



(APRNet <http://www.aprnetworkng.org>)

E-mail of the President: anthony.onoja@uniport.edu.ng, tonyojonimi@gmail.com, info@aprnetworkng.org Mobile: +2348065238655

APRNet Q4 REPORT 2017

(Covering the Period, 1st October – 31st December, 2017)

Presented by

Dr. Anthony O. Onoja

President, APRNet

January, 7th 2018

1. Introduction

This report records the major activities and achievements of the Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet) from 1st October, 2017 to 31st December, 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:

(1) Membership Profile

During the period in review, APRNet membership increased by 3. The subscription rate was, however, not very encouraging as old members failed to pay up their debts. The attitude of "What is in it for me?" is still playing out on some members who try to discount their benefits by benefits such as sponsorship to attends events, workshops and conferences. However, APRNet use of free publishing for its members in the Network's journal, (NAPReJ) is attracting more new members. This will be sustained by developing the journal and increasing its frequency and quality over time.

During the period in review, an APRNet young scholar, Mrs. Toyin Ajibade bagged a PhD in Agricultural Economics from the University of Ilorin. She is now Dr. (Mrs.) Toyin Ajibade. Dr. Ajibade is an Assistant Editor of NAPReJ. Another member reported the completion of his PhD thesis but has not confirmed whether his result has been approved by the Senate at the time of filing this report.

The period equally saw Dr. Tony Onoja, APRNet president, bagging an award of Excellence for his remarkable Contribution to Research and Development by attracting research grants to the University of Port Harcourt.





APRNet President Dr. Tony Onoja, receiving an Award of Merit for outstanding contribution to research development from the Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Port Harcourt, in recognition of his role in winning research grants to the University on 7th November, 2017.. This is the second of such an award won by him in three years.

The period had its moments of heaviness for members too as APRNet President and IFPRI-Nigeria coordinator, Dr. Tony Onoja and Mr. John Mazunda, both lost their mothers. They were both buried in December at Kogi State in Nigeria and in Malawi respectively. APRNet EXCO members and some other members of APRNet were in attendance at the funeral rites of the APRNet President's mother in Ogugu, Olamaboro LGA, Kogi State on 21 and 22nd December, 2017.

(2) APRNet Gets a Second Vice President Nominated by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

During this period, specifically on 16th October, 2017, APRNet Second Vice President was nominated by the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. His name is Mr. Auwal Maidabino Ahmed, a Director, Planning and Policy Coordination Department of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. This is to fulfil the constitutional requirements of the composition of APRNet EXCO as pursued vigorously by the President and the EXCO during the year. We are very glad to have him on board of the

Executive Council. This will promote the relationship of APRNet with the Federal Government with respect to agricultural policy making inputs from the network. Kindly find attached a letter to this effect from FMARD at the Appendix.

(3) APRNet Partners with Agricultural Society of Nigeria

During the period in review, the President and Vice President of APRNet were at the 51st Annual Conference of Agricultural Society of Nigeria (ASN) held from 24th - 27th October 2017 at Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN), Wuse, Abuja. During the opening ceremony held at NUC House at Wuse, APRNet President, Dr. Tony Onoja, was invited to give a good will message from APRNet to the society. He used the opportunity to showcase the activities and ideals of APRNet during the well attended event. Subsequently, the APRNet team were co-opted into the think tank team to deliberate on strategies for making agricultural scientists in different fields in Nigeria be recognized as professionals under one umbrella of chartered agriculturists. The lobby team is working currently on this move as the bill for this has passed its second reading at the National Assembly in Abuja.



The President, APRNet, Dr. Tony Onoja, with the Chief Editor, Nigerian Agricultural Journal, ASN Journal, Prof, Jude Mbanasor and another member of ASN during the collaboration at Abuja in 24th October 2017

(4) APRNet President Participated in THE FIRST EVER NIGERIA'S AGRICULTURAL JOINT SECTOR REVIEW Organized by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) in 2017 AT ABUJA

Following a special invitation to APRNet President with reference No SPD/595/S.II/VOL.1, 23rd September, 2017 the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Chief Audu Ogbe, invited the APRNet President, Dr. Anthony O. Onoja, to the approved Joint Sector Review JSR on the Implementation of the 2014 Malabo declaration under the context of Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and Agricultural Promotion Policy in the country. In furtherance of the above, the Ministry in collaboration with stakeholders collected data from all relevant institutions and other stakeholders for the year 2015 and 2016 which formed the basis of the analysis and report of the sector. The Joint Sector Review (JSR) of 2017 was held on 28th – 29th September, 2017 at Rock View Hotel, Wuse II, Abuja. The event gave room for multi-stake holders engagements of experts in addressing the budget for 2018 for the agricultural sector as well as redefining the role of agricultural extension in the Nigerian agricultural policy thrust among other issues related to the Green Alternative (The Nigerian Agricultural Promotion Policy).





From the right, Prof. Agu., Prof. Okuneye and Dr. Tony Onoja, Presidents of Agricultural Extension Society of Nigeria, (AESON), Nigerian Association of Agricultural Economists (NAAE) and Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet at the Joint Sector Review (JSR) of FMARD held in Rock View Hotel, Abuja in 2017



The APRNet President at the Joint Sector Review of the Nigerian Agricultural Sector in Abuja November, 2017

5.) APRNet Website Hits and Visibility Soars

Table 1 : Website Visits to APRNet site Statistics

This is a quarterly report of the APRNet Website from the month of September to November

Summary of Website Statistical Report

Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
Sept. 2017	917	1,301	10,430	19,210	821.08 MB
Oct. 2017	1,009	1,790	4,932	12,267	751.11 MB
Nov. 2017	1,311	2,872	7,530	13,127	662.20 MB



The data in table 1 indicate that website visits recorded by APRNet during the period remain on the upward direction. This is a sign of consistent positive attention the network is receiving globally owing to its innovative activities and engagements. APRNet can do more if given enough financial and moral support.

6.) APRNet Held its 7th Policy Seminar in Lokoja Kogi State with huge impact at The Hotel Blue Bell, 500 Housing Unit, Lokoja, Kogi State, 23rd November 2017

The seminar flagged off at 10.10am by Dr Celestine Nze, the Secretary General of APRNet who was the anchor of the event together with Prof. Pius Ike. Invited guest who were present at the start included the Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture (Hon. Kehinde Oloruntoba) and three Special Advisers to the Governor among whom were Special Adviser on Health (Dr Ata), Special Adviser on Agriculture, and Special Adviser on Rural Development (Hon Usman). Also, the Permanent Secretary to the Agricultural Ministry (Dr Isam) and the president of FAMAN (Dr Damien) were acknowledged. In addition, the APRNet President (Dr Anthony Onoja) and Dr Stella Adejoh were called up to the High Table.

After the introduction of dignitaries, an opening prayer was held by Dr Gloria Ujor, and then a goodwill message was given by the FAMAN president. Dr Damien reiterated the relationship between APRNet and FAMAN and the importance of their existence to agricultural development in Nigeria. Thereafter, the APRnet President gave a welcome address. Dr Onoja introduced the APRNet, and elucidated on its mission and objectives. Dr Onoja noted the need for intensification of agricultural development as a result of rising food insecurity which has been brought about by numerous issues ranging from increasing population, high militancy/conflicts, reduced oil prices, poor farm productivity, rising cattle herds menace, poor technology, climate change effects to poor agricultural financing and inconsistent government policies. According to Dr Onoja, it was against this background that the multi-stakeholders approach which APRNet adopts became necessary as a tool for finding solutions to food insecurity in the country. The President also acknowledged the Kogi State government's Initiatives on enhancing rice production in the state but prayed the Confluence Rice brand promised in May 2017 by the State Government should get into the market soon for the deadline given was almost here. Thanking the Governor for his progress on security matters, he advocated that the security be extended to Agriculture. The need to see to the creation of the Faculty of Agriculture in the Federal University



located in Lokoja was advocated by the President of APRNet too. At the end of the President's remarks, a keynote address was given by the Hon. Commissioner for Agriculture. Hon. Oloruntoba spoke about the efforts of the Kogi State Government in agriculture especially in rice production (promising that confluence rice would hit the market by December, 2017). A mill with capacity of milling 50 tonnes per day has been set up and the government is partnering with the farmers to enable consistent supply and also with the Federal-owned silos for storage to ensure price stability. In addition, there was a plan to start organizing a Kogi fishing festival with the development of aquaculture and fishing activities. More so, the Kogi Government is partnering with an Israelite Company in greenhouse development for vegetable production, he noted. The Agriculture Commissioner spoke about the rejuvenated ADP and the need for funding support for agriculture finance. The Commissioner at the end of his address was given an award of recognition for his works in Kogi by the APRNet president. In his acceptance speech, the Commissioner dedicated the award to the governor and the good people of Kogi State. After this, there was a breakup for a photograph session.



Some participants (early birds) at the 7th Agricultural Policy Research Seminar held at Hotel Blue Bell, Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria on 23rd November, 2017.



Presentation of a Seminar Paper on Anchor Borrowers' Programme of CBN in Nigeria by Dr. Stella Adejoh APRNet Member and Director General, Bureau for Public Procurement Kogi State Government, Lokoja.



Donating APRNet Journal (Nigerian Agricultural Policy Research Journal) to the Government of Kogi State (via the Deputy Governor of the State) — in Lokoja, Nigeria after the 7th APRNet Agricultural Policy Seminar on 23rd November, 2017



Reading a citation of the Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture of Kogi State by the LOC Chair and Director General Bureau for Public Procurement, Kogi State with the APRNet President and Vice President listening



APRNet EXCO in a meeting with the Deputy Governor of Kogi State, Commissioner for Agriculture, Senior Adviser on Agriculture, Permanent Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development and Director General of the ministry at the State House.



Senior Special Advisers on Health and Agriculture & Rural Development in a chat with the LOC Chair

The first seminar paper was presented by Dr Stella Adejoh who spoke on the Anchor Borrowing Programme (ABP) in Kogi State. The main objective of the ABP is about linking farmers with suitable markets and large scale processors and increasing capacity of agricultural firms. The major focus of the ABP is on rice production. The ABP is currently faced with challenges which include poor loan recovery rate (presently at about 30%), none availability of land/ownership status and non-commitment of input suppliers. Considering the identified challenges, Dr Adejoh recommended proper profiling of farmers for accurate targeting of true farmers, intensification of advocacy and sensitization programmes to increase awareness of the ABP among stakeholders. In addition, there should be proper monitoring and evaluation at the local and state levels; timely supply of inputs, adequate funding, motivation of extension/desk officers of the programme, more collaboration/partnership with NGOs for broader outreach and social inclusion with gender balance.

The second paper was presented by Prof Pius Ike. It was on 'Assessment of Nigeria Agricultural Financing Policies and Initiatives (1970-2016). Policies that have been initiated by the FGN towards agricultural development include Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution (GR), Land Use Decree 1978 etc. Pro Ike noted that the highest share of credit from money deposit banks to agriculture was in 1975 (17.49%) and this has dwindled down over the years to about 3% in 2014. Similarly, the FGN budgetary allocation to

agriculture in the years had been very minimal. The research findings showed that a 1% increase in allocation to the agriculture sector would increase agricultural output by 0.58%, a 1% increased lending by commercial banks would increase agricultural output by 0.096% , but a 1% increase in interest rate would reduce agricultural output by 1.17%.

Furthermore, Ms Esther Joshua was invited to speak about the State Partnership for Agriculture (SPA). SPA is a partnership programme ongoing between the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and Kogi State. It aims at improving agricultural delivery capacity at the state level. At the end of the SPA presentation, the presence of the Honourable Commissioner for Environment was announced. She gave her own good will message too and highlighted the nexus between environment and agriculture. She also highlighted where the works of her ministry had involved agricultural development too.

The fourth presenter (Joel Idoko) spoke on the National youth Empowerment scheme. He noted that the study was basically about redirecting the whole policy framework to identify the significant variables affecting agriculture. He emphasized on the need for the engagement of youths in driving agricultural programmes. He encouraged the state government to key into their programme for actualization of the current national change agenda regarding agriculture. At the end of the presentation at 1:45pm, the special adviser on Rural Development moderated over the questions and answers interactive section.

FAMAN President was specially invited and was present at the event to deepen the collaborations between APRNet and the other sister organizations in Nigerian agriculture. Dr Damien of FAMAN asked about the funding of agricultural programmes that were sometimes hijacked at the state level by non-practitioners and what the government was doing about it at the local levels.

In commenting reacting, Prof. Ike talked about the Delta state experience of youths selling off starter packs.

Mr. Abdulahi A. Salifu commented on the problem faced in the ABP. He noted that town hall meetings are necessary for feedback and gave an instance where such platform enable farmers to immediate report their objections. He also noted that supply of inputs were untimely. He then advocated for the need to involve those who know the real farmers. This was more so, because, funding the PMT (project Monitoring Team) should be a priority to enable proper profiling of farmers.



The extent of sensitization done by the ABP team was another question posed by Mrs. Isabella Omojor. In addition, Mr. Ahmed James of ADP, commented on how the farmers can be profiled or identified. He recommended that extension agents should be involved in identifying the real farmers.

There was a pause on the question/answer session to allow the Commissioner for Environment give a brief remark on the seminar. She welcomed all and commented on the absence of the ABP in Ogugu, Olamaboro LGA, where she hails from. She stressed on financial inclusion and talked about the “gown reaching the town”. She stressed the need to find practical solutions that are tailored towards problems peculiar to specific locations. She ended by advocating for partnership with the environmental ministry for substantial development. A group photograph with the APRNet executives was then taken.

At the resumption of the question session, there were questions on whether the money being provided by the government gets to the farmers and the status of the CBN policy on interest drawback. Ms. Isabella commented on farmers' understanding the literacy of finance and the need to teach farmers about the use of the finance being provided. Another observer commented on the need to focus on where the money is being channeled to, specifically to work on the psychology of the farmers.

For Mr Idah, a consultant to the Kogi Ministry of Agriculture, there was yet to be a full understanding of the ABP. He was of the opinion that the major problem was the implementation of the programme. Based on his interaction with farmers on ABP, he observed that the ABP was free. This is because it is difficult to ask the already poor farmers to contribute fund and therefore there is an ongoing re-evaluation of farmers. He noted that, FADAMA succeeded so far because of the partial input of fund by farmers. There was the need to correct the Land Use Act of 1978 to enable farmers own their farms.

Through the efforts of Dr. Stella Adejoh, the APRNET EXCO paid a courtesy call on the Kogi State Deputy Governor at his office. The APRNet team met the deputy governor, Elder Simon Achuba who was formally introduced to the APRNet team. The anthem was sang, after which the Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development gave a brief remark about the APRNET team's visit and the mission of the group. After that, the APRNET president introduced all the EXCO members along with the LOC chair. In the course of the address, he commended the deputy governor for his immense support towards agricultural development in Kogi State and then briefed the deputy governor on the workings of APRNet. At the end, some copies of the APRNet journal (NAPReJ) were



donated to the Deputy Governor who then gave his own remarks. The Deputy Governor acknowledged that research work was vital to human development and as such, APRNet was doing a noble work. He expressed the appreciation and willingness of the State to key into the group initiatives as agriculture has been declared an emergency area in Kogi State. He acknowledged the need for establishment of an Agricultural Faculty in the Federal University in the state and to this end promised that they will liaise with the institution to establish a Faculty of Agriculture in the university. He welcomed the APRNet once more and wished the members a safe trip back home. Dr. Adejoh gave a brief closing remark thanking the Deputy Governor for receiving the team and expressing faith that the promises made by his Excellency will come to fruition. The meeting was called to an end at 4: 55 pm.



Audience listening



A consultant to CBN on Anchor Borrower's Scheme giving a speech on the Scheme



From left to right are the Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture of Kogi State, the LOC Chair and Director General Bureau for Public Procurement, Kogi State with the APRNet President listening to a presentation during the Seminar



The Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Kogi State, Mr. Oloruntoba appreciating the Award of recognition given to him for his contribution to agricultural development in the state by APRNet team during the Seminar at Lokoja



The Honourable Commissioner for Environment and Water resources making a presentation at the Seminar



Breakfast time



APRNet EXCO Present, in a group photograph with the LOC Chair, Dr. Stella Adejoh



The Honourable Commissioner for Environment and Water Resources, posed with APRNet EXCO during the event



Participants listening raptly to speakers at the event.



A Presentation from Synergos (A Bill and Melinda/ Ford Foundation) NGO

It is instructive to note that at the time of filing this report, the government eventually launched the Confluence rice to heed to their promise which APRNet reminded them of in November 2017. As can be seen in the Vanguard Newspaper of December 8, 2017 12:58 pm (Read more at: <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/12/kogis-confluence-rice-hits-market/>) noted in a headline thus : "Kogi's Confluence Rice hits market". According to the paper, Kogi Agricultural Development Project (Kogi ADP) has commenced the milling and sales of confluence rice to meet the high demand during the yuletide season. According to the Assistant Managing Director of Kogi ADP, Mr Isaac Ejiga, the confluence rice is a product of sustained commitment of Kogi State government to make the state assume leadership position in food production in the country. Ejiga assured that Kogi ADP would continue to contribute towards Governor Yahaya Bello's determination to make confluence rice the most affordable rice for Kogites. He said the product will be made available to the masses at Kogi ADP head office, Felele, Lokoja and will be sold to residents during the festive period and beyond. A bag of 25kg costs N7,000 while 10kg N3,000.

APPENDIX

A WELCOMEADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

ANTHONY O. ONOJA (PhD)

PRESIDENT, *APRNet*

at the Agricultural Policy Research Network's (APRNet) 7th Agricultural Policy Research Seminar

held at Blue Bell Hotels, 500 Housing Unit, Lokoja

on 23rd November, 2017

Protocols

The Honourable Commissioner for Agriculture

Special Advisers to the Governor

The Permanent Secretaries of MDAs Present

Professors and Distinguished Academics

Farmers Representatives

APRNet Members and EXCO

Development Institutions Representative

The Media Representatives

Other Invited Guests

It is indeed a great pleasure and honour for me to be in this special gathering of very distinguished policy makers and stakeholders in agriculture in Kogi State, my own state, to deliver a welcome address at this occasion of the 7th Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet).

Kindly permit me to introduce our organization before addressing the major issues that brought us here. APRNet was established in 2009 at a meeting of Nigeria's agricultural research policy stakeholders and was facilitated by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) under the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)-funded Agricultural Policy Support Facility. The organisation is being governed by a 9-member Executive Council comprising of researchers, policy experts and representatives from the private sector and civil society. The EXCO of APRNet also includes a Nominee of the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development as the Second Vice President.



The network facilitates the following tasks:

- I. Research and information sharing (This include through Journal Publications, policy briefs, bulletins, website publications, holding of seminars, conferences and research forums). You may like to have our journal (NAPReJ hosted on our website)
- II. Training/ capacity building
- III. Policy linkages and feedback (e.g. through our **Annual National Multi-Stake holders Forum** in Abuja)
- IV. Dissemination and public enlightenment (*advocacy and media enlightenment*)

Members of APRNet (individual and corporate) cut across various agricultural policy related disciplines including Public Policy, Agricultural Economics, Development Economics, All fields of Agricultural Sciences, Development Partners, Research Institutes in Agriculture, Ministries, Development Agencies (MDAs), Development Banks and CBN, Farmers Associations, Agribusiness Experts and Practitioners, Private Sector Investors etc. We have over 120 members currently and still counting. Our website hits rose from a modest average of about 200 visitors per month in 2014 to over 10, 201 hits per month. This indicates the global relevance and visibility of our Network whose membership cuts across different nationalities.

The World Economic Forum (2017) noted that with over **795 million undernourished people in the world currently**, hunger remains a global challenge, while malnutrition and **hunger takes the unenviable position as number one risk to health worldwide**. WFP (2017) indicated that not only do insufficient – or the wrong – food cause suffering and poor health, they also **slow progress in many other areas of development like education and employment**. More worrisome too is the fact that in Nigeria, over 3 million people are reported to be in urgent need of humanitarian assistance due to conflicts (Action Against Hunger, 2017). The food situation in Nigeria is worsened recently by

- ✓ increasing human population (Nigeria now over 184 million people)
- ✓ drop in **oil prices and over dependence on oil in Nigerian economy**,
- ✓ **militancy** in the Niger Delta,
- ✓ rising food prices globally,
- ✓ increased spate of conflicts in North East Nigeria (Boko Haram),
- ✓ poor farm productivity
- ✓ poor technology uptake (low agricultural extension access, low income, technological capacity gap and low innovation)
- ✓ inability to access farm credit (poor agricultural financing),
- ✓ the rising menace of cattle herds men attack on farmers especially in the middle belt and South East Nigeria.
- ✓ rising effects of climate change
- ✓ inconsistent government policies and poor will on the part of governments to address agricultural production

The scenario above also leads to **disenchantment with government** and it is responsible for most **conflicts** as we see in Nigeria today.



This is because access to food is a right of every one. It is the right of every government to ensure the security of lives and property of its citizens. Hence government cannot shy away from developing agriculture at any level if it desires development. Any government which fails to address economic issues of poverty and hunger would fail woefully.

Hence the decision of the global community in 2015 to adopt the 17 Global Goals for **Sustainable Development to improve people's lives by 2030** could not have been more timely. The **Goal 2 – Zero Hunger** – pledges to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. The challenge of meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially SDGs 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health and wellbeing) and 13 (climate action) by 2030 (United Nations, 2015) remain very urgent tasks that will require scientific evidence to inform policy responses at national, regional and global levels.

It is in line with the Malabo and Maputo declaration which Nigeria and other African countries were party to. Reducing hunger and increasing agricultural productivity and improving agricultural value chain is also the focus of the Nigerian Agricultural Promotion Policy (NAPP) or the Green Alternative.

Achieving the goals of the Green Alternative which seeks to take Nigeria away from oil led economy to an agricultural led economy would require a **multi-stakeholders** approach. It will also require a carefully mapped out agricultural financing policy that is amenable to the peculiarities of Nigerian farmers situation. That is why the two major themes of today's Policy Seminar are centred on agricultural financing (both talking about Nigerian agricultural financing experiences as well as the CBN Anchor Borrowers' scheme).

The reason for anchoring this seminar in Kogi State this time around is very instructive. We, at APRNet, were made to understand, during our last Annual National Multi-Stakeholders Forum held in Abuja in AUGust, 2017, that there have been series of Agricultural revolution initiatives going on in the State under the distinguished leadership of the Executive Governor, His Excellency Governor Yahaya Bello and his able Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Hon. Kehinde Oloruntoba. For instance we understand that in May 2017 the government kick-started massive agricultural projects in the state. Rice mill was situated in Kampe-Omi Dam and it is expected to create thousands of direct and indirect jobs for citizens of the State; and that the scheme plans to have the production of Confluence Rice to be made abundantly available in the State by December 2017. We also learn that investors are now trooping into Kogi State because the State is now safe, secure and business-friendly due to the efforts of the quiet achieving Governor who is eternally committed to turning around the fortunes of the State. This safety is no doubt, connected with Governor Yahaya Bello's passion for the security of lives and properties of all indigenes and inhabitants of Kogi State.

While the Governor strives his best to achieve the primary goal of government, security of lives, it will be instructive to know that security of lives also include security of the stomach - food security of the citizens.

We are therefore using this opportunity to advocate for more efforts in encouraging farmers to access farm inputs especially farm credit, fertilizers, improved seeds and access to rural infrastructure such as good roads and electricity to help farmers add more value to their agricultural products and improve their well being in the process.



Achieving this feat will involve concerted efforts by the government and all other stakeholders in agriculture in Kogi State. Part of the reason why we are meeting in Kogi State today is to advocate for engagement of multi-stakeholders in agricultural policy formulation and implementation. In addition to this, APRNet strongly believes that research in agricultural fields and related science fields will not lead to development in Kogi State and indeed in Nigeria unless efforts are made by relevant authorities to build capacities of researchers as well as farmers to bring about innovative technologies in farming as well as bridging the gap between the research community/academia and the farmers/agribusiness who are the end users of agricultural research. Institutions such as Kogi State University and The Federal University, Lokoja among others, would have a significant role to play in this area. It is surprising to note that a state such as Kogi State which is one of the food baskets of Nigeria given its rich agricultural resources still has a conventional Federal University which has not yet started any programme in agricultural sciences. All related institutions in the state that have anything to do with the farmers must be harnessed to contribute their maximum quota to agricultural development in the State. These will include the revival of the State Agricultural Development Project to better carry out more modern agricultural extension services in line with the current thrust of the Federal Government in the *Green Alternative*. The need to revive the Agricultural Development Project, especially its Agricultural Extension services, is highly needed at this time when the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is re-activating the national agricultural extension service delivery system.

Farmers need to be exposed to modern methods of farming and innovative ways of improving their productivities so that abundant food can flow in the households of Kogi citizens and the entire country again.

I want to thank you all for leaving your various tight schedules on a busy working day like this to be part of this important event. This event would not have been successful without you. It would not have been what it is too without the support of IFPRI, APRNet EXCO and its congress members. We thank the Kogi State Government represented by the Hon. Commissioner for Agriculture, Hon. K. Olorunfoba for their support to this event too. APRNet is also highly indebted to the LOC, Chair, Dr. Stella Adejoh (Director General, Kogi State Bureau for Public Procurement and a very wonderful member of APRNet) for her wonderful organizational skill in making this event a huge success.

Thank you all.

Dr. Anthony O. Onoja



IN THE NEWS:

KOGI STATE GOVT TO COLLABORATE WITH FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LOKOJA TO ESTABLISH AGRICULTURE FACULTY

Kogi state government said it would liaise with the Federal University Lokoja to establish a Faculty of Agriculture for effective research work in the institution. (This was one of the major recommendations of APRNet among others).

The Deputy Governor of Kogi state, Elder Simon Achuba, who stated this during the visit of the Agricultural Policy Research team to Kogi government in his office said, with the establishment of the Faculty of Agriculture in the institution, the research work will be easy for agricultural policy researchers in the university.

The Deputy Governor said the state alone would not be able to go into critical research work like the institutions of learning, maintaining that the institutions have the capacity or mandate for research work.

He said the state University would also help in agricultural research while calling for collaboration between the state university and the federal University for effective research work in the state.

According to the Deputy Governor, such collaboration would boost agricultural research and complement the effort of the state government on the development of agriculture in the state.

He said the government of Governor Yahaya Bello is committed to developing agriculture in the state, stating that the government has invested heavily on agriculture.

The Deputy Governor commended the research team for finding Kogi state worthy to host the research seminar, assuring that the state would key in to their programme for the good of the State.

Speaking, the commissioner for Agriculture, Hon. Oloruntoba Keyinde said the government of Governor Alhaji Yahaya Bello has done well in the area of agriculture in less than two years in the office, stating that more would be achieved before the end of the first tenure of the administration.

He commended the research network over its commitment to effective agricultural research work in the country, stating that without research, there wouldn't be meaningful development

On his part, the leader of the team, Dr Tony Onoja said they were in the state for a seminar that looked into the challenges of research funding across the country.

He commended Kogi state government for its several commitments to agriculture in the state, saying the commissioner for agriculture in the state was given enabling ground to perform, hence the award he received from the team.

Signed : **Akor Sylvester,**

Chief Press Secretary to the Deputy Governor of Kogi State



after a security council chamber of the Government House in Yola, has stated that the police have made some arrest in connection with the recent killings in Numan local government area of the state. A press release sent to our correspondent,

among the warring groups, while also assuring them that, "government is on top of the situation to consolidate on the conviviality being enjoyed in the local government in the last two years," he said Bindow, who set up

UCA, also stressed that the peace co-existence among communities is non-negotiable and gave assurance that the medical bills of all the Mubi bomb blast and the survivors of the killings in Numan local government areas would

choice. It is very unfortunate that the security breach has led to loss of lives and culprits, in addition to finding the solution to communal clashes in the area," the chief said.

Expect Confluence Rice In The Market Soon'

BY SAM EGWU, Lokoja

Kogi State commissioner for Agriculture and Rural development, Kehinde Oloruntimehin, has admonished Kogies to exercise patience for his plans for agriculture will begin to manifest soon. Kehinde, stated this yesterday in Lokoja, Kogi State capital at the seminar organised by Agriculture Policy and Research Network, APRNet, Kehinde, who stressed that Confluence Rice will

hit the market, latest in December ending, also noted that importance attached to agriculture by Bello informed his decision to be with him. "Agriculture has become business to enhance the economy of the state with the value chain of creating employment opportunity for the teaming youths," Kehinde stated. According to Dr Anthony Onoja, President of Agric Research and Policy Network, APRNET, a policy geared towards advocacy to bring about right attitude

towards agricultural development in the country has enjoined government at all levels to key into "Green Alternative" of the federal government. "APRNet was established in 2009 at a meeting facilitated by Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA with the task of research and information, training and capacity building, policy linkages/ feedback and dissemination and public enlightenment. Dr Onoja stressed that APRNet cut across various

agricultural policy related disciplines including public policy, agronomics, research institutions in agriculture, ministries, development agencies among others, he said. The director general of Kogi State Bureau for Public Procurement, Dr Yola Adejoh, who emphasised on the need to get the policy on agriculture development to ensure food security also stressed that the aim of the seminar is to formulate policy from that will take the message to the grassroots.

AG Lauds ANMFIN Over 10bn Farmer-to-finance' Mutual Funds Initiative

BY JIMMY AKIBO, Abuja

Federal government has handed the

Conference tagged, "Incremental Financing Options for Agribusiness in Africa: Solutions to Worldwide

sector's importance in reducing global poverty and spurring economic growth, agricultural development has been

cash crops. Adding that the seminar would set up requirement on how to access the loan by farmers. In a



APRNet charges Kogi to encourage farmers to access farm inputs

By **John Akubo, Lokoja**

30 November 2017 | 4:17 am

<https://guardian.ng/business-services/aprnet-charges-kogi-to-encourage-farmers-to-access-farm-inputs/>



Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet), has charged Kogi State Government on the need to encourage farmers in the State to access farm inputs especially farm credit, fertilizers, improved seeds, and access to infrastructure like good roads and electricity. These will enable them add more value to their agricultural products and improve their wellbeing in the process. The President, APRNet, Anthony Onoja, who said this at the 7th Agricultural Policy Research Seminar held in Lokoja over the weekend.

According to him, while Governor Yahaya Bello of Kogi State achieved the primary goal of Government to ensure security of lives, there is a need to ensure food security for the citizens.

He said: “Achieving this feat will involve concerted efforts by the Government and all other stakeholders in agriculture in Kogi State, adding that the network shifted the seminar to Kogi State to advocate for engagement of multi-stakeholders in agricultural policy formulation and implementation.

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He said APRNet believes that research in agricultural fields and related science will not lead to development in Kogi, and indeed in Nigeria, unless efforts are made by relevant authorities to build capacities of researchers and farmers bring about innovative technologies in farming. This will help in bridging the gap between the research community/academia and the farmers/agro-business, who are the end users of agricultural research.

“Institutions such as Kogi State University, and the Federal University Lokoja, and a host of others, would have a significant role to play in this area.

“It is surprising to note that a State such as Kogi, which is one of the food baskets of Nigeria, given its rich agricultural resources despite having a conventional Federal University is yet to start any programme in agricultural sciences.

He also called on the management of all related institutions in the State that have anything to do with farmers to key in, harness, and contribute their maximum quota to agricultural development.

“These will include the revival of all state development agricultural projects to carry out holistic modern agricultural extension services in line with the current thrust of the Federal Government in the Green Alternative.

“The need to revive the agricultural development project especially its agricultural extension services is highly need this time when the Federal ministry of agriculture and rural development is reactivating the national agricultural extension service delivery system.”

He indicated that farmers need to be exposed to modern methods of farming.

**FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

AREA 11, GARKI-ABUJA

P.M.B. NO. 135

Telegrams.....

Telephone.....



SPD/286/III1317

Ref. No.....

16th October, 2017

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The President
Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet)
P.O. Box 79, Karu Site,
Abuja, FCT.

Attention: Anthony O. Onoja (Phd)

**RE: REQUEST TO NOMINATE A VICE PRESIDENT TO REPRESENT
THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(FMARD) IN AGRICULTURAL POLICY RESEARCH NETWORK
(APRNET) EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.**

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 20th May, 2017, on the above subject matter and to convey the Permanent Secretary's approval for the nomination of Auwal Maidabino Ahmed, who is the Director, Planning and Policy Coordination Department of the Ministry, to serve as the 2nd National Vice President in the Executive Council of APRNet.

2. Please accept the assurances of the Permanent Secretary's warm regards.

Itodo J. E

Chief Agric. Research Officer
for: Permanent Secretary



PROFILE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF HON. KEHINDE OLORUNTOBA, KOGI STATE COMMISSIONER FOR AGRICULTURE

Honourable Oloruntoba Kehinde, an indigene of Kabba Bunu LGA. of Kogi State was born on 3rd July, 1974 in Akure, Ondo State. Armed with a B.Sc Industrial Chemistry, LLB (Law degree) and MBA. He worked in UBA for 13 years and as a Special Adviser to His Excellency on Project Monitoring, Commissioner for Budget and Planning and now Commissioner for Agriculture in Kogi State until his appointment as the Commissioner for Agriculture of Kogi State under the regime of His Excellency, Governor Yahaya Bello. He is married with kids

Under his watch as the Commissioner for Agriculture in the State, Hon Oloruntoba recorded the following feats:

Mechanization of Agric: Purchase of 40 tractors, Boom Sprayers, Combine Harvesters

Massive land clearing of lands along high ways across the senatorial districts for cultivation of Mellon seeds for improved productivity and also for security while engaging the youths.

Special attention to rice and cassava production in the State.

Cultivation of 400 hectares of land for rice production at Omi Dam in collaboration with Agric Business Services (Private investors) supported with 50 per day rice processing plant

Engagement of an Israeli company to collaborate with the State on green house farming for production of vegetables in the State.

1000 fish ponds established for 1000 youths at Omi Dam in Kogi State