The refreshed strategy of the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture, (IITA), sets clear targets – by 2020 the institute’s research efforts will have contributed to lifting 11 million Africans out of poverty and to restoring 7.5 million hectares of land into sustainable use. To achieve this, the institute will strengthen its presence throughout the sub-Saharan region and continue to build strong scientific infrastructure and capacity in collaboration with national agricultural research organizations.

IITA's scientific focus is on biotech and plant breeding, social science and agribusiness, natural resource management/soil science, plant production and plant health. Nutrition, food technology and bioinformatics are examples of prioritized areas for future investment. IITA is fully engaged in the CGIAR Research Programs, CRPs, taking active part in nine of the programs and leading the “Integrated Systems for the Humid Tropics”, Humidtropics.

IITA is also building public/private partnerships through a range of initiatives, e.g. strengthening the seed sector, and activities to stimulate youth employment and entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector.

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