

Talking Drums continues to feature stories about how IITA stations celebrate women and their accomplishments

IITA Burundi fetes dynamic women in International Women’s Day celebration



Students attending the program to celebrate International Women’s Day.

The IITA Burundi station celebrated International Women’s Day on 9 March with the theme *Promoting equality and empowerment for women and girls in science and agriculture*. The guest speakers were Mrs Vestine Mbundagu, leader of a dynamic women’s association in Burundi, [Dr Marie-Chantal Niyuhire](#), Head of the Socioeconomic Department at Institut des Sciences Agronomique du Burundi (ISABU), and Mrs Christella Ndayishimiye, a successful agribusiness woman and Head of TOTAHARA composite flour processing enterprise.

Twenty-five final year students from among the best five secondary schools in Bujumbura were invited to take part in the celebration to encourage and orient youth in science and agriculture. Mrs Mbundagu presented on “*The promotion of gender equality*”, while Dr Niyuhire gave a lecture on “*The promotion of gender equality in science and research*”. The last speaker, Mrs Ndayishimiye, who left public service to engage in composite flour processing as a private enterprise, shared her life experience. Today she employs over 12 workers, processes, and sells 10 tons of composite flour per month, and

comfortably caters for her family needs and welfare.

Students expressed their satisfaction with the unique experience gained and thanked IITA for the opportunity. They were eager to share what they had

learned, reassuring IITA that they will take the teachings with them and encourage their families and friends. Students felt confident to pursue their studies and dreams, and said they wished to work for IITA soon.



International Women's Day - IITA-Kinshasa Women Group

The IITA-Kinshasa Women's Group organized on 10 March a conference at IITA-Kinshasa to celebrate International Women's Day. The theme of the conference was **Fighting against breast and uterine cancer is my business**.

The guest speaker was Dr Ruth Nseka of the Monkole Hospital Center.

The conference contributed to educating women and girls on these two types of cancer that often affect women and girls. Mrs Charlotte Sanginga, Head of the Scholarship committee, IITA Women's Group, during a visit to Kinshasa, participated in the conference and welcomed the guests and spouses of IITA staff.

The conference started with a brief overview of breast and uterine cancers by Mrs Valerie Tembo, President of IITA-Kinshasa Women's Group. She explained that the conference, aims to:

- Sensitize women on the existence of breast and uterine cancer
- Raise awareness of prevention methods
- Encourage regular medical screening to prevent these deadly cancers
- Consolidate IITA Women's Group by attracting the support of spouses of colleagues
- Ensure the visibility of the group with non-governmental institutions, governments, politicians, and the Congolese community.

As a result of the conference, it was expected that participants learn and become aware of all prevention and

disease detection methods; and that they become ambassadors in the fight against breast and uterine cancer by conveying the message to other women in their respective communities.

Before the end of the conference, IITA Director General Nteranya Sanginga, joined, congratulated the group, and encouraged them to continue to organize activities such as support to children by offering scholarships. He emphasized that the IITA Women Group is a very good initiative.

About breast and uterine cancer

According to Dr Nseka, breast cancer is a tumor that develops in the mammary gland and can destroy other nearby organs. It is the most frequent kind of cancer representing about 23% of all gynecological cancers, and affecting about 90 women in 100,000 or one woman in 10.

In DRC, breast cancer is the second cause of female mortality, after that of cervical due to late diagnosis and lack of therapeutic means. This pathology of unknown origin is caused by several risk factors, namely: smoking, personal history of ovarian or endometrial cancer, history of radiation, late first pregnancy or null parity (not having children), postmenopausal obesity, mastopathy (repeated presence of a lump in the breast), alcohol, early menstruation (before 12 years of age), hormone replacement therapy, unhealthy diet as well as high socioeconomic level.

She added that the symptoms guiding its diagnosis are abnormal lymph nodes under the armpits, bloody discharge, a hard and odorless lump, as well as retraction of the breast from redness, edema, or an appearance of orange-peel skin.

Its prevention is based on screening, exclusion from alcohol consumption, physical exercise, healthy eating, sufficient breastfeeding, reducing use of oral contraceptives, and avoiding late pregnancies.

Poorly treated gynecological infections expose cervical cancer

Dr Nseka indicated that repeated or poorly treated gynecological infections could lead to cervical cancer, which is a tumor disease of infectious origin. It is the second most common gynecological cancer and is the first in terms of mortality. This pathology, in most cases, is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) and other risk factors such as prolonged infections lasting 10 to 15 years, a multiplicity of sexual partners, HIV, multiparity (more than 5 children), and early menstruation and sexual intercourse.

Moreover, this type of cancer has no symptoms at its initial stage. So, screening is very important. At its advanced stage, it can manifest by abundant bleeding provoked by sexual intercourse, pain during intercourse, white, smelly discharge, pain in the lower abdomen with difficulty in urinating, a pressing and continual desire to go to the toilet, and lower back pain.

The speaker emphasized that women should respect the preventive measures, including screening every 3 years, treatment of genital infections, good hygiene, and vaccination against the human papillomavirus.

Mrs Sanginga concluded the conference by thanking everyone for their presence and encouraged other women to be part of the IITA Women's Group. She emphasized the need to spread the messages so that others become aware of these diseases. The conference ended with cocktails.



Top left: President of IITA Kinshasa Women's Group and Mrs Charlotte Sanginga. **Top right:** Guest speaker Dr Ruth Nseka. **Bottom:** Group photo of IITA-Kinshasa Women's Group and spouses, IITA DG N. Sanginga flanked on his right by Mr. Zoumana Bamba, DRC Country Rep.

Internal Auditors as trusted advisors in fostering organizational success

Today, organizations are operating in an increasingly complex environment, characterized by unprecedented changes and uncertainties compounded by the current COVID-19 pandemic. They continue to face the emergence of disruptive technologies and business models as well as changing stakeholders' expectations and behaviors. A good example is the ongoing One CGIAR reform process.

In this dynamic environment and with global challenges affecting all the professions, there is a lot of expectation and demand on the assurance providers, among them the Internal Audit.

The Internal Audit's mission, as enshrined in the Internal Audit Standards, is to enhance and protect IITA's value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice, and insights. One way the Unit provides this value is by linking audit engagements to the risks that

may have the greatest impact on the organization's ability to achieve its objectives.

Annually, a plan of audit engagements is developed, which is based on documented risk assessments and incorporates input from Senior Management and the Board. This plan cuts across various hubs, projects, and units to provide Internal Audit with a full view of processes across the organization.

Internal Audit is a reliable change champion that brings fresh perspectives to processes and risk management practices, and ensures a transfer of leading and tested practices across IITA. Internal Auditors also assure mitigation plans in place for emerging and existing risks.

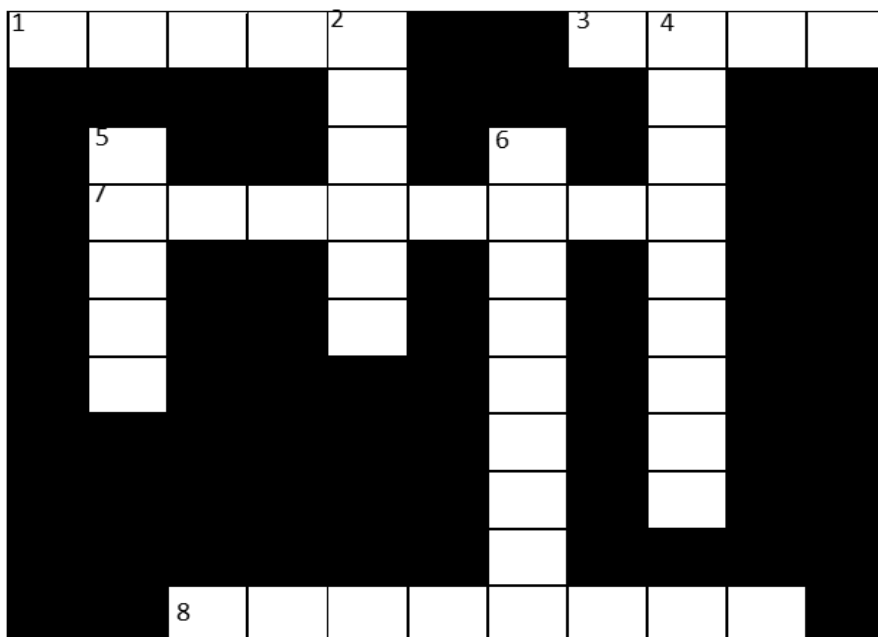
Through consulting engagements, Internal Auditors provide support to identify potential risks and consequently recommend controls to be built into new processes before they are operational.

As Internal Audit processes evolve, the team would like to move our support to a level where we contribute to strategic aspects of the IITA business. Such a future-focused and risk-centered approach where Internal Audit partners with Management helps to build trust and facilitates a relationship marked with openness.

As all our Internal Auditors are members of the Institute of Internal Auditors, the team subscribes to the Standards and principles of the Code of Ethics, which include Integrity, Objectivity, Confidentiality, and Competence. The principles require the audit team to perform their work with honesty, diligence, and responsibility, and to contribute to the organization's objectives. In addition, the Unit undergoes an external quality review every five years to confirm its conformance to the Standards and Code of Ethics.

As the Internal Audit team embarks on this journey to accomplish its mission and become a trusted advisor, we welcome your thoughts, encouragement, and suggestions on how we can reach this goal. The intention is for our stakeholders to embrace and benefit from our insights, recommendations, and advice.

—IITA Internal Audit Team,
contact: t.fumhe@cgiar.org



Across

- 1 Internal Audit's mission or worth [5]
- 3 Uncertainty [4]
- 7 Dependable or trustworthy [8]
- 8 Widespread disease or Plaque [8]

Down

- 2 Rules of conduct [6]
- 4 Moral uprightness [9]
- 5 Firm belief or In God I ____ [5]
- 6 Goal or Aim [9]

Quotable quote

"In times like these, it is important to assess the situation on a day-to-day basis and monitor the threat levels in different locations."

- Salonié Ganju, Matrix

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