

Agriculture Permanent Secretary lauds IITA's commitment to Tanzania's agricultural development

Tanzania's Ministry of Agriculture Permanent Secretary, Hon. Andrew Massawe applauded [IITA](#)'s achievements in attaining agricultural milestones. He noted partnership for impact with national agricultural stakeholders, the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) to improve breeding, seed propagation innovations, and multiplication, and the Tanzania Official Seed Certification Institute (TOSCI) to build capacity in seed certification. [to page 3](#)



IITA Eastern Africa Regional Hub Director Leena Tripathi at Tanzania's parliament session in Dodoma.

Nigerian Conservation Foundation donates seedlings to reforest burnt IITA Forest section

A forest fire, probably from neighboring garbage and weed burning, burned down a section of the IITA Forest Reserve in February 2021.



Ademola Ajayi, IITA Forest Center Field Supervisor, welcoming the invited guests: NCF partner, school pupils and IITA Security guards.

Though the IITA Security Unit and the forest night rangers curtailed the fire, many trees suffered severe damage. The IITA Forest Center, therefore, called on the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) to donate seedlings to replant the burnt area—a request they readily obliged.

On 27 May, members of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF)—Dr Joseph Onoja, Wenceslas Gatarabirwa, Ian Barber, and Paul Insua-Cao—and student-members of IITA Forest Center’s Schools Conservation Club (SCC) converged at the IITA Forest Reserve to replant trees in the burnt area. The SCC members were students from two secondary schools in Ibadan, Nigeria.

NCF partners with the IITA Forest Center to conserve tree seedlings and donated 2400 seedlings to restore the burnt area. Contributing to the tree replanting operation is a win-win for IITA and NCF, as the IITA Forest Reserve is one of the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) for NCF’s bird monitoring activities. The conservation of the trees at IITA Forest Reserve would consequently keep the bird’s habitat intact. NCF also sponsors IITA Forest Center’s School Conservation Clubs, where students learn to collect seeds, watch and identify birds and other wildlife, and find out how to conserve all types of flora and fauna.

During the exercise, they planted over 11 species of indigenous trees. The diverse tree species planted would prevent spreading diseases peculiar to particular tree species—if such incidences occur.

Some of the trees planted were *Erythrophleum suaveolens* (Ordeal tree), African maple tree, *Entandrophragma angolense*, *Cola gigantea*, and *Khaya ivorensis*.

Olukunle Olasupo, IITA Forest Center Field Supervisor and 2018 winner of the March Christian Award of the prestigious Botanic Gardens Conservation, coordinated the planting session. The goal was to replenish indigenous trees to support other life forms native and adaptable to the environment.

After the tree planting demonstration by Olasupo, the guests and students took to planting different trees already placed at the base of different stacks in the field. Hilde Koper, IITA Deputy Director

General, Corporate Services, planted the African maple tree. This cultural tree hosts the African Silk Worm used in making the African native fabric Sanyon.

The leader of the NCF delegation, Onoja, planted *Entandrophragma angolense*, an excellent timber tree that takes about 35 years to bring out its first flower. Other invited conservationists planted *Cola gigantea* and *Khaya ivorensis*, choice timber trees already endangered and on the IUCN red list.
Contributed by Folake Oduntan



Top right: NCF partner planting a tree seedling flanked by his colleagues, Forest Center staff, and IITA DDG Corporate Services, Hilde Koper (left). **Center:** School pupil guided by IITA Forest Center staff to plant a tree seedling. **Bottom:** Pupils, teachers, and some Forest Center staff after planting seedlings at the burnt area.

This was revealed in a three-day official visit by the IITA Eastern Africa Regional Hub management to the Ministry of Agriculture and TARI from 15 to 17 May. The activity was organized and supported by the Building Economically Sustainable Seed Systems for Cassava, Phase II (BASICS-II), The International Fund of Agricultural Development's South-South and Triangular Cooperation (IFAD-SSTC), and [African Cassava Agronomy Initiative \(ACAI\)](#) projects.

The visit's objective was to update the new Permanent Secretary, Hon. Massawe on recent engagements between IITA and the Ministry and potential areas of partnership. The IITA Eastern Africa Regional Hub Director [Leena Tripathi](#) appreciated the Ministry of Agriculture for their support and shared IITA's operation experiences in Tanzania related to administration challenges, including robust enabling environments for scientific work and engagements.

"I once visited TARI Kibaha and Mikocheni centers; I saw the IITA posters and was curious to know more about you. When I arrived at Mikocheni center, I was informed that many of their laboratories were made possible through support from IITA," Hon. Massawe said.

During the meeting, Tripathi noted that IITA's work and efforts usually align with government development strategy as outlined in the Agriculture Sector Development Plan II (ASDP II). "Our research activities for partnerships aim to increase food security and safety, reduce rural poverty and undernutrition, and promote sustainable natural resource management," she said.

However, Hon. Massawe highlighted areas of emphasis to achieve a 10% annual growth rate for agriculture, which supports 65% of Tanzanians.

"The areas of emphasis are seed systems with a focus on breeding new varieties and multiplications, research, youth support to create a better tomorrow (youth engagement in agribusinesses), structural developments for markets and mechanization, and engagement of the Public-Private Partnership model," he noted.

The next day, the IITA team met with TARI Director General Geoffrey Mkamilo at the TARI headquarters in Makutopola, Dodoma, to update him on transitioning to One CGIAR and discuss how to strengthen the partnership and improve the visibility of IITA in Tanzania. Mkamilo advised an advocacy strategy to increase the visibility of IITA activities in the

Government's high-level offices through frequent meetings and visits. Tripathi mentioned that TARI should acknowledge IITA's contributions to the varieties development and other jointly developed technologies while discussing with the government officials. It was also agreed that we should co-develop proposals and co-implement projects or programs.

On the last day, the IITA team attended the annual parliamentarian budget session for 2022/23, whereby the Ministry of Agriculture presented its annual budget. During the session, organized for stakeholders on the invitation of The Ministry of Agriculture, the Speaker of Tanzania's national assembly, Hon. Tulia Ackson, thanked several organizations and international institutes, including IITA and other CGIAR centers, for their immense contribution to the nation's agricultural development sector.

IITA has an excellent partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture. The Institute has supported different activities, including editing and printing of Tanzania's Cassava Development Strategy 2020-2030 and other climate-smart agriculture books, as well as collaboration to enhance extension services through capacity building of government agricultural staff. *Contributed by Gloriana Ndibalema*

Take responsibility! Stop the spread of COVID-19!

Always clean your hands; practice physical and social distancing; wear face masks properly; avoid crowds and public places; keep a 2-meter distance from the next person; and practice general sanitation and hygiene.

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.



Improving productivity and efficiency along the agricultural value chain in Kano State

IITA and partners organized a seed fair from 10 to 18 May at Kano Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KNARDA) Headquarters and KNARDA Zonal offices in Kano metropolis, Northern Nigeria. The fair provided farmers with quality seeds of market-preferred, improved major crop varieties and other agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, animal feed, and small-scale machinery at affordable prices from genuine sources for efficient use and agricultural extension services.

at each center by the District Head of the Local Government Areas.

Several government officials attended the opening ceremony, including the Special Adviser to the Deputy Governor on Agriculture, Alhaji Hafizu Mohammed, who represented the Deputy Governor of Kano State, His Excellency Dr Nasiru Yusuf Gawuna. Other guests included Permanent Secretaries of Ministries of Agriculture, Local Government, and Commerce; the Emir of Kano HRH Alhaji Aminu Ado Bayero, represented by Sarkin Dawaki Mai-Tuta; KNARDA Managing Director Alhaji Bello Abubakar, represented by Director Administration and General Services, Hajiya Aisha Abdullahi Garko; and the Kano State Agricultural Supply Company (KASCO) Managing Director, Bala Mohammed Inuwa.

Other stakeholders at the fair were the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Nigerian Agriculture Insurance Corporation (NAIC), Seed Companies, Agrochemical Companies, and dealers. Some large- and small-scale farmers and Kano State commodity farmers' associations for cowpea, soybean, maize, groundnut, wheat, and sorghum also attended the event.

This indicated a high level of interest and the belief that the future of agriculture is bright. The event created significant economic gains as agro-dealers sold large quantities of market-preferred, improved varieties of major crops and other agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, animal feed, and small-scale machinery to farmers during the fair.

The Seed and Inputs Fair was organized in collaboration with the Kano State Agropastoral Development Project (KSADP), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Institute for Agricultural Research (IAR/ABU), Center for Dryland Agriculture (CDA-BUK), KNARDA, Sasakawa Africa Association (SAA), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), National Agricultural Seeds Council (NASC), KASCO, All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN), Seed Companies Association of Nigeria (SEEDAN), and the Association of Registered Seed Companies of Nigeria (RSCON). *Contributed by Sarah Sallau*



*Top: Dignitaries and the Governor's representative at the Seed and Input Fair.
Bottom: Dr Kamara enlightening partners on the improved seeds.*

The IITA-Kano Station exhibition showcased improved crop varieties that the institute promotes in the region. Among the most notable were the improved seed varieties of cowpea, soybean, and maize. Information materials on improved crop management and IITA's work to support farmers with new technologies

to help farmers realize high yields were also available.

The six-day event attracted over 2,881 attendees, including researchers, seed companies, input suppliers, farmers, processors, buyers of improved seed, community leaders, and service providers. The fair was officially opened

IITA-led Zero Hunger Project partners IFAD-VCDP to empower women processors in Ogun State

Through funding from the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), [IITA](#) has empowered women processors in Ogun State by donating a wet hammer mill and a press on 31 May to the FGN/IFAD-VCDP Assisted Cassava Processing Center in Bara Obafemi Owode Local Government Area in the state.



Top: Zero Hunger Project and IFAD-VCDP associates setting up the mill in Bara Obafemi Owode Local Government Area. *Bottom:* Excited women processors learning how to use the wet hammer mill.

The women were thrilled when the IITA Postharvest Specialist Peter Kolawole informed them of the wet hammer mill's durability and efficiency. He added that it could process 4 tons of cassava per hour, compared to the previously used grater, which ideally grates 2 tons per hour under the same conditions.

The Zero Hunger Project Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Manager, Oyewale Abioye, speaking on behalf of the Zero Hunger Project Lead [Debo Akande](#), disclosed that the donation of the equipment was made possible through the strong partnership between IITA and the IFAD VCDP team in the state. He informed the processors that the project had trained 14 fabricators across the state, introducing Segun Salisu—one of the trained fabricators whose workshop was in the Local Government Area. He charged them to take advantage of the capacity in the state to build more machines.

The Zero Hunger Training Manager Bolanle Olorode enlightened the women on the basic hygiene practices to keep the machine clean to ensure that the processing center produces clean and healthy food.

According to IITA Postharvest Engineer Thierno Diallo, donating the wet hammer mill was borne out of the state's mechanization needs assessment survey conducted by the IITA Zero Hunger Project. The engineers also educated the Bara Processing Center Manager, Olufemi Sodunola, on operating and maintaining the machine. *Contributed by the Zero Hunger Project Team*