

## Funding opportunities: CGIAR Global Director on Finance meets IITA team

[CGIAR](#) Global Director for Innovative Finance and Resource Mobilization, [Andre Zandstra](#), visited the [IITA](#) Ibadan campus on 26 July. His visit provided a platform to discuss funding opportunities with IITA management and other staff affiliated with innovative finance and resource mobilization in the Institute. to page 3



Andre Zandstra (middle) in a group photograph with IITA Management--Nteranya Sanginga, Kenton Dashiell, Hilde Koper--and some IITA staff.

## YEASA organizes stakeholders' roadmap workshop for youth investment in agribusiness

As part of efforts to create profitable partnerships and support beneficiaries in Nigeria, the Youth Employment in Agribusiness and Sustainable Agriculture (YEASA) project consortium, Afe Babalola University (ABUAD), IITA, and Africa Rice, organized a workshop for national and local stakeholders on the roadmap for public and private sector youth investment in the agricultural sector. YEASA project beneficiaries and representatives from government institutions, NGOs, and regulatory institutions attended the meeting.



Participants during a presentation session at the roadmap workshop.

The workshop showcased agribusiness start-ups that emerged from project implementation to facilitate linkages with government and private sector opportunities for youth. The event took place on 21 July, at the IITA headquarters, Ibadan, with Dr Olabode Adetoyi, Ekiti State Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Security, in attendance.

The Commissioner said he participated in the program because he understands the importance of youth to the Nigerian economy while commending the project's implementing partners.

"We can see the excellent results and testimonies of the beneficiaries. More than 600 youth have been trained and empowered in Oyo and Ekiti states, and Benin Republic. I cannot wait for the YEASA program to become national because of the unique method of training and empowering youth. It seems like it will be a big challenge for us as a government to adopt this promising program."

The YEASA project manager, Prof Amos Onasanya, while highlighting

the project activities, explained that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementing partners explored the use of ICT platforms to train the project beneficiaries, which IFAD commended.

Prof Onasanya said that in the last three years of implementation, 2000 youth were employed directly and indirectly through the project.

"The project has done a good job of teaching technical, entrepreneurial, and life skills to the beneficiaries and giving them a grant to start their agribusiness. However, now we want these micro-enterprises to scale up by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the stakeholders participating in this workshop," he said.

During the workshop, the aspiring youth agribusiness owners were advised to have a positive attitude and to explore available funding opportunities.

"We know that the business environment is tough. That is why we have a group

for young entrepreneurs in the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (NACCIMA) Youth Entrepreneurs. We mentor entrepreneurs, provide them with finance, and most importantly, access to the institutional market. We are ready to work with YEASA," said Chief Kola Akosile, National Vice President, NACCIMA.

Stakeholders appreciated the opportunity to hear the success stories of the agripreneurs and see their products. "This event is a good opportunity to get to know the YEASA project better. I am impressed with the support YEASA gave to agripreneurs and the businesses that have emerged. I will do everything in my power to help these businesses get their NAFDAC certification," he added.

The YEASA project aims to improve the livelihoods of rural youth through agriculture and agricultural enterprises by providing youth with improved technical, business, entrepreneurial, financial, and life skills. *Contributed by: Tomiwa Adesanya*



Group photograph of participants taken after the workshop.

## Got a story to share?

Please send your story with photos and captions every Tuesday to [iita-news@cgiar.org](mailto:iita-news@cgiar.org) or Katherine Lopez ([k.lopez@cgiar.org](mailto:k.lopez@cgiar.org)) and Uzoma Agha ([u.gha@cgiar.org](mailto:u.gha@cgiar.org)).



In a meeting with the IITA Senior Management team, Zandstra mentioned that this trip was his first to IITA and Nigeria. He commended IITA's aesthetic and serene environment and the excellent reception. He explained that he is the connector between major funders and CGIAR Initiatives. Hence, he is interested in meeting IITA staff affiliated with finance, understanding their interests, and entertaining their finance-related questions in line with One CGIAR.

[Kenton Dashiell](#), IITA Deputy Director General, Partnerships for Delivery, briefly described IITA work and activities. Dashiell also mentioned his earlier discussion with Zandstra about an IITA campaign for a systems council meeting.

Zandstra explained that the campaign aims to convince CGIAR to hold the upcoming systems council meeting in IITA in May 2023. He suggested that the contributions of [Dr Nteranya Sanginga](#),

Director General of IITA, would be recognized during the meeting.

Dr Sanginga affirmed the suggestion, saying that IITA would be happy to host the Systems Council. He also suggested that individuals with a voice in Nigeria/Africa and associated with IITA should be involved with the council, like Dr Akinwumi Adesina and His Excellency, Olusegun Obasanjo. Zandra welcomed this suggestion.

In wrapping up the meeting, Zandra highlighted five areas CGIAR is working on funding: Systems Council members, emerging markets, climate funds and finance, IFIs (the banks), and a private innovative finance bucket. He stated that he is open to questions and contributions on funding.

At the close of the meeting, Dr Sanginga said, "Zandstra, your presence here is important to us. Your visit has shown that we are actually a team with CGIAR." Dashiell added that Zandstra is now officially a member of the IITA family.

Zandstra was later taken on a tour of the Institute's campus to see IITA's technologies and interact with staff.

*Contributed by: Favour Eleta*



DG Sanginga (left) welcoming Andre Zandstra to IITA.

## Tricot: A better method for on-farm crop testing



The Nigerian Tricot research team in a Tricot trial farm for cassava.

The NextGen Cassava Breeding project, the [IITA](#) Cassava Breeding Unit, and Sahel Consulting recently organized a triadic comparison of technologies (Tricot) workshop with the Nigerian variety release committee. Sahel Consulting works with the Nigerian Variety Release Committee, through the [Collaborative Seed Programme \(CSP\)](#), to innovate the procedures and approaches used to enable variety release.

The workshop proposed employing Tricot as an alternative and better way for on-farm testing with farmers and processors. Representatives from [CGIAR](#) research centers and National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES) from various African countries shared experiences with the Tricot method. The workshop, moderated by Prof Chiedozi Egesi, Project Leader for the NextGen Cassava Breeding, highlighted the procedure for variety release, among other key areas.

During the opening remarks, National Variety Release Committee Registrar, Dr Sunday Aladele, shared the idea and process that birthed the need for the Tricot workshop. According to him, consideration to include the Tricot system in the variety release system resulted from brainstorming on the best way to reduce the length of time and generate more representative on-farm data that will meet the National Variety Release Committee's requirements for registration and release in Nigeria. "This was because recent studies showed that Nigeria's variety release

system is one of the lengthiest in Africa," he said. Chinedu Agbara presented the Collaborative Seed Programme objectives that aim to increase efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the variety release system, which will be a critical contributor to a broader seed sector transformation.

Presenting on Tricot insights, Ann Ritah Nanyonjo, a researcher at Uganda's [National Crop Resources Research Institute](#) (NaCRRRI) Cassava breeding team, shared Uganda's experience with Tricot. She mentioned that one good quality of the approach is that many farm households are engaged in the trials. Nanyonjo added that using Tricot trials resulted in quick dissemination of candidate cassava clones and the release of varieties with farmer-preferred characteristics. "Local seed systems are strengthened because more choices are available to adapt to the changing climate," she included.

Jacob Van Etten, Research Director, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, highlighted the benefits of

Tricot. According to Van Etten, Tricot enables small and easy tasks for each participant, keeping them motivated. He also mentioned that the process is supported with digital tools resulting in quick analysis and robust data. "Tricot makes new types of partnerships possible," he added. Sharing next steps, Van Etten suggested the need for more capacity building on Tricot; developing protocols for specific crops and contexts; agreeing on the role of Tricot in variety release; and developing new partnerships that can create win-win situations.

Sharing Ghana's experience with Tricot, Richard Oteng-Frimpong, Head of Groundnut Breeding in [Savannah Agricultural Research Institute](#) (CSIR-SARI), spoke about some barriers faced in implementing Tricot in groundnut production. He said requirements for crops with low multiplication rates like groundnut could limit the number of participants. He also mentioned that the availability of a reliable set of participants willing and able to participate in the process needs proper attention and skill.



Tricot farmer (female) with the lead farmer (male) who collects data from a group of 10 farmers in Benue State.

Oteng-Frimpong, however, stated that the advantages clearly outweigh the barriers. Tricot has many benefits such as the ability to reach a large number of farmers and to independently assess new genotypes. Other benefits include the low cost of capturing data and ease of doing it for a large number of people; and the approach does not require extensive training to use with support of the online platform.

[Béla Teeken](#), Associate Social and Gender Scientist at IITA, shared Nigeria's experiences with Tricot. Highlighting the gender perspective of the approach, he explained the influence of gender on variety preferences in cassava. Teeken mentioned that gender was the most important socioeconomic driver in variety selection. He, however, emphasized that although gender was not the focus of the workshop, the Tricot method allows easy and standard segregation of participants according to social dimensions and therefore integrates gender and social inclusiveness without much

extra effort. The CLimMob online data and data analysis platform ([www.climmob.net](http://www.climmob.net)) is able to provide those social and other dimensions that significantly explain the variability in the data. Such information can be crucial with regard to variety adoption. Furthermore, Tricot creates a network of experimenting users that can be used for further variety dissemination based on Tricot results and even offers a platform for the communication of other technologies.

Elyse Tuyishime from One Acre Fund in Rwanda shared the country's experience with Tricot. He stated that Tricot made on-farm testing so much simpler because much time is gained due to the standardized approach in which data entry, cleaning and analysis are so well streamlined and automated with all the room to include particularities related to the country and crop.

Kaue de Sousa, digital inclusion researcher from Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT, spoke about

data analysis of Tricot and how it can be used for decision making. He highlighted the integrative aspects of where Tricot data were combined with climate data. He further highlighted that Tricot expertise will be integrated as a knowledge skill in the curriculum of several African educational institutes and can count as a valuable part of several BSc, MSc and PhD trajectories. He also highlighted that the current 1000farms project especially targets the support of NARES in relation to capacity building needed to apply the approach.

The workshop revealed Tricot's potential in increasing the visibility of specific preferences by different social segments, ecological regions and intersection with gender. Importantly, it also showed the possibilities of linking Tricot data to climate and breeding data to provide various ways to test breeding trials' external validity and assess the genetic gain in farmers' fields.

The workshop took the Nigerian Variety Release Committee along in four areas: including more value chain actors than only farmers; notions of social impact of breeding and more representative feedback from users in general that can provide crucial information on the external validity of breeding trials; the importance of gender differences; and assessing genetic gain in farmers' fields.

Speaking at the workshop, Dr Ibidun Adetiloye, Desk Officer of National Variety Release Committee, explained that Tricot is an innovation that has come to stay, serving as an alternative to the current method of on-farm testing. "From the presentations, Tricot seems more cost effective with more farmers involved compared to our current practice. I appreciate IITA and Prof Egesi for organizing the workshop," she said.

Aladele gave the closing remarks and indicated that the workshop has convincingly shown that Tricot is a viable alternative for on-farm testing of crops for variety release. Prof Egesi wrapped up by appreciating his fellow organizers from various Institutes in CGIAR and also commended participants for their active engagement. *Contributed by: Favour Eleta*



Grace Agi, a farmer and processor, in her baby trial with a Nextgen variety.

# Ivan Buddenhagen, former IITA Director of Cereal Improvement Program, passes on

With a deep sense of loss, IITA announces the demise of the former Director of Cereal Improvement Program from 1975 to 1980, Ivan William Buddenhagen. He died at his Davis, California home in the USA on 9 July 2022.

Ivan Buddenhagen led the international research program on rice and maize, producing varieties and hybrids widely grown across Africa. In 1986, the Institute received the King Baudouin International Agricultural Research Award for its accomplishments on a major viral disease of maize, Maize Streak Virus, as a result of his contributions to maize research during his years at IITA.

Buddenhagen's 60-year career in the world of plants started with his education at Oregon State University in Corvallis, where he received a BSc in Botany, an MSc in Plant Pathology, and a PhD in Plant Pathology, Plant Breeding, and Genetics.



*The late Prof Ivan W. Buddenhagen*

He was born in Ventura, California, in 1930 to a petroleum geologist father and mother who was a teacher. His professional journey covered countries like Costa Rica, Pakistan, Hawaii, and Honduras where he would discover the origin of the banana Moko disease, the ecology of the pathogen, and its mode of insect transmission. He also worked with breeders on developing resistance to the Moko disease.

His passion for science directed his research on the pathogenesis and integrated control of major diseases threatening banana cultivation for large plantations and smallholder farmers in Indonesia. With modest funding from the Nunhems Foundation, he conducted field research on banana and collected wild relatives of banana in Sumatra. As a result of his work, planting materials of disease-resistant bananas are now available for smallholder farmers of Indonesia.

As an academic, his track record for innovation resulted in his initiating new courses, new staff positions, and expanding funding to develop a mature department of plant pathology at the University of Hawaii. As Chairman of the Department of Plant Pathology, he also developed a full virology facility, expanded research on banana diseases, and helped develop a new plant science building with modern laboratory facilities for plant pathology.

During his six years at IITA, colleagues described him as a scientist with



*The late Prof Ivan William Buddenhagen*

extensive knowledge, scientific rigor, and a capacity for lateral thinking. Buddenhagen will be remembered for thinking out of the box with a clear vision and his courage in tackling impediments to science.

The family farm in Oregon became the site for more of his efforts to improve crops. To reduce the role of viruses that limit garlic production and to encourage the possibility of new germplasm, he obtained many garlic varieties to obtain true garlic seed. After several years, he could provide true garlic seed for about 30 new varieties to other eager garlic breeders in six countries.

Buddenhagen is survived by his wife of 51 years, Evelyn, daughters, sons, and grandchildren.

Gifts in memory of Ivan may be given to: The UC Davis Botanical Conservatory at <https://give.ucdavis.edu/go/botanicalconservatory>; or, to, Yolo Hospice at <https://yolocares.org/give/> Contributed by: Timilehin Osunde

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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.