

## Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation

From April 12-14, I was in Ibadan, Nigeria for a very exciting meeting. I joined more than two hundred international and national partners from countries across Africa, including leaders from the African Development Bank (AfDB) and CGIAR centers, policy makers and the private sector to discuss a new initiative, "Africa Feeding Africa" or Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT).

It was a unique opportunity to take a value chain approach to scale up CGIAR technologies to transform African agricultural practices. TAAT is designed to provide technical support to governments so they can realize the full value and potential of AfDB loans. This will help to accelerate rural growth, make sure that modern food systems provide the right nutrition and serve as an engine for sustainable growth in Africa.

There was a lot of positive energy and expectant potential at the meeting. I was invited to serve on a closing panel to decide the name, role and implementation of TAAT. At the end we drafted a report to be approved by the AfDB Board by September 2016.

During the three day workshop I felt a real sense of urgency for action to accelerate the delivery of proven technologies to smallholder farmers in Africa. The discussions focused on the possibilities for collaboration and funding for TAAT with on-going activities to increase synergies and decrease competition and overlap. The World Bank is increasing its focus on agriculture in several initiatives so there are many windows of opportunity there.

I see a way for our country strategies to play a critical role in attracting and enabling programs to ensure that new and existing technologies reach farmers under this initiative. I also envision that TAAT will become a core part of our plan of implementation in Africa. There was strong support for ICRISAT's work by IFAD and an appreciation for the strength and commitment of ICRISAT for this critical mission to transform African agriculture, which was extremely encouraging to me.

Donors and partners emphasized a need to engage the private sector more along the value chain, something we are well positioned to do with our country strategies so we need to leverage these quickly. There was also a clear emphasis on Inclusive Market Oriented Development and empowering youth to be successful entrepreneurs.

The closing remarks of the meeting reflected a can-do attitude and the need for change that can be achieved through TAAT. All representative from donors; WB, IFAD, AfDB, and partners; FAO, FARA, Sasakawa, CGIAR, conveyed their strong personal support of TAAT, and promised positive reports to their respective managements.

I look forward to working with all partners in the process to realize this unique opportunity to achieve impact at scale through strategic and committed partnerships with African governments, the private sector, and farmers' organizations.

### **Representation:**

Over 250 delegates from countries across Africa, 12 CGIAR centers (4 DGs), policy makers (Sudan, Mali, Nigeria), private sector (limited representation), NARS, FARA, AfDB, IFAD, WB, Syngenta Foundation, FAO.

More information: [http://www.iita.org/taat?p\\_p\\_id=58&p\\_p\\_lifecycle=1&p\\_p\\_state=normal](http://www.iita.org/taat?p_p_id=58&p_p_lifecycle=1&p_p_state=normal)