

## **CSIR-CRI and IBP conclude agreement for plant breeding support in Ghana**

March 2018 – Ghanaian crop researchers can expect more technical and professional support, training and strategic advice to conduct their breeding activities efficiently, thanks to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed recently between the Crops Research Institute (CRI) – an Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Ghana (CSIR) – and the Integrated Breeding Platform (IBP).

CSIR-CRI breeding teams for rice, groundnut, soybean, cowpea, sweet potato, yam and vegetable crops are already using IBP software, the Breeding Management System (BMS), on their desktops. “We will soon have them migrate to the server edition for organisation-wide collaboration,” comments Dr Stella Ama Ennin, CSIR-CRI Director. “It would allow us to centralise and manage our breeding data at the institutional level, a best practice that will surely contribute in having CSIR-CRI recognised as a national Centre of Excellence.”

Now officially an IBP Support Centre, CSIR-CRI will also be promoting the use of such tools by institutions across Ghana and beyond. To that effect, Dr Ennin has appointed a BMS Support Specialist on her team, who will both assist with institutional deployment at CSIR-CRI, and act as a focal point for other organisations in West & Central Africa looking to implement breeding informatics.

Dr Jean-Marcel Ribaut, IBP Director, concurs emphatically: “CSIR-CRI has a longstanding track record of excellence in disseminating demand-driven technologies and building capacity. This agreement lets us join forces to grow our respective expertise, and have it radiate and benefit an even larger community.” Indeed, more developments are expected to unfold in the wake of this agreement as new funding and projects are confirmed over time. One such project, to *Enhance institutional breeding capacity in Ghana, Senegal and Uganda to develop climate resilient crops for African smallholder farmers*, is now initiating with a consortium of partners led by the IBP and AfricaRice, thanks to the funding of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Part of this funding will go to CSIR-CRI directly, as the lead partner for implementation in Ghana.

As they come together under this MoU, CSIR-CRI and the IBP hope to position CSIR-CRI as a regional leader for modernised breeding practices. Interested parties are welcome to contact CSIR-CRI directly for more information.

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## **About the Integrated Breeding Platform (IBP)**

The [Integrated Breeding Platform \(IBP\)](http://www.integratedbreeding.net) is a not-for-profit that provides digital solutions – namely, the Breeding Management System (BMS) – and training on best practices, to increase breeding performance in developing countries. Building on the Generation Challenge Programme's achievements, the IBP has been very active in West Africa over the last three years, fostering an extensive network of partners across CGIAR Centres, advanced research institutes, universities, international centres and other actors from the public and private sectors. This has been made possible, in part, thanks to funds from the West Africa Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP) of the World Bank, under the coordination of CORAF/WECARD, and the longstanding support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Access to the right tools and opportunities will help breeders achieve more efficiency in crop improvement, and therefore have a concrete and direct impact on their specific local environment:

[www.integratedbreeding.net](http://www.integratedbreeding.net).

## **About the Crops Research Institute**

[CSIR - Crops Research Institute \(CRI\)](http://www.cropsresearch.org) is the largest of the thirteen (13) research Institutes of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research of Ghana (CSIR). Its mission is to develop and disseminate demand-driven technologies, and build capacity for sustainable food and industrial crop productivity to enhance livelihoods. With head offices at Fumesua, near Kumasi, Ghana, CSIR-CRI researches food and industrial crops to improve yields, resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses, adaptability to climate change and to various end-user needs. Other areas of research focus are Resource and Crop Management, Seed Technology, Plant and Post-harvest, Biotechnology and Plant Health with the objectives of developing improved crop varieties, high quality planting materials and sustainable, environmentally friendly production practices that can be easily adopted by farmers to increase their productivity and reduce post-harvest losses. Socio-economic research is also conducted to assess the circumstances of farmers and processors, measure the adoption rates and impact of the Institute's technologies.

[www.cropsresearch.org](http://www.cropsresearch.org)

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