



# AIAE Newsletter

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## Reflections in Retrospect of 2003

- Prof. Eric Eboh

**E**cclésiastes chapter 3 verse 1 says: there is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven. ....” Now is the time for reflection about the progressive march of the Institute over the past 9 years, as we mark a cross-over from one period of the Institute to another.

With the benefit of hindsight to June 2003, there is no doubt that African Institute for Applied Economics (AIAE) has recorded wide-ranging landmarks and milestones in institutional development, research and research networking with stakeholders (policymakers, private sector and civil society) as well as in the development of infrastructure and amenities and technological retooling. Like typical experiences of institution building, our organisational learning curve has not been smooth and straightforward. It

has been a very challenging but highly fulfilling experience.

When by fate, the pioneer Executive Director, Prof. Chukwuma Soludo, was called to national service as the Chief Economic Adviser to the President/Chief Executive Officer of the National Planning Commission in June 2003, the Institute was barely two years since it began operations in 2001. It was akin to the case of a baby who was still undergoing breast-feeding but whose mother was inevitably physically taken away. On assuming the position of Executive Director, within this context, I was confronted with several challenges to build upon the strong foundation already laid by Prof. Chukwuma Soludo, during the first two pioneering years. The robust and ambitious research enterprise set out at the beginning of the Institute had to be sustained and

strengthened. The human resources base (research and administrative personnel) needed to be enhanced in tandem with the organisational structure, which was at its very formative stage. It was also obvious that adequate attention had to be paid to resource mobilisation and funding sustainability in order to ensure effective research programming and networking. These were humongous challenges that stared me in the face.

I confronted the challenges with utmost determination, vigour and passion (given that what was entrusted to me was what I love doing, what I regard as my divine calling). It appeared I had already been prepared, though unknowingly, for this huge critical assignment. This is against the backdrop of the relevant and useful antecedents at the University of Nigeria,



Prof. Eric Eboh

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## “My Dream for AIAE”

Prof. Chukwuma Soludo



Prof. Chukwuma Soludo

**T**he Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Institute Prof. Chukwuma Soludo has disclosed that his dream is to make the Institute a leading Pan African Independent Think Tank. He said he has made up his mind to devote a significant time to pursue the realisation of this noble vision.

The former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) gave this hint at the congratulatory dinner organised by the Institute for him on the 20th of February, 2012 at Nondon Hotel Enugu. The cerebral economist noted that for the past 10 years of AIAE's existence, the Institute had lived up to the expectations of the stakeholders, adding that the Institute would grow in leaps and bounds in the second decade which just began in 2012.

The chairman of the BOD appreciated the management and staff of the Institute led by Prof. Eric Eboh, who has given his intention to return to the University, for doing a yeoman's job in making sure that the Institute is one of the first to be

reckoned with among think tanks in Sub Sahara Africa. He also expressed his gratitude to the stakeholders including the federal government, the state governments especially that of south east states of Nigeria, the Organised Private Sector (OPS), the NGOs, CSOs, the Associate Fellows, the Academics, the community leaders for their support and collaboration all the time.

He said the memoir detailing the experience of his foray into politics and lessons he learnt is already in the pipeline for others to benefit from. “Lack of institution is the bane of Nigeria's development, we only make individuals who may or may not make any difference, we don't build institutions. To worth it, you must make a difference, this and some other issues would be revealed in my memoir I will soon produce for public consumption”, he averred.

Dignitaries present at the dinner which included, members of the Board of Directors;

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Old premises of the Institute

Nsukka where I founded and coordinated the science-based networks – the Development Research and Action Team (DRAT) and the Natural Resources and Environmental Economics Group (NAREEG). In addition, I had also been actively researching and got rich professional exposures through competitive research fellowships with many international research networks. They include the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) and the African Technology Policy Studies (ATPS) Network; both based at Nairobi, Kenya, International Foundation for Science (IFS) based at Stockholm, Sweden and American Council of Learned Societies/Social Science Research Council of America (SSRC) based at New York and the African Development Foundation (ADF), based at Washington DC. Besides, I had also developed good measure of people skills through my founding and promotional role in the community development initiative for social and economic upliftment of my native community. The community development initiative was the Owa-Alero Forum for Youth Education and Career Advancement (FOYECA). Based on increased demand for its community development functions and services, the FOYECA, in a progressive manner, was transformed into the Conference of Owa-Alero Professionals (CoWaP), which in turn metamorphosed into Owa-Alero Development Union, an umbrella organisation of all groups and associations in the community. These background elements of leadership and management skills somewhat prepared me for the challenges of my responsibility as Executive Director of the Institute.

The march therefore began. There was no space for complaints or excuses. Efforts and resources were directed at producing results. Failure could not be tolerated. Though positive expectations were high, there remained dots of uncertainty as to what would become the future of the nascent Institute. The orientation and resolve to producing results, and tangible results for that matter, was to become the guiding tenet of my approach throughout the last 9 nine years. But, this resolve alone was not sufficient to produce results. Team work was imperative, more

so team leadership. Also, building on 'inherited' networks and creating new ones was highly essential. Being first and foremost a research institution and think tank, it is incumbent upon AIAE Executive Director to provide research leadership in terms of initiating and developing research programmes and mobilising resources – human, material and financial – to implementing and realising them. Underlying my responsibilities as Executive Director is to function as the “first line of attack” as well as the “last line of defence” for the Institute on research and programming matters. The Executive Director has to first mobilise his talents and then use same to drive those of others. This meant that I had to bring my intellectual resources to bear on the entire research enterprise of the Institute. Again, my previous experiences through active research at the University were highly beneficial and instructive. But, the manner of research I was faced with differed somewhat from the traditional research pattern and mode, which hold sway at the University. Research at the Institute has to be policy-relevant and problem-solving, not merely abstract or theoretical in nature. This is understandable. Only through policy-relevant and problem-solving research could the Institute fulfil its mission which is – to promote evidence-based policymaking.

In tackling the challenges, it was important to do self-evaluation and stock-taking of my research strengths and weaknesses and their implications for the Institute. I devoted energies to utilising my strengths for the Institute's research programme while identifying and courting those individuals that had the capacity and skills to compensate for my weaknesses. I was not interested in taking credit for research successes. I was primarily motivated to drive the Institute to produce good quality highly rated

research. This principle has been applied throughout the research team building exercise at the Institute over these years. Research teams are constituted based on the need to tap the different research strengths of individuals, ensure mutual complementation within research teams, promote peer learning, integrate mentoring and maximise collective excellence.

In order to increase the policy relevance and usefulness of our research, it was necessary to create innovative mechanisms and processes for eliciting and integrating end users' (policymakers and stakeholders) inputs in problem definition, data collection and feedback on results and findings. This was done without losing sight of the need to maintain scientific quality and intellectual independence of our research. The innovations worked very well as evidenced by the national acclaims that greeted our research programmes notably the Better Business Initiative (2003-2005) and the Business Environment and Competitiveness across Nigerian States (BECANS) – 2005 to present. Today, BECANS is nationally accepted as a research-based mechanism for benchmarking, peer review, advocacy on business environment across the 36 States and FCT. AIAE BECANS is recorded as the first ever subnational (State-level) science-based benchmarking of the business environment in Nigeria. The prospects for BECANS as an independent evidence-based monitor and accountability platform for business environment are ever increasing as the country's democratic space widens. In addition, AIAE Research Policy and Guidelines, which integrate stakeholder (including policymakers') consultation/feedback with scientific quality and research communication have boosted policy influence and helped in tackling gaps between research and research end-users.

To enlarge AIAE's influence on national policy agenda and public debate, I constituted and inaugurated the Policy Think Group (PTG) on 29 January 2010. The PTG serves as potent vehicle for articulating and transmitting research inputs into policymaking in a rapid manner. As a think-pot, the PTG brainstorms on topical and

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Members of the SENEC Committee after a meeting

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Prof. Eboh fielding questions from the press

on-the-spot policy questions and processes informed standpoints for use by stakeholders, including government officials, NGOs, mass media and the private sector.

Today, one vivid footprint of AIAE's policy influence in the past 9 years is the South-East Nigeria Economic Commission (SENEC). SENEK is perhaps the most outstanding legacy of AIAE in the economic policy landscape of South-East Nigeria, where the Institute is located. It is evidence of research insights taken up by end-users and turned into practical use. This is the model of research-policy interface in line with the Institute's mission of "promoting evidence-based decisions in both public and private sectors." The concept of South-East Nigeria Economic Commission emanated from a Stakeholders' Forum on "The State of Industrial Clusters in South-Eastern Nigeria", organized by the African Institute for Applied Economics (AIAE), on 26th September 2006 in Enugu. Based on the communiqué of the Forum, AIAE set up the Interim Steering Committee to facilitate the establishment of south-east economic commission. The Committee draws members from the cross section of stakeholders including government officials, private sector persons, academia, professionals and leaders of civic organizations.

The Steering Committee then established four subcommittees as follows: study subcommittee, sensitization and publicity subcommittee, consultation subcommittee and legal and institutional framework subcommittee. Following critical study of alternative models, international experiences and inputs from a variety of sources, the study subcommittee developed the base document "Memorandum for the Establishment of South East Nigeria Economic Commission (SENEK)" from 2007 to 2008. As indication of the ownership and legitimacy of the SENEK, the Memorandum of Understanding for the Establishment of SENEK has so far been signed by four out of the five Governments of the South-East States. Till date, the Steering Committee is undertaking intensive mobilisation, consultations and strategic engagements to develop operational

structures and frameworks for the flag-off of SENEK.

As at 2003, the organisational set-up was in its infancy and the organs for administrative, finance, research and corporate affairs were still very lean. The institutional framework needed to be beefed up to stand the challenges of the future. Today, there is a full-fledged Finance and Administration Unit (FAU) as well as Communication and Stakeholder Relations Unit (CSRU).

In addition to financial reporting, accounts keeping and operating financial transactions, the FAU is delegated with functions relating to procurement, supplies, security, facilities maintenance, sanitation and hospitality. In the same vein, the Communications and Stakeholder Relations Unit (CSRU) handles communication and public affairs. It is also charged with the responsibility of publicising and disseminating the Institute's research and the mobilisation and engagement of research stakeholders (government policymakers, private sector organisations, civil society organisations and the media) for the uptake of the Institute's research findings. It is intended to be the anchor of research communication and policy influence strategy of the Institute.

Meanwhile, the Institute's research structure is today emboldened by a Research Coordinator position with the responsibility to manage, coordinate and synchronise the research initiatives and activities across the five thematic research areas, which themselves, are anchored by respective thematic conveners. In implementing the expanding research programmes of the Institute, it became imperative to give special attention to nurturing the Associate Fellows Network, which was at its formative stage, on my assumption of office. The Institute's Associate Fellows provided a critical and dependable pool of intellectual resources for responding to the need to grow the research outputs of the Institute. In order to tap the resources offered by the AIAE Associate Fellows' Network, I initiated a regular and systematic programme of thematic peer learning seminars, training workshops and expository sessions. The principle was to achieve mutual relevance and symbiotic relations between the Institute and its Associate Fellows. The idea worked well. Since the number of in-house research staff was relatively inadequate for the research outputs that needed to be produced, the Associate Fellows network became an imperative intellectual resource to draw upon.

On the other hand, the Associate

Fellows have benefitted distinguished exposures to academic and research networks, better access to training and capacity building opportunities, increased access to cutting-edge science literature and databases and better facilities for peer review, research publications and professional interaction and growth. Hence, the bulk of the research outputs of the Institute these past 9 years have been accounted for by Associate Fellows who are not full-time employees of the Institute. In tapping from the Associate Fellows Network, I had to apply a mix of approaches including suasion, peer pressure and productivity-based reward techniques. Besides, both research, administrative and communications staff of the Institute benefitted immensely in terms of self-improvement and career development through academic upgrading. Almost all staff of the Institute obtained higher academic degrees and/or professional qualifications during the past nine years. This attests to the excellent working environment which I created for staff self-actualisation and professional growth.

One of the most important landmarks in strengthening the research infrastructure of the Institute is the establishment of the Research Databank in 2006. The purpose of the Databank is to develop and maintain an ongoing robust, credible and up-to-date statistical database, primarily for the Institute's research programmes. The goal is to enhance research efficiency and effectiveness through easy, rapid and direct access to good quality in-house data and statistics. The Databank consolidates macroeconomic, microeconomic, social sector and human development indicator in a coherent and cumulative manner. Since inception, the Databank has grown significantly in terms of organisation, volume of data captured and methodological fineness and demand from various data users.

Today, the statistical database is a critical research resource. The Databank is managed by a coordinating team, charged with mobilising data and statistical information from various sources, conducting data verification and transformation as well as updating them as and when due.

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AIAE staff members

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Currently, the Databank provides the Institute's researchers with quick, convenient and inexpensive access to verifiable datasets on various economic, social and human development indicators. There is a growing demand for the Databank's data and statistical information by government agencies, researchers, academia, civil society and private sector. Based on cumulative progress over the years, the Databank now has close to 9,500 data points, comprising time series and cross sectional data. On the whole, 'traditional' indicators constitute 30% of the entire dataset while 'transformed' data make up about 60%, and the remaining 10% are primary data.

Besides, the research infrastructure has been boosted with modern technology and enhanced library. Emphasis was paid to acquiring computer softwares for data processing, econometric analysis and report writing. Today, AIAE library has considerable volume of electronic literature including e-journals, e-books and e-data. It includes a total of up to 3,000 hard and electronic publication titles comprising books, journals, reports, working papers, technical papers and monographs. In addition, the Institute now subscribes to global online literature databases such as the Online Access to Research in the Environment (ORAE) and Journal Online (JsTOR) and those of development partners, particularly IDRC and World Bank. Currently, the library is undergoing full-scale automation using Libplus software – a library automation/digitalization manager.

In my bid to engender institutional self-reflection, influence longer-term outlook and promote strategic organisational development, the landmark AIAE 5-year Strategic Plan 2009-2013, codenamed "Project Leading-Edge" was developed and launched in 2009. As the first-ever AIAE Strategic Plan, Project Leading Edge embodies AIAE's niche goals, policy thrusts and programmatic priorities from 2009-2013. It was aimed at enhancing the Institute's competitive edge in the African economic research communities. It was produced

through a pain-staking participatory planning process involving all the Institute's stakeholders. The Plan articulates AIAE's purposes, objects and targets in its five thematic research areas and proposes strategies and tools for enhancing its competitive edge, organisational development and operational effectiveness. It serves as an operational template for consolidating upon the achievements and progress of the Institute since its inception. The strategic planning process involved identification and diagnostic analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Institute amidst the array of opportunities and threats posed by the external environment particularly the demand-supply dynamics of research funding and the dynamic developments in the global and African



Members of AIAE Board of Directors

economies. The Strategic Plan contains measures and techniques to harness the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of the Institute in tandem with measures to maximise advantage of the opportunities and minimise the impact of external threats. The strategic planning exercise was a very instructive and useful experience for me, the management, Associate Fellows and Board of Directors of the Institute.

Fortuitously, the conclusion of the strategic planning process synchronized with the IDRC

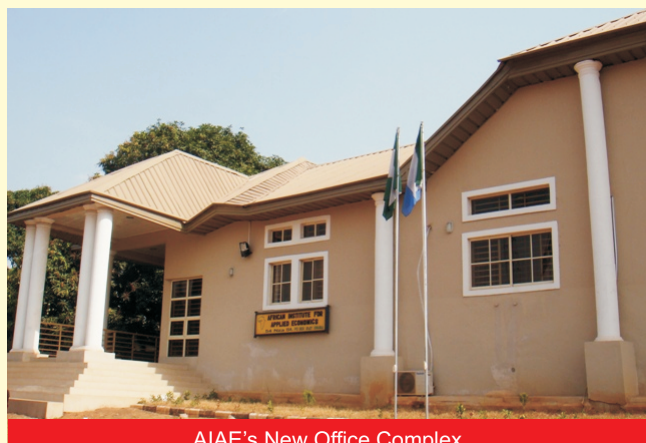
TTI global call for proposals for long-term institutional grants. By Divine timing, therefore, the Strategic Plan became the major winning platform upon which AIAE articulated its competitive bid for the long-term institutional (core) grant. Our efforts paid off as AIAE was one of the few policy research institutions that were selected as the first cohort of grantees beginning from 01 July 2009.



Prof. Eboh and Members of the IDRC team in AIAE Library

Today, AIAE is running the third year of the four-year (renewable) grant for research, organisational development and communication and policy linkages. The IDRC TTI grant has enhanced the Institute's capacity fundamentals and redefined its future, as evidenced by the significant boosts in independent research, staff development, research communication and policy linkages.

Further to the strategic planning exercise and in order to deepen institutional development, we developed and launched the first-ever AIAE "Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and Guidelines" in June 2010. My key motivation for an institutional framework for M & E is the need to promote institutional self-accountability, organisational learning for enhanced impact and innovative change and adaptive management. The M & E Policy embeds an evaluative thinking paradigm for maximizing impacts in the areas of research quality, policy influence (communications, networking and outreach) and overall organizational performance. The basic philosophy of the M & E Policy are that: monitoring and evaluation (M & E) are indispensable element of organizational culture; monitoring and evaluation is basis for institutional learning and reflection which drives transformative change; evaluative learning is an ongoing influence in organizational behaviour; monitoring and evaluation is a mechanism to ensure quality assurance and value adding; monitoring and evaluation as a means to promote accountability and sustainability. The M & E Policy articulates measures, tools and feedback mechanisms of multilevel and multidimensional nature. The multiple levels include human resources M & E, Unit level M & E, project or programme level M & E and institutional or corporate level M & E, while the multiple dimensions include research, policy influence, communications, networking and capacity building. Furthermore, the M & E Policy has since been translated into operational guidelines stipulating roles and responsibilities across Management Units,



AIAE's New Office Complex

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## Stakeholders charge Government on management of Sovereign Wealth Fund

Stakeholders in different sectors of the Nigerian economy has urged the Federal government to ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation of the Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF) already signed to law for implementation. They called on Nigerians to join hands with the government in resolving fiscal federalism issues among the federating units so that they would not pose danger for the management and sustainability of the Fund. This submission was made at Valencia Hotel, Abuja on the 1st of March, 2012 at the policy seminar on the management of Sovereign Wealth Fund organised by the African Institute for Applied Economics (AIAE).

The Executive Director of the Institute, Prof. Eric Eboh while welcoming participants to the Seminar said debate had shifted from constitutional propriety to the imperatives of efficient and sustainable management of the Fund. Prof. Eboh added that the main concerns relate to political sustainability, implementation effectiveness and economic impacts given poor fiscal; governance and weak budget and public expenditure management across the three layers of government.

Dr Friday Ohuche, a Research Fellow in the

Institute who presented a paper on Nigerian Sovereign Wealth Fund: Tackling the Challenges of Implementation, Governance and Sustainability, stressed the need for the implementing authority to create a clear investment strategy to avoid losses and fiscal consequences. Having examined the weakness and strengths of the Act establishing the Fund and other related issues, Dr. Ohuche challenged the civil society and advocacy pressure groups to ensure effective delivery and sustainability in the management of the Fund.

The Seminar was organised by AIAE to create platform for greater awareness, exchange of ideas and sharing of perspectives on the strengths, weaknesses, risks and opportunities

of the SWF. A policy memorandum was adopted at the meeting to be forwarded to the appropriate government agencies as the contribution of the Institute to advancing public

policy. AIAE's track records in the research-policy interface are evidenced by the platforms which she provided stakeholders over the years for critical discussions of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, Business Environment and Competitiveness, the Global Economic and Financial Crisis, Social Protection Policies, Agricultural Sector Policies and Programmes and others.

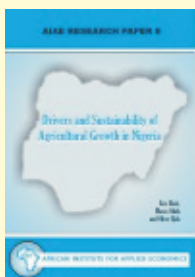
Participants at the Seminar included various relevant government agencies such as Fiscal Responsibility Commission, National Planning Commission, Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission, the National Assembly, the Nigeria Governors' Forum, the Central Bank of Nigeria, Debt Management Office, and many others. Civil society organisation, non governmental organisations, community leaders, researchers, think tanks, and the media also attended the event.



Participants pose for a group photograph at the event in Abuja

## Recent Publication

### AIAE Research Paper 8



### Drivers and Sustainability of Agricultural Growth in Nigeria

This paper evaluates the factors that drive Nigeria's agricultural growth with an intent to inform and stimulate appropriate policy responses for growth sustainability. Overall, the study shows that Nigerian agricultural output growth is directly related to the growth of factor input, but, the negative outlook of the trend of TFP implies that growth might not indeed be sustainable.

### Soludo's Dream: continued from front page

Prof. Ginigeme Mbanefoh, Prof Akpan Ekpo, interim Chairman of SENECA, Prof. Okwudiba Nnoli, Eng Chris Okoye, Dr. Jones Lemchi, Mr. Frank Amagwu and others poured encomiums on Prof. Soludo for being a good ambassador of the academia in government and the south east in general. They all praised everyone involved in what they called "from Genesis to Nondo" which signifies the place where the ceremony for the send forth was held and the place where the congratulatory dinner was held.

## Staff News

Mrs Beatrice Ndibe has been promoted as Deputy Administration Manager, she will also double as Principal Secretary in the Office of the Executive Director. Before now, Mrs. Ndibe was the Administrative Officer and was also serving as Secretary in the office of the Executive Director. The Institute's management is very optimistic that the promotion will spur her to greater dedication, hard-work and excellence.



## Board of Directors Meeting

The meeting of the Board of Directors was held on the 21st February, 2012. Issues related to the development of the Institute for the new phase were considered

## AIAE advances Policy Relevance of the Research on Social Security Programmes in Nigeria



Rev. Fr. (Dr.) Ichoku speaking at the event

The contributions of various participants at the policy consultative seminar on social protection programme in Nigeria held on the 29th February, 2012 at Valencia Hotel, Abuja would no doubt make the study robustly relevant for government policy implementation. At the mid research seminar attended by relevant government agencies, the CSOs, NGOs, the media and others, stakeholders agreed that recent and current waves of global economic shocks have underscored the need for countries to reinvent the mechanisms and phenomena for social protection, equitable development and balanced growth.

The Executive Director of AIAE, Prof Eboh had said the Seminar was a key element in the AIAE research approach for ensuring the transparency, legitimacy and credibility. He added that forum provided an opportunity to review government efforts on social protection policy through its agencies vis a vis international best practices, and analyse and proffer solutions to the challenges being faced by the implementers, operators and participants of the program.

According to him, in terms of methodology approach, the Institute had constructed a diverse range of standard verifiable indicators to measure participation effectiveness and sustainability. "Examining these parameters will enable better understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with these initiatives and strategies and measures to enhance their efficiency, effectiveness and impact. Within this context the seminar is aimed at improving the public policy relevance, practical usefulness and feedback from stakeholders", he stressed. While presenting the initial work of the study a Research Fellow in the Institute, Dr. Hyacinth Ichoku said the mid research work was open to constructive criticisms that would enhance the scientific validation of the project.

Presenting his paper, the Executive Secretary of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Mr. M.B.W. Dogo Muhammed represented by Dr. Kenneth Korve, General Manager, Planning Research and Monitoring, NHIS said developing and implementing a sustainable healthcare financing strategic framework is a key success

factor for health sector reforms in Nigeria and in improving the health status of a majority of the people, both in the immediate, intermediate and long-term perspective.

He noted that the Scheme has continued to perform its roles of coordinating and monitoring of all the stakeholders under its coverage to ensure that they perform optimally to the expectations and within the operational guidelines of the Scheme. Mr. Dogo Muhammad added that it is expected that every stakeholder would play his expected role accordingly so that NHIS could achieve its goals which will eventually benefit the common man.

"Through the NHIS, government hopes to achieve more flexible, more innovative, and more competitive response to the health sector in order to : ensure that every Nigerian has access to good healthcare services; that families are protected from the financial hardships of huge medical bills; ensure equitable distribution of healthcare cost among different income groups; maintain high standards of healthcare delivery services; ensure efficiency in healthcare services; improve and harness private sector participation in the provision of healthcare services; ensure equitable distribution of health facilities within the Federation; ensure appropriate patronage of all levels of healthcare, and ensure the availability of funds to the health sector for improved services", he averred.

## AIAE Trains Professionals in Tools for Agric Policy Analysis

In the quest to fulfil its mandate of enhancing the capabilities and skills for cutting edge research, the Institute has successfully trained senior researchers in the nation's agricultural sector in the methodologies and tools for agricultural analysis. The training was held in collaboration with the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) between 20 and 23 March, 2012 at the AIAE Conference Hall. The seasoned professionals and senior researchers were drawn from sixteen (16), government owned agricultural research Institutes in Nigeria.

Giving overview of the workshop, the Executive Director, Prof. Eric Eboh said the courses were structured to meet the modern day methods of agricultural policy analysis. He said, "There is a black box between research and policy making it difficult to maximise the impact of our research to the society. During this training, the black box will be turned to white box." Prof Eboh added that the course modules were designed to make research output practicable, noting that the training is long overdue because of the need to operationalise the impact of research activities. He appreciated the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) for the partnership and promised that the initiative would yield positive results.

The Director of Agricultural Policy, Extension and Socio-economic Research Programme of ARCN, Prof. Damian Chikwendu, while welcoming

the participants said the council was happy to partner with AIAE. He added that at the end of training, the trainees would be expected to be able to use at least one tool of agricultural policy analysis with the view of being able to meeting the information requirement of policy makers. He noted that ARCN "believes that the NARLs with national mandates on specific commodities should work not merely in the area of genetic improvement for mandate commodities but also in the area of socio-economic studies of their commodities."

The researchers were exposed to adequate knowledge of methodology and framework in policy analysis, policy issues and dynamic influences in Nigeria's agricultural development, Policy Analysis Matrix (PAM), Computable General Equilibrium (CGE), methods and techniques of getting research knowledge and products into policymaking

and opportunities for research influence on policy, challenges of influencing policymaking by effective research communications and others.

Some of the resource persons at the training include Professor Eric Eboh, Professor Ukwu I. Ukwu, Mr Manson Nwafor of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan and Dr. Samuel Negedu, the National Coordinator, National Agricultural Foundation of Nigeria, a former Special Assistant to Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The researchers are expected to go and demonstrate the knowledge gained during the four day training to carry out agricultural studies to meet the Federal government's agricultural transformation agenda.



Prof. Eboh and the team of Facilitators at the Workshop

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reporting requirements, deliverables and timelines as well as feedback and use mechanisms for channeling the results of M & E to facilitate the organizational learning curve.

The development of infrastructure was not left out. Starting from 2006, we began to find resources to acquire land and develop own building complex. We were lucky to find a wide expanse of land in a suitable area of Enugu. We mobilised resources and acquired the land on 3rd April 2007 and commenced the construction of the office building on 5th October 2009. After several stoppages and delays occasioned by shortage of funds, we completed the building and moved our offices to this new complex on 2nd May 2011. Throughout the building project, the Institute's finances were severely stressed. We were caught between meeting our research obligations and conserving funds to execute the building project. The discretion, efforts and sacrifices paid off. Today, the office complex stands out as a living evidence of our determination to succeed, a resolve not to give up amidst daunting constraints.

Integral to our efforts to boost the operational capabilities and efficiency of the Institute, we set an agenda for the purchase of an official vehicle. In spite of the financial pressures that confronted us at the time, we were able to pay for an official vehicle on 14 September 2009. The official vehicle (minibus) has enhanced the operational logistics as well as improved the corporate image of the Institute. The vehicle is today a

testament of our determination to ease the programming effectiveness of the Institute both in the current period and into the future.

Whatever achievements and milestones we have recorded in the last 9 years would not have been possible without the solid foundation laid by my predecessor, Prof. Chukwuma Soludo. In addition to his pioneering role as the founder of the Institute, he set the Institute on the right pedestal in the national and regional landscapes before his call to national service in the Obasanjo government. I am indeed very grateful to him and the Board of Directors for laying this strong foundation and creating the conducive environment for me to function as Executive Director.

The exemplary cooperation and support of staff of the Institute cannot be sufficiently appreciated. The staff of the Institute put in great sacrifices, sometimes working in prolonged manner and at very odd times in order to meet project timelines and get things done. It was great working with all of them as we together weathered the "thick and thin" of the journey. Also, I owe tremendous gratitude to all Associate Fellows, particularly, those who demonstrated outstanding commitments and constant availability to provide critical research services for the Institute. Our friends and partners in the private sector and civil society were highly supportive through participation in AIAE-coordinated research-based public policy networks, notably BBI, BECANS, Enugu Forum and SENEC. They brought in complementary perspectives and insights into the networks and thereby engendered greater

national relevance and effectiveness.

Overall, the future of AIAE is very bright. The right direction and tone for the future has been set by the worthwhile organisational learning curve of the past 9 years. No doubt, the challenges in using research to inform and influence public policy are daunting, and great creativity and innovativeness are required to continually confront them. The institutional environment for competitive research is increasingly dynamic and the developmental scope for 'think tanks' has intensified. Besides, there is a growing need for research to help address the lingering policy-relevant questions about economic growth, poverty reduction, inequality, globalisation and sustainable development in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa. The good news is that today, AIAE is stronger, better, more vibrant and more visible to the national and international community. The signs are visible and tangible. They cut across the critical success benchmarks for policy research institutions which include research performance, human resource profile, policy engagement and public influence, networking, financial health, national/regional relevance, institutional development, technological and infrastructural enhancement. In the manner of Paul's last testimony – 2 Timothy 4:6-7: "... and the time has come for my departure, I have fought the good fight, ....., I have kept the faith...", so, I wish to say, in all modesty, that my Providential Calling to AIAE is a MISSION EXPERIENCED.

**Prof Eric C. Eboh, Executive Director  
(June 2003 to May 2012)**

## 2003 TO 2012: GROWING IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS

To say that the Institute experienced phenomenal growth between June 2003 and May 2012 is to say the least. Stakeholders of the Institute including associate fellows, academics, leaders of the organised private sector, community leaders, women leaders, and others expressed their views on these giant strides under the leadership of the outgoing Executive Director, Prof. Eric Eboh during the period. By popular demand, the views expressed by some of these stakeholders are chronicled below:

“AIAE has undergone considerable transformation from a nascent assemblage of research fellows with the associated supporting administrative sub-structure, to a visible, credible, and foremost economic policy institution with a pan-African mandate. That transformation was made possible by the determination and commitment of Associate Fellows, the innovative leadership of Prof. Eboh, as well as the inspiring confidence and support of Prof. Soludo. I see AIAE transform into an intellectual hub for economic policy-making and advocacy in Africa, if the next leadership of the institute builds on the current momentum.”

**Dr. Kalu. O. Oji, Associate Fellow & Economist,  
Central Bank of Nigeria, Abuja**

“There are numerous truths about AIAE since inception. One of such truths is that in the past nine years, AIAE has really witnessed many giant strides and visibilities in promoting evidence-based decision making in Nigeria. As a former employee, the Institute afforded me the opportunity of a rich practical learning experience in economic/agricultural research, policy advocacy, networking and consulting services on other wide range of development issues in Nigeria and West Africa.”

**Oliver C. Ujah  
Associate Fellow, and Economic and Strategic Marketing Advisor, Water and Sanitation for Africa (WSA), Burkina Faso**

“As a foundation member in 2000, I have seen AIAE-the African equivalent of Brooklyn Institute dreamed by Prof Soludo, grow from a little recognized, almost informal set up to become a key player in the Nigerian research industry. Then we saw it as a platform for interaction among researchers and to listen to the erudite and scholarly lectures often delivered by Prof Soludo. At his exit in 2003, we thought

AIAE was about to go the way of many other research institutes in Africa. Then, came Prof Eric Eboh who has dazzled us with his performance as the Executive Director since 2003 and has established AIAE as a strong competitor in the Nigerian and African research industry”.

**Hyacinth Eme Ichoku  
Dept of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka**

“AIAE emerged at a time that many capable and renowned economics scholars and practitioners were yearning for a platform to engage in public policy work in and around Enugu. Professor Soludo, the founding Executive Director, left while the aircraft, so to speak, was still gaining height. Few believed that the Institute would survive the exit of 'evangelistic' Professor Charles Soludo as he was then well known, and fewer still accepted that an unknown 'disciple', then Dr. Eric Eboh would preach the gospel, whether in season or out of season. It behoves all of us to thank Professor Eboh for service faithfully rendered and encourage him not to turn his back to the project by continually availing it of his resourcefulness, passion and commitment”.

**S. A. Ukeje, Associate Fellow, AIAE**

“AIAE for the past 9 years under the leadership of Prof Eric Eboh has proved to be the leading evidence based research institution in Nigeria based on the track records of its researches, symposia, policy dialogues, workshops, trainings, seminars and conferences both local and International conducted/organised during the period under review. As an Associate Fellow, the institute has added value to me as a person and has enriched my CV to international standard through my active participation in the activities of the Institute. Finally, may God make sky to be the limit of Prof. Eric Eboh for his efforts and sacrifice for the past 9 years”.

**Ndaya Muhammad Yelwa  
Associate Fellow**

“In nearly ten years of fruitful research and consultancy, AIAE has proven to be the best classroom especially for those interested in evidence based research. Its involvement in probing research into governments' and MDAs' operations and international assignments attest to the wealth of experience garnered by the Institute and its staff (both permanent and ad hoc). It is hoped that the Institute would, through

honest hard work continue to probe and proffer solutions to the myriad of social and economic problems in the South-east, Nigeria and the world at large”.

**E. M. Igbokwe,  
University of Nigeria, Nsukka**

“Research at AIAE has been intellectually challenging, involving moments of agony and ecstasy. It continues to provide opportunities to meet wonderful people, exchange ideas, learn new tools, collaborate on economic studies, and have access to seminars and briefings. Working with Prof. Eboh has been illuminating, and I pray he continues to find golden nuggets in unexpected places as he walks through life's uncharted pathway”.

**Ifediora Amobi  
Investment Policy Adviser,  
Growth & Employment in States  
(GEMS3) Support Improved Business Environment**

“In the last nine years, AIAE has stoutly positioned itself as a key policy research institute not only in Nigeria, but in Africa. It made strong and visible inputs to key national policies and debates. It took its strong footing and became internalised as a strong and veritable R4D institute in Nigeria, mobilising both local and international talents and think-tanks”.

**Dr. Jones Lemchi  
Department of Agricultural Economics  
Federal University of Technology,  
Owerri**

“I must observe that the AIAE in the last nine years has grown from “that Institute in Enugu” to an internationally recognised and respected research and development institution that has delivered values to the Nigerian and African public and private sectors. The Institute has grown from a humble rented accommodation to a permanent office and conference edifice. Most importantly, the Institute (under the leadership of Prof Eric Eboh) has given a sense of value, dignity and respect to most associates and staff of the Institute which has sustained the level of commitment that has been demonstrated by everybody over these years and helped to build the Institute to its height today”.

**Chidiebere Ibe, a Research Fellow,  
Governance Consultant,  
and Public Policy Analyst based in  
Abuja.**





“AIAE has lived more than expectations in the past 9 years. It has successively served as what I can call the knowledge centre. I look forward to a capable hand that can carry forward the giant strides of Prof. Eric Eboh and his current team. Wish all the staff well”.

**Ken Kwujeli**

“With appreciable authenticity and vehement visibility all in alignment with its vision and mission, the AIAE has, within the period under review, made its impact felt at country, regional, continental and intercontinental levels as one of the leading economic research institutes in Nigeria and Africa. I congratulate the driver of the vision and mission, Prof Eric C. Eboh who has effectively etched his name in stone. The relocation of the Institute from a temporary site to a well-designed permanent site bears the imprints of a clear-headed development economist. Kingly kudos also goes to the Associate Fellows of the Institute.”

**Augustine Odinakachukwu Ejiogu**  
**Department of Agricultural Economics**  
**Imo State University, Owerri**

“The peer learning series of AIAE over the past nine years has been a major source of updating knowledge on contemporary issues among academics and other stakeholders within the south east of Nigeria and beyond. The networking opportunities provided by Prof Eboh- led AIAE over the past nine years have led many academics to higher heights in their various disciplines. Many students were able to sail through their academic programmes with intellectual and material supports from AIAE either through AIAE standard library facility, training programmes and peer learning sessions. Of particular note is the fact that AIAE under the directorship of Prof. Eric Eboh transformed from a tenant to owner-occupier status. For me this is the peak!”

**Ifeyinwa Achike,**  
**Associate Fellow**

## Press Clips

On Jan .19 FRCN Network reported comments on 2012 budget by the Executive Director. Also on Feb. 22,23,24, 29, March3, 4,5,7 Vanguard, Daily Independent, Tribune, The Nation, Eko FM, Lagos Tv, ThisDay ,STV, BusinessDay , Guardian, on Social Security Seminar. Sovereign Wealth Fund was also on Feb. 27, March 2, 3,4,5,6,12 Raypower Network, AIT, Thisday, Lagos TV, Channels, Daily Independent, Superscreen, Eko FM, Vanguard, Sun, and FRCN Network on Sovereign Wealth Fund.

“For almost a decade, AIAE broadened the activity portfolios of research and advocacy beyond the usual 'research book-keeping'. It increasingly focused on capacity development and knowledge sharing, particularly bridging the gap between research output and end-users. For me, the nine active years of Professor Eric C. Eboh projected AIAE as a connecting pillar between the old ways of conducting research and the new challenges of bringing together research and practice towards the achievement of mutual development objectives”.

**Dr Moses O. Oduh**  
**SA-DG,**  
**Debt Management Office, Abuja**

“In nine years of his stewardship as the Executive Director, Prof. Eric Eboh through hard work, dedication to duty and uncommon public relations skills developed the dream that was AIAE to a household name in Nigeria's evidence- based research and policy advocacy Community. There is hardly any public institution in Nigeria that the foot prints of AIAE does not resonate at both national and regional levels on a wide range of development and policy issues addressing one developmental challenge or the other in a most professional way. I am glad to note that donor community has come to associate their development strategies with the expertise and professional services rendered in the area of research and policy advocacy by AIAE. The Associate Fellows of the Institute will surely miss the leadership and principled approach to evidence based research demonstrated by Prof Eboh during his tenure”.

**Dr. Friday K. Ohuche- Country**  
**Economist, IMF**

“As chairman of the Enugu Forum steering committee, I found my organizational skills, professional duties, personal trainings and intellectual abilities sharpened and greatly enhanced and my immediate job performance witnessed a significant boost. The Forum organized monthly lectures on key and relevant national issues. Professor Eboh's leadership of the Institute brought out the

best in me and I used same to add to the growth of AIAE. From a rented apartment when I joined, AIAE is now a landlord to the extent of accommodating scholars and professionals on sabbatical...Kudos to Eric and team. I have no regrets giving my time to AIAE all these years because I am better for it”.

**Ibeawuchi (Frank) Amagwu,**  
**Chairman, Enugu Forum Steering**  
**Committee**

“AIAE is one of the prestigious research institutions in Nigeria that I am proud to be associated with. The institution has served as a knowledge centre and spring board for me in the pursuit of my career. The history of my current key carrier height and achievement as the Technical Adviser to the Honourable Minister of National Planning on various assignments since 2005 till date cannot be completed without making reference to AIAE. AIAE has been a good back-bone for me”.

**Quindaline C. Eneh**  
**National Planning Commission, Abuja**

It was with mixed feelings that I received the news of Prof Eboh's imminent exit as the ED of the AIAE. His tenure coincided with mine as the National President of the Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME). The fact that he immediately saw the relevance of business membership organizations like NASME to the work of the Institute and the Nigerian economy was evident: AIAE joined NASME as an institutional member at par with other research institutes in the country, Prof Eboh became a valued resource person for our Conferences and rendered his services free of charge to the association. Most importantly, he co-opted NASME into the BECANS project, which was the first independent study of business environment across Nigerian states. His leadership of the Institute has been exemplary and I hope his successor will build on this excellent foundation.

**Ike Abugu, PhD**  
**Immediate Past President, (NASME)**

