

Bi-monthly fitness walk for staff resumes in Ibadan campus

Considering the need to sustain sporting activities that promote wellness without compromising relevant COVID-19 safety protocols, IITA resumed the bi-monthly fitness walk, initially suspended following the outbreak of the virus pandemic in Nigeria. The health walk, which took place on 24 July 2020, coincided with IITA's 53rd anniversary of founding.

Earlier, while announcing the resumption of the walk, Wole Oladokun (Employee Services Manager) reminded all staff to join the walk to celebrate 53 years of IITA's impactful agricultural research, which has transformed the agricultural landscape across the continent and continued to improve the lives and livelihoods for millions of Africans. He said: 'We are

using this platform to improve health and wellness in the Institute which is directly linked with performance, less time off based on sick-offs, and eventually, fewer expenses personally and institutionally on medication and all.' He urged Sportsfest Team Coordinators to mobilize their respective teams for the walk.

The event witnessed a huge turn-out of staff, including the IITA Senior Management Team who came in their respective team colors. Director General N. Sanginga and spouse Charlotte, Deputy Director General Ken Dashiell, Head of HR Lilian Mendoza, Head of Communication Katherine Lopez, and HR Manager Lade Oke were among those who participated in the walk starting at the Sports Center.

Addressing staff before the start of the walk to mark IITA's 53rd year, Dashiell reminded staff to celebrate IITA's achievements. He said "IITA is strong at 53 and will be stronger at 54 and 55." Echoing Sanginga's words, he reiterated "Help IITA, and IITA will help you."

Oladokun also expressed appreciation to participants for taking part in the event. Head of IITA Clinic Dr Samson Adeleke emphasized the need for regular exercise and announced some guidelines in line with the new normal fitness walk protocols earlier developed by HR and communicated to all staff in keeping with medical advice to curb the spread of COVID-19.



HR and medical team organize weekly health awareness session

In keeping with the need for increased awareness to forestall community spread of COVID-19 in the IITA campus, the HR-Medical Team has rolled out a weekly health awareness session for staff in the IITA Ibadan Campus. The first session, organized for staff of the Facilities Management Services (FMS), was held at the FMS Pavilion on 8 July. The second and third sessions featuring the Cassava/Yam Breeding Units and staff of the Threshing Building were held on 17 July and 23 July, respectively.

All sessions featured presentations by Drs Samson Adeleke (Head, IITA Clinic) and Akinola Titilade of the IITA Medical Unit, who took turns to answer questions on COVID-19, modes of transmission, and necessary measures/medical



protocols required to contain the spread, especially in IITA.

Attending the sessions were the Unit Heads with other staff members.

‘Wole Oladokun (Employee Services Manager) urged everyone to keep observing the protocols put in place to

curb the spread of COVID-19 in IITA and advised staff to take the lessons learned from the sessions very seriously.

Adequate physical distancing was maintained in line with COVID-19 protocols.



DG Sanginga commissions newly acquired four-wheel drive tractor

On 9 July, Director General Nteranya Sanginga commissioned a newly acquired four-wheel drive tractor, at the Institute’s Farm Office. This is the third tractor acquired by IITA in five years.

The Farm Office had not purchased new tractors for over 30 years. This lack of investment slowed down the agricultural work in the Institute as the machines were malfunctioning, and maintenance cost was increasing. New tractors needed to be acquired for excellent research work to be done.

The present leadership tenure started in November 2011, and by 2016 the first four-wheel drive tractor was acquired. In 2018 another tractor was purchased, and in 2020, a third was added. Sanginga has played a significant role in the acquisitions as Farm Manager Wilson Igbaifua confirmed in his remarks appreciating the DG. He said, “Without your support, this would not have happened.”

“This kind of tractor is the best as it can be used for all kinds of farm operations, including generating electricity, for



irrigation system, and as a vehicle for shelling farm produce. With the new tractors, we will be able to serve the Institute better,” Igbaifua added.

In his comments, the DG applauded the recent strides made by the Farm Office. “We are proud that you have used your initiative to put things in place,” Sanginga said.

Sylvia Oyinlola, Administrative Head for West Africa Hub, buttressed the DG’s point while giving her speech on behalf of Robert Asiedu, Director of Research for Development (R4D), IITA West Africa. “There has been a big difference between my first visit to this Unit and today. The difference is very impressive,” she said.



Health tips to staying safe with COVID-19

While staff continue to adjust to the reality of staying safe with the COVID-19 pandemic through consistent adherence to safety measures, it is pertinent to keep our immunity strong through a healthy lifestyle, taking note of:

- Adequate sleep (6-8 hours daily).
- Work-life balance: striking a balance between work and other essential aspects of our life (social, family, spiritual, self-development, etc.), to minimize and manage stress.
- Daily healthy eating; adequate and balanced diet with sufficient

vegetables and fruits (8-12 servings of varieties of fruits and vegetables per day).

- Intake of sufficient amount of water (at least 3 liters daily for an adult).
- Regular exercise:
 - ⇒ The exercise should be regular and adequate; 4 to 5 times weekly with each session lasting at least 30 to 45 minutes. Avoid being on the same working spot for hours; intermittently walk out of your workstation.
 - ⇒ Engage in the type(s) of exercise that you can tolerate well, regular brisk walking, sports, the use of gym facilities, and walkathon.

COVID-19 Protect yourself and loved ones

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19

+ WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands with soap and warm water regularly.



+ COVER A COUGH OR SNEEZE

Cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve, or tissue. Dispose of tissue and wash your hands afterward.



+ DON'T TOUCH

Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands.



+ KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



+ STAY HOME

If you experience respiratory symptoms like a cough or fever, stay home.



+ GET HELP

If you experience symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath), call your health care provider or local health department before seeking care.



Quotable quote

"The doctor of the future will give no medicine but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, in diet and in the cause and prevention of disease."

- Thomas Edison

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