



# IITA

## Youth Agripreneurs

*Agriculture is the future*

July 2016 Issue 19

## IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA) partners with Hello Tractor on mechanization



2nd from left, representative of IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Waheed Oni, with some stakeholders during the launching

IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA) is partnering with Hello Tractor to train young agripreneurs in Nigeria on the use of a 'Smart Tractor' designed by the company. The partnership aims to increase smallholder farmers' access to mechanization and support youths as the catalysts for change and innovation in agriculture.

The training, which commences in September after the project launch in Abuja on Monday, July 18, will bridge the gap in the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) and mechanization in agriculture.

The Hello Tractor project funded by USAID is another self-developed proposal of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs after the Community Youth Agripreneurs project. The Hello Tractor which is a two year project will give IYA the opportunity of providing training for 100 youths on the business of owning, maintaining, utilizing, and promoting services for a fleet of smart tractors. IYA will also support the participants in the

formation of individual and group-based enterprises to ensure more engagement of youths in the agricultural sector.

The training workshop, which will take place in three different regions in Nigeria; Ibadan, Abuja, and Kano will range from lectures, case studies, brainstorming,

discussions, group exercises, demonstrations, debates, and videos. Training content for the workshop will include a curriculum comprising of areas such as agribusiness value chain, use of ICT in agribusiness, mechanization in agriculture, networking skills, entrepreneurship, introduction to tractor and implement maintenance, business management, risk management, organizational / administrative development, business model/plan and marketing. All these are expected to aid

the youths in sustaining a productive and competitive tractor agribusiness enterprise.

The Hello Tractor project will also provide youth agripreneurs who will be selected across the country access to financing, which will help them own a fleet of tractors. This would create opportunities for the Agripreneurs to provide tractor services for up to 15,000 smallholder farmers.

The 'Smart Tractor' developed by Hello Tractor is a versatile machine with eight attachments to serve farmers throughout the farm production cycle. It has attachments which include those for tilling, plowing, threshing, haulage, irrigation pumping and sprinkling, iron wheels for wet paddy rice production, and other vital farming needs.

The tractor is also fitted with a GPS antenna, local SIM card, harddrive and telematics capabilities, which enables them to connect the Smart Tractor to the powerful cloud software of Hello Tractor, even in rural environments with low connectivity. This connectivity feature enables Hello Tractor to pair farmers in need of tractor services with a Smart Tractor owner within their vicinity.



L-R IYA representative Waheed Oni ;and Matthew Burton, Director Economic Growth and Environment office USAID

# IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs (IKYA ) trains unemployed graduates

To achieve the goal of engaging more youths in agribusiness, the IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs (IKYA) has developed a capacity building program for young graduates who are willing to embrace agriculture as a means of creating wealth and employment.

The nine weeks training, which aims to transfer the entrepreneurial and agribusiness skills and experience gathered so far by IKYA to the teeming population of unemployed youths in DR Congo, is poised to enlighten the youths on opportunities available along the value chain in agriculture.

The first set of youths to undergo the training graduated recently, while IKYA will be supporting the youths through mentoring and backstopping. The group will also be monitoring the progress and challenges faced by the youths in their chosen area of agriculture.

During the training, the youths were attached to the different production sites of IKYA in Kalambo, Murhesa, Nyakabera, Lwiro, where they were trained on production, processing, packaging,



*Some of the trainees during a practical sessions on value addition*

leadership, group organization, business plan and proposal development.

Noel Mulingaya, the coordinator of IKYA congratulated the trainees for the priceless opportunity given to them to be employers of labor through the agribusiness skills imparted in them by the group. Sharing the experience of IKYA, Mulingaya stated that members of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs were given

the opportunity to explore the links along the agricultural value chain, and the group according to him has been able to progress through lessons learnt from the challenges and successes of the group.

“To provide money for young entrepreneurs is important but the crucial step is the entrepreneurial spirit and sharing knowledge,” he said.

# IYA Abuja expands its fish farming business, records success in the first fish production cycle

IITA Youth Agripreneurs in Abuja (IYA Abuja) has followed the foot-step of the mother group in Ibadan (IYA Ibadan) by expanding its number of fish ponds from 1 to 5.

IYA Ibadan, which also diversified from crop production into fish farming started in 2014 with 4 earthen ponds and expanded to 17 within 2 years of operation within the premises of IITA in Ibadan.

Impressed and challenged by the success of the mother group, IYA Abuja embarked on its fish farming business in February 2016. After being trained by the fish team in Ibadan, IYA Abuja stocked its first earthen pond of 20m by 40m in size with 5,500 pieces of juvenile catfish for the initial production cycle.

With technical support and backstopping from the fish team in Ibadan, the IYA team in Abuja has started the harvesting and sale of table size catfish five months after its diversification into the fish farming business.

Realizing the huge gap between the demand and supply of catfish within and



*Dr Kenton Dashiell (M) with IITA Youth Agripreneurs in Abuja displaying one of the catfish harvested from the pond*

outside the Abuja metropolis, the team has expanded and added additional four earthen ponds to the initial one pond to meet up with the huge demand from its consumers.

The Deputy Director General, Partnership and Capacity Development, Dr Kenton Dashiell who was present during the

harvest commended the youth for the hardwork and zeal dedicated towards the business.

The highpoint of the harvest sales was the sales of the biggest catch harvested. The fish, which weighed about 2.4kg was sold to the head of Abuja station, Dr Gbassey Tarawali.

# IKYA Play host to DR Congo communities on National Fish Day



Local fishermen heading towards Nyakabera for the National Fish Day

IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneur (IKYA) in June played host to the 48th edition of the National Fish Day in DR Congo.

Tagged 'The development of intensive family and fish farming in the DR Congo as the way forward to alleviate the low fish consumption pattern', the event recorded a large turnout of people from all over the country to IKYA's fish site at Nyakabera.

While declaring the ceremony open, the National Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, His Excellency, Kabwe Mwehu commended IITA through the IKYA initiative of revitalizing fish farming in Eastern DR Congo and other provinces.

"Youths are the drivers of change and I am convinced that IKYA will help to promote and reactivate commercial fish

farming and contribute to the reduction of malnutrition in the region through massive fish farming," he said.

The South Kivu Provincial Minister of Agriculture, Her Excellency, Adolphine Muley who was amazed at the development of the Nyakabera site, emphasized that the things she observed at the formerly abandoned Nyakabera site is a testimony that youths are the future of agriculture in DR Congo.

She added that IKYA's Nyakabera site would be piloting the sensitization and awareness creation of regular consumption of fish and fish based products to improve household dietary diversity and nutritional status.

It will be recalled that IKYA through IITA in September 2015 signed an MoU with South Kivu provincial government of DR Congo to reactivate the 50 government-owned but abandoned fish ponds at the Nyakabera site. Through the MoU, IKYA re-opened and stocked 15 of the ponds with tilapia and catfish thereby piloting the phase of local production of fish on the site.

## IITA Youth Agripreneurs-Kinshasa (IYAKIN) promotes oyster mushroom's culture

IITA Youth Agripreneurs-Kinshasa (IYAKIN) has diversified into the production and marketing of edible mushrooms called 'Oyster'

Mushrooms production and marketing offer important business opportunities because the oyster species is rarely available in the market, and are in high demand and appreciated by the Congolese.

Mushrooms offer a lot of nutritional benefits. They are rich in proteins, vitamins A and B, and sodium, which contribute to the functioning of the human immune system. In addition to containing less sugar, oyster mushrooms are rich in protein, fiber, and contain trace

elements that rejuvenate, give strength, aid digestion and fight against blood pressure and even cancer.

The oyster variety of mushrooms is not well known in Africa; it can be grown all year round, and production does not require a lot of financial effort and space. Thirty to 45 days after the inoculation of the substrates with the mycelium; mushrooms start to appear and are regularly harvested and sold to consumers.

After production, mushroom substrates are used as organic fertilizer in vegetables and fruits production. IYAKIN decided to venture into the mass production of oyster mushrooms to respond to the



An agripreneur with some of the mushrooms

high market demand of the products.

## IITA Youth Agripreneurs Tanzania (ITYA) recruits more Youths

IITA Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs (ITYA) has recruited more young graduates to join the group in Dar es Salaam. The youths were selected after going through an oral and written

screening exercise conducted by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Eastern Africa Hub, Tanzania. Speaking on the recruitment exercise, the coordinator of the group, Veronica

Kichantav said ITYA is gradually gaining a lot of recognition in Tanzania as the group received more applications during as compared to previous vacancies.

"We believe the new team will join efforts with others and support the implementation of the group's activities", she stated.

### Elizabeth Masaga

My name is Elizabeth Masaga and I joined the IYA program in the year 2016 after completing my first bachelor degree in Environmental Science



Management at the University of Ardh, Dares Salaam, Tanzania.

"Ever since I joined ITYA, I have explored so much potential in agriculture. For example, I was not aware of soymilk; I did not know how it is being processed, and how marketable soy product could be.

With my experience so far, I believe I will become the best agripreneur dealing with soybean and cassava products.

### Newton Deogratius Kabwela

My name is Newton Deogratius. I completed my first degree on Procurement at the Tanzania Institute of Accounts (TIA), Kurasini, (2012). I joined ITYA in 2016 and work with the vegetable and soymilk production unit. My interest is in commercial



agriculture and I aim to become an international business man. Agriculture will attract more youths if agricultural resources and the technologies are further improved. If technologies such as irrigation,

mechanized tools are introduced and made available at low costs, agriculture will attract more youths.

### Prisca Ndunguru

My name is Prisca Ndunguru. I am a graduate of Agricultural Economics and Business from the Sokoine University of Agriculture. I was inspired



to join the program because I liked agriculture since I was a teenager. I have observed ITYA project activities, and I am impressed at their level of success. I want to urge my fellow youths to stop seeing agriculture as an inferior profession; rather they should focus on the long term impact of agriculture around the world.



IYA Kano team vaccinating the rams

## Update from Kano, Nigeria

As a modification of an intensive system of animal production, the IITA Youth Agripreneurs in Kano have diversified into livestock production through the fattening of rams.

The youths have acquired over 8 rams for the first cycle. The fattening of the rams according to the market survey conducted by the youth is profitable and will increase the market value of the rams.

The rams are currently being housed at the facilities of the ILRI in Minjibir Kano. Necessary precaution methods are being put in place to ensure that the rams are disease free.

## Call for applications: Engaging youths in agribusiness



The training workshop will take place in three different regions: Ibadan, Abuja, and Kano and will range from lectures, case studies, brainstorming, discussions, group exercise, demonstrations, debates, and videos. Training contents for the workshop include curriculum, such as;

- Agribusiness value chain,
- Use of ICT in agribusiness,

- Business management, risk management,
- Organizational/administrative development,
- Business Plan Development and marketing. All these are expected to aid the youth in sustaining a productive and competitive tractor agribusiness enterprise.

Applicants must meet the following criteria.

- Youth between age of 18-35
- Interested in practicing agribusiness and developing the capacity of others.
- Educational qualification (NCE, OND, HND, Bsc)
- Interested in owning and rendering services with Fleet of SMART tractors.

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- Mechanization in agriculture,
- NetworkingskillsandEntrepreneurship,
- Introduction to tractor and implement maintenance,

To apply, please visit "www.youthagripreneurs.org" for more details.

Application deadline: Sunday 14 August 2016

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