



YPARD

Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research and Development

Communiqué

The creation of a forum for young professionals in ARD was discussed by more than 70 people from different stakeholder groups coming from over 20 nations, in particular from Morocco. Participants discussed problems faced by young professionals, and how these issues could be addressed by a global, multistakeholder forum as proposed following the European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD) 2005 conference. The meeting was supported by Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and other agencies committed to ARD, and was opened by the Director General of INRA and the Director of CGIAR. Its objective was to assess the need for such a forum and to define its focus.

In a participatory approach, we learned that there is a uniformity of problems faced by young professionals in ARD regardless of their origin, discipline, or employment. The issues expressed were as follows: poor access to resources and funding for young professionals, lack of career opportunities, poor institutional support, insufficient communication between young and senior professionals, between different stakeholders, and a lack of opportunities for young professionals to contribute to strategic ARD debates.

The meeting agreed that there is a need for a platform for young professionals, YPARD, composed by members who advocate and voice young professionals' needs and beliefs. YPARD should be present at international level meetings, organise information, and forge a strong learning-network. YPARD could then expand and incorporate other activities. The meeting also raised many other expectations as to what YPARD should do such as raise and channel resources to young professionals.

We are grateful to the enthusiastic participation of young and senior professionals in our discussions, in particular of our Moroccan colleagues. Several institutions are strongly supporting the establishment of YPARD. GFAR is particularly encouraging this process as it looks into having YPARD under its wings. We will move forward and assert YPARD's role within the ARD system.

Contact: Balasubramanian Ramani (balasub@botanik.uni-hannover.de)

December 2005