



Agricultural Policy Research Network

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Communiqué at the end of the One-day 5th APRNet National Multi-Stakeholders' Forum on: “*Making Agricultural Policy Research Work for End-Users*”

**Organized by the *Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet)* on
Thursday, 30th August 2018 at Valencia Hotels, Wuse II, Abuja, Nigeria**

Preamble

The one-day APRNet 5th National Multi-Stakeholders Forum recognized the efforts of the present administration led by President Muhammadu Buhari towards diversifying the economy of Nigeria through sustained agricultural transformation. The forum was organized by the Agricultural Policy Research Network (APRNet) with support from International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). It was aimed at exploring best options for making agricultural policy research work for end-users thereby improving the livelihood of farmers and other agriculture industry players in Nigeria. The APRNet is a group of professionals from different areas of specializations in the Agriculture sector working through inclusive engagement of multi-stakeholders relevant for sustainable agricultural development in Nigeria and Africa via evidence-based advocacies for policies to advance Agriculture and other agro-allied enterprises. The forum, which was well-attended, included representatives from diverse fields with interest in agriculture and rural development. It commenced with an opening address by President, APRNet - **Dr. Anthony O. Onoja**. During his address, the President highlighted that the core interest of the Network is using a multi-stakeholders approach in addressing myriad of challenges inherent in Nigerian agriculture and food sector which he briefly identified as including poor productivity along the value chain exacerbated by climate change, storage losses of agricultural produce, incessant killing of farmers by herdsmen, poor access to finance and international and local markets, and poor linkage of research findings with end users' demands among many other issues. He noted that

APRNet activities are in line with the Federal Government Policy on “The Green Alternative”. At the end of the Presidential address there was a Keynote speech by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, FMARD (Chief Audu Ogbah), which was delivered by Mr J.E. Itodo from the Research Department of the Ministry. At the end of the keynote address he formally declared the event opened. After the ministerial speech, the Head of IFPRI-Nigeria Office (**Dr. George Mavrotas**) mentioned in his speech that he was delighted with the progress made by the network under the leadership of **Dr. Anthony O. Onoja** notwithstanding that he was just a few years in the office as the President of the network. In his remarks, **Dr. George Mavrotas** also stressed that IFPRI-Nigeria (and on behalf also of the *Feed the Future* Nigeria Agricultural Policy Project, NAPP), will continue supporting the activities of APRNet. He encouraged the APRNet senior management to intensify their efforts for strengthening the Network in the coming year.

Other highlights of the forum included a presentation on “Leveraging ICT for agricultural development” by **Dr. Tony Ojobo**, Director Public Affairs, Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC). More papers came from **Dr. Victor Oboh** (Assistant Director at Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN) – on “Boosting Agricultural Productivity through Investment in Agricultural Research”. There was also a paper from **Mr UkonuUkonu** on practical ways of adopting snail farming for food security and poverty alleviation. Finally, **Dr Manson Nwafor** (Senior Economist, IITA) made a presentation on “Experiences in Linking Research and Practices”.

Observations

The following observations were made:

- (i) APRNet was making progress in linking agriculture research with policy for end users in the country but there is still a need for APRNet to ensure that all her activities contribute more towards achieving food security in Nigeria;
- (ii) The revolution experienced in telecommunication industry had made some positive impacts in economic growth through e-commerce and other related economic activities and that the agricultural sector also needs to leverage on these;
- (iii) Despite its relevance, public spending on agricultural policy research has continued to decrease over the years;

(iv) A substantial and sustainable investment in “Research and Development” is required to ensure an efficient agricultural production and performance;

(v) Huge potentials abound for farmers and individuals for raising household income levels by adopting mobile snail farming across the country;

(vi) There is need for “Demand Driven Research” which is required in Nigeria food sector to bring the desire growth that is needed in the sector. However, data issues were constraining research conduct in Nigeria for policy making.

Resolutions

The APRNet 5th Multi-Stakeholder Forum hereby makes the following resolutions:

1. There is need for frequent capacity building in the agricultural sector at all levels of government in Nigeria and especially at the Federal level through the involvement of APRNet and other stakeholders towards the productivity of farmers;
2. APRNet should be encouraged to be involved in more robust and regional methods of policy data analysis in the agricultural sector. This could be done through the collaboration of APRNet and other relevant stakeholders both locally and internationally;
3. Relevant government and non-governmental agencies including APRNet should assist Nigerian farmers to upload their products on the internet using social media and internet facilities to penetrate international markets;
4. Government should invest in reliable data provision and make them more open for easy access by researchers and policy information especially in the agricultural sector;
5. Professional associations should synergize and get more involved in the advocacy for decentralization of agricultural policy so as to capture specific regional requirements and comparative advantage in each region;
6. Funding to agricultural sector and research should be improved by both the public and private sectors.

7. APRNet shall lobby and demonstrate the need for a quarterly review of the Agriculture Promotion Policy (APP) in order to guide the Federal Government on progress towards attainment of the objectives of the country's agricultural policy. In line with this, it should as much as possible identify and create research groups that will engage in demand driven research that is widely accepted and has fundable themes.

Signed:

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