



Partnerships

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Dr Denis Kyetere says partnerships facilitate smallholder technology access

Dr Denis T. Kyetere, the Executive Director AATF has said that public private partnerships (PPPs) are an important mechanism for facilitating access to appropriate technologies by smallholder farmers in Africa. Using the work AATF does as a case study of the critical role of PPPs in agricultural development in Africa, Dr Kyetere said that the underperforming African agriculture caused by lack of access to appropriate technology requires effective mechanisms to negotiate their access, transfer and deployment. AATF's mandate is to facilitate PPPs for the access and delivery of such technologies that address constraints that are plaguing smallholder farmers in the continent

and are held by private and public sector organisations around the world.

Dr Kyetere was speaking at the first Bio-Innovate Regional Scientific Research Conference in February 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In addition to making the presentation on PPPs, Dr Kyetere was also a panel discussant during the 'Applying and integrating biosciences innovations in the socio-economic development of Africa' session that was held alongside the main conference. The meeting was organised by the Bio-Innovate Programme of the International Livestock Research Institute and was attended by over 150 scientists, policy makers, the private sector, donors, and other stakeholders. The Bio-Innovate Program is currently



Dr Denis T. Kyetere

supporting nine bioscience innovation and policy consortia projects bringing together 57 partnering institutions from the six eastern Africa countries of Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda and outside the region.

For more information on AATF visit <http://www.aatf-africa.org> ■

AATF renews its collaborations with FARA and CORAF

AATF has renewed its collaboration agreements with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain Pour La Recherche et le Developpement Agricoles (CORAF) that will see its engagement with each of the organisations enhanced. The renewals followed discussions held by AATF staff and representatives of the two organisations in Nairobi in January.

The discussions proposed areas of collaboration that would grow the participation and visibility of the organisations in fulfilling their mandates. They also focused on how to realise a closer working relationship between the organisations and thus contribute towards greater regional participation and geographic reach across Sub-Saharan Africa. The above discussions were a culmination of meetings held in 2012 between Dr Denis T. Kyetere,



Prof Abdourahamane Sangare (second left) CORAF's Biotechnology and Biosafety Programme Manager with AATF staff during the meeting to review the MoU between the two organisations in January 2013 in Nairobi

Executive Director AATF with the Executive Directors of FARA and CORAF, Dr Monty Jones and Dr Harold Macauley respectively.

CORAF was represented at the meeting by Prof Abdourahamane Sangare, the Biotechnology and Biosafety Programme Manager while the FARA team was led

by Prof Walter Alhassan, the coordinator of the Strengthening Capacity for Safe Biotechnology Management in Sub-Saharan Africa (SABIMA) project at FARA.

For more information on the FARA and CORAF collaboration please contact Mrs Nancy Muchiri n.muchiri@aatf-africa.org ■

Project updates

Maruca-resistant Cowpea project gets approval to conduct multi-location trials

The Nigeria team of the *Maruca*-resistant Cowpea Project received approval from the country's National Biosafety Committee to conduct multi-location trials in 2013. This was revealed at the Project's 2013 annual review and planning meeting held in Accra, Ghana in March 2013.

A review of results from confined field trials (CFTs) conducted by project partners in Zaria, Nigeria and Farako Ba, Burkina Faso in 2012 revealed that there were two promising transgenic cowpea lines from both CFTs. The results were found to be consistent with those from previous trials conducted in the two countries in 2010 and 2011. This significant milestone in product development paves way for Nigeria to move the trials from confinement to multi-location trials in 2013.

In Ghana, the National Biosafety Committee gave approval to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research to



Participants of the Pod-Borer Resistant Cowpea Project during the annual review and planning meeting held in Accra, Ghana in March 2013.

conduct the first CFTs for the project in November 2012. This makes Ghana the third country in Africa to conduct transgenic trials for the *Maruca*-resistant Cowpea. The project is developing cowpea varieties with resistance to the *Maruca* pod borer. The borer causes grain yield losses ranging from 20-80 percent and farmers have indicated interest in the product.

The Project Advisory Committee also formally changed the Project name to Pod-Borer Resistant Cowpea from *Maruca*-resistant cowpea during the meeting. This was to help make the name more understandable to stakeholders.

For more information on the Pod-Borer Resistant Cowpea project contact Dr Prince Addae p.addae@aatf-africa.org ■

WEMA wraps up phase 1 and ushers in phase II

The Water Efficient Maize for Africa (WEMA) project marked the end of the first phase of the Project (2008-2013) and ushered in the second phase (2013-2017) during its fifth annual review and planning meeting in February 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting that brought together representatives from the eight partner institutions discussed achievements and challenges faced during the first phase of the project and also planned for phase two which will focus on the deployment of the drought-tolerant and insect protected maize varieties to smallholder farmers.

Among the key achievements for the project during phase one included successful conduct of confined field trials for transgenic varieties in Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa; and submission of conventional drought tolerant maize hybrids into the national performance trials in Kenya.

During the meeting, participants also laid out plans for the deployment of the first WEMA conventional drought-



The WEMA team members visit a maize trial in Kiboko, Kenya during the 2013 review and planning meeting in February 2013.

tolerant maize varieties that are set to be released to farmers in 2013/2014. The partners also had an opportunity to visit the WEMA confined field trials for Bt insect-protection and the drought tolerant trials that are in their first and fourth seasons respectively at the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute Kiboko

field station. While here they observed that most of the WEMA varieties had outperformed some of the best local hybrid checks on the market.

For more information on the WEMA project contact Dr Sylvester Oikeh s.oikeh@aatf-africa.org ■

AATF staff develop institutional and project 2013 work plans

AATF staff from Nairobi and Abuja offices met in February in Nyeri, Kenya to develop the 2013 work plan. The project work plans will also be used in discussions with partners across all projects. Overall all projects made significant progress in 2012 following which 2013 will be busy as some projects such as WEMA look to deploy the first conventional varieties while cowpea enters into multi-locational trials. The staff also participated in a team building session that was held on the last day of the meeting. ■



AATF staff during a team building session held alongside the 2013 planning meeting in Nyeri, Kenya in February 2013.

AATF hosts COMPRO-II project national meetings on biofertiliser regulatory frameworks

The Commercial Products – II project partners in Kenya, Ghana and Uganda held several workshops during the first quarter of 2013 aimed at developing and implementing regulatory mechanisms for biofertilisers. The meeting participants reviewed the status of existing regulatory frameworks, including guidelines, regulations, standards, labeling requirements and quality assurance practices in each country. The meetings were organised by AATF one of the partners responsible for the establishment and institutionalisation of quality control and regulatory mechanisms in the project. Similar meetings will be held in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Tanzania during the next quarter.

COMPRO-II project aims to improve crop yields, improve food security, and minimise the negative impacts of bad or inadequate agricultural practices on the environment. The project is built on public-private partnerships to develop effective laws and regulations for biofertilizers and other agro-inputs in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The project goal is to see a significant reduction in the use of inefficacious agro-inputs in



A plenary session during one of the country meetings in Kenya.

the marketplace, resulting in increased crop yields and improved food security for smallholder farmers in SSA. Other partners in this project include International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) the coordinators of the Project, Farm Inputs Promotions Africa,

CABI, regulatory bodies, policy makers, research scientists, product proponents, and farmer organisations.

For more information on the COMPRO-II project please contact Dr Francis Nang'ayo f.nangayo@aatf-africa.org ■

AATF and IITA meet to strengthen collaboration

AATF and IITA have agreed to strengthen their collaboration to improve the livelihoods of farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa. Both organisations are already working on various projects across Africa that include the control of aflatoxins in maize and peanuts, *Striga* control in maize and development of banana with resistance to the bacterial wilt disease.

Speaking at the meeting held at the IITA campus in Ibadan, Nigeria in March 2013, Dr Denis T. Kyetere, the AATF Executive Director said the challenge in Africa is huge and there was a lot of work that AATF and IITA could collaborate on to make a difference in people's lives. Dr Nteranya Sanginga, the IITA Director General reassured AATF that IITA was ready to put more effort in collaborating with AATF for the benefit of farmers.



AATF and IITA staff during the meeting to renew collaboration in March 2013 in IITA offices in Ibadan, Nigeria

Dr Kyetere was accompanied by Dr Jacob Mignouna, the former Technical Director at AATF, Dr Prince Addae, the Cowpea Project Manager and Mr Alhaji Tejan-Cole, the Foundation's Legal Counsel. The IITA team included

among others Mr Kwame Akuffo-Akoto, Deputy Director General (Corporate Services) and Dr Kenton Dashiell, Deputy Director General, Partnerships and Capacity Development. ■

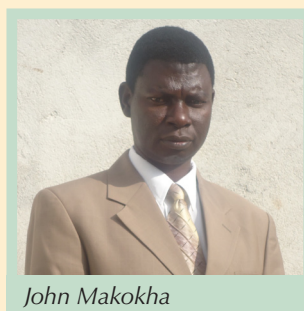
AATF takes first prize at AFSTA exhibition



Dr Denis T. Kyetere, the Executive Director AATF receives the 'Best Exhibition' award plaque and certificate from Daniel Otunge (left) and Rosemary Nzuki (Centre) who represented AATF at the AFSTA Congress and Exhibition in March 2013 in Mauritius

AATF won the best exhibition stand award during the 2013 Africa Seed Traders Association congress and exhibition held in Mauritius in March 2013. The AATF stand was recognised for the variety of the materials showcased and disseminated; the attractive layout that pulled big crowds and for the professionalism displayed by the AATF staff manning the stand. During the weeklong event, AATF and project information materials were disseminated to the over 200 participants from around the globe who attended the congress. Seed companies indicated interest in technologies from projects such as WEMA and *Striga* Control in Maize. ■

AATF recruits a Resource Mobilisation Officer



John Makokha

John Makokha, a social scientist, has been recruited as the Resource Mobilisation Officer for AATF effective 18 February 2013. John holds an MBA in marketing and strategic management from Kenyatta University, a BSc degree in Agricultural Economics from Egerton University, a Diploma in Business Management from

the Kenya Institute of Management (KIM) and a certificate in Project Management from the University of Tennessee, USA. He is also a certified grants manager having completed the Gateway to Grants course offered by USAID, and is a continuing student of Certified Fund-Raising Executive (CFRE) course by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP). Prior to joining AATF, John worked at the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) Refugee Trust of Kenya as the Grants/Development Officer in charge of fundraising and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. At AATF, John is charged with mobilising resources and building relationships with donors, among other duties. John is a Kenyan national.

For more information on John please visit <http://www.aatf-africa.org/about-us/governance/staff/john-makokha> ■

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