

## IITA collaborates with Bangladesh to improve areas of research and nutrition

For more than five decades, [IITA](#) has collaborated with organizations and governments to help attain the Institute's goals of combating food insecurity and reducing malnutrition and rural poverty.



Mr Rahman Masudur at Virology Unit during the tour of facilities.

Continuing in this vein, the Bangladesh High Commissioner to Nigeria, His Excellency Mr Rahman Masudur, accompanied by his spouse, Mrs Dilmatar Masudur, visited IITA Headquarters on 2 February.

The visit aimed to explore collaboration opportunities with IITA, focusing on value addition to vegetables in Bangladesh. He also sought to understand the Institute's collaboration with other countries in Southeast Asia.

After the tour of facilities, the High Commissioner commended the Institute for its impressive work to ensure food security and safety by guaranteeing plants are protected from any viral disease. "I was able to distinguish between plants infected with a virus and virus-free plants," he said excitedly.

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## IITA-Abuja seeks stronger ties with FCTA



IITA and FCTA staff during the visit.

The newly appointed [IITA](#) Abuja Station Head, Professor Lateef Sanni, on 3 January paid a courtesy call on Mallam Abubakar Ibrahim, the Secretary of the Agriculture and Rural Development Services, Abuja, in his office at the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) secretariat.

Highlighting the objectives of the visit, Sanni informed the FCTA Secretary that he was there, first to introduce himself as the new IITA Abuja representative and secondly to strengthen the already existing partnership between both parties. He recounted past achievements recorded by the Institute and the Ministry of Agriculture that, according to him, date as far back as 1991.

While lauding the numerous contributions and role played by the Ministry towards the success of the Institute in actualizing its mandate, Sanni sought additional assistance in three critical areas. Top on the list was a request for an outreach and capacity building line budget to be drawn from the Ministry to enable IITA to bridge the gaps in agricultural interventions in FCTA.

According to Professor Sanni, if granted, this will place IITA on a pedestal to play the strategic role that will complement the Federal Government and the FCTA's efforts in guaranteeing food and nutritional security within the Federal Capital Territory Administration and beyond.

Responding, Mallam Ibrahim congratulated Professor Sanni on his appointment as the new representative of IITA Abuja. Mallam Ibrahim noted with great delight the impact of the partnership on farmers in the FCTA. He appreciated the IITA delegation and pledged his ministry's total commitment to the continuing success of the research institute.

The FCTA Secretary seized the opportunity to inform the visiting delegation of the planned 2022 Farmers' Day. He stated that, as

usual, IITA would be expected to play a significant role. Ibrahim noted that finishing touches were being made on the reviewed MoU between both parties and will be signed soon.

The IITA Abuja Station representative was accompanied on the visit by past station chiefs Gbassey Tarawali and [Beatrice Aighewi](#), and Marketing and Visitors Service Officer Terngu Abur.



*Top: IITA and FCTA staff during the visit. Bottom: (L-R) Professor Lateef Sanni with past IITA-Abuja Station chiefs Dr Beatrice Aighewi and Dr Gbassey Tarawali.*

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In addition, he explained that since agriculture is the fulcrum of the economy, the Bangladesh government focuses on improving the scale of food production. This will lead to a diverse research portfolio and generate opportunities for citizens.

The High Commissioner also explained what Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) does. He stated that there could be collaboration

between IITA and Bangladesh Premier Research.

He said: "We will employ modern technologies to find out the condition of the soil, the approach of planting grains and other crops to improve the quality of the soil, and adopt disease-resistant plants." He added that producing cassava with its different end-products could be replicated in other parts of the tropical world.

He spoke with the Youth Agripreneurs about carrying out research in vegetables and the different opportunities that could be generated.

IITA Deputy Director General [Kenton Dashiell](#) appreciated Mr Masudur for his visit and said he would connect him with the CGIAR South Asia Regional Director. "We look forward to your return in agribusiness and opportunities," he said.



*Top: The Bangladesh High Commissioner to Nigeria, speaking with the Youth Agripreneurs. Bottom: IITA Management Staff discussing areas of collaboration with Mr Rahman Masudur.*

# Dominicans call for partnership with IITA to empower their team in agricultural activities

The Order of Preachers (OP), an order of Catholic priests also called Dominicans, paid a courtesy visit to [IITA](#) Headquarters on 1 February to discuss areas of collaboration between IITA and the Order. The OP was founded in 1816 by Saint Dominic de Guzman, and its impact on people's livelihood has grown over the years.



Reverend Father Francis Chiadi (OP) highlighting suggested areas of collaboration with IITA.

Reverend Father Francis Chiadi, OP Chairman, Senate Ceremonial Committee, Dominican University, gave a general introduction about the Order. He highlighted the University's desire to explore its agricultural potential by incorporating research activities to empower its team in the new site in Omotoso, Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

"We want to get involved in capacity development including training, knowledge sharing, and technology dissemination; technical support for commercial agricultural production and processing technologies; and visits

to IITA by students of the Dominican University," he stated.

In response, [Alfred Dixon](#), Director for Development and Delivery, said that IITA has worked with the Dominican Order in Moniya under the Weed Management Project. "I look forward to reviving this partnership, but we should start with an MoU," he said.

IITA Deputy Director General, Partnerships for Delivery, [Kenton Dashiell](#), added that strategic avenues would be employed to integrate the Dominican community with the IITA community. Dominican students

would be linked to IITA's activities in Ghana since the Dominican Order also operates in Ghana. In addition, they would have access to useful information by being added to IITA mailing lists. He also suggested that an MoU be signed before collaboration.

Youth Employment in Agribusiness and Sustainable Agriculture Project Coordinator, Oluyemi Adunoye, noted that the unit could provide capacity development activities for youth who fit into the criteria of existing projects that the IITA Youth Agripreneurs implement, such as the IFAD Agri-hub project and the I-Youth project.



DDG-P4D Kenton Dashiell (rightmost) speaking on the terms of partnership engagement.