



# Agricultural Policy Research Network

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## **APRNet Q2 REPORT**

**(Covering the Period, 1st April – 30th June, 2017)**

**September, 2017**

## **1. Introduction**

This report documents the major activities and achievements of the Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet) from 1st April, 2017 to 30th June, 2017. Challenges and prospects of the organization were equally highlighted in the report. The major activities and challenges as well as prospects are hereby presented under the following sub-themes:

## **2. APRNet Held Three Events at Asaba in June, 2017**

- i. Convening of 5th Agricultural Policy Research Seminar*
- ii. Capacity Building Workshop*
- iii. Book Donation and Courtesy Call on the Management of Delta State University, Asaba.*

The first major event of APRNet for the year 2017 took place in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria on Friday, 9th June, 2017. This included convening of the 5th Agricultural Policy Research Seminar of APRNet and a Capacity Building Workshop which were declared opened by Professor Eric Eboh, the Job Creation Officer of Delta State and the Immediate Past President (and pioneer President) of APRNet. This was after a welcome remark from the host, the Provost, College of Agricultural Sciences, Delta State University Asaba and an address by the Immediate Past President of Farm Management Association of Nigeria. After this, Dr. Tony Onoja, the APRNet President, welcomed all participants to the dual event after a good will message during which he highlighted some key functions and milestones of APRNet over the last few years especially under his stewardship with the support of International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)-Nigeria (under the leadership of Dr. George Mavrotas, IFPRI-Nigeria Programme Leader. On his part, Professor Eric Eboh lauded the current leadership of APRNet EXCO and took the entire audience to memory lane on how APRNet was formed plus a comprehensive elaboration of the major achievements as well as the roles expected of APRNet in Nigerian agricultural policy landscape. Prof. Eboh demonstrated in words and action his love and support for APRNet during the event. He was emphatic on the need to maintain the flagship programme of APRNet which is the Annual Stakeholders Forum on Making Research Work for End Users. The Policy Seminar was attended by 70 participants. This shows the growing interest people have for APRNet Agricultural Policy Research seminars.

After a group photograph, the Policy Seminar was presented by Dr. Ebere Mercy Ndubisi-Ogaraku, a Senior Lecturer at Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Port Harcourt. The paper, which was co-authored with Dr. Anthony O. Onoja was titled: ***The Nexus between Insurgency, Environment and Agricultural Livelihoods in Nigeria.***

After the seminar presentation and tea break, the second session of the programme, which is a capacity building workshop commenced. Dr. Anthony O. Onoja (APRNet President) trained the participants on the Sub-Theme: *How to Write a Grant Winning Proposal*, while Dr. Ibisime E. Etela, Associate Professor, Department of Animal Science & Principal Research Fellow, Institute of Agricultural Research and Development, University of Port Harcourt, held a training session on the topic: *Capacity Building for Fundable Integrated Agricultural Policy Research.*

The Goal of the Capacity Building Workshop were to :

- ❖ Increase the ability of APRNet members and its stakeholders to identify local problems and their solutions.
- ❖ Enlighten participants/members on the requirements of funders of research and development projects donors.
- ❖ Stimulate the interest of APRNet members in competitive grant winning for themselves and their institutions.
- ❖ Equip APRNet members with the skills for conducting funded trans-disciplinary research of relevance to agricultural policy and rural development at national, regional and global levels.

The event came to an end after an interactive session that lasted for about one hour followed by a lunch session at about 3.40 PM. The event came to a close after a vote of thanks from the APRNet President and a remark from the LOC Chair, Professor P. C. Ike, the APRNet Vice President. Some copies of Nigerian Agricultural Policy Research Journal (*NAPReJ*) were donated to the University by the EXCO after paying courtesy call on the Vice Chancellor's representative.

Pictures of the event are as follows:



*Figure 1. Prof. Eric Eboh, Immediate Past President, APRNet and Job Creation Officer, Delta State declaring the occasion opened*



Figure 2: President of APRNet, Dr. Tony O. Onoja giving an opening remark while Prof. Eboh, FAMAN Immediate Past President and Provost (Rep.) of the College of Agriculture at the University looked on



Figure 3: Dr. Mercy E. Ndubueze-Ogaraku presenting her seminar paper during the event





*Figure 4: Audience Listening with rapt attention during the events*



*Figure 5: Dr. I. Etela, one of the Resource persons for the Grant Winning Proposal Writing Workshop of APRNet at Asaba on 9th June, 2017*



*Figure 6: APRNet EXCO Posed with the Immediate Past President of APRNet and the Key Note Speaker of the day, Professor Eric Eboh (3rd from the left). To the immediate right to him is the incumbent President, Dr. Tony O. Onoja, Dr. Mercy E. Ndubueze-Ogaraku (Assistant Secretary), Dr. Celestine E. Nze (APRnet Secretary) and to the extreme, Prof. PC Ike, APRNet Vice President. First left stood Dr. Odinaka Ejiogu, South East Regional Coordinator and followed by Dr. Gloria Ujor, APRNet Treasurer.*





*Figure 6: Group Photograph of some participants at the event*



*Figure 7: EXCO Members present posed shortly after the event.*





*Figure 8: The LOC Chair and Vice President of APRNet, Prof. PC Ike declaring the event closed.*

#### **4. APRNet's Strategic Plan 2017-2021 Draft Writing in Progress**

During the period in review, there was a remarkable progress in drafting the APRNet's second Strategic Plan, The 2017-2021 Strategic Plan which was muted by the President in January, 2017. The draft report is still undergoing modifications and inputs before it will be presented to APRNet congress for ratification at a later date this year.

#### **5. Membership drive**

The leadership of APRNet, during the period in review recorded new members who registered financially and on the website portal of APRNet. These include: Dr.(Mrs.) A. Henri-Ukoha, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Port Harcourt; Professor Jude Mbanasor, Provost College of Finance and Agribusiness Studies, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike in Abia State; Dr. (Mrs.) Stella O. Adejoh, the Director of Procurement, Kogi State Government, Lokoja and Mr. L.C. Obike of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike in Abia State. There is an increase in tendency towards maintaining a gender balance in membership of APRNet as the members grows as well as registration of high profile experts into the network.

## 6. APRNet Website Report (April-June, 2017)

This is a quarterly report of the APRNet Website from the month of April to June. This report is further divided into three (3) parts. The first is the month of April, then May and lastly June. However, for the ease of reading, the summary is presented as follows:

Table 1. Summary of Website Statistical Report from April to June, 2017 (Total Figures)

Month	Day	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth in MB
April	Total	3044	6572	8783	225.6
May	Total	262	744	1582	80.63
June	Total	956	3443	9984	345.93

Source: APRNet Website Consultant, 2017.

Table 2. Summary of Website Statistical Report from April to June, 2017 (Average Figures)

Month	Day	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth in MB
April	Average	101	219	292	7.52
May	Average	8	24	51	2.6
June	Average	31	114	332	11.53

Source: APRNet Website Consultant, 2017.

The data in Figures 1 and 2 summarized the web performance of APRNet based on statistics of its website. From the whole data it could be observed that total hits recorded on APRNet website during the second quarter of the year 2017 rose from 8783 hits in April to 9984. This upward trend in the web hits of APRNet website indicates a progressive interest in the activities of APRNet as presented on its websites. There is a need to even improve upon this performance as APRNet aspires to become a global brand in agricultural policy and rural development network. This ambition will be buoyed by increase in number of engagements of APRNet activities which is subject to availability of fund, better website management in terms of content delivery and improvement and more awareness creation by APRNet leadership.

## 7. EXCO Meeting Held in Asaba

During the period in review too, a formal EXCO meeting of APRNet was also held. During the meeting, the conduct of the events at Asaba was appraised and

corrections on noted lapses were made to enhance delivery in subsequent events while suggestions and plans were put in place to host the APRNet next event at Abuja in August, 2017, i.e. the proposed APRNet 4th National Multi-Stakeholders Forum, the flag ship event of APRNet and the 6th APRNet Agricultural Research Policy Seminar. Nine EXCO members were present at the meeting.

#### **8. APRNet President Requests for the Second Vice President Nominee from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD)**

During the period in review, the President and the Treasurer of the Network, Dr. Tony Onoja and Dr. (Mrs.) Gloria Ujor, visited the Honourable Minister's office with a letter requesting for the filling of the vacant position meant for the Ministry. The Minister was urged to nominate the APRNet's Second Vice President as required by the APRNet Constitution. The letter was well received by the Honourable Minister, Chief Audu Ogbe and was being followed up by the President of APRNet. There are positive indications that a nominee will soon be named and communicated to us.

#### **9. Prospects and Challenges**

During the period in review, the network experienced a delay in the release of fund to commence with the activities of the network as planned in the 2017 APRNet budget submitted to IFPRI. There was also a slow response of members in meeting up with their financial obligations. Nevertheless, with the support of some strong members, especially our EXCO members and Immediate Past President, Prof. Eric Eboh, it was possible to get the planned activities done on schedule while awaiting the commitments from our major funder, IFPRI. However, most thanks go to IFPRI, without whose funding the listed activities could not have been fully carried out as they eventually met up with their obligations to enhance the production of the agreed deliverables later during the period in review. Generally the period (Q2) was activity packed and there was a lot of enthusiasm and zeal to achieve more for the growing network from the body language of the enlarged EXCO members. APRNet is also faced with the problem of ad hoc nature of staff which brings about saddling of too much responsibility in the hands of a few willing volunteer EXCO members. The need for two permanent staff, Programme Officer in Abuja and a paid Journal Editorial



Assistant to be stationed physically close to the Managing Editor of NAPReJ and President of APRNet, Dr. Tony Onoja, at Port Harcourt becomes more urgent. With persuasion to our funders, IFPRI-Nigeria, under the dynamic and understanding leadership of Dr. George Mavrotas, we have hope that our request may be granted in the next financial year. This will hopefully boost the efficiency of APRNet leadership in delivering all agreed deliverables and the major aims/objectives of the Network.

Thanks.

Signed:

**Dr. Anthony O. Onoja**

*President, APRNet*