

2019



IITA Youth Agripreneurs in 2019: A Synthesis of Action towards Effective Agribusiness Delivery

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Front cover photo:

A compilation of photos from the various projects implemented by the IITA Youth Agripreneurs across Africa.

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IITA Youth Agripreneurs in 2019: A synthesis of actions towards effective agribusiness delivery

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SUMMARY

This document describes the activities of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA) for the year 2019. IYA essentially started as a youth-led exploration of agribusiness incubation in August 2012 and established diverse learning enterprises, and expansion through the creation of additional groups.

A set of operating strategies evolved based on gender equality, teamwork, leadership, and enterprise experimentation. Stakeholders and several agencies were attracted to the IYA approach and funds were made available to both formalize and expand its operations.

The Agripreneurs approach is built upon reorienting educated youth toward self-employment in agriculture and growing those businesses in a way that provides decent employment and builds rural economies.

Maintaining its footprint as one of the leading youth in agribusiness initiatives in Africa, IYA activities in 2019 were channeled towards the realization of the set outcomes in the strategy developed by the organization in 2012.

At inception, IYA had highlighted some of the outcomes of the intended program—creation of jobs and self-employment through the establishment of independent agribusiness enterprises, the establishment of an independent organization focused on youth in agribusiness related activities, employment by some of the trained youth in the private and public institutions, employment opportunities for some in the Business Incubation Platform of IITA, opportunities for some to pursue further studies at various professional levels while a few would be retained to run the organizations.

Indeed, the outcomes evolved as planned, with about 30 percent of the team members establishing their independent enterprises, five percent securing employment with IITA, and twenty-three percent employed in the private and public sectors. Six percent of the members are currently pursuing Masters and PhD degrees, while twenty-two percent fall into the category of people whose current mode of engagement does not fit into the proposed outcomes category (still learning or exploring opportunities along commodity value chains).

The attraction of donors to the IYA initiative led to the establishment and implementation of projects like ENABLE-Youth and ENABLE-TAAT funded by

the African Development Bank, the Chevron-funded Community Youth in Agribusiness Group (CYAG), and Youth Employment in Agribusiness and Sustainable Agriculture (YEASA) funded by the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD).



Director General of IITA, Dr Nteranya Sanginga with pupils of IITA International School during the preparatory stage of the Start Them Early Program.

The Start Them Early Program (STEP) was another initiative birthed out of IYA. STEP was born out of the need to catch future agripreneurs right from secondary school. IITA realized that this category of young people is at a critical juncture in deciding livelihood paths with strong implications for agricultural transformation. Hence, the need to expose them to viable and sustainable opportunities inherent in agriculture while building their capacity to harness them well.

This report serves as a reflection of the consolidation of successes and development of the IYA program in 2019.

From the Head, Youth in Agribusiness Office



Evelyn Ohanwusi

The year under review was indeed a step towards an evaluation of some of the highlighted outcomes of the group. Also, the footprint of IYA continued to expand with its recognition as one of the innovative organizations promoting the cause of youth in agribusiness. While doing this, it had more responsibility to ensure that more young people participated in agriculture as a business and this led to the implementation of projects of various magnitudes.

The implementation of ENABLE-TAAT continued in the year, training was conducted, advocacy activities resulted in partnerships with many organizations, and food-basket demonstration fields were established to promote nutrient-fortified TAAT commodities. Although the project could not boast of establishing independent agribusinesses during the year, it continued to monitor the ones established in 2018 and provided mentorship support.

This situation will, however, improve in 2020 as the project explores opportunities for the establishment of an agribusiness park, which will be linked to agri-hubs in Nigeria and other countries.

ENABLE-Youth continued to record success, especially in Cameroon, Madagascar and with more countries indicating interest to participate in the pilot phase. The political instability witnessed in 2019 in Sudan restricted project activities and resulted in a poor macroeconomic environment that has affected the growth of businesses; however, this situation is being resolved. But with this, the project still established 13 Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centers (YABICs), which operate as training and business units that are expected to be self-sustaining upon completion of the program in 2022. Some trained youth under the program in Madagascar received funding from a financial institution to establish their businesses. The technical advisors have indeed been instrumental to the success of the program.

It gladdens our heart also to say that we moved a STEP ahead through a new initiative known as the Start Them Early Program. Our focus for this program is targeted at secondary schools in Africa. It commenced activities in three countries but aspires to become a Pan-African program.

Getting recognition for our commitment towards improving both agribusiness opportunities and creditworthiness of youth across Africa in 2019 was a call for us to intensify effort on some of our activities, especially in the Francophone countries. The award, which is the first of its kind and funded by the government of Switzerland, was presented during the 41st conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) at the organization's headquarters in Rome. The award came with the cash prize of \$20,000, which IYA pledged to use in the establishment of a Youth in Agribusiness program in the Republic of Benin. Fulfilling its pledge, it partnered with a project funded by IFAD, the Youth Employment in Agribusiness and Sustainable Agriculture (YEASA) Project to train youth and provide them with inputs to start their businesses through the IFAD window for supporting small and medium enterprises.

The Chevron-funded project in the Niger-Delta region has been ongoing for a while now but will be completed in 2020. The project also recorded the establishment of 45 new agribusinesses. More importantly, the group made a significant contribution towards evaluating the impact of a change in the mindset of young people in embracing agriculture as a business.

It was not all rosy in 2019. The team had challenges in securing funds for its trained youth to start independent businesses, but efforts are in place to improve on this for 2020. Its activities are also becoming decentralized, hence a need for a harmonization of all projects/programs in the unit.

IITA's management has also been supportive since inception. We appreciate you all.

In the coming years, the unit will be working with a host of partners, donors, supporters, and colleagues to make an impact and deliver in the agribusiness space for youth. There is no question that we need to maintain the momentum gathered so far through our achievements and impact. We also need to re-evaluate and re-invent ourselves to stay focused. If there is going to be agricultural transformation, then youth must be motivated to embrace

agribusiness, thus becoming the drivers of the change required. I invite you to enjoy more details of our story across Africa.

ENABLE-TAAT Project

ENABLE-TAAT represents a huge opportunity for the IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA) to expand its scope and expose other young people to agribusiness and agripreneurship. ENABLE-TAAT is one of 15 Compacts comprising the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation Program (TAAT), funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and led by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). The IITA Youth Agripreneurs were selected to lead youth empowerment within TAAT because of its widely recognized Agripreneur Model.



ENABLE-TAAT team during the International Youth Day in 2019.

The overall purpose of ENABLE-TAAT is to assist in the promotion of TAAT's key agricultural technologies, operate technology and innovation centers for young people on specific commodity value chains, and stimulate youth-led agribusiness start-ups in support of TAAT's nine Priority Commodity Chains (Rice, Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato, Cassava, Aquaculture, Wheat, Sorghum/Millet, Maize, and High Iron Bean). The goal of ENABLE TAAT is to reduce the economic marginalization of African youth through the

introduction of modernized agricultural technologies in a way that leads to new agribusiness and greater employment opportunities. The project is being implemented in DR Congo, Kenya, Nigeria (Ibadan, Imo, Onne, and Abuja), Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia with planned expansion into two additional countries, Togo and the Republic of Benin.

Country	Number of Beneficiaries
Cameroon	235
DRC	537
Kenya	323
Nigeria	1838
Senegal	14
Tanzania	664
Togo	43
Uganda	437
Benin	10
Zambia	297
Total	4398

The project has four main objectives, which include the expansion of agribusiness opportunities for exploring employment opportunities available for young people through TAAT's priority value chains and proven technologies. This is expected to be achieved through training young people along these value chains and encouraging them to develop sustainable businesses in line with the proven technologies.

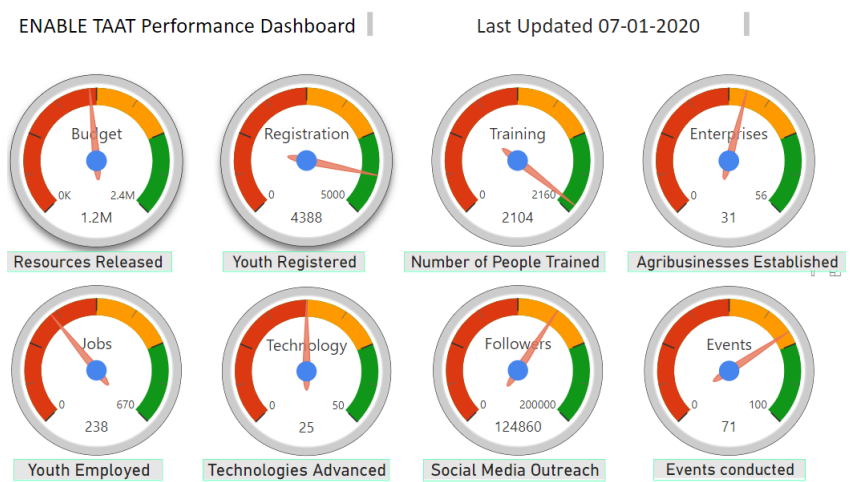
Another objective is to provide support to agribusinesses through advocacy and ICT. Using various communication tools, ENABLE-TAAT is expected to document the parallel effort of the compacts and present it in an inspirational and replicable fashion.

It also aimed to improve human nutrition by raising awareness and access to improved nutrition in rural areas through the promotion of nutrient-fortified TAAT commodities. This is expected to be done by developing a network of nutritional food basket demonstrations and promoting them through outreach actions that both disseminate TAAT's improved varieties to vulnerable persons and offer them to the youth-led agribusiness community.

The project initially identified 19 African countries as its implementation sites but reduced the number to six after the review of funds and resources allocated to the compact.

Pursuing the objectives of the compact, the team established liaison offices at the project sites putting into consideration the components of the overall TAAT project; creating an enabling environment, regional technology delivery infrastructure, deployment of appropriate technology, and program management.

To monitor the progress of its activities, ENABLE-TAAT developed an innovative Monitoring and Evaluation dashboard to track its achievement in line with the component objectives. The dashboard indicates a massive impact in terms of both its direct and indirect beneficiaries.



ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The ENABLE-TAAT team organizes and participates in a series of advocacy events to sensitize the public about the activities of the project with an intention to guide other young people toward agribusiness incubation and youth-led enterprise development. This takes various forms—poster presentations, workshops and seminars for sensitization, documentation to showcase success stories and results through short videos, fliers, pamphlets etc; and the use of these materials for aggressive resource mobilization to generate funds for expansion of the program to more countries and additional funding to reach youth.

This effort yielded some results as the teams in Nigeria, Kenya, DR Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia in 2019 were able to directly reach over 1,000 people and 124,860 indirectly through the social media platforms. The link (<https://youthagripreneurs.org/enable-taat/information-sources/>) contains some of the materials produced in the effort to create an enabling environment.

Some of the highlights include an agricultural summit organized in partnership with the Youth Advocate Nigeria (YAN) at the IITA headquarters, Ibadan in October 2019. With the participation of over 340 youth, stakeholders, researchers, actors in the financial sector, and Agripreneurs from different parts of the country, the one-day event was aimed at sensitizing youth on the need to embrace agriculture and agribusiness to combat the menace of unemployment in Africa and also to encourage networking amongst youth. It was also an opportunity to relate with financial institutions on securing seed funds for trained youth to establish agribusiness enterprises along various value chains.

In Kenya, the compact promoted TAAT technologies to farmers and non-governmental officials at a farmers' day event held in Chavakali. Value-added products of one of the commodities promoted by TAAT, Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP), such as cakes, chips, juice, chapati, and mandazis, were produced and showcased to the beneficiaries of the program to promote some of the derivatives from TAAT commodity products.

The compact, in collaboration and partnership with some in-country funded projects, was able to expand to the Republic of Benin to commence ENABLE-TAAT activities in the country. ENABLE-TAAT partnered with youth in agribusiness country project funded by IFAD and an FAO-funded innovation award won by IITA, to establish an incubation center where young people would be trained in agribusiness.



ENABLE-TAAT team in Kenya took advocacy activities to rural areas to sensitize the farmers on TAAT technologies.

REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE (RTDI)

Through this component, ENABLE-TAAT identifies and realizes the agribusiness and employment opportunities available to youth through TAAT's priority value chains and proven technologies. It carved out agribusiness incubation and the establishment of agribusiness park activities to facilitate these opportunities.

Operating through 11 incubation sites across six countries, ENABLE-TAAT uses its various training tools to support the opportunities presented by value chain compacts. The incubation centers operate across a fairly narrow set of TAAT value chains based upon the economic advantage in the specific locations.



A practical session of ENABLE-TAAT interns on fish processing.

In 2019, ENABLE-TAAT compact trained 1,378 young people along the value chains of cassava, orange-fleshed sweet potato, aquaculture, poultry, high iron beans, rice, and maize. The youth are also exposed to entrepreneurship and business plan development after which they are requested to pitch their business ideas.

Some of the training was conducted in partnership with national partners in the various countries and commodity compacts for proper integration of the technologies. In some locations, the incubation facilities were upgraded to support business creation for youth and create a viable platform for training and entrepreneurship.



Practical training sessions for youth in Tanzania and Nigeria.

ENABLE-TAAT
Youth
Incubation
Program

⌚ 3 months
📍 Abuja, Ibadan,
Imo & Onne

Register for free
to acquire technical and
entrepreneurial skills on:

- Fish
- Cassava
- Orange-fleshed sweet
potato (OFSP)
- Poultry and
- Vegetable Production

To apply: <http://bit.ly/AgIncubation>

A flyer prepared by ENABLE-TAAT seeking applications from interested young people to participate in the incubation program.

The selection of Agripreneurs to participate in incubation programs follows the skills checklist for potential youth agripreneurs. For instance, in Nigeria the team launched an advertisement for the recruitment of young people to participate in the incubation conducted across the four ENABLE-TAAT incubation centers (Ibadan, Onne, Abuja, and Imo) along the value chains of Cassava, Aquaculture, OFSP, Poultry, and Maize. A total of 16,535 applications were received. The trainees were shortlisted based on set

selection criteria (with attention to gender equality) and subjected to a series of interactive sessions to test their entrepreneurship skills and will. The trained youth developed business plans along the value chain they had been trained in with the intention of linking them to financial institutions to apply for loans to start their businesses.



A cross section of the first set of ENABLE-TAAT interns in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Similar training occurred in Kenya, DR Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

DEPLOYMENT OF APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES

ENABLE-TAAT developed the Food Basket outreach to raise awareness and access to improved nutrition in rural areas through the promotion of nutrient-fortified TAAT commodities.

The approach adopted the development of a network of nutritional food basket demonstrations and promoted them through outreach actions that both disseminated TAAT's improved varieties to vulnerable persons and offered them to the youth-led agribusiness community. This activity was implemented in six countries and eleven sites in 2019.

Through the establishment of mother fields in eleven sites, over 285 daughter fields were established on Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato, High Iron Beans, Cassava, and drought-tolerant maize. The beneficiaries had access to inputs such as vines, seed, and cuttings for seed multiplication etc.

After the establishment of the mother fields, ENABLE-TAAT officers in project sites conducted farmers' field days to distribute germplasm, disseminate Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) information and inputs, and nutritional

information of the crops. Some even enlisted women and youth groups and other interested parties to establish Food Basket daughter fields and enterprises using germplasm and information distributed during the outreach events.



Sample of a harvest from one of the ENABLE-TAAT food basket fields.

Table 1 shows number of beneficiaries of ENABLE-TAAT food basket activities per value chain.

Table 1. Number of beneficiaries per value chain.

Value Chain	Number of Beneficiaries
Cassava	1256
Maize	1270
Fish	648
OFSP	851
HIB	553
Livestock	110
Small ruminant/Poultry	922
Sorghum/Millet	82
Wheat	38
Rice	367
Total	6097

The team also provided continuous extension support to monitor the progress of these outreach efforts in compliance with GAP.

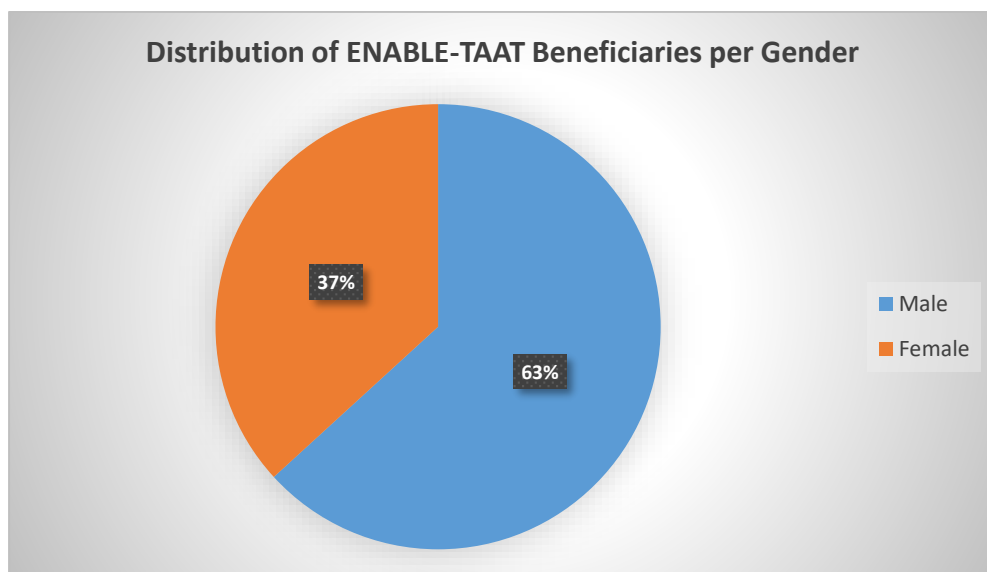


Figure 1. Percentage of beneficiaries of ENABLE-TAAT project by gender.

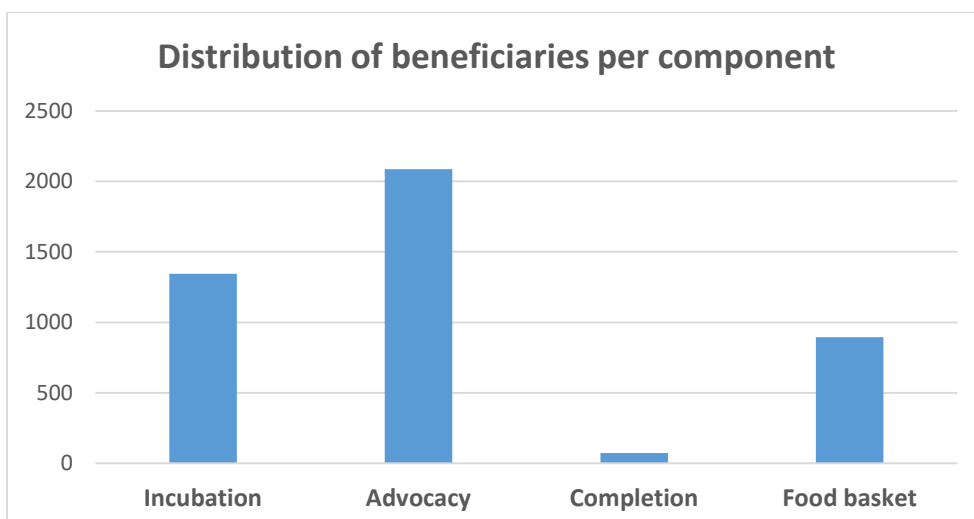


Figure 2. Performance of ENABLE-TAAT project per component.

Figure 2 shows that the ENABLE-TAAT recorded low output in terms of agribusiness completion which literally means the establishment of independent agribusiness enterprises along various value chains. Although the projects recorded impressive numbers in training and exposing interested young people to various opportunities in agriculture, accessing funds for them to establish independent agribusiness enterprises is a major challenge. While the project strives to link up with country programs for loans, it is exploring credit facilities provided by commercial banks and other lending institutions to assist in securing single digit loans to facilitate the lending process.

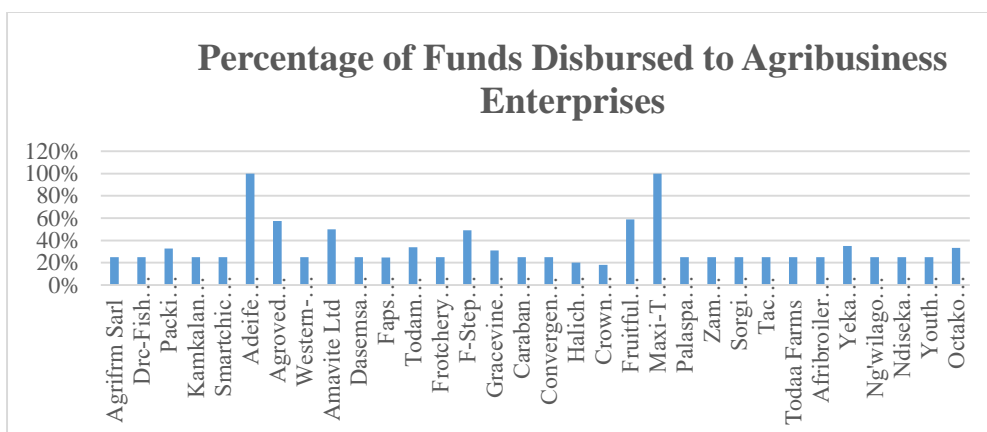


Figure 3. Level of support received by the trained youth.

For instance, in Nigeria the compact is working with the Nigerian Incentive-Based Risk Sharing system for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL), an initiative of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Bankers' Committee, and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development (FMARD). NIRSAL was created to make lending easier for agribusiness. ENABLE-TAAT is currently exploring the credit facility provided by NIRSAL and CBN under a window known as the Agri-Business Small and Medium Enterprises Investment Scheme (AGSMEIS). AGSMEIS is one of the credit facility products of the CBN through NIRSAL that gives loan to agribusiness enterprises of up to N10m at a 9% interest rate. To facilitate access to this, IITA was registered as an Entrepreneurship Development Institute under the Central Bank of Nigeria's Entrepreneurship Development Program. The Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) provides capacity building and other support services to the youth and presents them for loans. In Kenya, the trained youth under the project were able to secure agricultural loans provided by the county government. Efforts are ongoing to ensure trained agripreneurs under the project in other locations explore loan opportunities available at their disposal.

In 2018, about 32 agribusinesses enterprises were supported by ENABLE-TAAT. As at 2019, 24 were still operating while 8 enterprises failed due to lack of funds.

Also identifying other funding options, six Agripreneurs trained by IYA applied for and won the Tony Elumelu foundation grant for 2019. The TEF Entrepreneurship Programme is the \$100million commitment of Tony Elumelu, an African investor and philanthropist, to identify, mentor, and

fund 10,000 African entrepreneurs in 10 years, with the goal of creating millions of jobs and revenue on the continent. Two of the Agripreneurs are from DR Congo, one from Tanzania, and three from Nigeria.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The structure of the project made it imperative to formally recruit liaison officers who would oversee activities at the project sites. In the third quarter of the year, the TAAT project management unit launched an advertisement for the recruitment of consultants as liaison and project officers in DR Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and to occupy thirteen positions. After the rigorous recruitment process, nine positions were approved with four still awaiting approval.

The project is coordinated from the headquarters and led by a Project Coordinator that directs its activities.

Liaison Officer	Location	Email Address	Phone Number
Akpanika Oluseyi	Abuja, Nigeria	S.Akpanika@cgiar.org	+2348064749504
Ogunwole Dorcas	Onne, Nigeria	O.Ogunwole@cgiar.org	+2347068089235
Ahanonu Silver	Imo, Nigeria	S.Ahanonu@cgiar.org	+2349037924737
Mutinda Lorraine	Nairobi, Kenya	L.Mutinda@cgiar.org	+254705873395
Muema Elizabeth	Kibwezi, Kenya	E.Muema@cgiar.org	+254707859015
Sanginga Josana	Kinshasa, DR Congo	J.Sanginga@cgiar.org	+243978214018
Kebwe Veronica	Dar Es Salam, Tanzania	V.Kebwe@cgiar.org	+255756055990
Nakabugo Beckie	Kampala, Uganda	B.Nakabugo@cgiar.org	+256772521221
Sibeso Consent	Lusaka, Zambia	C.Sibeso@cgiar.org	+260976488485

2019 ENABLE TAAT Budget Summary

Year 2 Outputs	Budget	% of Total
Component 1: Creation of Enabling Environment (EE) —for technology adoption by farmers	21,750	4%
Component 2: Regional Technology Delivery Infrastructure (RTDI)/TAAT platform —that can provide and deploy needed food production technologies and any additional adaptive research required	55,960	11%
Component 3: Deployment of appropriate food production technologies, through campaigns in RMCs	203,100	39%
Component 4: Project Management & Coordination	245,963	47%
Total	526,773	100%

ENABLE-YOUTH PROGRAM

The Empowering Novel Agri-Business-Led Employment for Youth (ENABLE-Youth) project started as a brain-child of IITA through its youth in agribusiness initiative. The African Development Bank adopted and modified the IYA initiative to suit country specifics. It has become a country program with IITA providing technical assistance based on its expertise in countries such as Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Madagascar, and Sudan. These countries apply for loans to implement the nationwide project for the benefit of young people who are unemployed with the aim of exposing them to employment opportunities along various agricultural value chains. They learn through agribusiness incubation and translate their experiences into developing business plans to be funded through loans for the establishment of various agribusiness enterprises. Using this model, they are encouraged to become self-employed and employers of labor.

Below is a summary of the activities of the program in countries where IITA provided technical assistance in 2019.



Some beneficiaries of ENABLE-Youth in Cameroon.

MADAGASCAR

Following the objective of the overall ENABLE-Youth project, ENABLE Youth Madagascar aims to reduce youth unemployment through the transformation and modernization of Malagasy agriculture, and strengthening food and nutritional security. More specifically, it promotes the creation of remunerative jobs and generation of income for young people in agriculture and agro-industry. In the year under review, IITA established a pilot facility for the first 35 of these Agripreneurs undertaking a twelve-month incubation program. As a result, 23 business plans were developed and financed for US\$287,714. These businesses have since created 42 direct and 102 indirect jobs along the dairy and maize value chains. Three additional YABICs were initiated and a second cohort of 94 Agripreneurs were recruited in March 2019. A third cohort of 138 Agripreneurs was recruited in September 2019 to join the incubation program. In the year, the country project established quite a number of partnerships with the private sector and completed the training of 18 YABIC staff.



Some ENABLE-Youth beneficiaries in Madagascar with IITs Director in East Africa, Dr Victor Manyong during the presentation of start-up funds to the youth.

SUDAN

ENABLE-Youth Sudan operates in 13 Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centers (YABICs) with each running as training and business units that are expected to be self-sustaining upon completion of the ENABLE-Youth program in 2022. The YABICs adopted the incubation model and the target is to assist 2000 youth to establish businesses that create at least 12,000 jobs within five years. In 2019, 900 youth enrolled in the program. The first intake comprising 300 youth completed the incubation phase and prepared bankable business plans that were presented to partnering financial institutions. The program facilitated their access to finance through the establishment of a credit guarantee scheme worth US\$18 million. In the year, YABICs also operated pilot enterprises that generated \$339,000 and registered an average 30% rate of return on investment, confirming that agribusiness ventures are viable and profitable. The enterprises engaged in include greenhouse farming of vegetables; fattening of livestock; poultry production; fish hatcheries, farming, and feed formulation; and seed multiplication. The political instability witnessed in the year in Sudan restricted project activities and

resulted in a poor macroeconomic environment that affected the growth of businesses.



Processed chicken ready for sale by ENABLE-Youth beneficiaries in one of the YABIC centers in Sudan.

CAMEROON

ENABLE Youth Cameroon operates within the framework of the country's larger program known as the Agricultural Value Chain Development Project (AVCDP), a sovereign loan project of the African Development Bank. Through the project, IITA established 14 Youth Agribusiness Incubation Centers (YABICs) across Cameroon that will run for three years following its Youth Agripreneur guidelines. Each YABIC is intended to host three consecutive 12-month agribusiness incubations with 36 (MOL) interns selected through rigorous, gender-balanced criteria. The first cohort of 512 youth started this training in February 2019 and developed 48 business plans. The pilot enterprises fall into three categories: modern farming, commodity marketing, and value-added processing, and will be financed by the project to usher in long-term experiential learning. In 2019, about 350 Agripreneurs finalized their business plans and are expected to be financed by partner financial institutions in 2020. The project demonstrates the applicability of the IITA Agripreneur model to larger AfDB development initiatives.

ENABLE-Youth Cameroon aims at training 1536 youth in agribusiness, and then assists and mentors them in developing business plans for 600 youth-led enterprises that in turn are expected to create at least 6000 new jobs.



ENABLE-Youth beneficiaries working on their fields in Cameroon.

GHANA

ENABLE Youth Ghana aligns with the industrialization agenda of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The Rural Enterprises Program was aligned to ENABLE Youth Ghana and the Government's "One District, One Factory" agenda. In this regard, IITA is assisting to train 2,900 tertiary level graduates to own and manage 58 agroprocessing businesses in selected districts across the country. In essence, this initiative provides the youth with a range of resources and services including entrepreneurship training, business support, workspace, mentorship, and business clustering to ensure they are well equipped to manage these new businesses. In 2019, 2,900 youth were selected and training is scheduled to commence early 2020. As at the time of compiling this report, the Government of Ghana was in the process of setting up factories and processing units that will be run and managed by these trained youth.

Based on the modalities of operations in all the countries highlighted above, it is important to compare the success and cost effectiveness of the approach to the Agripreneur model being followed in the three other countries, and possibly blend the strongest features of each for the implementation of more country programs.

COMMUNITY YOUTH IN AGRIBUSINESS GROUP (CYAG) PROJECT



A view of some fish ponds established by the trained youth in the Niger-Delta region.

The Community Youth in Agribusiness Group (CYAG) project is funded by Chevron Nigeria Limited. It focuses on youth in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, assisting them to establish agribusiness enterprises along the plantain/banana, cassava, and fish value chains. It is a 5-year project and will

round off its activities in the second quarter of 2020. CYAG is implemented in the Ijaw and Itsekiri axis in Warri, Delta State.

In 2019, the project through its business support component, disbursed start-up funds to both Ijaw and Itsekiri trainees for establishing independent agribusiness enterprises either as an individual or as partners. This is in addition to the businesses funded in 2018. In the **Ijaw axis**, 19 interns were funded. Eighteen of them started their agribusiness enterprises. Eight of these businesses are located in the riverine communities and eleven within Warri metropolis. In the **Itsekiri axis**, 20 interns were also funded with many of them establishing businesses in line with the project value chains.

About forty-five new agribusinesses were established through the project.

In line with the project work plan and timeline of activities, the CYAG project team in 2020 will mobilize the second and third batches of interns who would go through an orientation exercise and training on value addition of fish, cassava, and plantain, hatchery construction, and management. Practical demonstrations for these sets of trainees will be carried out simultaneously to meet the indicated timeline of activities as submitted to the donor.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN AGRIBUSINESS AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE (YEASA) PROJECT



YEASA beneficiaries during training on value addition of cassava.

The YEASA project started in February 2019. It is funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and aims at building the technical, entrepreneurial, and soft skills of young adults (18–35 years), as a means of improving their productive capacity and increasing their benefits from existing agri-food systems. The project is implemented by three

institutions: Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD), the grant recipient, and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and the AfricaRice Center as sub-recipients. The project is set to empower 1,000 of the young adults resident in rural areas of the Republic of Benin (Parakou and Cotonou) and Nigeria (Oyo and Ekiti) for a period of three years. The target beneficiaries will have the opportunity to choose from a range of agricultural commodities such as moringa, soybean/cowpea, maize, plantain, mango, cassava, rice, and aquaculture; also feed-mill and agric-machinery fabrication. IITA, being a sub-recipient, is expected to empower 200 young rural adults in Nigeria and the Republic of Benin along the value chains of maize, cassava, plantain, cowpea, and soybean, and machine fabrication for 3 years.

Through this project in 2019, a total of 57 youth were trained in Nigeria and the Republic of Benin. Forty-seven of them received starter parks after drafting and successfully pitching their business ideas.

THE INTEGRATED PROJECT OF AGRICULTURAL GROWTH IN THE GREAT LAKES “PICAGL”

The Integrated Project for Agricultural Growth in the Great Lakes “PICAGL” is a country loan project funded by the World Bank to improve the agriculture sector in DR Congo. The objective of the project is to increase agricultural productivity and marketing in targeted areas in the DRC, improve regional integration in the agricultural sector, and provide an immediate and effective response in the event of a declared crisis or emergency. It will benefit around 200,000 households living in two provinces (South Kivu and Tanganyika). In 2019, the project commenced training of target beneficiaries of 6000 youth distributed in 65 groups. The project in 2019 has started the clustering of trained youth into business groups for them to develop business plans and review with financial institutions. Business plans on 13 enterprises were submitted to one of the partners of the project, a microfinance institution in DR Congo. The project aims to support youth to create 180 youth-led enterprises, to accelerate and backstop 60 existing youth led enterprises, and employ an additional 1000 young people.



The youth in DR Congo support other young people with tilapia fingerling production, processing, and marketing.

START THEM EARLY PROGRAM (STEP)

STEP is a new initiative operating in the Youth in Agribusiness office. It aims to advance agribusiness development to secondary schools in Africa and redirect the aspirations of young people in secondary schools towards careers in modern agriculture by exposing them to viable opportunities in agribusiness at an early stage.

The project commenced in 2019 in three countries; Nigeria, Kenya, and DR Congo and will gradually extend to other countries, giving opportunities to young African youth to become empowered through agribusiness.

In the year, the program implemented activities covering:

- The inception workshop
- Identification of host schools
- Baseline survey report
- Identification and development of training tools
- Provision of ICT-support facilities
- Innovations from STEP team in DR Congo, Kenya, and Nigeria.

STEP inception workshop (10–13 September 2019)

The purpose of the inception workshop was to officially launch the Start Them Early Program (STEP) and make plans for its first year of operation in DR Congo, Kenya, and Nigeria. Although the program commenced in DR Congo through a young man known as Bobo Prince under the initiative he called Newage Africa, IITA adopted the concept and expanded it to other countries after receiving funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and CTA. The outcome of the workshop is the design of the STEP Implementation Plan, which now serves as the general guide for all the activities carried out across the three countries of project implementation.

Identification of host schools

The STEP team developed some selection criteria for identification of schools to serve as centers for implementation of the project. Using the criteria, nine secondary schools were selected across the project implementation locations. Part of the selection criteria include:

- Mixed enrollment of both boys and girls, and preferably public schools.
- The willingness of the school to participate in STEP activities.
- Availability of a demonstration field or space in the school environment or neighborhood for pilot enterprises and experiential learning.
- Location in contrasting peri-urban and rural zones.

The table below gives an overview of the various secondary schools where STEP program activities are being implemented.

Country	Name of School	Status/ Agricultural Zone	Location of School	School Population	Population of Agriculture Students	Number of students enrolled for STEP
Nigeria	Fasola Grammar School	Public School	Oyo State	326	326	196
	Oluponna High School	Public School	Osun State	993	993	173
	Lead cCty High School	Private School	Oyo State	274	274	25
Kenya	Mwiki Secondary School	Public School	Nairobi County	501	150	40
	Muongoiya Secondary School	Public School	Kiambu County	602	150	50
	Afraha High School	Public School	Nakuru County	1202	300	60
	Kisayani Secondary School	Public School	Makueni	687	551	60
DRC	Institut Weza	Public School	Nyangezi	904	110	109
	EDAP/ISP	Public School	Bukavu	2026	394	330
	Mushunguri Institut	Public School	Mudaka	320	154	154

Source: STEP first technical interim report.

Baseline Survey Report

The team in 2019 also conducted a survey across their various countries to generate information on the attitudes of secondary school students towards career choice in agriculture and agribusiness. The result from the survey

revealed some interesting facts as a slight majority (54%) imagined agriculture playing some role in their future, with a preference for animal enterprise (42%), field cropping (30%), and food processing (15%) as the most attractive options.

At the same time, 46% of those surveyed had no attraction to agriculture for a variety of reasons. Some of the reasons are still related to the perception and hard labor envisaged in agriculture. Thirty percent say its requirement for excessively hard labor (30%) will not enable them to venture into agriculture while 20% are of the opinion that the return for the labor put into it is relatively poor. Twenty-one percent say that the overall unfavorable image of farmers is part of their non-attraction to agriculture. At the same time, 25% of these youth stated that they lack the land or facilities needed to practice farming and this excluded it as an option in their career planning.



The STEP team in Kenya while conducting the baseline survey.

Identification and development of Training Tools



One of the team members conducting training for pupils at IITA International School.

As part of its activities for the implementation of training activities in 2019, STEP developed a unique approach towards delivering training with the unique target beneficiaries. It is an encompassing strategy which includes approaches, value chain per country, training materials, parent/teacher involvement, school open

days, gender and reproductive health training, selection of facilitators/volunteers, and training of trainers' programs. The training approach is based on:

- Course work
- Pilot incubation enterprise
- Extracurricular activities.

An overview of the approaches in building the next generation of agribusiness leaders.

Course work	Pilot incubation	Extracurricular activities
Computer training including Office packages ICT application in Agriculture E-learning platforms, short quizzes Leadership, followership, teamwork, work ethics and communication skills Business plan development and business management Accounting and farm record keeping Marketing including digital branding and sales Gender and reproductive health education Nutritional health.	Land preparation and animal barn installation Crop and animal production Application of mechanization in the enterprises Postharvest management and handling Processing and value addition Marketing and branding using ICT.	Games, both offline and online Competitions, debates, presentations, designs, quizzes Excursions, field visits, and exchange programs Mentorship sessions, career talks, and seminars.

Provision of ICT support facilities

Before STEP's intervention in the identified schools, most were rural schools without exposure to ICT skills and tools. This has deprived both the teachers and students access to basic ICT tools and equipment such as computers, smartphones, tablets, etc.

Most of the schools engaged in 2019 as beneficiaries were provided with ICT equipment procured to set up computer workstations, intended to strengthen ICT use, and facilitate the training of both the school teachers and students in the schools. This is to enhance the use of ICT in agriculture. The computers have also been loaded with the training manuals and curriculums to be used.



A step towards impacting knowledge in ICT.

STEP in the year under review was also innovative enough to have carried out a gender analysis of young people engaged in agriculture.

Some 41% of the surveyed students were girls, allowing for gender comparison. Fewer girls profess to originate from farming backgrounds (–12%) or to have plans involving farming (–28%). Both of these factors imply a gender basis for the stigma associated with agricultural careers.

Of those girls attracted to careers in agriculture, fewer are attracted to field cropping (–16%), animal rearing (–31%), and fish farming (–20%); but girls are far more attracted to opportunities involving food processing (+36%) and marketing (+46%). More girls than boys are discouraged from farming because it involves drudgery (+43%), but fewer girls believe that agriculture offers fewer opportunities (–33%).



Boy or Girl, agriculture should be fun for both genders.

Innovations from STEP in Nigeria, DR Congo, and Kenya

In Kenya, the STEP team is linking strategically with the IYA program through engagement of former IYA trained youth as STEP personnel. This is to leverage on their expertise in conducting youth training, advocacy, and community outreach and they have been entrusted to transfer this knowledge to their younger counterparts. The team in Kenya also introduced cost-effective, small-scale farm machinery to the schools. This attracts the students and encourages them to participate in various agricultural activities.

During the yuletide season in DR Congo, the STEP team organized a holiday camp for students in three schools in the country to strengthen their capacity in agricultural entrepreneurship and guide them in their aspirations towards careers in agriculture. The program included site visits to local agribusinesses established and managed by young people to enable the students to understand the business environment and see the possibility of wealth from agriculture. The program also incorporated lectures on environmental management and gender and the need to give equal opportunities to both boys and girls in accessing resources and making decisions in the community.



Students in DR Congo receiving lectures on agribusiness.



Students at WEZA Institut in DR Congo learning how to produce and package juice.

In Nigeria, the team promoted and strengthened the use of digital tools in schools through the introduction of ICT in agriculture.

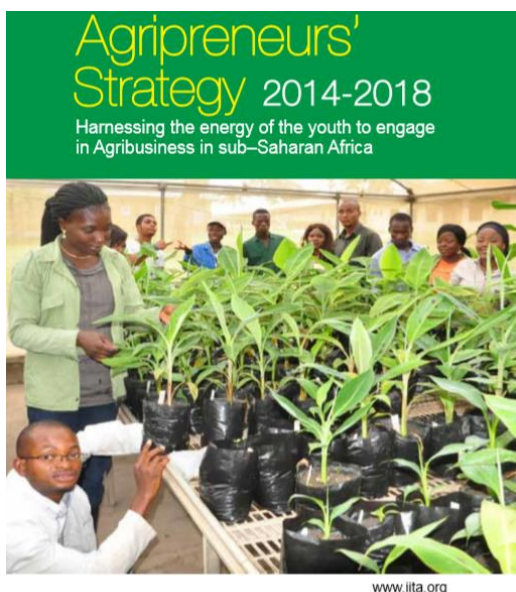
The team trained teachers and students on the use of ICT in agriculture to enable both the teachers and the students to be sufficiently prepared, confident, and competent in making full use of the benefits of these facilities in and out of the classroom. The training focused on:

- Ways the teachers would use ICT to enhance learning, i.e., research, communication, collaboration, innovative tools.
- Emphasizing practical learning and creation of curricular projects and assessments.
- Use of Web 2.0 and Social Media for agribusiness.



Students in DR Congo practicing some ICT skills in their laboratory donated by STEP.

IYA Outcomes



The IITA Youth Agripreneurs strategy 2014-2018 focused on expected outcomes of the initiative. In the strategy, (i) 40 percent of the trained youth will become self-employed owning their independent agribusiness enterprises, (ii) 10 percent will become employed by the Business Incubation Platform of IITA, (iii) 10 percent will become employed by private and public institutions, (iv) 20 percent will further their studies, and (v) 20 percent will continue to run the organization by

carrying out key activities such as conducting training, advocacy, M&E, and resource mobilization through proposal writing, project implementation etc.

Year 2019 makes it seven years of operation for the group and it became imperative to evaluate the progress made towards achieving the target of the aforementioned outcomes.

Summary of Findings

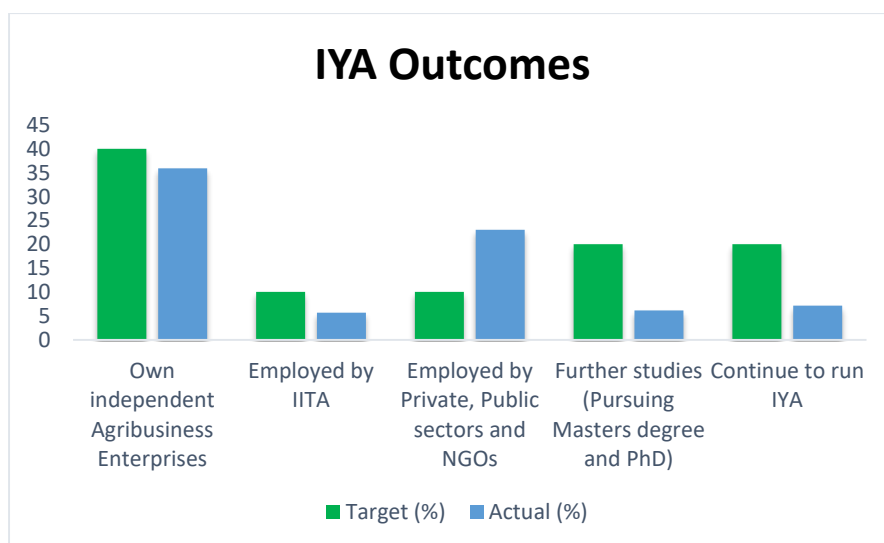
The survey reached out to 390 Agripreneurs to inquire about their current mode of engagement in attribution to the proposed outcome of IITA Youth Agripreneurs model. The table and chart below present the summary of this evaluation exercise to measure the outcomes against set targets since the inception of the IYA program.

The result of the analysis revealed that 36 percent of the Agripreneurs are self-employed through their established independent Agribusiness enterprises or are pursuing Agribusiness careers as CEOs or Cofounders, 23 percent secured employment opportunities in private or public institutions and NGOs as staff based on the experience, knowledge, and skills acquired during their stay as Agripreneurs, 5 percent were employed by IITA, 6 percent are furthering their studies pursuing Masters and PhD degrees, 7 percent,

based on their competency and experience, continue to run IITA Youth Agripreneurs by carrying out activities such as resource mobilization, training, Monitoring and Evaluation, communication etc. for youth-related projects. However, about 22% are still learning or exploring opportunities along commodity value chains.



Going down memory lane... L-R Dr Sanginga with an Agripreneur when the program started in 2012. R-the first set of agripreneurs as youth corpsers.



A graphic illustration of the outcomes of IYA members.

An overview of the outcomes on IYA members

Category of Outcomes	Frequency	Actual (%)	Target (%)
Own independent Agribusiness enterprises (CEOs and Cofounders)	141	36	40
Employed by IITA	21	5	10
Employed by private sector, public sector, and NGOs	90	23	10
Further studies (pursuing Masters and PhD)	24	6	20
Continue to run the IYA	28	7	20
NA (Agripreneurs whose current mode of engagement has not yet fit into the outcomes category (still learning or exploring opportunities along commodity value chains) and those who did not respond due to relocation abroad etc.)	86	22	
Total Agripreneurs	390	100	100

A case study of the spin-off

Youth Agripreneurship Global Limited (YAGL)

The Youth Agripreneurship Global Limited (YAGL) is one of the spin-offs that emerged from IYA in 2019. It is an independent organization established as a subsidiary of IYA to operate independently and serve as a link between IYA and the private sector. The group serves as a continuation of the strongest feature of IYA relayed toward independent operations. It provides proactive

contract services in the areas of project design, coordination and advocacy, communication and information, youth training in agribusiness, and agribusiness enterprise support.

In large part, it is intended to ensure that the IITA youth empowerment program being conducted over the past seven years be extended beyond the term of the founding father of the youth agripreneurs initiative at IITA, Dr Nteranya Sanginga.

Their activities commenced on the 1 April 2019 and they have rendered services to the mother group—IYA—for some ongoing projects, but more needs to be done by the group to promote its vision and objectives.



Dr Sanginga paid a courtesy visit to the YAGL team at their office in Ibadan, Oyo State.

FROTCHERY FARMS LIMITED

Frotchery Farms Limited is one of the pioneer spin-offs of IYA. The company which focuses on catfish production and value addition was established three years ago and information provided from their 2019 business review revealed a gross profit of 2.88 million naira since start-up with a negative net profit of N407,667. The company hopes to start recording a positive net profit from the first quarter of 2020.

In 2019, the product secured the certification of Nigeria's food regulatory body—National Agency for Food & Drug, Administration and Control (NAFDAC). The certification, coming after three years of continuous

application, will enable the company to make their product available across the Nigerian market.

With the NAFDAC number, it became imperative for the company to rebrand its product and introduce new packaging of international standards. The company received the support of an angel investor who facilitated product branding and packaging. Their business review for 2019 revealed an extension of their markets to 13 additional markets outlets and an 81 percent customer base increase.



The Old vs New Pack

Relaying it focus for the coming year, 2020 Frotchery farms intends to expand its fresh fish production and processing capacity to meet up with demand. It also intends to expand its markets from the current status of 12 to 37 states in the country. It has some foreign markets through referrals and will improve on penetration. The team needs a sum of \$31,181 in investment/loans to achieve its stated plans for 2020.

The year did not however end without some related challenges for the Frotchery Farm team with an unexplainable disappearance of about 15,462 pieces of fish from the ponds without recording any incidence of mortality or disease outbreak. The current smoking kiln is insufficient to meet the increase in demand, thus making production tedious and slow.



The Frotchery team presenting their branded pack to one of their angel investors, Mrs. Sanginga

F-STEP Cassava Enterprise

Another passionate Agripreneur who has become known for her efforts in promoting agribusiness along the cassava value chain is Oluwaseun Ogidan. Seun Ogidan was trained by IYA and she started her business with savings and support from relatives. In 2019, Seun cultivated 30 hectares of cassava and intercropped with 20 hectares of pro-vitamin A maize at Ago-Owu in Osun State in order for her to get quick return. Her plan for 2020 is to cultivate 100 hectares of cassava and intercrop with 50 hectares of maize. She is currently seeking for support to own a processing facility which would also serve as an additional source of income.



L-R Seun Ogidan and her staff on the field at Ago-Owu.

IYA INITIATIVES FOR 2020

More opportunities for youth: In the coming year 2020, IYA will focus on expanding its scope by giving more young people the opportunity to become job creators along the agricultural value chain. With the support of its technical adviser, the team continues to develop a proposal to secure funding for this purpose. The youth will not only be trained but will be linked to funding opportunities that will aid the start-up of independent agribusinesses.

Part of such projects include the ENABLE-TAAT phase 2 project, which is funded by the African Development Bank. IYA is currently implementing phase 1 of the project. Although phase 1 was slow to materialize into the creation of self-sustaining agribusinesses along the TAAT commodity value chains, it served as a window to raise awareness and access to improved nutrition in rural areas through the promotion of nutrient-fortified TAAT commodities.

Also through the Rural Youth Action Program (Agribusiness Hubs) funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), IYA will establish a pioneering agribusiness hub in Imo State and satellite activities in Ibadan, Nigeria. This will offer both employment and entrepreneurial-track training and accompanying services to 2588 direct beneficiaries and 20,500 indirect beneficiaries. The project will be implemented in partnership with Songhai Centre.

Young Africa Works is another initiative funded by the MasterCard Foundation. It pays specific attention to women empowerment and development and it will operate in three states in Nigeria—Lagos, Kano, and Kaduna. At the expiration of the project in 2025, IITA and partners, are expected to have built the capacity of over 40,000 and enabled 242,000 young women and men to secure dignified and fulfilling work in agrifood value chains. The project, if approved, would be the second project implemented by IYA under the MasterCard Foundation portfolio.

IYA in other locations, especially in DR Congo, will also continue to participate in World Bank and AFDB-funded projects to empower young people in the Francophone zones of the organization. It is insightful to say that opportunities await IYA in country and regional programs to expand their scope for agribusiness opportunities.

Creating linkages and windows for credit facilities for agribusiness establishment: From experience, training is one component or step towards engaging young people in agriculture. It is commendable to train and build the capacities of youth in agricultural value chains and IYA has developed tools and displayed some experience in conducting training and incubation for interested young people. But there are still gaps in ensuring that the training translates into the establishment of agribusinesses and this is due to lack of access to funds. Many financial institutions are reluctant to provide loans for start-up without collateral but IYA plans to link up with country programs for grants and loans for its trained youth. Also, securing a single digit loan through various funding mechanisms provided by some banks may be of assistance. For instance, in Nigeria the team is exploring opportunities with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) through Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing system for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) to secure a five percent loan from a credit facility window known as the Agri-Business Small Medium Enterprises Investment Scheme (AGSMEIS).

Some of the trained youth were opportune to have attracted the interest of angel investors and opportunities of such will be explored.

Exploring online marketing and web-based training

This requires some level of commitment on the part of the group. A chapter of IYA in Uganda became famous in the region based on the use of its online marketing platform to link buyers and sellers of vegetables. This is so far the only group that has utilized the ICT platform in marketing. Other teams seem to be struggling and are yet to develop an innovative approach towards this. For continuous visibility and relevance within the youth in agribusiness space, it is imperative for IYA to design tools that will enhance its reach in terms of marketing and training.

Commercialization of training activities

One of the core strengths of the team is capacity development of young people along the agricultural value chain. IYA has developed training manuals on commodities and has the expertise to deliver both technical and soft skill training. But most of the training focuses on project or donor specifics, which are often limited in terms of targets beneficiaries. To reach a larger number of youth, training can be conducted at a subsidized rate to give more young people the opportunity to participate. This could also be a means of

generating sustainable income for the group. This requires an holistic approach.

Scaling its agribusiness support services

Provision of support services to youth after training is important. Offering business advisory services, business plan development services, market linkage, financial support services etc are some of the packages to be developed by IYA to further engage its trained youth. The database from M/E registration and market information will be linked to the existing IYA Help-Desk platforms for use by new entrepreneurs.

Conclusion and Recommendation

While the team plans delivery and implementation of project activities operated under the youth in agribusiness office, it is advisable that they explore means of sustaining the organization in the absence of donor-funded projects.

- There is a need for the group to conduct a proper evaluation of the program with its findings published in a reputable journal.
- The business development arm of IYA needs to be strengthened for effectiveness in delivery of its core responsibilities to the trained youth.
- IYA should start exploring partnership opportunities which could in turn translate to funding opportunities for the establishment of independent agribusiness enterprises.
- The group needs to collaborate with other youth in agribusiness initiatives in Africa to expand its network and opportunities for country programs.
- IYA operating as an institutionalized unit within IITA needs more integration into the P4D Directorate and not be viewed as an extension of other projects or the directorate.
- There should be a proper harmonization and standardization of youth programs, its components, and curriculum within IITA.

2019 in Pictures



President of DR Congo Felix Tshikedi interacting with young people from IYA and STEP at the launching of the President Olusegun Obasanjo Campus in Bukavu.



Project Steering Committee of TAAT on an evaluation mission to some of the ENABLE-TAAT businesses in DR Congo.



Evelyn Ohanwusi receiving the FAO-funded innovation award on behalf of IYA. The award fund was used to start activities in Cotonou, Republic of Benin.



IYA realized the importance of agricultural insurance after a rainstorm destroyed the 5000 poultry facility of Agroved Enterprise—a business established by some trained youth of IYA in Abuja, Nigeria.



A cross section of participants at an agribusiness summit organized by IYA.



IYA Francophone leader, Noel Mulinganya conducting a training for youth in Togo.



Ms Jennifer Blanke, Vice-President from AfDB during her visit to IYA.



The launching of one of the schools for the STEP program in DR Congo.

Acknowledgement

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The management and team of IITA, the P4D management, and most especially our number one cheerleader, the Director General of IITA, Dr Nteranya Sanginga for their insight, coordination, and guidance to the success of the program.

And to the donors and funders of the IITA Youth in Agribusiness program, thank you for 2019. We look forward to better collaboration to empower youth toward profitable agribusiness in 2020.



