



NIHORT News



A NEWS BULLETIN OF NATIONAL HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
P.M.B 5432, IDI-ISHIN, JERICO RESERVATION AREA, IBADAN, OYO STATE, NIGERIA.

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NIHORT IN BRIEF

VISION:

To develop horticultural produce and products for local and export market with attendant health, industrial raw materials and employment generation benefits.

MISSION:

To develop sustainable production and utilization of horticultural crops in order to achieve excellence in fruits, vegetables, spices, ornamentals as well as aromatic plants research in Nigeria.

MANDATE:

To conduct research into the genetic improvement, production technologies, processing, storage, utilization and marketing of fruits, vegetables, ornamentals, spices, other medicinal and aromatic plants of nutritional and economic importance.

MOTTO:

Institutional progress through excellence in horticultural crops research

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Our Goal

To build intra-institutional synergy and enhance reputation of the Institute through effective and efficient engagement of the public for the attainment of organizational mandate.

Our Strategies

- Produce and distribute NIHORT News
- Organize press conferences and releases
- Organize policy seminars and public engagements on new technologies and innovations
- Promote/enhance social media interfaces
- Publicize technical and social events

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From the
**Editor's
Desk**



Things happen as divinely ordained. I count it a privilege to be appointed as the Editor of NIHORT News at this time. NIHORT News has been in existence since the 1980s but its production has not been regular. The last edition was produced in 2009. This has been due to myriads of challenges among which mainstreaming into institutional structure is paramount.

The advent of the new administration under the able leadership of our indefatigable Director/Chief Executive Officer, Dr Attanda Mohammed Lawal recognized the need to resuscitate the production of the NIHORT News on sustainable basis in order to enhance the reputation of the Institute among all stakeholders. Thus, the Public Relations Unit of the Institute was established with production of NIHORT News as one of the major responsibilities of the Unit.

How time flies. It is now one year that the Director/CEO assumed office as the team lead of the Institute. This edition coincides with this period. Henceforth, NIHORT News would be produced in both electronic and print format on sustainable basis. By the grace of God, the electronic format would be published monthly while the print format is scheduled for quarterly production. I enjoin readers to enjoy the various articles and

events shared in the newsletter. Highlights of some of the events that happened in the past one year are contained therein. You will enjoy articles written by the Director/CEO about achievements in the last year, an interview conducted in which he shared his views, some of the newly released technologies by the Institute such as new tomato, *Amaranthus* and okra varieties, visits by important personalities, collaborations, enlightenment about how to reduce fruit flies, youth empowerment, seminars, and social events in this edition.

You are welcome
Editor



Dr Lawrence O. Olajide - Taiwo

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR/CEO OF NIHORT, DR MUHAMMED LAWAL ATTANDA ON HIS ONE YEAR IN OFFICE.

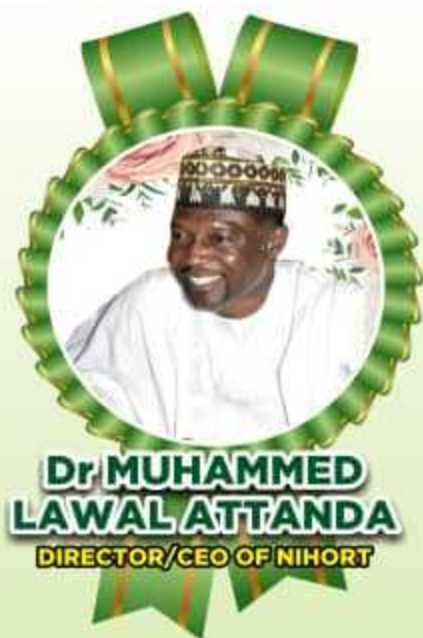
The Public Relations Unit of the National Horticultural Research Institute, NIHORT, Ibadan paid a scheduled visit to the Executive Director/CEO of the Institute, Dr M.L. Attanda, on Friday, 24th March, 2023 in his office in commemoration of his one year in office as the substantive ED/CEO. The visiting team was led by the ebullient Coordinator of the Unit and Director of Research, Dr. L.O. Olajide-Taiwo, and in the few minutes spent in the ED's office, a brief interview was granted.

Excerpts:

Q: Just like yesterday, you are already one year in office as the CEO of NIHORT. How do you feel, looking back to your first day, sir?

A: Honestly, it's really thrilling. I don't know how to qualify it, but to be frank with you, I didn't know it's one year now. You know, when the going is good, you wouldn't know how far it is, but when somebody is finding it difficult, that's when you know that the time is really long. It's thrilling, enjoyable and most significantly, challenging, which actually makes it thrilling. By and large, the past one year has been very interesting to me, because I have dynamic teams; I consult them each time I have issues, and they come out openly to me. So, the one year has been really interesting to me, and thrilling, and I look back and thank God for the opportunity.

Q: There have been existing collaborations in NIHORT, yet, you are building more and also promoting excellent relationship with our Ministry and the supervising agency, the ARCN. How will you articulate all these, in harmony, in order to realize a more productive NIHORT?



A: Like I said earlier, I have a wonderful team which I know how to make good use of. The sky, for me is the starting point. I like consultation, and I think that's one of the reasons you can see all those things. We consult a lot, and if you look at what has been done within this period of time, definitely you will know that it's not a one-man's job; it's the team effect. When you go together, you go far and steady, but when you go alone, you may go fast but not far. That's the spirit in the game.

When I came in, I found out that we have a ministry with which we need to work hand-in-hand. I had to identify our expectation, which is luckily on ground. Also, with the bimonthly meeting of the Internal management Committee (IMC) of the Institute, I was able to learn fast, and in a very short time, things have started to fall in place. I could remember, I spent my first fifteen days just visiting the International

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR/CEO OF NIHORT, DR. MUHAMMED LAWAL ATTANDA ON HIS ONE YEAR IN OFFICE.

Contd.

Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) which gave me the eye-opener that led to the collaborations that started to come in.

Indeed, if you know how to be a good team player, every difficult task would be a piece of cake.

Q: On the morning of the just-conducted senior staff promotion exercise, crisis was at its high threshold. You stepped in promptly and courageously, and it is clear that the looming crisis was totally averted.

How were you able to do that?

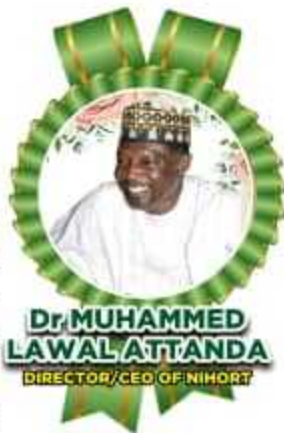
A: We grew up in Africa context to be team players, even though westernization has come to diminish the community lifestyle. If you know how to live this African community lifestyle, wherein you can wake up in the morning in your mother's room and have breakfast in another person's room, then you will know the importance of human relationships. I grew up through that system, and I value it much as an African man and a Nigerian in particular.

I found out that what happened that morning was that there was need for communication. Where there is a lacuna, something will definitely fill it, because there is no void anywhere. There was lack of information, as a result of the communication gap; we didn't know what they (the unions) wanted and they didn't know what we were doing in. There was need to cross-breed because it takes two to tango, that's why we stepped in to know what their grievances were, and what they think they wanted that we have not done. You need to communicate in order to get things done. So, we (the Institute's Promotion Committee) came in, listened to them, and inarguably, sanity and extant rules prevailed. All those things are there in the

books; we only needed to read, interpret and apply them. There was nothing new.

The fundamental thing that we have relegated to the background is communications, and nobody has clairvoyancy to know what you have in your mind, until you say it out. So, I found out that communication is lacking, and we have to bring it back.

In addition, I never engaged in physical fight and I don't think that exchange of blows solves problems; I believe in negotiation through effective communications. Even when you fight, you still need to come back and discuss it; so, why don't you discuss before you fight. For about one year or two now, Ukraine and Russia have been on the battlefield. Believe me, they will still come to a roundtable. We can avoid the series of destruction – social, psychological, material and institutional. So, I believe in communications, discussion, even negotiation. There is nothing as powerful in God's creation as talk. As a community-grown man, I have to learn how to live peacefully with people, and the impact of the absence of peace has dealt negatively with us, especially considering the agriculture sector that has suffered much because of farmers-herders clashes. Peace begets progress, which begets prosperity, and in turn love and unity.



**Dr. MUHAMMED
LAWAL ATTANDA**
DIRECTOR/CEO OF NIHORT

INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR/CEO OF NIHORT, DR. MUHAMMED LAWAL ATTANDA ON HIS ONE YEAR IN OFFICE. Contd.

Q: As an Associate Professor in a first-rate Nigerian university, I believe you will like to go back to your passion.

What legacy will you want to leave behind in NIHORT?

A: At the completion of my tenure, I want to look back and see a workable system/institution, benchmarking IITA as an international organization among the nationals. Also, I want to see the rich but latent human resources of NIHORT transformed to world standard, delivering quality output at the percentage I want it to be.

I want to see an institutional platform that is autopiloted. As an example, prior to dry season, you don't have to request for irrigation facility before you get it. The person that is supposed to do that knows when and how it is supposed to be done. What we go outside of the country to see is possible here because we have everything that it takes to get there.

Also, I want to see in the part of our crop improvement activities. NIHORT has achieved a lot in her past 46-47 years, but we still need to do more. We are lucky to have array of mandate crops. We need to stamp our feet in those areas.

Finally, I want to see the Centre of Excellence as we are called in NIHORT. If we can achieve these, I will feel fulfilled to have come to NIHORT.

Q: Any other word that you may wish to share, sir?

A: Well, it is no other than to be grateful to Almighty God for the past one year (twelve months) for the strength and courage of conviction to come. I didn't know it was going to be this smooth.

I also need to appreciate my IMC, regularly, for that warm acceptance, knowing that I was coming from outside. The team gave me all the inputs that I needed. Then, the staff and colleagues of NIHORT have been wonderful. They cooperated with me and worked optimally, in spite of the industrial action at the time.

Finally, I appreciate the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Dr Mohammed Mahmood Abubakar, a wonderful administrator, and also the Executive Secretary of ARCN, Prof, G.H. Sharubutu.

These categories of people have made my being here worthwhile and really fulfilling.

My word therefore is more of appreciation, and a solemn request, as Oliver Twist, for your continued support so that we can achieve more, now that the experience is there and we know the terrain.

Thank you very much.



Dr. E.T. AKINYODE
Principal Investigator/Lead Breeder

NIHORT RELEASES THREE TOMATO VARIETIES: BOUNTIFUL YIELD FOR FARMERS

Tomato, being one of NIHORT's mandate crops is a very important vegetable fruit crop that is consumed globally on daily basis due to its nutritional and health benefits. The Principal Investigator (P. I), Dr E.T. Akinyode during her presentation at NACGRAB reported that there is low production of tomatoes in Nigeria (3.9-10 tons/ha) compared to that of European countries.

These three improved tomato (*Lycopersicon lycopersicum*) varieties were presented by the PI and released on the 19th of January, 2023 for farmers and other stakeholders due to their better performance when compared with the local check (Onityre) and other farmer's varieties (Beske, Kerewa etc).

The names given to the three newly released tomato varieties are HORTITOM 1, HORTITOM 2 and HORTITOM 3.

The characteristics of each variety are:

Name of Variety: HORTITOM 1



- i. Type of variety: Pure line
- ii. Pedigree: Cherry x Beske
- iii. Morphology: Indeterminate, rounded predominant fruit shape and red mature fruit colour
- iv. Adaptation: Sudan savannah
- v. Days to maturity: 75-82 days
- vi. Potential Yield: 55.6 t/ha
- vii. Outstanding characteristics: Tolerant to Fusarium wilt, *Meloidogyne incognita*, early maturing, high

yielding, good shelf-life (15 days), good nutritional qualities and good for the salad recipe

- viii. Nutritive contents: Lycopene-0.94mg/g; Beta-carotene-0.44mg/g; Total carotenoid-18.54mg/g; Vitamin C-135.32mg/g and Brix- 5.83o
- Year of release: 2023.

Name of Variety: HORTITOM 2



- i. Type of variety: Pure line
- ii. Pedigree: Onityre 2 x Small Ibadan local
- iii. Morphology: Indeterminate, slightly flattened predominant fruit shape and orange mature fruit colour
- iv. Adaptation: Rainforest, Guinea and Sudan savannah
- v. Days to maturity: 80-87 days
- vi. Potential Yield: 49 t/ha
- vii. Outstanding characteristics: Tolerant to Fusarium wilt, *Meloidogyne incognita*, early maturing, high yielding, medium shelf-life, good nutritional qualities and good for paste in processing industries
- viii. Nutritive contents: Lycopene-1.66mg/g; Beta-carotene-0.59mg/g; Total carotenoid-32.61mg/g; Vitamin C-160mg/g and Brix- 5o
- Year of release: 2023.

Name of Variety: HORTITOM 3

- i. Type of variety: Pure line
 - ii. Pedigree: Onitye 2 x Igede
 - iii. Morphology: Indeterminate, highly rounded predominant fruit shape and pink mature fruit colour
 - iv. Adaptation: Rainforest
 - v. Days to maturity: 79-85 days
 - vi. Potential Yield: 63.3 t/ha
 - vii. Outstanding characteristics: Tolerant to *Fusarium* wilt, *Meloidogyne incognita*, early maturing, high yielding, medium shelf-life (15 days), good nutritional qualities and good for the salad recipe
 - viii. Nutritive contents: Lycopene-2.41 mg/g; Beta-carotene-0.99 mg/g; Total carotenoid-47.56 mg/g; Vitamin C-160.6 mg/g and Brix-5.47°
- Year of release: 2023.

Names of breeders and collaborators for the three improved tomato varieties

a. Breeders: Akinyode E.T. (Lead breeder), Ariyo O.J., Ibitoye D.O., Chikaleke V.A., Anyaoha C.O. and Olomide O.A.K.

b. Collaborating scientists: Attanda M. L., Oyedeji E.O., Fashola O.O., Aminu-Taiwo B. R., Aderibigbe O.R., Oke A.O., Akinleye O.C., Lukman F.B., Modupeola T.O., Abdul-Rafiu A.M., Akinpelu O.A., Oladigbolu A.A., Arogundade O., Olajide-Taiwo F.B., Ibe R.B., Onyegbule U., Ajayi E.O., Uwalaka O., Elum G., Usulo E., Shuaibu M., Abidemi M., Omotosho R.R., Sadiku B.T.

Cultivation and consumption of these newly released varieties will lead to increased income, improved livelihood and nutrition access, reduced post-harvest losses due to their firmness, thereby reducing the rate of tomato seeds and paste importation for effective food and nutrition security.

Acknowledgment:

- NIHORT Management
- Technical staff.



Team at the On-Farm trial field

HORTICULTURAL ACADEMY FOR YOUTHS

(HAY)



PREAMBLE

Horticultural crops are notable as means of providing nutrition, food security, health, employment and livelihood for different stakeholders especially youths who form a sizeable proportion of the populace. However, due to the highly perishable nature of these crops and the need to effectively cultivate for maximal productivity and returns, it becomes imperative to receive tutelage. The teeming unemployed Nigerian youths are a significant number which if properly harnessed and trained can become gainfully employed and also cascade into employers of labour, the effect of which will include reduction in youthful restiveness, drop in crime rate and other social vices, and a contribution to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Thus, this academy is set to explore different segments of horticultural crop value chains with focus on capacity building of youths in horticultural crops production and utilization on a sustainable basis.

The pilot phase was flagged off in January 2023 with thirty youths. The youths were drawn from NIHORT neighbouring Local Government Areas, farmer and youth organizations. Some of the prime vegetables are Amaranth, Corchorus, Cucumber, Tomato, Pepper and Telfaria. Due to short gestation period of the crops, the group will be within the Institute for a period of nine months for effective monitoring and supervision by multi-disciplinary team from NIHORT.



HAY Core team members with the Director/CEO



Cross section of the trainees plot



Trainee with harvested produce

Reducing fruit flies damage in West Africa for a sustainable uplifting of the fruit industry to meet domestic and export trades

By Dr V.C. Umeh

Director of Research & National Coordinator, SyRIMAO Project, Nigeria



Generally, fruit cultivation is on the increase in Nigeria due to the various agricultural programmes lunched by government to boost production for domestic and export trades. This is aimed at increasing farmers' income generation and improving their livelihood. However, the advent of an alien invasive fruit fly species *Bactrocera dorsalis* together with existing indigenous species undermined

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I n W e s t A f r i c a , f r u i t f l i e s
(D i p t e r a : T e p h r i t i d a e)
a r e t h e m o s t

important pests of fruit crops such as citrus, mango, guava and various wild plant species. They constitute major insect pests of quarantine importance and are at the origin of the interceptions of fruit cargoes destined for the European market. Faced with the pressure of fruit flies on horticultural crop production which has a negative impact on the food, health and social security of the populations and on the environment, ECOWAS set up, in 2014,



Fig 1. Map of West Africa showing the distribution of mango fruit flies infestation; the red pins show alerts emitted to orchards with high infestation levels while the green pins show safe orchards

a project to support its regional plan for fruit fly control in West Africa (PLMF). The project was funded by the European Union (EU), the French Development Agency

(AFD), ECOWAS and its member states and executed between 2015 and 2019. This project has achieved significant results which include i. the establishment of a surveillance, watch and alert systems for an effective and targeted control of fruit flies in 11 of the 15 ECOWAS member countries ii. the

development under researcher management of promising technologies of fruit fly control and iii. capacity building of stakeholders on fruit fly control in the field and post-harvest handling. These important achievements nevertheless remain fragile and eager to be finalized, consolidated, perpetuated and scaled up in the 15 ECOWAS Member States.

In a bid to sustain the gains of PLMF and extend the project to all the 15 member states, a new

project was initiated titled the Regional Innovative Fruit Fly Control System (SyRIMAO) project which is an implementation by the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy. The project reinforces the achievements of the West African Fruit Fly Management which has enabled the establishment of multi-actor networks in member States to monitor, detect and control the cross-border spread of fruit flies in the regions. The project is under the management of National fruit fly

Committee and approved by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture in Nigeria. The overall objective of the Project is to improve the incomes of West African fruit and vegetable producers, and particularly the small producers, to contribute to food security, poverty



Fig 2. Trapping fruit flies for surveillance and decision making on control actions by the reception of alert

reduction and job creation in the sub-region. One of the aims of the SyRIMAO project is to strengthen regional and national research systems and their coordination in order to provide producers with efficient control techniques with low environmental impact. The successful implementation of the various activities that make up the project requires knowledge and ownership of the technologies to be implemented in mango orchards by the actors themselves (Figs. 1 and 2).

NIHORT intervenes in recent outbreak of *Tuta absoluta* on tomato farms in parts of northern Nigeria

Report compiled by: Oreoluwa Nkem Ezekiel



Tuta absoluta, commonly called 'tomato ebola' among farmers is a pest of tomato and its history in Nigeria dated back to 2015 when hectares of tomato farms were ravaged especially in the northern part of the country. This prompted the Institute into action to contain the menace by a team of scientists led by Dr Abiola O. Oke. The team developed Fact Sheets, the Tuta Trap-Tray (TTT) and two bio-pesticides (NIHORT-Lyptol and NIHORT-Raktin) to control the insect both at the adult and pupa stages respectively.

A recent outbreak of the insect pest was reported in Kano, Katsina, Kaduna and Jigawa States in April, 2023. The Director/CEO constituted a quick response team that coordinated production of TTT and airing of sustainable Tuta control jingles in media platforms from 21st-29th April, 2023. The media outfits utilized were; FRCN Kano, FRCN Kaduna, Arewa Radio Kano and Kaduna, Freedom Radio Kano. One Thousand and six (1006) 4-litre kegs plus 50 TTT were dispatched from NIHORT Headquarters in Ibadan to NIHORT outstation, Bagauda, Kano State to enhance accessibility of relevant stakeholders to the products.

Similarly, the urgency of the situation necessitated a press conference and brainstorming session on this menace in Abuja on Tuesday 25th of April, 2023. The Director/CEO, NIHORT, Dr M.L. Attanda was represented by the Head of Department, Farming Systems and Extension, Dr Iyabo Adeoye and Head of Bio-pesticide Centre Mr. Oladigbolu Abiola.



The other key stake-holders included the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and National Tomato Growers Processors and Marketers Association of Nigeria (NAPTAN). During the press conference, Mr. Abiola Oladigbolu speaking on behalf of the Director/CEO recalls how the pest caused destruction of tomato farms in 2015 leading to tomato scarcity and reduced the nutrition of many Nigerian families. To cap it all, he showcased NIHORT technologies and described their usefulness in curbing the pest.



Director/CEO's one year in office:

Achievements



It is for me a pleasure to serve at the National Horticultural Research Institute and be the Team-Lead of the efforts to boost the Institute's capacities and relevance to be in a position to contribute its quota to

horticultural development in our dear Country, Nigeria and beyond. The Institute has the mandate to conduct research into genetic improvement, production technologies, processing, and marketing of fruits, vegetables, and spices of nutritional and economic importance.

The horticultural sector has potential promises to promote food security, job creation, income, economic empowerment and sustainable livelihood, however, NIHORT's capacity to deliver on these promises has been affected in the recent past by a number of factors.

The focus of my administration, therefore, has been mitigating the referred challenges and, we have been able to record remarkable paradigm shifts and achievements since I assumed the mantle of leadership on March 1st 2022. Below chronicles some of the achievements recorded so far;

1. Release of 3 new high yielding, fusarium wilt tolerant tomato varieties on January 19, 2023. They are HORTITOM 1,

**Dr MUHAMMED
LAWAL ATTANDA**
DIRECTOR/CEO OF NIHORT

HORTITOM 2 and HORTITOM 3 with potential promises of an average yield of 25.12 tonnes – 26.93 tonnes per hectare, a remarkable improvement on the existing average of 3.9 to 10 tonnes. The varieties are also resistant to high rainfall regime. They contain high lycopene, beta carotene, vitamin C etc.

Additionally, 60 lines of tomato are expected to be ready for multilocational trials by December, 2023.

2. The Institute also released another 2 tomato varieties in collaboration with the Premier Seeds Limited on January 19, 2023.

3. Multiplication of the newly released okra (NHOKRA1) which is high yielding, and early maturing with a potential yield of 23.96t/ha and amaranth (NHAMARI) high yielding, tolerance to shoot rot Choanephora and lodging with potential yield of 25t/ha. Some of the seeds have been distributed to ADPs in Oyo, Ogun, Ekiti, Osun, Lagos, Edo and Ondo, Agricultural Development Farmers' Association and Justice Development and Peace Movement (JDPM) during the visit of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to the Institute.

4. Rehabilitation of the Institute's Gene bank to enhance its capacity to store seeds for short-term and long-term purposes.

5. The Institute is at the threshold of releasing new pepper lines.

6. Tomato wine has been developed by the Institute among other value-added products

Director/CEO's one year in office:

Achievements

Contd.

- DIRECTOR/CEO OF NIHORT

to minimize post-harvest losses most especially during the peak season of tomato production.

7. In order to promote and strengthen youth inclusion in horticulture and agribusiness development, the Institute kicked off a programme tagged 'Horticultural Academy for Youth' in December 2022. The participating youths are being trained for a duration of 9 months, and provided with necessary inputs.

8. Capacity building of stakeholders in Tomato and Plantain value chains in Ondo and Delta states.

9. Efforts are ongoing to equip and commission the newly built Institute's Biotechnology laboratory.

10. Provision of functional irrigation infrastructural development to facilitate all-year-round research and production activities.

11. Rejuvenation and maintenance of orchards of Mango and Citrus to prevent loss of citrus and mango genetic resources.

12. Two new Toyota Hilux (4-Wheel Drive) were acquired to enhance technology transfer in the Institute.

13. Partnership and collaboration with groups such as Women Farmer Empowerment Initiative and International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA).

14. The Institute has installed dedicated Electricity lines that have boosted the power supply to the Institute most especially for laboratory Gene Bank Operations.

15. Construction of 215m roads and rehabilitation of Institute internal roads.

16. Security towers have been built in the Institute to prevent theft of equipment and experimental materials.

17. Efforts have been geared towards improving the Institute's environment to create a conducive environment for research and demonstrate that the Institute is the centre of excellence for horticultural research.

The Institute will intensify efforts through the indefatigable support of all and sundry in the following areas in the years to come:

1. Crop improvement of horticultural commodities
2. Post-harvest management
3. Pest and diseases management
4. Laboratory infrastructures
5. Capacity building of horticultural value chain stakeholders' capacity / Dissemination of developed and on shelves technologies.
6. Perimeter fencing
7. Capacity building of staff
8. Environmental management
9. Improvement in Internal Generated Revenue

Director/CEO's one year in office: Achievements **Contd.**

- DIRECTOR/CEO OF NIHORT

Though our administration isn't devoid of challenges but with the effort from respective quarters and the work we put in place, we have a strong conviction that the future definitely holds the best for the institute. We would continually change the paradigm to cause monumental transformation that will continually position us to be nationally responsible and globally competitive.

The successes recorded across all climes won't have been possible without the tremendous effort and unwavering support of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Abubakar Mahmud Mohammad. This monumental feat that we have attained thus far is as a result of the hard work from respective quarters. As much as we put in our effort, if it doesn't get the right enablement from the Ministry of Agriculture under the purview of the Minister, such efforts won't have yielded any result but we are indeed grateful that our efforts were necessitated in due time for us to be at this current phase of our administration.

The noble act of selflessness as demonstrated by Prof. Garba Sharubutu the Executive Secretary, Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) Abuja has not just been helpful but it has given us the right privilege to exhibit the latency of creative ideas that we have with the mandate of strategically

positioning NIHORT amongst comity of Institute's within and on the global scene. We are indeed grateful and we look forward to more of such acts to further help us advance our aims and objectives.

Special doxology goes to the Management and Staff of NIHORT whose effort has been instrumental towards the successes recorded. My belief system has always been that the reward of hard work is more work and I am indeed grateful for the unstinting effort put into respective projects by members of Staff and Management of our dear Institute. This gives me a clear idea that if we continue with this momentum to put in the best into all that we do, we would be able to achieve even more greater feat and transcend existing results.

It is indeed a great privilege to be serving in this Capacity as the Executive Director of NIHORT and I am looking forward to more years of putting my best into achieving greater feat for the institute through the support and effort of Government, Stakeholders, Staff and Management. The sky is indeed the starting point for us!!!

A WORKING VISIT OF THE HON. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO THE INSTITUTE

Report by: Mrs. Olubunmi O. Alo



There was so much anticipation and preparation was at its peak to receive The Hon. Minister, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr Muhammad Mahmood Abubakar at the Institute on 25th October, 2022. The Hon. Minister arrived at the Institute at exactly 4:40pm and was accompanied by his entourage and the Executive Secretary (ES) of Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN), Prof. Garba Sharubutu. They were warmly welcomed and ushered along-side the Director/CEO, Dr Attanda Lawal to the auditorium to address the members of staff who were eager to meet him.

Dr Attanda Lawal appreciated the Federal Government through the assistance of the Minister for its support on many things to mention a few:

- Ø He stated that this is the first time NIHORT experienced 100% budget release in the past 8 years.
- Ø Restoration of efficient electricity that gives about 15-16 hours power supply to the Institute.
- Ø Facilitating the employment of new researchers to replace the ones that left via diverse ways.

Just like Oliver Twist, the Director/CEO demanded for upward review of funding for horticultural research work along the value chains of the mandate crops so as to make Nigeria competitive like other productive African countries.

The Hon. Minister responded by appreciating the warm welcome he was given from the moment he stepped out of the vehicle and also expressed his pleasure on all he has seen so far. He stated that understanding the dynamics of Agriculture establishments was not easy just like the array of products he saw in Director/CEO's office kept him dumb-founded as he was not privy to the information that such products are being produced in NIHORT.

The Minister acknowledged NIHORT as having the highest crops mandate, commending her for the products being generated through research work and pledged his support for increased performance for the competitiveness of the sub-sector in food productivity. In his words and I quote " I just saw one orange tree that can produce three different oranges on one tree. Wow! This is amazing and I know with optimum support you can do more"



**The Hon. Minister,
Dr Muhammad Mahmood Abubakar**

A WORKING VISIT OF THE HON. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO THE INSTITUTE

Contd.



Rounding off the event, the Minister accompanied by Ex. Sec. of ARCN as well as the Director/CEO distributed some NIHORT products like the newly released *Amaranth* and *Okra* seeds, NIHORT bio-pesticides (Lyptol and Raktin) to governmental, non-governmental and farmer's groups. This is part of the Institute's contribution to food security in the country. The materials were given to the farmers through the Agricultural Development Programmes in the six states of south west comprising Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti and Lagos.



Visit of the US Consular on Agriculture to NIHORT

Report by: Joseph Okocha

The first striking remark of the Consul's visit was his timeliness: the programme was billed to start by 12.00pm on Tuesday, 6th December, 2022, and by 11.40am the Consular was already in NIHORT. By 12pm dot, he was led by the Director/CEO of NIHORT, Dr M.L. Attanda, through the well-decorated corridor to the Institute's auditorium. You could see the amiable CEO apparently answering questions from the visitor, and explaining the different banners and posters lined along the corridor which convey the various products, programmes, research outputs and technologies developed by NIHORT.

Behold, Dr Gerald H. Smith, the United States' Consular on Agriculture in Nigeria, Benin Republic and Cameroon.

Upon arriving the auditorium, the regulars of the Nigerian National Anthem (second stanza, albeit) and the video clip showing brief history of NIHORT, its mandate, geographical spread within the country,

his welcome address, expressing his utmost pleasure to have the august visitor in December, which he considered a rare privilege. In a more or less business-like manner, the CEO stated the Institute's overwhelming mandate as the only horticultural research institute in Sub-Saharan Africa, the key achievements, core potentials and the possible areas of collaboration. He ended his address with a deep sense of gratitude to Dr Smith, on behalf of the entire NIHORT family.

On his speech, the Consul expressed pleasure at interfacing with NIHORT, stating clearly that his purpose of visiting was primarily to kickstart the process of qualitative collaboration by acquainting the Consulate with firsthand information about NIHORT and her potentials. He identified Biotechnology as one key area of common interest, further relaying the Fellowship and Exchange programmes of the Consulate that could be of great benefit to NIHORT staff, especially the scientists and the technologists.



On Arrival At The Executive Director's Office

activities, achievements and subsisting collaborations were played to the obvious delight of our visitor and his entourage.

Following the video, the Director/CEO of NIHORT, Dr Muhammed Lawal Attanda gave

In his response, the CEO thanked the Consul and by extension, the government of the United States of America for the good gesture. Some IMC members, notably Dr. E.I. Nwanguma (Chairman, Research Review & Planning Committee) and Dr O. O. Oyedele,

Visit of the US Consular on Agriculture to NIHORT **Contd.**

Director of Research also responded in gratitude, while at the same time giving some of the benefits accruable to the new bilateral relationship. Our special visitor was shown some of NIHORT's products on display, both seedlings of various horticultural crops and the ready to eat/consume finished products. Most delight-some, indeed.

Dr Smith reaffirmed the Consulate's position on collaborative relationship, while the Director/CEO of NIHORT, in appreciation, prided in the great potentials and capabilities of the Institute, which he implored the Consulate to explore, exploit and support.



SEMINARS

2023 IN-HOUSE SEMINAR SERIES

The 2023 NIHORT Seminar Series started on the 26th January, 2023, with the Executive Director/CEO, Dr Mohammed Lawal Attanda blazing the trail. On this page, we bring you abridged information on the seminars held so far. Details can be accessed through the Office of the Chairman, Research Review and Planning Committee.

Title: Research and Production: Opportunities and Challenges
Date: 26th January, 2023.
Presenter: Dr M.L. Attanda, ED/CEO, NIHORT.



The major highlights include the Relationship between Research and Production, Conceptual Framework of Research Production, Guidelines that turn Research Principles into Production, Production Models and Production Strategic Enablers.

SEMINARS

2023 IN-HOUSE SEMINAR SERIES

Title: Research Scientists' Performance and Assessment Criteria for Institutional and Personal Development
Date: 2nd March, 2023.
Presenter: Dr L. O. Olajide-Taiwo, Director of Research, Extension Research Programme



Bulk of the seminar talked on marginal productivity based on perceived subjectivity of assessment and measurement criteria. The speaker proposed a more objective framework for measuring overall productivity, and hence development.

SEMINARS**2023 IN-HOUSE
SEMINAR SERIES**

- Title:** Project Implementation and Management for Sustainable Development Impact
- Date:** 16th March, 2023.
- Presenter:** Dr I.B. Adeoye.



The thrust of the talk was on the significance of formulating SMART objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) in reporting project performance, based on the five-level result chain of Inputs, Activities, Output, Outcome, and Impact. This was in addition to the examined project life cycles and common areas of mistakes in implementation.



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Hortconsult

Hortconsult is a spin-off company of National Horticultural Research Institute with mandate for consultancy and training. We engage individuals, companies and other stakeholders to transact business in the different horticultural value chain to achieve growth, profitability and sustainability.

OUR SERVICES ARE:

- Feasibility study on horticultural crops production
- Establishment and execution on Landscape projects
- Consultancy services for establishment and management of horticultural farms and orchard
- Training programmes (In-house and customized)
- Advisory services
- Improved planting materials (Vegetable seeds, suckers and seedlings)



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MOTTO: PROGRESS THROUGH
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