

# VEGNEWS

A Quarterly Newsletter of Ni-Can-Veg Project 106511

Issue No.1, December, 2011

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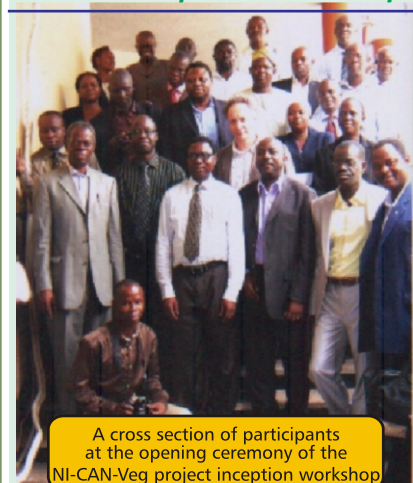
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## EDITORIAL

This edition contains the news of inception workshop of Ni-Can-Veg project 106511 jointly funded by IDRC and CIDA under the Canadian International Food Security Research Fund (CIFSFRF), inauguration of enumerators, some -preliminary field experiences and the photoscope section entertains.

### NIGERIAN AND CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES COLLABORATE ON VEGETABLES PROJECT Inception Workshop held at OAU



A cross section of participants at the opening ceremony of the NI-CAN-Veg project inception workshop

A new giant stride was made in solving Africa's food insecurity challenges on March 14, 2011 at the Obafemi Awolowo University's

Conference Centre. This was during the inception workshop of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) sponsored project. A team of seasoned scientists from top universities in Canada (Cape Breton University and University of Manitoba) and Nigeria (Obafemi Awolowo University and Osun State University) in collaboration gathered with the sole aim of enhancing rural food security through sustainable production and utilization of underutilized Nigerian vegetables.

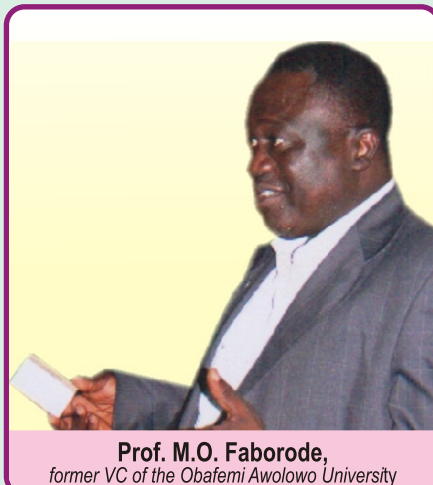
### Ni-Can-Veg Project: A Fulfilment of Aspiration - Akinremi -



Prof. Akinremi

Professor Wole Akinremi, a soil scientist and one of the principal investigators from the Department of Soil Science, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada, described the project and the team as the fulfillment of a long time vision and aspiration. He said that seeing agricultural extensionists, economists, soil scientists and agronomists on a

roundtable discussion is not only fulfilling but also productive in the context of achieving food security in Nigeria's rural areas. Similarly, Professor Clement Adebooye, a renowned agronomist and a principal investigator from Osun State University took the team down the memory lane, highlighting the potential of Africa continent with respect to vegetables. He also outlined some remarkable scientific breakthroughs which the team has accomplished. He posited that the focus of the project is to build on and expand the earlier accomplishments through the current research project. In line with this view, Professor Duro Joseph Oyedele, a seasoned soil scientist and principal investigator from Obafemi Awolowo University said that the overall objective of the project is to increase food security and economic empowerment of resource-poor



Prof. M.O. Faborode, former VC of the Obafemi Awolowo University

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rural women farmers of Nigeria through the utilization, cultivation, processing and preservation of underutilized vegetable species.

The workshop was graced by the Vice - Chancellor, Professor Michael O. Faborode, who congratulated the researchers and wish them a successful research endeavour. He used the occasion to thank the sponsor of the project and the Canadian counterparts for their interest in the Nigerian universities. He wish them a nice stay in Nigeria. Other eminent scientists at the workshop were Professors Akin Olayinka (Dean, Agric OAU), Patrick Aina (Soil Scientist), Adeolu Ayanwale (Agric. Economist), Dixon Torimiro (Agric. Extensionist/ Rural Youth Studies) and Kehinde A. Taiwo (Food Scientist) Others were Drs. Watuwa Richard (Financial Magement), Kemi Idowu (Soil Fertility), Peter Agbola (Economist), Chi Nwoke (Soil Fertility), Babatunde Fikayo (Plant Propagation) and Alabi Kaothar (Agric. Extensionist).

### Project 106511 Team at UniOsun, attended Inaugural Lecture

The Ni-Can-Veg research team, led by IDRC's Senior Programme Officer, Dr Pascal Sanginga, visited one of the four collaborating institutions, the Osun State University, Osogbo on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The visit was part of the Inception Workshop programme. The visit was historic because, on this day, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sola Akinrinade, signed the Memorandum of Grant Conditions for Project 106511 in a colourful ceremony in the presence of IDRC (Dr Pascal Sanginga), all the Principal Investigators, all the Provosts of Colleges of UniOsun and journalists (see picture). In his speech, the Vice-Chancellor thanked IDRC/CIDA for funding this result-oriented research on under-utilized vegetables which will definitely positively affect the lives of the resource-poor rural farmers in southwest Nigeria. The Vice-Chancellor also praised the extensive collaborative network of the project team involving Canadian and Nigerian Universities. He promised that the University will do everything to assist IDRC to monitor the progress of the research. The visit also coincided with the professorial Inaugural Lecture delivered by Professor Clement Adebooye, the Principal Investigator from Osun State University. The lecture was titled, "Exploring the Vegetable's World: Nutraceuticals and Physiological Investigations." The pictures say it all in Photoscope section of this NEWS Letter.

### Enumerators Inaugurated for Ni-Can-Veg Field Survey

Majority of the FADAMA co-coordinators and extension agents in south western states of Nigeria convened at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State in Ajoye Lecture Theatre on 16th August 2011 for inaugural training on Ni-Can-Veg baseline survey. The purpose of baseline study phase is to compile baseline information that will be used for gender analyses and provide input into other phases of the study. In addition, the baseline information will form the basis against which we can compare information gathered at the end of the study to assess the impacts of the study. The enumerators were recruited for the purpose of information gathering during the baseline survey. Baseline survey basics were explained to the enumerators with the aid of the survey instrument which include three sets of questionnaires (household, marketer, gatherer and consumer). The usage of the survey instrument was demonstrated to the enumerators with good emphasis on the vital information needed. Both scientists and enumerators had discussion on the survey instrument and survey techniques after which one representative from each state also demonstrated how the survey can be carried out successfully. Survey timeline was provided by the Principal Investigator and the enumerators were allowed to have one-on-one interaction using the survey instrument and basics as guide to attend to the questionnaires. Opportunity was given for more discussion and contribution on the baseline survey.



A Fadama Coordinator facilitating the Enumerators workshop in a session

### RESEARCHERS COMMENCE FAMILIARIZATION AND SUPERVISION TOURS TO COMMUNITIES IN OSUN STATE

The vision of IDRC/CIDA Ni-Can-Veg project is to bring back indigenous vegetables to the Nigerian tables by popularizing their cultivation, marketing and consumption, and also to empower the rural women economically. The project took the researchers round some rural and urban communities in Osun State of Nigeria. Among the areas visited were Atakumosa central market, Owena community and Majaro community in Ilesha East LGA; Oja-Titun market, Ajegunle community, Campus gate community and Ede Road community in Ife Central LGA; Obaloran Market, Oja-Ife market and Ilode



## PHOTO SCOPE



L-R: Prof. Akinremi, Dr. Watuwa and Prof. Oyedele at the workshop



Women scientists at the Project Inception Workshop



L-R: Prof. Faborode, Dr. Ayinde, Prof. Adebooye, Dr. Idowu and Dr. Sanginga.



L-R : Mr. Ojo and Prof. Torimiro.



L-R: Dr. Sanginga and Dr. Bouman



A cross-section of scientists at the Project Inception Workshop



A cross-section of scientists at the Project Inception Workshop



L-R: Prof. Akinrinade, Adebooye and Sanginga Chatting

community in Ife East LGA; Olode market, Omifunfun market, Onigbodogi market and Ifetedo community in Ife South LGA; Gbongan central market, Ode-Omu community and Majeroku community in Ayedaade LGA and Alekuwodo market and Owode community in Osogbo LGA. The common indigenous vegetables gathered, cultivated, marketed and consumed in visited communities were Tete Abalaye, Odu, Worowo, Efinrin, Ebolo, Oguma, Sokoyokoto, Iyana-ipaja, Yanrin, Safara, Oosun, Igbaagba and Gburee to mention a few. The consumers, most of whom were elderly people of 50 years and above expressed their satisfaction in consuming indigenous vegetables but noted that they are not readily available in the market coupled with the fact that majority of them are seasonal. Aside from the nutritive values of the vegetables, they also attributed reasons for consumption to inherent medicinal values.



Interaction of Scientists with rural farmers at Omifunfun

## Dry season Vegetable Business -Emerging Means of Livelihoods

A team of Ni-Can-Veg project's scientists conducted baseline surveys on under-utilized vegetables cultivation in Akure, Owena, Majeroku, Ajebandele, Ilode, Omifunfun communities of Osun State. Evidence from the field shows that dry season vegetable business is rapidly growing and emerging as an area of diversification among the farmers especially during the dry season. Most of the farmers testified that vegetables cultivation has significantly improved their socio-economic livelihoods as the proceeds have been used in training their children up to tertiary institution, built houses, acquired many assets, among others.

The team also observed a gendered division of labour along the vegetable production chains. For instance, men were found to be mostly engaged in land clearing and preparation, and planting, while women are predominantly involved in weeding, fertilizer application, harvesting, packaging, transportation, and marketing activities. Men vegetable farmers were observed to have a better access to vegetable farming inputs such as land, capital, fertilizer, etc., than their women counterparts. This observation will be a challenge to the Ni-Can-Veg project which is focused on equipping women farmers so that they have comparable access to farming resources vis-a-vis men farmers. In the visited communities, green vegetables – *Tete*, were observed to be popularly cultivated followed by *Osun*, *Odu*, *ugu* (pumpkin),

*Gbagba*, etc. Also, some vegetables such as *woorowo*, water leaf, bitter leaf, *gbooro*, *ekuku*, *ebure*, snake tomato, *musun-musun*, *isapa*, *efun-ile*, *agbeje*, *asufokoko*, *akumolapa*, *lafakale*, *egun-daamu* (local tete), *elebute*, *sokoyokoto*, etc. were found to be mostly gathered and not usually deliberately cultivated. Traditional methods of land preparation, planting, weeding, harvesting, packaging, and marketing were found to be more prominent among the vegetable farmers. The formation of Co-operative societies was found to be significantly influencing the vegetable farming business through provision of better access to capital and inputs to the members. An example of organized Co-operative group is the Unity Vegetable Farmers (UVF) located at Owena Military Barracks, Akure which is well recognized and supported by the Fadama Programme of Ondo State Government (see picture).



Scientist with Unity Vegetable Farmers, Owena Barracks, Akure (14 women and 3 men)

The farmers were sensitized on the need to start cultivating some of the indigenous vegetables that are gradually being threatened by neglect. The Ni-Can-Veg project team enlightens the farmers on what the participating farmers stand to gain and also seek their participation in the project activities. The farmers, who are predominantly women, while expressing their eagerness to participate in and cooperate with the project team, also solicit for the project support for inputs such as fertilizer, seed, farm implements, pumping machine etc to enable them maximize their production potential during the dry season.

### Project Team: Principal Investigators

<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Canada</b>
Prof. D. J. OYEDELE	Dr Thomas BOUMAN
Prof. O. C. ADEBOOYE	Prof. O. O. AKINREMI

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