

Communique

2020 Conference Communique

Communique of the 15th International Research and Development Network of the Children and Youth in Agriculture Programme (CYIAP NETWORK).

The conference held from 9th to 12th March, 2020 at Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria. The theme of the conference was 'Engendering Holisititc Development of the African Child'. At the end of the conference, wherein 2 lead papers were presented and about 47 academic presentations made, it was concluded that the African child is equal to any other child from any other part of the world, for example Europe, America, among others. However, there is need to provide equal opportunity and enabling environment for the African child to actively utilize their potentials to the optimum. Other major highlights of the conference included the grand finale of secondary school students' quiz competition and award presentation to distinguished professionals, captains of industries and traditional ruler who have immensely contributed to child and youth development in Nigeria and beyond, uplifted the agricultural sector and humanity at large.

Emerging points from the conference for policy formulation and adaptation for a holistic development of the African child were as listed.

Creation of informal groups at various levels, i.e. preschool, primary and secondary schools who are interested in practical and precision agriculture and formation of the group be formalized and structured like "boys scout" or "girls brigade" and should have government backing with well stated aims and objectives.

The instructors of these children (in (1) above) will be carefully selected and should be professional educators in all field of agriculture or agriculture allied industries, and funding could be directly by the government, for example, the Industrial Trust Fund.

Children should be empowered in five major areas of human development, vis: physical, intellectual, social, emotional and moral developments, so as to engender holistic child development.

There is an urgent need to further reinforce and repackage agricultural science in Nigerian education curriculum right from the basic school level, this became necessary seeing that agricultural science is tending towards extinction as the subject is being underplayed, given that the subject is no longer a priority in Senior Secondary School Certificate and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board Examinations.

Given the dwindling prices of oil and particularly, the security challenges in the country, there is dire need to make agriculture the major source of economy. Parents, therefore, need to encourage their children to embrace agriculture as a course of study in the universities and other tertiary institutions.

Stakeholders in agriculture should ensure increased awareness on the need for children and youths to be able to identify crop and livestock species in order to foster holistic development as well as endear them to agriculture.

Young farmers club in primary and secondary school should be revitalised in such as way that it will cover main areas of agriculture and fulfill its primary objectives, amongst which is 'catching the students young', i.e. endearing them to agriculture at the very young age.

Infrastructure and facilities should be put in place to encourage youths' involvement in agricultural engineering and

entrepreneurship.

Expertise of youths in the use of ICT gadgets (GPS, drones, satellite, phones) should be developed and harnessed in solving agricultural problems as such mechanisation, climate change, etc.

The use of social media platforms in the dissemination of agricultural information should be encouraged as a way of reaching out to youths given their attachment to such platforms.

Parents, caregivers and religious leaders should ensure that they give proper guidance and counseling to children in order to prevent them from being victim of child defilement.

The government should be more proactive towards implementation of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) policy statements and ensure adequate funding of the ECE centres in order to achieve its stated goals.

The association renewed its commitment to reposition the CYIAP network in order to engender global relevance, by ensuring a more functional website with upload of all past publications online, interactive platform where the active members can access their membership certificate online, amongst other proposed ideals.

Being an election year, a new set of executives were elected to steer the mantle of leadership of the association for the next two years, with Prof. Cletus J. C. Akubילו, Rector, Enugu State Polytechnic, emerging as the President.

The 16th CYIAP-NETWORK conference will be held in Enugu state.

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