

Central Bank of Nigeria to collaborate with IITA GoSeed on cassava production

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) hosted different stakeholders in the cassava value chain in Nigeria as it works on developing the sector in the country. Stakeholders included a team from [IITA](#) comprising IITA-Abuja Head of Station [Tarawali Gbassey](#), ATASP-1 Cassava Commodity Specialist [Richardson Okechukwu](#), and Akinyemi Ibikunle of the IITA GoSeed team. The meeting, which included the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by the different parties, took place at the CBN Head Office in Abuja on 21 November. [to page 2](#)



Group photograph.

Osun State Commissioner of Agriculture visits IITA to seek collaboration

On 3 December, Honorable Adedayo Adewole, Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Security, Osun State visited [IITA](#) to explore collaboration opportunities. Directors and Deputy Directors of research and extension, fisheries, livestock, and the Program Manager of the Agricultural Development Program, all working with the Osun State Ministry of Agriculture accompanied the Commissioner.



Hon. Adewole (far right) explaining the purpose of the visit.

IITA Director General [Nteranya Sanginga](#) and Deputy Director-General, Partnerships for Delivery, [Kenton Dashiell](#) received the Honorable Commissioner and his team.

Hon. Adewole showed appreciation over the already existing partnership between IITA and Osun State, but also emphasized the need for his team to “learn from a system that works.” He said, “I want my team to see a system that works and learn from it. I want everyone to realize that nothing stops Osun’s agricultural sector from working, especially if we are persistent.”

Dashiell told the team of IITA’s willingness to partner with Osun State, but also charged the delegation on some of the right steps towards sustainable development in the agricultural sector of the State. He said, “Make sure your objectives align with both national and state policies. Be grounded in technology, engage with the private sector, and develop realistic scaling strategies. We must make sure that this meeting yields fruit.”

Hon. Adewole said, “We are looking at how IITA can strategically collaborate with us

by creating a demonstration farm, where farmers can come and learn.” In addition, he commended IITA’s Start Them Early Program (STEP) and has begun to make plans for a partnership between the Osun State government and STEP.

In response, Dashiell encouraged them to create the demonstration farm themselves, as owners of the land, but that IITA will be of support in every way. “We will make the demonstration farm a profit-making farm through collaboration with the private sector,” Dashiell said.

DG Sanginga pledged to render support to Osun State Ministry of Agriculture, and also urged everyone on the team to support the Commissioner with their expertise. “Currently, there is an IITA station of about 200 ha in Osun state, hence this won’t be the last interaction between IITA and Osun State,” DG Sanginga said.

The take-home message for the delegates was that they must do the work, but can be assured of IITA’s support. Addressing his team, Hon. Adewole concluded, “We have to double our efforts.”



Kenton Dashiell speaking on steps to sustainable development in the agricultural sector.

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Governor Godwin Emefiele of the CBN attended the event along with delegates from cassava producing states such as Governor of Ekiti State Dr Kayode Fayemi and Governor Oluwarotimi Odunayo Akeredolu, SAN of Ondo State. Other participants were the Deputy Governors of Ogun State, Chief Mrs Yetunde Onanuga and Oyo State, Engr Rauf Olaniyan.

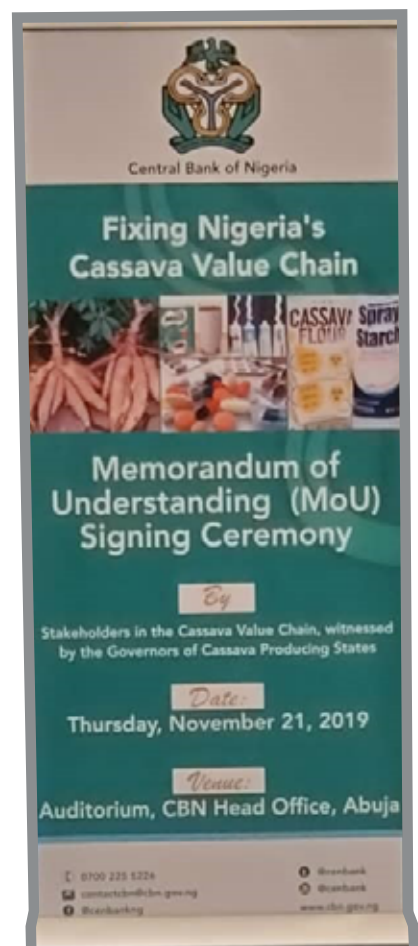
The CBN facilitated the signing of the MOU between the Nigeria Cassava Growers’ Association (NCGA), Cassava Stem Producers, and Large-scale Cassava Processors to guarantee steady off-take and processing of cassava in Nigeria. The CBN will be collaborating with IITA to provide quality cassava stems of improved varieties to cassava farmers and to conduct training for Agricultural Development Programs (ADPs) in the 36 states of Nigeria.

In remarks made during the event, Emefiele said, “We included cassava in the FX exclusion list to salvage the industry, encourage farmers to go back to their farms to boost job creation, and increase output and improve the capacity utilization of our processing

companies.” He pledged to support the NCGA at the production level under the Anchor Borrowers’ Programme (ABP) as he expects this to increase farmers’ productivity and income.

Processors across Nigeria that are leveraging cassava for production attended the event during which the CBN expressed their interest in cassava processing and promised to support Large-scale Cassava Processors under the Commercial Agriculture Credit Scheme (CACCS) and Differentiated Cash Reserves Requirement (DCRR) programs. The CBN Governor stated that CBN and other stakeholders, including IITA, are to participate in the development of the framework for modern production and processing of cassava by tackling challenges in the cassava value chain.

Governments of the cassava-producing states in Nigeria and other stakeholders were encouraged by Emefiele to work together to resuscitate Nigeria’s cassava sector. He reiterated the need for all stakeholders to cooperate in creating 10 million jobs through agriculture to ease the unemployment rate in Nigeria.



CIALCA on track to improve profitable agriculture in the Great Lakes Region

Improving food and nutrition security and developing climate-resilient and profitable agriculture were discussed at the mid-term review meeting of the Consortium for Improving Agriculture-based Livelihoods in Central Africa (CIALCA). The three-day meeting was held in Kigali, Rwanda between 29 October and 1 November.

CIALCA operates in Rwanda, Burundi, and Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and is co-led by [IITA](#), Bioversity International, and the Joint Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and International Atomic Energy Agency (FAO/IAEA).

Over 40 participants from CIALCA's leading organizations, and partner and development organizations graced CIALCA mid-term review meeting and commended its continued impact in transforming agriculture and challenged CIALCA to leverage on its 14-year presence and take agriculture to an extra mile.

Dr Charles Murekezi, Director General of Agriculture Development in the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, observed the relevance of CIALCA in Rwanda and

the Great Lakes Region. "I applaud CIALCA for their ability to move with time and the way this consortium evolves from hard science towards science for action. CIALCA's mandate falls in the vision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, not only in Rwanda but also in the whole region," said Dr Murekezi, also a CIALCA Alumni, who officiated the opening of the meeting.

Of note was CIALCA's work co-investing with scaling partners to ramp up delivery of innovation. Since 2018, CIALCA has partnered with One Acre Fund to help them better understand their clients, particularly the drivers of adoption for their interventions and whether specific types of farmers are more or less likely to adopt certain practices and technologies. To do this, CIALCA and One Acre Fund have

developed farm typologies of Rwandan farmers to understand better and reduce the complexity of heterogeneity present in farming households.

This process has seen a series of typologies developed which have mapped farming households along two axes (wealth and adoption of inputs). These typologies are now being validated to ensure their existence and help One Acre Fund to target interventions towards potential clients who are more likely to adopt their technologies and to deliver appropriate and tailored interventions that are sensitive to farm heterogeneity across Rwanda.

Another noteworthy highlight was the development of site-specific fertilizer recommendations for cassava in the Great Lakes Region. In November 2018, CIALCA established 121 field trials in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda to understand more how cassava responds to different combinations of Nitrogen, Phosphorous, Potassium, and other micronutrient-based fertilizers. CIALCA is optimistic about the results with Deus Kayibanda, CIALCA



Group photograph.

Research Assistant in Rwanda, mentioning that, “Observable results before harvesting are very impressive and promising.”

This research will support the Governments and agriculture institutions of Rwanda, Burundi, and Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo to come up with fertilizer recommendations for cassava farming tailored to location, weather predictions, soil type, the farmer's production objectives.

“There is a big difference between the cassava fields that are fertilized and the cassava fields that are not fertilized. The fertilized cassava crop looks much better and there is no doubt that we will harvest better roots,” Matabaro David, one of the farmers whose land is used for cassava nutrient omission trials in Ruhango district, witnessed to participants of the CIALCA mid-term review who visited his fields.

Another highlight was the work of CIALCA spin-off project, ICT4BXW, which focuses on the use of ICT tools in the fight against Banana Xanthomonas Wilt (BXW) in Rwanda. “Farmer promoters are easily diagnosing Banana Xanthomonas Wilt in the main banana regions and directly transferring information to sector agronomist and RAB. Before BXW-App was introduced, we had to travel to those sites, but now we do it using the phones,” explained Nkunduwimye Jean Marie Vianney who works for RAB Ruhango station, which serves Ruhango, Muhanga and Kamonyi districts in the southern province of Rwanda.

CIALCA has continued to invest in developing the capacity of future

business, science, and policy leaders as part of its efforts to strengthen agricultural research and development capacity in the Great Lakes Region. Since the start of CIALCA, more than 150 PhD, Msc, and Bachelor students have completed their studies/research, and currently, eight students are pursuing their PhD and Msc studies under the CIALCA umbrella.

As part of its future outlook, CIALCA is committed to continuing leveraging research for development in the Great Lakes Region. [Dr. Bernard Vanlauwe](#), IITA Central Africa Hub Regional Director who officially closed the mid-term review meeting, reiterated the impact brought by CIALCA to the Great Lakes Region and called for the continuous rejuvenation

of the consortium. “CIALCA is Research for Development, that will not change, but we need to constantly adapt to up-to-date agriculture needs and opportunities. CIALCA has been there over a decade but we never get old”, Vanlauwe said in his closing remarks.

Dr. Kathelyne Craenen, Attaché Development Cooperation at the Belgian Embassy who represented the Belgian Development Cooperation (DGD), CIALCA's core donor, mentioned that: “I have been involved in CIALCA since its very first start in 2005. CIALCA is one of the flagships of DGD in terms of how development cooperation can lead to real innovation, capacity development and impact.”



Question and answer session.

Got a story to share?

Please send your story with photos and captions every Tuesday to iita-news@cgiar.org or Katherine Lopez (k.lopez@cgiar.org) and Uzoma Agha (u.gha@cgiar.org) for headquarters and Western Africa, Catherine Njuguna (c.njuguna@cgiar.org) for Eastern and Southern Africa, and David Ngome (d.ngome@cgiar.org) for Central Africa.



IITA Forest Center holds the second edition of Nigerian Bird Festival

The [IITA](#) Forest Center has recorded a growing interest in bird conservation, especially among students. From 28 to 29 November, the Center, which advocates for the preservation of biodiversity and is funded by the AG Leventis Foundation and the US Consulate General Lagos, celebrated the second edition of the Nigerian Bird Festival (NBF).

The two-day event was a convergence of ornithologists, environmentalists, conservationists, and students. The students were members of nine Forest Center School Conservation Clubs, distributed in Ekiti, Osun, and Oyo states.

Participants at the festival were engaged in different activities, which aimed at increasing publicity for bird conservation, from music to poem recitation and drama, and from bird watching to quizzes and camping. The event provided exposure to the students, many of whom have decided to have a career in ornithology, the study of birds.

Apart from being an indicator of a good and habitable environment, birds play crucial roles in enhancing food security through pollination, breaking of seed dormancy, dispersal and insect control. Talatu Tende, a Research Associate at the AP Leventis Ornithological Research Institute said, "The absence of birds in an area is an indication of unstable environment, even for humans."

Adewale Awoyemi, IITA Forest Center Manager, spoke on the need to raise awareness about the importance of birds, especially in urban centers. He said, "Ignorance leads to abusive practices such as environmental pollution and bird hunting." However, NBF is an avenue for raising awareness and educating young minds against these detrimental practices. In Awoyemi's opinion, bird watching and conservation practices are becoming more popular in Nigeria. He, however, called for greater involvement by everyone in "spreading the gospel of biodiversity conservation."

He said he expects that the students would diffuse the knowledge they gathered at NBF when they return to their localities.



Top: Bird watching activities. Center: Students involved in a bird identification exercise. Bottom: Student presenting on the importance of birds.