



Tropentag, October 11-13, 2006, Bonn

“Prosperity and Poverty in a Globalised World—
Challenges for Agricultural Research”

Towards Young Professionals’ Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD)

BALASUBRAMANIAN RAMANI

University of Hannover, Institute for Botany, Germany

Abstract

Following the EFARD conference in Zürich (Switzerland), on April 2005 and with the support of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the University of Hannover, and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), a group of young professionals in Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) started a dialogue with numerous stakeholders, including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), on the present scenario of young professionals in ARD. This suggestion was widely supported and found critically relevant for addressing current ARD challenges in a globalized world. A common agreement was thus reached, which recognizes that young professionals’ needs, beliefs, and special competences merit a better representation in future ARD. The need for such a Platform was thoroughly discussed by a wider public of young ARD professionals at the Annual General Meeting of the CGIAR in Morocco, in December 2005. Following this meeting, it was concluded that a global platform, under the wings of GFAR, would be an important first step towards addressing the issues and concerns of young professionals in ARD. A strategic workshop of the Platform core group members was conveyed at the Wageningen University and Research Centre (The Netherlands) on 02–05 May 2006, where the vision, mission and activities of the Platform were decided. The Young Professionals Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD) was born and its official launch will take place on 8th November 2006, as a side event to the GFAR triennial conference (Nov. 9–11, 2006) in New Delhi, India. The main objectives of YPARD at present are: (1) To facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge among young professionals across disciplines, professions, age and regions, (2) to broaden opportunities for young professionals to contribute to strategic ARD policy debates, (3) to promote agriculture among young people, and (4) to facilitate access to resources and capacity building opportunities.

Keywords: Agricultural Research for Development (ARD, Challenges, GFAR, Multi-stakeholder platform, Opportunities, Young Professionals, YPARD