



[2012]

Activity Report



YPARD Global Coordination Unit

Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development



Hosted by **GFAR** Secretariat

c/o Food and Agriculture

Organization of the United Nations

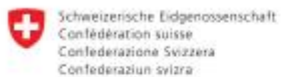
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Introduction

2012 was a year of growth for YPARD and a year where it made its mark in agricultural research for development. The strong showing by YPARD at the GCARD2 demonstrated to the international community that youth can have a strong voice and be an integral part of international events and proceedings and that they have a valid role to play. Local representatives established themselves and YPARD reached out to YPs on the ground, throughout the world. The network has matured, as well as its activities and its plan for the future is ambitious.

Activities

Some Highlights

- Implementation of the new website with greater interactivity and more features for members. A 44% increase of new members on ypard.net since March 2012 with significant increases in membership on social networks;
- New YPARD country representatives for Sierra Leone, Malawi, Mali, Benin, Nepal, South Africa, Switzerland and France
- Strong youth representation at the GCARD2, including mobilising the young social reporters and a youth pre-conference session which fed into a youth and gender focused plenary
- Establishment of a new region: YPARD Europe
- YPARD representative on the Steering Committee of the European Forum for Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD)
- Launch of YPARD China at CAAS in Beijing
- Release of a study on 'Working towards a generation of new professionals in ARD', with the skills and competencies needed by young people in ARD, as voiced by young professionals.
- Presentations on youth issues in agricultural development at various agricultural events by local and national representatives;
- YPARD Asia regional representative strategic planning meeting
- Active e-discussions on a variety of topics including attracting youth into agriculture, agricultural curriculum reform and agricultural innovation systems
- Video contest on issues of youth in ARD, with results in 2013

Strategic Objective 1 – Exchange of information and connecting YPs

Increasing membership and active contribution

Membership

There was a 44% increase in new members from March – December 2012¹, an average of 5 new subscriptions per working day against 1 in 2011. There are now 3056 active profiles on ypard.net, which are members with very well developed profile pages and those who receive mailings. YPARD still has more men than women members (894 female to 2048 male with 1964² unspecified) although it ensures equal gender representation in its activities. Gender selection is now required information with new member registrations.

The boost in membership in 2012 can be largely attributed to YPARD's increase in online activities, with a conversational and inspirational approach to sharing information. The increased sense of community has spurred several social media champions spreading the word about YPARD. Interns were recruited and have provided valuable assistance in feeding the website and promoting on social media, providing a continuous stream of information and opportunities relevant to YPARD members.

Face-to-face meetings at events and conference have been important in boosting membership at the international level. YPARD Awareness campaigns in-country bring youth together on a local or national level in order to outline opportunities, challenges for youth in agriculture and define their priorities as well as a plan of action for that country and/or region.

Sierra Leone working group:

Sierra Leone held three YPARD awareness meetings. The first was in April at Njala University Faculty Building, the second in May at Sierra Leone's National Agricultural training center and the third in June at Sierra Leone's National Agricultural Training Centre (NATC) with 75 people in attendance. The Sierra Leone



working group volunteered to create further sensitization in their various communities and make a plan of action. Learn more: [YPARD-Sierra Leone Recent Awareness and Meeting Up-date](#) and [Ending the Academic year with New projects for next year! - YPARD Sierra Leone's feedback](#)

¹ 4733 subscriptions on ypard.net as of December 31, 2012 and 3292 in March 2012 on the new website. There were 1098 new subscriptions from March 2012 to December 2012 against 258 new subscriptions in 2011 (**325% increase**)

² Data as of end of February 2013, instead of December 2012, thus providing a higher total of members

YPARD; connecting people for Youth empowerment...

“I feel that **YPARD is opening doors for young people** all over the world.

Their access and **exchange of information, network and opportunities** between global young professionals is crucial for present and future agricultural developments and policies.

YPARD as an international knowledge network offers **room for young professionals to voice their ideas** which otherwise might not have been heard.

I met so many interesting people through YPARD, and through their forum and news **I stay updated on the latest issues and discussions** in the agricultural domain in whatever part of the world!”

Machteld Schoonenberg, The Netherlands



“I am happy to being attached with this network as it is lifting up me to **connect with international agricultural research organizations, scientists and networks**. YPARD is a promising body of young professionals and has **the potential to guide career development.**”

Fardous Azam, Bangladesh



South Africa: YPARD members from or working in South Africa were invited to get in touch with the representative to network and strengthen YPARD activities in the country. Discussions are ongoing. Learn more: [Formalising and strengthening YPARD in South Africa](#)

YPARD Nepal Campaign: Several YPARD Awareness campaigns were implemented in Nepal alongside existing events on social media and Alltech Young Scientist Program. The series of events began on the 4th of December in Paklihawa Campus (113 participants), 5th of December in Lamjung Campus (91 participants), 14th of December in Himalayan College of Science and Technology (47 participants) and finally on 29th of December, 2012 in Rampur Campus (45 participants). During the program, two representatives (male/ female) from each of the four colleges were selected to enter into a local capacity development program and they have agreed to promote the network at the local level. Learn more: [YPARD Awareness Campaign in Nepalese agricultural universities](#)

YPARD China Campaign: YPARD was promoted in Yunan, Shanxi and Hebei Province in China in collaboration with the representatives’ field surveys in remote areas. This increased the number of members in China, but due to language difficulties the majority of the exchanges with these members are done in Chinese on RenRen (the Chinese version of Facebook). Learn more: [Promoting YPARD in Yunan, Shanxi and Hebei Province in China through a field survey project in remote and poverty villages](#)

Generating active contribution

A time consuming but important task is answering emails of people seeking to get involved with YPARD – as individual or partners on info@ypard.net. Requests come from all over the world, including Suriname, Costa Rica, Peru, Nepal, Nigeria, Kenya, Iran, Kyrgyzstan and many more!

Standard response letters were written-up in three languages (English, French and Spanish) providing information on how to become an active member of YPARD, how to become a representative, and a standard post-event email (reminding people to subscribe and get involved). Additionally, for new country representatives and those that have shown themselves to be particularly active, a soft copy of an ‘on-the-ground activities’ kit is provided with communications products, membership management sheets, registration excel sheets, YPARD branded letter templates and YPARD membership cards which were developed, to give a more ‘formal’ approach for those who desire it. For those who

want to contribute to the website, an online training is provided by the web and communications officer via Skype screen share.

New information and communication products were designed to raise awareness of YPARD and invite people to get active. “Become representative” sheets with attractive designs were created with guidance on how to get involved. Posters, T-shirts, notebooks and updated materials with YPARD Europe and hosting organization logo and membership card were also created.

Database Development

Advanced search-engines were developed for finding members’ profiles (those who agreed to make their profile public). When logged in, a member can also search other members by name, nationality, organisation, country of work, and expertise at <http://ypard.net/search-community>. This feature enables administrators to filter by age, gender, country and organization, allowing YPARD to target specific groups and assess what their most valued website services are.

Website

The new website was implemented in March 2012. The improvements include

1. A more appealing graphic design
2. Interfaces in English, French and Spanish
3. 5 regional interfaces: Global, Africa, Asia, Europe and LAC.
4. Updated text about YPARD, particularly informing people how to get involved
5. Up to date event calendars, giving members a snapshot of deadlines for opportunities and events.
6. Country representative profiles added to the “who we are” page in order to optimize networking between members and representatives in their country and spur local activity, see: <http://www.ypard.net/who-we-are>
7. Members can publish their own news, blog posts and resources once signed in. They can start and contribute to discussions on the forum or tell their story in the Young Professionals’ showcase: <http://www.ypard.net/showcase>
8. Uploading and searching of picture and videos was made for articles, facebook and the video gallery, which is critical to make information more attractive and communicative.
9. YPARD Video gallery was developed on ypard.net: <http://ypard.net/videogallery>.



Information dissemination

Providing YPARD members high quality, up-to-date information is a crucial aspect of keeping the YPARD network relevant and useful for members. Information is posted by the web and communications officer, interns, and the funding opportunities provider. Where possible, information is automatic, but it still requires work to ensure that information is relevant and is continually updated through social media. A number of items including testimonials and key YPARD events announcements were translated in Spanish and French to widen YPARD’s outreach.

Monthly newsletters were developed in HTML to replace pdfs, reducing their size and increasing their readability. These newsletters are a compilation of items published on www.YPARD.net and are sent to subscribers every month through the website, embedded in an email. 2856 members had chosen to receive mailings from YPARD at the end of 2012 a 52% increase from the end of 2011.

The YPARD **e-library** is growing, with publications available for members and those looking for documentation on youth and ARD related activities. There are four categories: YPARD reports, YPARD Newsletters, Youth and agriculture Publications, Work by YPARD members, and a search engine enables visitors to search by keywords.

The **Funding News Bulletin** continues to be sent to members twice a month. Deadlines are highlighted on the website as they approach and are marked on the opportunities' calendar. <http://www.ypard.net/opportunities>

The website is regularly reviewed in order to identify areas to be fixed and further improvements. Read: [YPARD is glad to launch its new website!](#) and explore: <http://www.ypard.net>

Below is some positive feedback on YPARD information services via Social Media :

The image displays a collage of social media posts. On the left, a Facebook post features a photograph of a wheat stalk against a blue sky with clouds. The text of the post reads: "Some other numbers? Today we are sending YPARD monthly newsletter to 2995 subscribers. This represents 100 subscribers more than last month. +894 subscribers since June - 8 month ago, (month we started sending newsletters through the new www.ypard.net!)". Below the photo are interaction buttons and comments from users like Courtney Paisley, Tari Ikibah, and Sitara Khabibova.

On the right, there are two Twitter posts. The top one is from @tallehatenchong, thanking @YPARD and @MarinaDev for a scholarship approval. The bottom one is from @YPARD, congratulating @tallehatenchong. Below these is a Facebook post from Marina Cherbonnier announcing the February newsletter, featuring Aracely Castro from Honduras. The post includes a thumbnail of the newsletter and a description of its content. Comments from Codrin Paveliuc-Olaru are also visible.

YPARD Community Blog

Posts on the YPARD Community blog really took off in 2012. The considerable increase in blog postings promotes a tighter 'community' between members. Some work is required by the YPARD team, both encouraging the writing and posting of blogs as well as editing the posts to enhance their clarity and maintaining the focus on youth and agriculture.

The blogging began with posts from Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya and Mauritius on topics such as rice culture and climate change, youth involvement in reshaping agriculture in Nigeria, entrepreneurship, the myth of farming as a poor man's profession and food wastage. This supports the objectives of network as a community of practice, sharing information and supporting the development of young professionals, providing editing support as enabling members to have online publications. 31 blog posts were submitted by YPARD members in 2012 (in addition to ones published by the YPARD team) with an average of 4 posts per month. The full list of blog posts can be found in Annex 1

The Blog section is also used for YPARD representatives to report their YPARD activities to the rest of the community which doubles as a 'trip report' for the global coordination unit and regional coordinators. 98 blog posts related to YPARD activities were published in 2012³.

While blog posts have increased dramatically, there remains more work to be done to solicit more comments and feedback on the blog posts, and generate more discussions from these posts.

Online discussions

Online discussions are used sparingly as they require a great deal of online support, but are a valuable means if there is a clear area into which the output of these discussions can be fed.

- Online discussions were organized in support of FANRPAN Twitter campaign on 6 Country Case Studies on Youth and agriculture, in August, in order to discuss youth perception, national policies, opportunities, and institutions and mechanisms for youth involvement in agriculture. More information: <http://bit.ly/Njp0ry>
- 3 online discussions in preparation of the GCARD2 youth discussion had 101 contributions on curricula changes, incentives for youth to get involved in agriculture and agricultural innovation systems, which were further discussed and formalised during the YPARD pre-conference session. <http://www.ypard.net/forums/gcard2-youth-e-discussions>

Mentoring programme

Pilot peer to peer mentoring

The pilot peer to peer mentoring programme ended in February 2012. The pilot faced many challenges and brought to light the intensive time and resources required to make a successful programme. The peer to peer style of mentoring was not the most effective approach for the network as most of the young participants tended to believe that mentors should be an older and they themselves lack the confidence that they can provide the skills required to other young people.

The initial decision to work with participants from one country only in the pilot phase could also be seen as one of the challenges. There is an assumption that if there was more diversity in the

³ Against 35 news items in 2011

participants, including country diversity, the outcomes could have been more positive. In future, online mentoring, and involving peers should be open to more than one country. However, this would lead to the need to rethink how any face-to-face interaction (called cluster coaching sessions in the pilot) would be effectively organized.

Further, the peer-to-peer mentoring programme would have been more successful with mentors and/or coaches who were committed to steering discussions with the mentees. Of course, this requires additional background work preparing coaches and mentors who are willing to volunteer their time on the platform for certain periods of time.

Recommendations from the consultancy include:

1. From the members' survey results and the feedback from the pilot phase, there is a clear indication that young people are yearning for mentoring as a way to develop their skills and gain more confidence in ARD. YPARD should continue working towards meeting these needs for their members.
2. More time will be needed to test this mentoring programme to completion, including the cluster coaching sessions and feedback. A most important strategy for the pilot phase will be to ensure that the peers are aware well in advance of what is expected, and there is continued dialogue with them to motivate them through the programme. This would require highly motivated facilitators/coordinators who can mobilize the support of mentors/coaches.
3. The mentoring programme could still be tested with a larger group of participants, and include some mentors and facilitators and this would be used to further improve its design for the future use by YPARD and other youth organizations.

Agri-VIVO pre-pilot project

Agri-VIVO is a platform aiming at connecting professionals in the field of agriculture. YPARD participated in the pre-pilot project with a number of partners and has thus far brought the biggest share of selected participants for the testing phase⁴. YPARD will continue its role in the project with the purpose of optimizing youth's chance to connect to pertinent professionals through the platform.

Strategic Objective 2- Opportunities for policy debates

The GCARD2

Youth were in the spotlight at the *second Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD2)*. YPARD held observer status on the GCARD2 Organising Committee and brought a strong youth focus to the conference including the issues of attracting and retaining youth in agricultural careers, youth input in agricultural curriculum reform and engaging youth in foresight.

⁴ 41 YPARD members on a total number of 108 participants to the Agrivivo pre-pilot project

Fresh perspectives on the conference discussions were brought through youth attendees and the team of young social reporters which set the tone for action on youth and agricultural development. YPARD was recognized as the youth mechanism of GCARD2 and for future youth empowerment, in the conclusion of GCARD2 sessions.

Learning and the Empowerment of Youth and Women – breakout session (C2.2)

These two traditionally marginalised groups in Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) were the focus of a discussion for their greater representation and engagement. This session was unique in that it involved youth in its design and selection of the youth speakers. It was practical, calling ARD players to take action where women and youth are concerned. Some calls to action include:

- Multiply the availability of high-quality opportunities for practical experience and career development of women and youth in ARD such as internships, fellowships, mentoring and professional secondment;
- Coordinate the monitoring and publication of statistics on the composition of ARD international and regional meetings, boards and leadership teams by age, gender and nationality;
- Take stock of regional efforts toward curriculum reform in agricultural education while advocating that those reforms support ARD that is transformative and that is fully inclusive of youth and women (The University of West Indies committed to including the voice of youth in their curriculum reform this year);
- Organisations must stop saying 'you should' and start saying 'I will' on action points;
- Invest in the full development of YPARD and GAP as mechanisms to support the implementation of the above.

Youth Blog posts:

- Are the youth and women speaking to themselves? [“WHO’s Listening? – Youth. Women. Empowerment”](#)
- [Empowering youth in ARD through YPARD: a commitment by GCARD2 constituencies!](#)
- YPARD article in World Farmers' Organisation Newsletter of November: [YOUTH TAKING A SIGNIFICANT PART INTO GCARD2](#)

YPARD pre-conference session

YPARD brought together young professionals active in ARD from around the globe to discuss and formulate a joint statement for the GCARD2 capacity development discussions. These youths submitted applications of interest through the YPARD network, were shortlisted by region, and put forward to the GFAR regional fora and social reporting team for sponsorship. Prior to the meeting, YPARD engaged its members in pre-consultations on the YPARD online forum from which reports were elaborated to set the basis for the interventions and maximise the face-to-face interaction. Working with partners, notably through the EFARD/Agrinatura capacity development session, informed the YPARD discussions and experienced professionals provided additional input.

The main points that emerged from the consultation were:

1. **Curriculum reform in agricultural education is needed.** Youth require a range of skills and competencies beyond their technical discipline. Reform of the agricultural curriculum must be a fully inclusive process which involves a wide range of stakeholders including youth.
2. **Greater youth input in decision making bodies.** Boards, steering and executive committees of organizations in ARD must include youth representatives to ensure work is relevant and inclusive for today's youth and tomorrow's leaders. To encourage the rapid uptake of youth representatives, they may begin as youth advisors, gradually moving to full status.
3. **Youth 'positive discrimination' in projects and funding.** Employment advertisements could include "Young Professionals are highly encouraged to apply and where skill sets are equal, opportunities are given to young professionals. Calls for proposals could also have particular funding tranches to be led by young professionals.
4. **Youth engagement in policymaking.** Organisations active in policy development must include youth as stakeholders in their policy recommendations. Youth also require capacity development to enable them to make their voice heard at the policy level.
5. **Internships, internships, internships!** Linking academic learning to the real world and gaining transversal skills are most effective through active learning. Universities, the private sector and ARD organisations must improve collaborative efforts and provide more support for worthwhile internship opportunities.
6. **Promotion of extra-curricular agricultural activities.** Extra-curricular activities and youth clubs in agriculture further develop needed soft skills and foster pride in agriculture. More support is needed for these organizations as well as more collaboration between ARD actors to inform youth of the opportunities available.
7. **Reward systems for future leaders.** Fellowships and scholarships must go beyond a technical focus, with comprehensive capacity development designed for leaders of a new, multifaceted agricultural development. To build young professionals that will truly make a difference, focus rewards on those who work to provide impact at the ground level.
8. **Promote agricultural career programs.** Lobby for greater agricultural focus on donor and government funded youth employment programs (JPOs for example). Scale up successful youth initiatives.
9. **Share success (and challenge) stories.** Youth testimonials in agricultural development can be used to share youth stories and influence others. New media tools can increase their impact.
10. **Link up with other marginalised groups.** Join forces to be heard! Where appropriate, youth interests may join other marginalized groups, to strengthen their call for a more inclusive ARD.

YPARD answers this call and replaces the 'you should' with 'I will'. YPARD will continue to share information on opportunities with youth and organizations in ARD and share success (and challenge) stories of youth in ARD. YPARD has and will continue to advocate for and help to place strong youth

on decision making bodies and advocate for a youth inclusive curriculum reform, contributing the input of the youth through the YPARD network. YPARD will advocate for increased agricultural focus on youth employment programs, youth positive discrimination and more effective internships. YPARD will continue to call on the ARD community to act and work with it in ensuring that youth supportive actions are implemented.

- Call for participation: [Call for expressions of interest among Young Professionals to bring a youth voice to GCARD2](#)

Blog posts

- [GCARD2 Youth e-discussions kicking-off](#)
- [On our road to GCARD2: YPARD Youth involvement!](#)
- [Engaging with youth in Agriculture - YPARD GCARD2 Pre-conference meeting](#)
- [“Holy” Youth-friendly GCARD2](#)
- [“Young but Not Naïve”](#)

Youth Social Reporters’ programme

YPARD collaborated with the CGIAR communications team to bring thirty-five young social reporters from different regions of the world to the GCARD. A global call was published on ypard.net and disseminated to more than 20 000 people in 3 languages to build up the online group worldwide. The participants were prolific and committed, boosting the profile of the conference worldwide and interacting online with a global audience. They not only spread the word on what was discussed at the GCARD2 but also shared their own observations and comments, and invited online participants to contribute to the discussions. Some of the outputs include:

136 social reporters from 44 countries (35 onsite and 101 offsite social reporters and supporters), 63 mainstream articles, 152 blogposts (visited 16,026 times from 149 countries), 1,500 daily Twitter updates, 300 Facebook updates read 20,127 times.

There was also a capacity building component from which trainees used social media to boost their own work in ARD. Members subsequently used the skills they had obtained to create, for example, social media awareness for the NEPAD Fish node in Malawi, the “Cool to Farm” workshop in Nigeria and the #AllForest agriculture and Climate change discussions at COP18. This blog post reviews a number of initiatives born from this capacity building opportunity: [“If agriculture is an aging profession, we need to make some changes!”](#)

“YPARD was the glue, the mechanism to get YPs in place.” YPARD selected the trainees and provided logistical support for their attendance. The social reporters, which were joined by the YPARD delegates, chose to maintain an online group, the “YPARD-SR group”, focusing on youth in agriculture advocating for SR as a key part of ARD events to ensure that youth and other marginalized stakeholders are represented in 2013 and beyond.

Call for participation: [Give a Youth voice at GCARD2 through Social Media!](#)

Youth Blog post:

- [Social Reporting Geeks signing off,](#)
- [“GCARD2: Young professionals “Make Agriculture Again”](#)

- [“If agriculture is an aging profession, we need to make some changes!”](#)

Youth in Foresight

With youth engagement in the foresight pre conference meetings, experienced professionals welcomed stronger youth involvement in foresight discussions. This is deemed a ‘hot topic’ for youth and one where they can play a leading role. YPARD will support increased engagement of youth in the global foresight academy.

Youth and the CGIAR

The CEO of the CGIAR Consortium, Frank Rijsberman, met with the young reporters to answer questions on youth engagement in the CGIAR. The youth asked questions such as: How does the CGIAR engage with youth in its work? Would the CGIAR consider a youth advisor on their boards? The CEO confirmed that future leaders are very important to the CGIAR and that they will commit to engaging with youth as they develop their capacity development programs.

Youth Blog post [How many people in positions of power are youth?: “Agriculture’s potential for solving YOUTH unemployment”](#)

Youth & ARD: some additional GCARD2 Youth perspectives

- [“Young Professionals Rule!”](#)
- [“I want to be president”](#): young people talking to the president of Uruguay
- [“North-South and South-South collective actions: Where is the place of youth?”](#)
- Testimonial: [GCARD2: YPARD Paved the Way for Me...You could be next!](#)
- Testimonial: [From getting a Youth voice to committing to action in ARD strategic arena!](#)
- Testimonial: [Youth in ARD: We’re getting there...](#)



GCARD2 was a key activity of 2012, with a number of expected follow-ups for 2013.

Inter-institutional linkages

YPARD Global

Tropical Agriculture Platform: YPARD attended development meetings and has become the youth representative of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), a platform to facilitate capacity development in agricultural innovation in the tropics. YPARD will continue to follow the progress of this initiative to advocate for youth focused capacity development initiatives worldwide

Gender and Agriculture Partnership: YPARD joined the GAP as the youth partner to enhance its work with young women and to work with gender initiatives to support greater focus on young women.

International Youth Day 2012

YPARD solicited contributions from partners to lead on a joint Communiqué for International Youth Day ([Counting down before the International Youth Day \(IYD\) 2012!](#)) Partners working on youth and ARD issues include; ARDYIS, e-Agriculture, GYIN, YPLD:



[International Youth Day 2012: Asserting our will to strengthen partnership among Youth for agricultural development](#)

CTA Youth strategy: YPARD took part in a 2-day workshop with 25 young people from the ACP countries to discuss priorities for supporting youth in agriculture and is providing continuing advice and feedback on the draft strategy. **Learn more:** [YPARD and Youth Stakeholders taking part in refining CTA Youth Strategy!](#)

FANRPAN: E-discussions were launched on YPARD forum to generate discussions on FANRPAN's 6 Country Case Studies on Youth and agriculture, focusing on youth perception, national policies, opportunities, and institutions and mechanisms for youth involvement in agriculture. More information: <http://bit.ly/NJpOry> .

e-Agriculture: E-Agriculture and YPARD share information and the two networks celebrated the international girls and ICTs day with an interview of YPARD web and communication's officer by e-agriculture: [How do ICTs play a role for supporting young female professionals in agriculture.](#) (see [French version](#))

Regional

Youth representation with in EFARD SC

In 2012, YPARD became an official member at the Steering Committee Meeting of EFARD (the European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development). A youth representative on the steering committee demonstrates a strong step forward for YPARD and youth recognition at high level discussions.

Learn more: [YPARD attendance at EFARD SC meeting](#) and [EFARD meeting 8th/9th, October 2012 in Switzerland - Personal Lessons learnt: Implementing changes takes time and needs patience](#)

Partnership with Agri-Hub Ethiopia (AHE): The AHE platform organized an annual networking day in December, 2012, inviting interested organizations and individuals to participate on the workshop. The YPARD Ethiopia representative attended and is looking at how to work with them to enhance YPARD Ethiopia activities in Ethiopia. Learn more: [Agri-Hub Ethiopia Annual Networking Day](#).

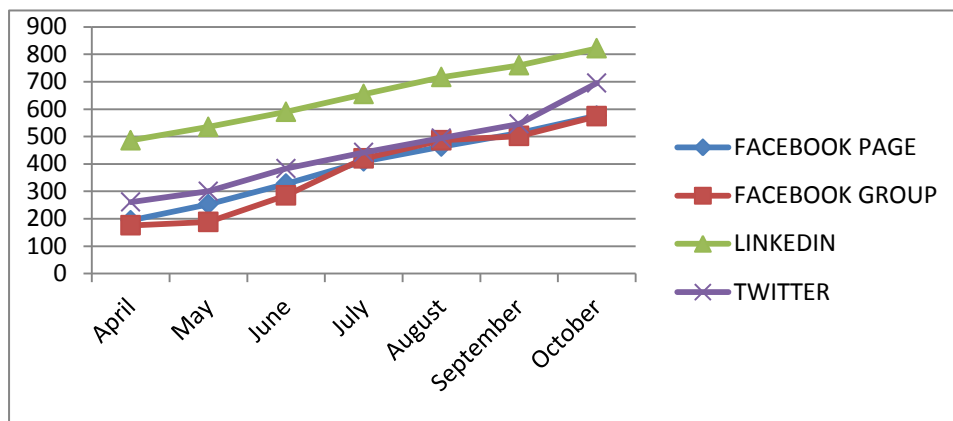
FORAGRO : The Sixth Meeting of the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO), took place in August 2012 in Lima, Peru. YPARD LAC took the opportunity to introduce the network to the region, presenting during the event and generating discussion on the challenges, opportunities and concrete actions on generational change in the region. YPARD LAC is continuing discussions with many of those present on how to strengthen the role of youth in the region in partnership with regional institutions. Learn more: [YPARD –Latin America and the Caribbean, present at the Sixth Meeting of Foragro in Lima](#)

Increase visibility

Information and Communications materials

New attractive and dynamic promotional materials (brochures, banners, posters and bookmarks) were developed and translated into French and Spanish and sent to YPARD representatives and active members attending key events. Flyers for donors were created to attract greater funding. Website graphics were improved to give a fresh look to the website, Twitter and Facebook.

Social media and social reporting



Increase of membership between April 2012 and October 2012⁵

Social media was a focus of 2012 and YPARD’s presence and visibility grew tremendously. This not only created greater awareness on the social networks themselves, but also translated to a significant increase in visits on the YPARD website through these channels. From January to December 2012, the website received a six fold increase in visits from Facebook, a fourfold increase of visits from Linked-In and 8 times more visits from Twitter.⁶

A social media strategy was implemented with the support of an intern in order to boost membership and contribution. The GCARD2 Youth Social Reporting Program provided a strong

⁵ Chart provided by a social media intern over the course of their internship.

⁶ 9553 visits from Facebook against 1482 visits in 2011, 1629 visits from LinkedIn against 421 in 2011 and 1416 from Twitter against 181 followers (8 times more than in 2011).

boost to the YPARD official social media accounts with the build-up of an online group of around 140 young social reporters to disseminate information while advocating for youth in agriculture. These channels further enabled YPARD to increase its visibility in its other work, sharing YPARD news, blog posts and events posted on the website.

Social Network	Visits	% Visits
1. Facebook	9,553	 72.80%
2. LinkedIn	1,629	 12.41%
3. Twitter	1,406	 10.71%
4. Blogger	194	 1.48%
5. Renren	193	 1.47%
6. WordPress	50	 0.38%
7. HootSuite	35	 0.27%
8. paper.li	19	 0.14%
9. tinyURL	10	 0.08%
10. Delicious	7	 0.05%

Source: google analytics: Traffic social sources for YPARD.net

Twitter: Live tweeting boosts visibility. The preparation of the GCARD2 through online social reporting and the momentum building boosted our fellowship on twitter and YPARD reports a 449% increase in followers from February 2013 against January 2012⁷. It is important to recognise that we fostered more conversations (52%) than updates (48%).

Additionally:

- YPARD posed the first question via twitter to panelists On “Role of Youth in future of Agriculture” during Rio+20 Conference
- YPARD mobilised discussions for the FANRPAN social media campaign on Youth case studies. The campaign lasted 4 weeks with parallel conversations on both twitter and YPARD forums.

Facebook: The [YPARD Facebook corporate page](#) has become one of the primary tools of reaching out to members, sharing information and generating discussions, evident by the number of fans of the page increasing by 534% in 2012⁸. Members of the [Facebook Group](#) increased twenty-fold⁹ and the number of contributions and discussions increased, creating a site that is very active and dynamic among members. There are more women than men as members on the site (51% female and 49% male) which may indicate that social media is a good way to reach out to more young women.

While the site does have an agricultural focus, Young Professionals also welcome inspiring pictures that may not be related to agriculture including youth growing/being brave and ambitious. A combination of empowering photos and ones with a more positive side of agriculture are featured.

⁷ 1000 followers beginning of February 2013 against 182 followers in January 2012

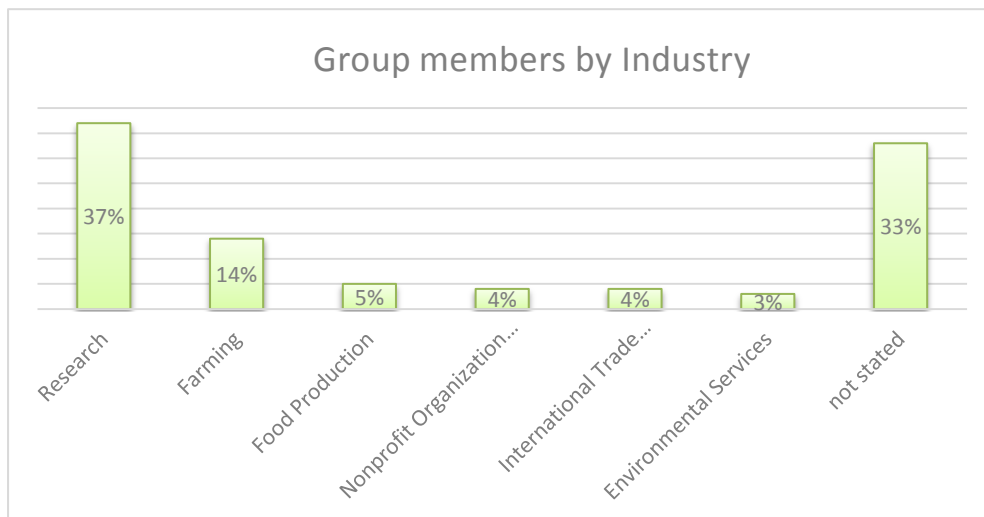
⁸ 850 at the beginning of 2013 against 134 at the beginning of 2012

⁹ 1000 at the beginning of 2013 against 51 members in January 2012

A YPARD Facebook campaign was organized in September 2012, soliciting one member each week to spread the word in their country about YPARD and invite people to join. It brought new members, but more importantly it generated a stronger community feeling which spurred greater interaction among members. Those who brought new members were given recognition on the site and given a virtual 'award' for their work.

LinkedIn: The YPARD LinkedIn group membership increased by 275% in 2012¹⁰. Content about competitions, grants and fellowships are of interest for the LinkedIn community with several requests for more information. Discussions have also increased dramatically, with several positive comments and members expressing thanks. This emphasizes that in addition to a professional network, YPARD must also cultivate the human and social aspects of a community.

LinkedIn offers an interesting picture of the group of members by industry. While the research sector is still dominant, the second most populous group by listed industry is farming activities.



Video: A video gallery was implemented on www.ypard.net containing videos on YPARD and its work as well as other videos related to youth and agriculture: <http://ypard.net/videogallery>. YPARD also plans to develop a YouTube channel, to reach a broader audience.

Sharing information online: The visibility of YPARD has been enhanced through partners' websites, including sharing information with e-agriculture, voice of the youth, EGFAR etc.

YPARD published 6 articles in the World Farmers' Organisation newsletter published in French, English and Spanish. These include:

- ["A youth outlook on skill gaps in high agricultural education", by YPARD in WFO's newsletter of June, 2012](#) showcasing the agricultural curriculum study, June, (p.17)
- ["Yes, agriculture offers great career opportunities! YPARD community can prove it!" by YPARD in WFO's newsletter of July, 2012](#) July, (p.13-14)
- ["Why have I chosen agriculture when I could get a stable job?" by Nawsheen Hosenally, Mauritius, YPARD's "YP \(Young Professionals\) showcase](#), August, (p.8)

¹⁰ 279 to 1044 members from the beginning of 2012 to 2013.

- ["Calling for Young farmers to tell their story!, by YPARD", p.7](#), September, (p.7)
- [YOUTH TAKING A SIGNIFICANT PART INTO GCARD2](#), November, p.15
- [Young Professionals in Agriculture engage into discussions on Climate Change!](#), December, p.20

YPARD lay out on Facebook and Twitter pages



ARD Events

YPARD has taken a two-pronged approach to getting strong youth presence and voice at key ARD events – through traditional face to face means and through a presence on social media. The YPARD-Social Media Team (YPARD SMT) has become a strong entity in its own right and continues to be active, with 140 people and counting.

On-site participation

Youth, food and farming, Future Agricultures conference

YPARD presented two papers at the Future Agricultures conference on youth, farming and the agrifood sector in Africa, March 2012. YPARD played a key role in the conference, shared its extensive experience on this topic and engaged in discussions on a comprehensive approach among actors. Read more at: [YPARD gets involved in the discussion on 'Engaging youth in agriculture'](#)

RUFORUM biennial conference 2012

YPARD participated to the conference as a panelist discussing [Engaging youth in rural transformation](#) . YPARD made partners and discussed with RUFORUM regarding the skills and competencies study conducted by YPARD to enrich discussions on curricula changes. It was also an opportunity to meet and sensitize young professionals to join YPARD. YPARD Zimbabwe members were present and networked with other Zimbabwean youth to recruit them to the national group.



Global Youth Forum

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Global Youth Forum was held in Bali, Indonesia in December 2012. The aim was to generate a new consensus on putting youth rights at the heart of development. The YPARD Malawi representative secured external funding for his participation and represented YPARD. He was amazed by the minimal reference to agriculture and thus worked to raise this issue and tried to convince his peers why it is important in the youth discussion. More information is available in the blog: [Reminiscences of a YPARD Member at ICPD Global Youth Forum in Bali](#).

Country level

Conference ‘Youth Perspectives: Environmental Issues in Contemporary Societies’, Switzerland

Alessandra Giuliani, a former Steering Committee member presented at the Opening Ceremony of the conference ‘Youth Perspectives: Environmental Issues in Contemporary Societies’, in Geneva, Switzerland in April 2012. She shared the history of YPARD, noting the similarities between its goals and those of the conference and encouraged people to sign up to YPARD. Learn more ["youth perspectives: environmental issues in contemporary societies" - my experience with YPARD](#)



Conference on ‘New skills for a European Bioeconomy’, Belgium

YPARD brought to the table a youth perspective on new skills for European bioeconomy, as a panelist at the conference on "New skills for a European Bioeconomy" hosted by the European Commission in Brussels in November 2012. The YPARD representative shared the results from the YPARD curricula study: Working towards a new generation of Young Professionals in ARD. Learn more [“New Skills for a European Bioeconomy” - YPARD taking part into discussions](#)

Raise the stake, Romania

YPARD was invited and supported by the Young Professionals in Local Development (YPLD) to talk about international ARD and local development at “Raise the stake”, February in Romania. YPARD generated discussion with young Romanians on their aspirations and ideas about agriculture as a career path. More available at: [International ARD, local development and the youth, in Romania](#)

Online participation

RIO+20 Agriculture day: YPARD attended the event virtually through YPARD official Twitter account. YPARD asked the first question to the panelist and thus succeeded to bring to the table youth issues and need for support.

Agriculture Day and All forest at COP18, Qatar : Following on GCARD2, YPARD solicited Young Professionals to get involved, in an online team, in two events related to **agriculture**: “Forest day” and “Agriculture, Landscapes and Livelihoods Day” as part of COP18, December 2012. Learn more: [Young Professionals in Agriculture engage into discussions on Climate Change!](#) Several calls were sent to guide Youth’s participation: [Youth, agriculture and COP18: Time to engage!](#) And [Engage, engage, engage! - COP18 agriculture day !](#)

Strategic Objective 3 – Promote agriculture among young professionals

Curricula Development

Skills and competencies study

Skills and competencies of graduates are no longer meeting the needs of the agricultural sector and agricultural curriculum does not adequately prepare youth for effective careers in Agricultural Research for Development (ARD). With increased attention on holistic and multi-disciplinary approaches to address challenges, agricultural professionals are expected to be able to integrate knowledge and practices from outside their disciplines and work within the multi-functionality of agriculture.

YPARD contributed to the discussion by bringing the voice of youth to the table. To this end, YPARD commissioned a study that asked youth in ARD in the early stages of their career development to rate a series of competencies according to their perceived level of importance now and in five years’ time. Employers rated the same competencies in order to compare answers and a statistical analysis was conducted to see whether there were significant differences

YPARD, the mechanism for giving a voice to the Youth in Ag.

“When you interview a young professional in ARD, you can feel his/her great energy, desires, ideas, projects, and dreams that they share with you so spontaneously. This experience let you know that there are young people out there that are committed and thinking in how to make possible a better life, a better planet for their country, their region.”

Andrea Carvajal, Colombia



“During the conference I tried visiting the YPARD booth and see what was going on. There I met and spoke with people, young and old who came around. From my discussion with people, I discovered that the fears that motivated and justified the creation of YPARD are real and have a global reach.”

Julius Ingweye, Nigeria



between these groups, as well as between respondents of different regions.

The results of the study reinforce the notion that young researchers require a range of diverse skills in addition to technical skills and theory. Today's young professional must be better able to work across different disciplines and in partnership with different stakeholders, understand the value chain and potential for profit and entrepreneurship at different stages. Internships are crucial to build a cadre of well-prepared young professionals for careers in ARD, as confirmed by the young professionals in the study; however, it is important that these internships have strong learning outcomes. The final report was released in 2012 as well as a summary document on the key findings. The report on skills and competencies of young people in ARD, conducted by YPARD, is now available on YPARD e-library: ["Working towards a new generation of Young Professionals in ARD" report](#)

Moving Forward: We are sharing the outcomes of the curricula development study with other organisations, specifically looking to influence those who undertake capacity development work, integrating youth specific needs. We have additionally begun discussions with Universities and University networks, to encourage them to use the results of the study in their curriculum reform. YPARD is seeking support to further develop the outcome of this report. Some potential areas of work include facilitating feedback from former students in the reform of targeted University programs, assessing the potential of networks on career development, providing an analysis of the value of internships for early career professionals including what makes a high quality internship and assess how access to these high quality internships can be enhanced.

Promoting agriculture as a career path

Video Contest – Seeing Thoughts project

The YPARD video contest ["Seeing Thoughts" - Video Competition](#) was created to capture and showcase the voices of youth and their contribution to agriculture for development. The contest began with a call for young professionals to submit storyboards on topics related to youth and agriculture, with certain suggested themes. Participants with the best storyboard were invited to carry on with the second phase: elaboration of the videos. Capacity development was then provided to those who developed the videos through the support of an online mentoring team that provided feedback and suggestions for both the content of the videos and practical filming.

Participation was limited with many of the initial 20 participants dropping out during the process. However, initial assessments demonstrate some strong messages. The final videos are being edited, and will be shared with the YPARD network and beyond.

Learn more: ["Seeing Thoughts" video contest - moving onto capturing youth stories into documentaries!](#)



ICTs benefits to young girls in agriculture: YPARD and e-agriculture produced a short video on the benefits of ICTs in involving young women in agriculture for International Girls and ICTs day. [How ICTs play a role in supporting young female professionals in agriculture?](#) (see [French version](#))

Notebooks and T-shirts: Modern notebooks and T-shirts were created to appeal to youth. Notebooks say “Agriculture, Old-Fashioned? Put more innovative ideas into it!”. T-shirts show: “Opportunities in Agriculture? You’d be surprised. www.ypard.net”. While many organisations develop t-shirts, not many can say that their constituents actually wear them! Members posted pictures of themselves wearing the shirts on Twitter and Facebook at different schools and various public places.

facebook Search for people, places and things

Look at this Courtney & Massimiliano !
YPARD Tshirts are definitely doing their full job ->
PROMOTING AGRICULTURE among the YOUTH!
Thumbs up to Kio for the great move!

Marina Cherbonnier Olawale Isaiah Ojo Nawsheen Hosenally Jieying Bi Dinesh Panday Sridhar Gutam Firdavs Kabilov Keron Bascombe Ypard Codrin Paveliuc-Olariu what i wore to a children Farming club training day in Kwale on growing legumes in their school demonstration plots. I didnt have to talk much, the Tee did :) Forget what i was saying behind the block :)

Like · Comment · Unfollow Post · Share · Promote

Kuntal De, Dinesh Panday, Darlington Kahilu and 2 others like this.

Kio Wachira Hahaaa thanks! Its just the beginning. Watch the space for more of this 😊
14 minutes ago · Unlike · 1

Codrin Paveliuc-Olariu I actually have my t-shirt on me right now at the office. The guys & girls here asked me where did I get it. Answer: YPARD 😊
11 minutes ago · Unlike · 2

Courtney Paisley And it looks so good on you! Nice work.
9 minutes ago · Unlike · 2

Series of Showcase: Each month, YPARD publishes and promotes a “Young Professional of the Month” on the YPARD showcase and through Monthly Newsletters and Social Media. Young Professionals featured in 2012 came from Nigeria, The Netherlands, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Mauritius, Peru, Colombia, Honduras, Switzerland, Italy, Philippines with equal gender representation. See: <http://www.ypard.net/showcase>

Strategic Objective 4 - Access to resources and capacity building

Support to regional and country levels

Strategic support to regions and countries

- A regional Asia meeting was implemented by VIT University in India, the YPARD Asia hosting institution. Members of different country offices had a chance to meet one another and share their experiences. The regional coordinator later visited the coordination unit as a side meeting when in Rome and discussed the **Asia strategy and action plan**. Read more: [Meeting with YPARD Asia reps shapes the annual plan](#)
- The YPARD Global Director travelled to meet with the YPARD LAC coordinator and key individuals at CIAT in Cali, Colombia. The pair discussed building up the region, discussed with CIAT on how to link up initiatives and strategies to propel the region ahead in 2012. Read: [Building up the Latin America and Caribbean \(LAC\) Region](#)
- The roles and responsibilities of YPARD representatives were further clarified and processes developed for the nomination of new ones. This document is available in the YPARD repository at: <http://ypard.net/sites/ypard.net/files/Representatives%20Roles%20and%20Responsibilities.pdf> (flyer also available : http://ypard.net/sites/ypard.net/files/YPARD_informative_sheet.pdf)
- YPARD China representative and a high level staff from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) visited the YPARD Global Coordination Unit while in Rome in January 2012 and discussed ways to build up YPARD China. Learn more: [YPARD China representative’s visit to YPARD Coordination Unit, Rome](#)



Global internship program

YPARD web and communications activities were supported by 4 interns in 2012. They posted information on the website, updated social media and translated documents. Each intern provided 10 hours per week for a 6 month period. The interns were from Nigeria, Mauritius, The Netherlands and Romania.

The internship program is designed as a capacity building opportunity: interns increase their knowledge on web editing (training on Drupal and teaching of editorial tips) and information research, social media, translations, and insight into development and partnerships in general. The interns receive a nomination letter, and a certificate and reference letters (Word and LinkedIn Profile) upon completion. Their feedback about the internship and the methodology is very positive. Learn more: [Waving up to Machteld, intern with YPARD](#); [YPARD welcomes three new interns!](#); [Farewell to YPARD interns, Sabina and Nawsheen!](#); [Farewell to YPARD Social Media intern, Tega Otojare!](#)

Activities and workshops

Sri Lanka

The Sri Lanka representative organised a workshop on “Indigenous knowledge for a sustainable Agriculture” in January, 2012. The aim was to generate discussion and then register the students as YPARD members. However, due to poor internet connectivity, the names and emails of participants were collected on paper, to be registered later. The discussion session was considered highly valuable by those in attendance and will continue as a YPARD Sri Lanka activity, reaching those youth who do not have internet access. [Feedback from the workshop on “Indigenous knowledge for a sustainable Agriculture”, Sri Lanka, 17th January 2012](#)

Vietnam

YPARD Vietnam organized two training courses in June 2012 that gathered over 140 farmers; one on Coffee and one on Tea in Lam Dong province, a tea and coffee growing region in Vietnam. The representative explains that nowadays, many tea and coffee farmers are young people. However, they are growing tea and coffee using cultivation techniques from experience of their parents and have very little information about sustainable cultivation. They do not know how to cultivate in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way. They are using very little organic fertilizer and much chemical fertilizer. Tea and coffee are high income crops and many young people will choose to farm

Feedback from a YPARD intern

“As for my feedback on the YPARD internship: it was amazing! Really, why I liked it so much:

- because it was only 8 hrs per week, I could manage it next to my other work.
- although it was unpaid, I felt that through the training you gave me I gained a lot from this internship.
- not only was it a great experience for my skills and knowledge, but also expanding my network with other YPs was great! {posting on LinkedIn played an important role as it made me very visible}.
- the weekly updates & Skype meetings made me feel my work was important and crucial, and kept me from slacking in my work or working behind schedule. however, I also appreciated the flexibility when I missed some hours due to other work.”

these. These courses were an opportunity for farmers to expand their knowledge by interacting with other farmers in local areas and researchers. Learn More: [Training courses on sustainable agriculture for coffee and tea farmers](#)

China

2012 saw the official launch of YPARD China, a significant and dynamic new region. An event was launched in partnership with the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) in June of 2012 with over 190 participants from 21 organisations. The event saw a high turnout of young professionals, some inspirational speeches from youth champion senior professionals and young entrepreneurs and ended with



a plan of action for members of YPARD China. Some of the concerns included the inability of Chinese members to access the YPARD Facebook site, and YPARD ensured them that all opportunities would be reposted on the website for them to see. More information is available here: [Climate Change and Food Security—Role of Young Professionals in ARD—YPARD China Promoting Conference will be held in CAAS](#) and [YPARD China Steps Up!](#)

Much activity has been going on in the region since, including: YPARD China's cooperation meeting with Oxfam and Lsm Rural Reconstruction Center was held in CAAS: [YPARD China's cooperation with Oxfam and Lsm Rural Reconstruction Center of RUC](#) as well as: [YPARD China won great success in the YPs' Science Forum hosted in CAAS](#), and [Countdown - YPARD China is preparing its official launching!](#)

Zambia

YPARD Zambia has been active, mapping people and institutions in ARD in the country. To further enhance this they created a Dgroup : « Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development – ZAMBIA » and a repository, linking stakeholders and sharing information among those working on issues related to the youth in ARD in Zambia. [YPARD Zambia is strengthening its network!](#)

Nigeria

“Agribusiness, Cool business” were the words on the lips of the 39 youths that came together in Akure Ondo state Nigeria in November 2012 to be part of the COOL TO FARM Workshop series by Agropreneur Nigeria and the OAC-Agro Advocacy Initiative in partnership with YPARD.

The main purpose of the workshop was to show to the youth that agriculture can be a sustainable and attractive profession and demonstrated how they can be involved in the value chain.

“I am keenly interested to involve in the organization which could explore the student’s inner talents, their experiences and knowledge for the betterment of agriculture and attract youths towards scientific agricultural practices as well.”

Swarnima KC, from the Nepal awareness raising meeting

A presentation by the YPARD Nigeria representative stressed that YPARD was open to all who were professional in agriculture. Interested youths put down their email contact for future follow up.
Learn More: [IT IS REALLY COOL TO FARM](#)

EUROPE

YPARD built up the YPARD Europe platform and welcomed all YPARD European members or members currently based in Europe to discuss and set priorities for the European activities. (Learn more: [YPARD is building the YPARD Europe platform, join the initiative!](#)). Martina Graf, hosted by HAFL in Switzerland, was selected as the regional coordinator and leads the development of YPARD Europe network. Learn more: [Welcoming YPARD Europe coordinator!](#)). Read also: [Welcome YPARD community, welcome YPARD Europe!](#)

LAC

The last event of the celebration of the 45th anniversary of CIAT was the World Cafe, organised by YPARD-LAC and ALCUE-KBBE where participants were asked the question: Is bio-economy an alternative for young people to regain interest in agriculture? The activity generated a lot of interest and discussion and is helping to build up the Latin American region and activities engaging youth.
Learn more: [Is bio-economy an alternative for young people to regain interest in agriculture?](#)



YPARD Evolution

New Country Representatives

YPARD welcomed 9 New Country Representatives in 2012:

- Africa : Malawi, Mali, Sierra Leone, Benin, and the passing of the position to a new candidate in South Africa.
- Asia : Nepal
- Europe: France and Switzerland

Learn more:

[Strengthening YPARD networks with 3 new country representatives](#)

[Welcoming YPARD South Africa representative: Shakespear Mudombi](#)

[Welcoming the new YPARD South Africa representative - Obert Mathivha](#)

[Welcoming YPARD Benin representative - Frejus Thoto](#)

[Welcoming YPARD Nepal representative - Dinesh Panday !](#)

[Welcoming YPARD France representative!](#)

[Welcoming YPARD Switzerland representative!](#)

Steering Committee

YPARD sent a call for new Steering Committee members and welcomed Nidhi Nagabhatla, a researcher from India and Femke Van Der Lee, an NGO worker from the Netherlands

Learn more:

[Welcome to our newest YPARD Steering Committee member!](#)

[Welcome to our newest YPARD Steering Committee member!](#)

YPARD Communications strategy

Elaboration of the YPARD communications strategy based on internal (team), community, and external (PR) communications. Systematic development of forms to facilitate an extensive regional presence and locally led activities.

YPARD Europe

Targeting youth in Europe active in agricultural research for development and actively supporting their engagement in YPARD activities has made strong initial progress. The particular focus of the regional coordinator to focus on Eastern Europe and their links with Western Europe has demonstrated a group of young professionals 'hungry' for greater opportunities and networking in ARD. The Eastern European countries have shown themselves to be particularly active and keen to support YPARD's objectives.

Capacity Development

YPARD has learned that while capacity development is very important for young professionals, YPARD as an organisation is not best placed to implement capacity development itself. Its role is to encourage others to undertake trainings that are responsive to the needs of today's youth. This is an additional aspect of the study undertaken on the needs and capacities of youth, to identify those skills and competencies that the youth confirm that they require, and thus, those that we try to provide for a new generation.

Annual report 2011



[YPARD 2011 activity report now available online!](#)

Challenges and lessons learned

Country level activities: The young professionals and social reporting team at the GCARD2 held an informal meeting on their roles in YPARD and what can be improved. Two main issues were raised during this meeting. The first is that current YPARD country representatives are not responsive enough to members who would like to get involved in that country which diminishes potentially active members. The second is that it is difficult to implement activities when YPARD is not an officially registered organisation. It is felt that this hinders adequate recognition and credibility with in-country partners. In response to these challenges, some steps to address them were discussed.

- YPARD country representatives should be more vigorously vetted for the post. YPARD has agreed to try to ensure that national representatives are more accountable for their responsibilities by ensuring that they are first active through the network and that they confirm they agree to the terms of the roles and responsibilities of national representatives. However, it remains a challenge as the post is not remunerated and there is thus, minimal leverage to ensure good conduct. YPARD works on the issue of prestige and tries to ensure that the representatives are keen and active from the outset.
- It was agreed that an official letter from the global coordination unit expressing that the YPARD country representative is acting on behalf of YPARD in their country would help. The Global Coordination Unit developed this official letter and now includes it in the welcome package for new representatives.

Another request from members was a YPARD global face-to-face event where they can meet different members from around the world and plan activities together. While the traditional method of bringing people together through YPARD has been online, to keep costs down, the GCARD2 event really demonstrated the power of face-to-face interactions and the benefits they bring long after the event is over. There was a perceptible feeling of community during the event. YPARD will look into the possibility of obtaining funding for an event where more people can come together, perhaps as a side event again of another international conference. YPARD will continue to ensure that those selected to attend the event are those who demonstrate the strongest commitment to being involved with YPARD.

Regional Commitments: The lack of full-time commitment from regional coordinators continues to be a bottleneck for increased activity in the regions. This leads to the global coordination unit getting involved at country level to maintain enthusiasm from local members, which is time-consuming and unsustainable. During the Steering Committee meeting, there was a discussion of the merit of paying for full time regional officers, but it was concluded that this would not be feasible with YPARD's current economic situation and could be unsustainable if funding were to run out, whereas the current in-kind support is a more long-term sustainable option no matter what the funding situation.

Thus, some activities can be undertaken to encourage improved regional coordination. One method is ensuring very clear requirements and expectations of activities in the funding agreements. Additional funding will not be supplied to regions if adequate activities are not undertaken and

adequate reporting is not received. The YPARD Coordination Unit is also ensuring that the supervisors of the regional coordinators are conversant with YPARD activities, understand their importance and ensure that the hosting organisation is convinced of the value of ensuring that the regional representative dedicates some of their time to have a successful regional activities.

Communication: There are still instances when activities are happening at a local level, but the chain of communication is not robust enough that the global coordination unit does not receive this information and thus it is not reported in the newsletters or on donor reports. This is an ongoing effort to strengthen communication and ensure that information gets passed through.

What do the youth have to say? It continues to be a challenge to generate discussion and participation both online but also among young and inexperienced people during face to face events. This requires much encouragement, support and reminding for individuals in the network and continues to be something that YPARD looks for new and innovative ways to do.

Too much? Another challenge is the sheer number of initiatives in ARD that YPARD is asked to or feels it should become engaged in versus the amount of time it can realistically devote to any of these and the impact it can have. YPARD is keen to build on the power and commitment of volunteers to strengthen actions.

Conclusion and way ahead

2012 was an active year for YPARD with the development of several new representatives, a new and active region in Europe and greater recognition among the global ARD community of the importance of engaging with youth and ARD.

One key route that has proved effective for getting a stronger youth voice has been through social media which YPARD will continue to use to spread its message. Additionally, the provision of information and funding opportunities continues to be a highly valued service by members.

YPARD is being recognised as the youth network to develop better practices of engaging with youth and now has the opportunity to work with a range of actors implement sustainable and far reaching programs. Partners such as the CGIAR are in dialogue with YPARD as to how we can move forward.

YPARD is coming into its own, and has the SDC to thank for its continued support. There are perceptible changes being made in attitudes towards youth in the agricultural sector and YPARD continues to be behind, pushing for changes in this direction.

Annex 1: 2013 Plan – in brief

2013 will focus on fundraising, advocating for youth in ARD, putting into practice the youth interventions developed during the GCARD2 youth pre-conference session; seeking support for a mentoring programme to support young professionals, supporting local led activities by youth through national representatives, providing opportunities to young professionals and working to increase the attractiveness of AR4D to young people globally.

Strategic Objective 1 – exchange of information and connecting YPs

Website and data development

- Strengthen information services through advanced information aggregation and online management tools
- Improved information feed to the website with news, resources, member blog posts, videos and improve the tri-lingual services

Increasing Membership and active contribution

- Support country representatives and people who want to get more active
- Increase activity in various activities, through an organized group of members. Harmonise these activities under the strategic objectives as a global movement.
- Strengthen YPARD's Social Media presence through YPARD official accounts and an online team of YPs

Strategic objective 2: opportunities for policy debate

Inter-Institutional Linkages and ARD events

- Linking with the new CACAARI youth initiative, promoting active youth in ARD in Central Asia and the Caucasus.
- Continue supporting youth advisory roles in steering and executive committees through active participation and lobbying for additional youth representatives sitting on advisory committees/executive committees in the GFAR regional fora and other ARD organisations;
- YPARD as the mechanism for greater inclusion of youth to meetings and conferences. Possible meetings include CGIAR Science Forum, young women in seed in Africa meeting
- Work on a side meeting on youth and gender at FARA's Science Week in July 2013. Strengthen the youth social reporting program in this event.
- Actively contribute to the planning of the first African conference on women and young women seed entrepreneurship. YPARD will mobilize some key youth in the region for attendance and take part in the design of the meeting;
- Exploring youth involvement in the CGIAR CRPs, through the Consortium and the Drylands CRP.
- Identify the most promising young professional interested in engaging in foresight works with African foresight teams. Open the forward thinking platform to more young professionals from developing countries.

- Contributing to the Social Reporting of key ARD events through the YPARD-SMT in order to bring youth issues to the forefront, and make the voice of youth heard.

Increased Visibility

- Contribute to more media sources on youth and agriculture both in traditional and online sources;
- Increase the visibility of YPARD in FAO;
- Develop the Social Media strategy. Higher number of bloggers, and active people in social media;
- Strengthening YPARD branding for more visibility and materials in four languages;

Strategic objective 3: promote agriculture among young people

Curricula development

- Follow on the curriculum study to develop the next stages. Potentially follow up with university assessments by providing the youth/graduate link to assess university performance/curriculum and an examination of the effectiveness of internships at Universities and whether they meet their learning objectives.

Promoting agriculture as a profession

- Share and disseminate the final videos from YPARD 'Seeing Thoughts' competition.
- Advocate for greater agricultural focus on donor and government funded youth employment programs(JPOs for example) and scaling up successful youth initiatives.

Mentoring program

Scale up the examples from the pilot mentoring project and seek additional funding. The concept note has been developed and is ready. Additional mentoring activities to undertake at the same time include:

- Work with the Agrivivo platform in its pilot phase;
- Collect examples of successful mentoring programmes in the CGIAR and partner organizations. Provide examples of good potential pilot projects.
- Share information on the website about how to find your own mentor.

Strategic Objective 4: access to resources and capacity building

Fundraising

Fundraising is set to be a major priority for 2013. YPARD is seeking additional funding at the global, regional and national level. YPARD developed a funding strategy and has identified key donors with which to discuss. Additionally, YPARD developed flyers for Donors to seek for more support and highlight the key priorities and projects for 2013.

- Attend different ARD events to meet with donors
- Develop clear concept notes and strategic documentation

Access to capacity building

- Advocate for more youth-focused capacity development initiatives by ARD organisations. This is particularly relevant in the TAP, where YPARD is an official member.
- Engage with the Gender and Agriculture Partnership (GAP) to further develop and support programs for young women in ARD

Support to Regional Coordination

Seek additional funding at regional level to recruit fully paid regional coordinators to ensure a focused and committed regional coordinator who can manage and respond to the needs of the country representatives. In the absence of such funding, promote the recruitment of interns and additional support from hosting institutions.

M&E

- Development of a Logframe
- Clear indicators for the impact of activities
- Update the business plan for 2014-2018

Annex 2: List of blog posts (non YPARD-related) published by members on YPARD Blog

- [Growing more rice with less water in a changing climate](#)
- [Youth reshaping their future through agriculture](#)
- [Entrepreneurship and Agricultural Development](#)
- [Rural youth shatter the myth of farming as a poor man's profession](#)
- [Food wastage. Is there a way to prevent it?](#)
- [How to apply for an opportunity—successfully!](#)
- [Opinion: Consolidating youth voices in agriculture](#)
- [My Experience at the All Farmers' Association of Nigeria \(AFAN\) Ondo State Chapter Meeting](#)
- [New farming technologies the solution to food security in Africa.](#)
- [My thoughts on Sustainable Development...](#)
- [Young scientists at the TWAS/BioVisionAlexandria.NXT 2012](#)
- [4th Agriculture and Rural Development Day at Rio+20: Focus on youth](#)
- [Rio+20 View on Empowering Small Holder Farmers](#)
- [Farm households' livelihood diversification and its implications](#)
- [YoBloCo Awards: The beginning of a journey...](#)
- [FANRPAN Youth Case Studies Twitter Campaign starting on 1st August 2012!](#)
- [Web 2.0 Learning Opportunity in Mauritius, 9-13 July 2012](#)
- [Some tips to new Agriculture Graduates on the job market](#)
- [Agriculture Magazines connecting IAAS to Globally](#)
- [Agricultural Education in Developing Nations!](#)
- [3rd RUFORUM Biennial Conference – strengthening RUFORUM action!](#)
- [Mary...a strong voice coming from the ground!](#)
- [Asia Pacific Graduates' Youth Declaration to COP-18](#)
- [Organic Farming: Successful story of Madan from Nepal](#)
- [Food security for all](#)
- [Reshaping Youth in Nepalese Agriculture](#)
- [Young professionals discuss animal production and marketing systems in developing countries](#)
- [Des jeunes professionnels échantent sur les systèmes de production et de commercialisation de produits animaux dans les pays en développement](#)
- [Field survey experiences sharing for YPs](#)
- [Letter to Students in Agricultural Tertiary Institutions](#)
- [FAMILY FARMING – a means to Promote Youth's Involvement in Agriculture and Agribusiness](#)