

BILL & MELINDA GATES  
**AGRICULTURAL**  
**INNOVATIONS**

Contact: [media@gatesagone.org](mailto:media@gatesagone.org)

**Nigeria's Institute for Agricultural Research and Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations Form Partnership to Improve Crops for Smallholder Farmers**

**St. Louis, Mo. (Jun. 15, 2023)** — Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations (Gates Ag One) and [Nigeria's Institute for Agricultural Research](#) (IAR) are joining forces to advance research into important crops for smallholder farmers in Nigeria.

IAR, Nigeria's century-old agricultural research agency, is part of Ahmadu Bello University and has a national research mandate to improve the country's most important food security and cash crops. For example, IAR played a key role in a global research effort that developed a cowpea cultivar (SAMPEA-20T) resistant to the Maruca pod borer, which can cause losses of up to 80%. In addition, IAR scientists, in collaboration with partners, developed TELA maize, which is both resistant to two major pests and tolerant of drought conditions.

"We are thrilled to be working with Gates Ag One to further our efforts to make agriculture a cornerstone of the Nigerian economy, providing food and nutrition security as well as decent livelihoods," said Professor Mohammad F. Ishiyaku, Executive Director of IAR.

The agriculture sector currently accounts for around a [quarter](#) of Nigeria's GDP, with the country leading global production of staple crops such as cassava and cowpea. However, low levels of productivity caused by degraded land, pest threats, and climate change mean Nigeria remains a [net food importer](#).

BILL & MELINDA GATES  
**AGRICULTURAL  
INNOVATIONS**

“IAR’s pioneering research has already produced tremendous benefits for farmers in Nigeria,” said Joe Cornelius, CEO of Gates Ag One. “We see an enormous opportunity to complement IAR’s long history of agricultural innovation to accelerate crop improvements that meet the new and evolving needs of smallholder farmers.”

Gates Ag One, a non-profit affiliate of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was created to leverage advances in global crop science to serve the growing needs of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The organization invests in early scientific discoveries to accelerate the development of improved crops that can close the yield gap.

Ends

**About Gates Ag One:**

[Bill & Melinda Gates Agricultural Innovations](#) (Gates Ag One) is a non-profit organization that accelerates breakthrough agricultural research to meet the urgent and neglected needs of smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Out of the conviction that all lives have equal value, Gates Ag One serves the interests of smallholder farmers, who are most exposed to climate shocks yet lack the access that others have to the latest agricultural innovations. Gates Ag One works to level the playing field and empower smallholder farmers to transform their agricultural productivity, nutrition security and climate resilience. Learn more at [gatesagone.org](http://gatesagone.org).

###