

## Mimiko Harps on use of Local Talent in Nation Building

Ondo State Governor, Dr Olusegun Mimiko at the weekend cautioned against overdependence on the use of expatriates for the development of the country.

The Governor who maintained that Nigeria was well endowed with abundant human and material resources locally, including research and development centers said that these were capable of turning around the nation's fortunes without relying on expatriates.

He stated this in his office during a courtesy call on him last Friday by the new Vice-Chancellor of the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Prof Tale Omole and his management staff.

According to him, the "Abiye" safe motherhood programme of his administration was exclusively conceived and executed locally, adding that the World Bank has accepted it as a benchmark for the country and had also promised to scale up.

Governor Mimiko disclosed that the OAU, Ile-Ife was instrumental to the success of the Health Ranger Scheme that was introduced in the state during his tenure as Health Commissioner in 1999.

His words: "I believe that we can proffer solution to the problem we have in this country. One of the problems we have is this issue of total relying on expatriates; we have a lot of things we can demonstrate in every sense of modesty. Our *Abiye* programme was accepted by the World Bank. I was invited to do its presentation to the World Bank and they promised to scale it up. The University collaborated with us when we introduced our Health Ranger Scheme years back. In fact it was part of the success story recorded in the state. We even carried out surgery on weekends so that we could meet the health needs of our people.

"What I'm saying is that we can partner in so many ways, in education, technical education, renewable energy, like ICT, even in agriculture. We can put together a programme within a time frame and achieve result so that we can jointly fight hunger and poverty. We have already engaged 350 of our schools in Microsoft Academy. And I believe that Obafemi Awolowo University is a leader in ICT. We can leverage on your technical know-how in renewable energy. We engaged some of our Youth In Renewable Energy and they have started building solar inverters.

I know that we can fashion out a programme that will be of world class standard. I want to inform you that we are building three farm settlements in the state. One is already in operation in Ore and we have engaged one thousand of our youth there already, half of them are residents on the farm" said Mimiko.

As an alumnus of the university, Dr Mimiko commended the management team of the university for maintaining the infrastructure on the campus and for upholding its leadership status among universities within and outside the country.

Earlier, the vice-chancellor, Prof Tale Omole assured the state government of the university's collaboration in the development of its mineral and human potentials.

He, however, thanked the Governor for his past support to the university and called for his sustained and continued support for the varsity.