and joined as a local chapter within the IITA Youth Agripreneur Program. Its purpose is to build the capacity of youth and expose them to numerous opportunities in agribusiness, and to do so in a gender-balanced and increasingly self-sufficient manner. The group is located in semi-arid eastern Kenya within the University of Nairobi Dryland Research Station. The University provides facilities and mentorship to the group but it otherwise operates as an independent entity and has access to the Kibwezi River as a source for irrigation.

The group is registered as a self-help group, with an audited account with the Kenya Commercial Bank, and operates under a constitution to govern decision making. All members are



The Food Basket field established by the KHYG

university graduates who seek careers in agribusiness. They operate several pilot agribusiness enterprises including greenhouse and field crop production, fish farming, manufacturing of nutritious snacks and operation of a marketing depot in nearby Kibwezi town. It has added the TAAT technology toolkits to its operations. These not only include crops, but also a new goat fattening activity and plans of establishing a poultry enterprise. The overall goal is to

transition the group into a commercial Agribusiness Park and much is expected from ENABLE-TAAT to assist in positioning them in the right direction.

KHYG has pioneered several farm innovations. The team was the first IYA group to construct its own greenhouses and to practice drip irrigation technology. When offered the opportunity to produce sweet potatoes and beans, the two were

combined as intercrops to make the best use of the 25 cm drip emitter spacing. The team is presently expanding this system to another one ha of land.

Part of the innovation from the group is the development of a tent-style greenhouse and planted it with cuttings of six new virus free and drought-tolerant varieties of OFSP for the production of vines for cuttings and animal feed. The fish pond is linked to crop production through use of effluents, and even started vermiculture as a source of worms for fish feed and compost. Vegetable production serves as one of the major crop for the daily cash flow for the group, and continue to offer several traditional vegetables to local markets and consumers.

KHYG is working towards stronger linkages with the Kenyan government so that it can benefit from its various programs. Also, in the pipeline is the partnership with the Kenya Agricultural Sector Development Support Program.

The team however, is hard hit hard by the suspension of the youth-led Fall Army Worm Rapid Response because much of the alliance with county agricultural extension was built around the exceptional leadership and services provided in this area. Nonetheless, the team is ready to develop new strategies for effective advocacy of youth empowerment and registration of Kenyan youth as beneficiaries of TAAT, and

ENABLE-TAAT reach out to farmers in Zambia



Representative of ENABLE-TAAT in Zambia, Consent Sibeso, conducting a field training for farmers

The ENABLE-TAAT through its country implementation strategy is reaching out to farmers and youths in over 8 districts in Zambia.

Leveraging on the technologies being promoted by the commodity value chains

under the TAAT program, the compact is training young people and assisting them with inputs for the establishment of their businesses along the chosen commodities in the regions. This effort, which has attracted a lot of attention from the media and other stakeholders in

the agricultural sector in the country. The ENABLE-TAAT team had the opportunity to reach out to more farmers and young people at a farmers' Field Day organized by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Lusaka on the 29th of May.

Some of the commodities promoted by the youths during the Farmers' Field Day were the Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato, High Iron Bean (HIB), and Maize.

The trainees, under the incubation program being conducted through ENABLE-TAAT, also diversified into cassava processing for flour, chin-chin, scones, tidbits, and chips. All these products were displayed during the event. Different processing facilities such as cassava chipper, grater, dewater and miller were mounted and operated to demonstrate the stages of product processing.

Moving On...

One of the outcomes of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs program is to see that some of the members of the group further their education and expand their knowledge in a chosen field of choice. The team recently recorded three of such outcomes in Nigeria and Kenya.

Idowu Ayodeji Peters



Ayodeji joined the IITA Youth Agripreneurs in 2013. He has a B.Sc in Plant Science from the Olabisi Onabanjo University at Ago-Iwoye, Ogun state, Nigeria.

He was part of the Fishery and Livestock team while he was with IYA and a member of the team that started the fish enterprise in IYA. The team was trained by one of the largest fish industry in West-Africa, Durante Fish, and after two weeks of training, Ayodeji and his team established four earthen ponds for catfish production and expanded to 17

ponds within a short period of time.

Ayodeji in 2018 however secured a scholarship through the Japan International Research Centre for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS) initiative to study International Agricultural Development for his Master's degree at Tokyo University of Agriculture in Japan.

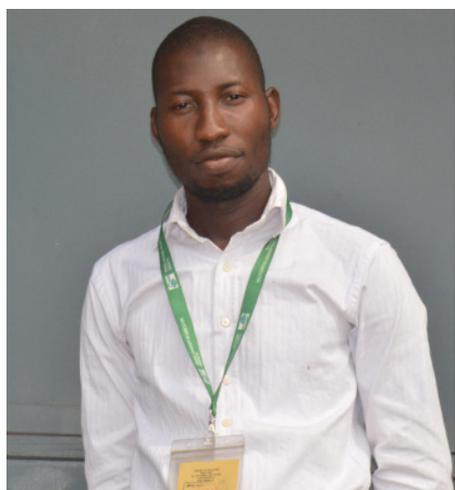
He is also a beneficiary of Dr Sanginga's scholarship where he obtained a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) in Agribusiness at the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB).

McEnroe Nzomo



McEnroe is one of the Kibwezi Hortipreneur Youth Group (KHYG) at Kibwezi, in Kenya. He joined IYA in 2016 and was selected as the leader of the team. He was actively involved in the sales of the commodities produced by the team especially along the Mombasa corridor. He initiated the potato crisp which is the value added product of potato from their fields and also facilitated the establishment of the group's first sales outlet in the Makueni county. He studied Food Science at the University of Nairobi and has now proceeded to KU Leuven University for his Master's Degree in Food Technology through a scholarship known as VLIR-UOUS.

Oni Waheed



Waheed joined the Green Wealth Agripreneurs (GWA) in 2015. The Green Wealth Agripreneur was a sub-set of IYA. He is a graduate of Water Resources Management from Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB). While in GWA, Waheed was a member of the Capacity Development team and he facilitated series of trainings. His exemplary values fetched him the position of the project lead for Hello Tractor project, which he led for 3 years.

Hello Tractor is sponsored by the USAID and is focused on training young Nigerian Smart Tractor owners on the business of owning, maintaining, and utilizing a fleet

of Smart Tractors to increase their income while delivering valuable tractor services to farmers within their community. Waheed recently secured a fellowship with Awaji Youth Federation (AYF). AYF is one of the projects of Pasona Group Inc based in Japan and it focuses on providing a creative platform for young innovators to use their existing skills and specialization to find solution to global issues on Education, Tourism, Digital Arts, Music, Food and Agriculture.

Waheed through his experience with the IITA Youth Agripreneurs now leads the Agripreneurs under the Food and Agriculture Project of Awaji Youth Federation.

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