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Five Decades of Achievement, Future Challenges in Focus at Ceremony Marking IAEA Labs Anniversary

28 November 2012 | In the 50 years since they opened, the IAEA's laboratories in Seibersdorf have improved the lives of millions of people through work using sophisticated scientific techniques, IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said today at a ceremony to mark the anniversary.

Work at the labs has made a difference in controlling animal diseases in more than 30 countries in Africa and Asia, and contributed to the development of hardier and more nutritious crops such as barley that can grow in the High Andes of Peru. Scientists at the labs have helped communities identify the best sources of underground water and ensure that this scarce resource is used effectively. They have worked on safe ways to preserve food, and provided vital technical support for cancer treatment and other medical uses of nuclear technology.

New challenges abound in the present and the future, Director General Amano said.

"Member States want us to do more in almost all areas of nuclear applications. This includes climate-smart agriculture, with priority on helping countries to adapt to climate change while improving food security.

"It includes improving preparedness for responding to nuclear emergencies and especially for dealing with radiological contamination in food and agriculture."

The Director General also said the IAEA would contribute more to controlling mosquitoes that transmit malaria by using techniques that, together with pest control programmes, have helped control other insects.

IAEA scientists at the eight nuclear applications laboratories and the safeguards laboratories carry out research and development and provide technical services to the IAEA's 158 Member States. The labs also regularly host fellows and scientific visitors, with more than 2 000 benefiting from this opportunity to learn in the past 50 years.

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- » [50th Anniversary of IAEA's Nuclear Sciences and Applications Laboratories in Seibersdorf](#)
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