

## Roles and Responsibilities of YPARD Country Representatives

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The Young Professionals Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD) serves as a medium for Young Professionals (YPs) in Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) to voice their views, exchange perspectives and work towards a more dynamic ARD.

YPARD has four strategic objectives:

1. to facilitate 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 resource and capacity building opportunities.

To meet its goals, YPARD works with young professionals on a regional, national or local level to undertake activities at a more geographically appropriate level. YPARD is looking for country representatives to direct strategic activities at a country level, with support from country members to contribute actively to a growing YPARD and help YPARD achieve its ambitious goals.

### A strategic role

The role of YPARD representative is intended to reflect the commitment and activities of a representative in their country of residence. This role requires you to represent and be an ambassador for YPARD in your country.

As a YPARD representative, you take on the responsibility of coordinating the national platform, working on youth issues in ARD in your country and linking these efforts with the regional initiative. You will be required to both consider specific regional needs while at the same time ensuring that activities are in line with the broader YPARD aims and strategic objectives.

It is important to create and maintain a culture of ownership towards all YPARD members and include them as much as possible into actual processes. In the development of strategies and planning, it is advisable to incorporate more YPARD members to represent more diverse interests. It may be thus, useful to develop a plan of action for activities by forming a local working group of active YPs.

The YPARD representative reports to the regional coordinator, and is responsible for both proposing activities for the region and reporting on these activities. They may also link to the coordination unit in the development of specific activities. The country representative is responsible for encouraging participation and communication with the YPARD members in their country.

## Activities

Representatives are required, every year to develop an annual plan for the country, which is based on suggestions and priorities identified by members of that country. Activities identified should contribute to at least one of YPARD's strategic objectives. .

These cover a range of activities for which representatives are expected to be active and are outlined below:

## Partnerships

Representatives should seek out relevant partnerships between YPARD and strategic organizations on a national level to build upon the YPARD strategic objectives. Representatives are responsible for initiating contact with relevant ARD and youth organizations in the country to open the channels of communication.

The outcomes of developing these partnerships may include:

- The implementation of joint projects;
- Working with the organization to raise awareness of youth issues in ARD within their programs and to reach out to young professionals active within that organization;
- Mutual promotion of each organization within the other;

You will also be responsible for maintaining an inventory of organizations in the region working on ARD and youth issues. By sharing such information, YPARD can broaden its global contacts base.

## Lobbying

Lobbying activities are designed to increase the awareness of the issues related to youths in ARD and promote greater inclusion of youth in existing programmes and initiatives. Some means by which lobbying activities can be implemented include:

- Working to make the voice of the youth heard within the YPARD members' own institution. YPARD members have an opportunity to discuss with their colleagues on how they can make their organization more youth friendly. Explore the type of programmes that can be implemented. Involve colleagues and try to raise a meeting on the topic.
- Strive to bring youth issues to the fore in broader strategic and political discussions. Participate in relevant meetings and other activities to represent YPARD and promote youth issues on the agenda. Request the organizers to consider the attendance of a youth organization so that there is greater stakeholder representation.
- Liaise with other Youth Organizations and Government Institutions to explore the level of interest among other organisations for youth issues. Working together will lead to greater results.

## Increase YPARD Membership

One primary activity is to increase membership in the region. Country representatives must actively work to increase members in the region and are expected to demonstrate an increase in local members in their first six months.

Activities that can be implemented to increase membership include: making presentations at Universities, meetings and organizations that explain what YPARD is, its aims and objectives and the benefits of joining. A generic powerpoint presentation is available for to use and we ask that each region customizes it for their audience and event, accordingly;

- Liaise with interested youths and experienced supporters on activities;
- Work with local YPARD members to encourage their active participation in the movement, listen to their concerns and collaborate on initiatives;
- Provide advice and support to national members where required and liaise with the regional coordinators on their behalf.

## Strategic debates and discussions:

- Look to promote greater youth voice on issues by organizing discussions among young professionals on specific topics of interest.
- Create a synthesis of the discussions and apply for support to disseminate the results at meetings, workshops or conferences.

## New ideas and activities:

- Generate new ideas and coordinate the development and implementation of YPARD activities with its partners and members in its region in consultation with the regional coordinators and Coordination Unit.

## Communications

Country representatives are required to communicate their activities to the regional coordinators and ensure that they are shared with the wider YPARD network by publishing them on the website. This allows all YPARD members to learn about activities and different regions to exchange ideas on successful activities that they may want to replicate in their own region. Reports on activities will need to be provided, detailing activities, outcomes and follow-up.

YPARD representatives are required to share their information by feeding the website and the blogs in coordination with the web and communications officer and are encouraged to disseminate information through social media (facebook, twitter, linked in, etc). Furthermore, exchanges with other YPARD representatives are encouraged.

The representative is the source of YPARD information for that country. It is thus their responsibility to keep the regional coordinator permanently aware of the specific challenges of the country and region that they represent.

## Examples and Suggestions for country representatives

Some suggestions are listed below for activities that could be implemented. Representatives are required, as mentioned in the activities section, to discuss with other members and representatives to exchange ideas and combine efforts when making plans for activities in the region.

- Online Activities: initiate the idea or the project of activities online in collaboration with the web and communication officer (forum discussions, blog competition e-conference, video and picture contests etc), on a country or regional level, and provide key leaders or partners to support the organization of such events.
- organize a capacity building opportunity for YPs in ARD, in collaboration with a partner organisation.
- Promote YPARD membership at meetings, in your organization or in your school.

## Decline in interest in agriculture

The decline in interest in agriculture among young people is one of the top concerns of YPARD and something that needs creative solutions by young professionals. We implore you, to come up with creative ideas of activities that can contribute to this issue. Use your contacts, networks and organizations to work on finding constructive solutions to this issue.

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### Further information on the representative is available in the YPARD Charter

In an effort to reach out to as much young professionals as possible, YPARD endeavours to facilitate and support the establishment of YPARD Local Representatives (LR) at the community, provincial, country, sub-regional or regional level. In the spirit of subsidiarity, these structures or mechanisms are referred to as “local Representatives (LR)”. Activities are carried out at the most geographically appropriate level.

The CU maintains a list and contacts of LR.

LR act on behalf of and represent YPARD in local or regional affairs. This differentiates them from global initiatives or activities in which they may participate but which are coordinated by the CU.

#### 3.6.1 Area of representations

As a principle, an area of representation is defined by the LR who is willing to act in this specific geographic unit. It may be defined as an entire country, parts of a country, or several countries, and should be linked to the network and activities of YPARD in that area.

The SC in consultation with the CU can suggest the redefinition of an area of representation based on the focus needed and availability of suitable candidates to successfully work in their capacity as regional focal points. The CU maintains a list of LR and their area of representation.

### **3.6.2 Local Representatives Profile**

1. A LR consists of one person, who is responsible for the coordination of YPARD activities in the represented region.
  2. LR must be YPARD members.
  3. LR should have proven to be contributing, productive and constructive as members.
  4. LR should be working in the ARD sector and should have relevant experience in this field. S/he is therefore expected to be familiar with ARD issues.
  5. LR are also expected to be proficient in English. Knowledge of languages relevant to the region of representation is expected.
1. LR should have proven capacity to successfully build up contacts within their regions as well as maintain the contact to the CU or SC.
  2. LR coordinates the regional volunteers and their activities.
  3. LR is a voluntary and non-remunerable position.

### **3.6.3 Selection Process**

LR are ideally nominated by their peers from the region. They are recognised by the YPARD Coordinator and SC after consultation with YPARD members from the concerned region and following a CU-coordinated review of proposed activities.

### **3.6.4 Modus operandi**

LR plan and contribute to YPARD's mission from their own initiative and with support from its members and the CU. Funds may be allocated to support their activities following a clearly formulated proposal based on transparent procedures. Local fund-raising must be informed and coordinated with the CU.

The LR have an important and delicate role in maintaining a good visibility of the YPARD movement in various regions. The LR are requested to report about their activities to the CU.

The following actions characterise a local or regional representation of YPARD:

1. Contribute to at least one objective of YPARD.
2. Elaborate and operate following a plan of local or regional activities including a budget. Share action plan and budget with the CU and other interested stakeholders. This will also serve as an input in the preparation of YPARD annual workplan and budget;
3. Work consistently in line with the YPARD's principles outlined in section 4 of this Charter.

### **3.6.5 Freedom of Action**

Local representations have numerous options to get involved in YPARD activities, based on their own need assessments, interests and capabilities. The Representative is free and welcome to participate to the development of YPARD in a creative manner and to:

1. Initiate appropriate linkages with regional and/or sub-regional fora in ARD as well as other regional players in ARD and advocate for YPARD involvement in regional and subregional activities. This should be done in close consultation with the CU;
2. Promote dialogue with other ARD stakeholders in the region to increase their awareness and interest on YPARD;
3. Develop, promote and implement YPARD activities in the region, in consultation with the CU;
4. Maintain an inventory of youth-based organizations in the region working on ARD issues;
5. Participate in relevant meetings and other activities upon request of the YPARD coordinator;
6. Motivate peers from the region to actively get involved in YPARD activities;
7. Keep the CU and the SC permanently aware of the specific challenges of the represented Region;
8. The use of the YPARD logo on official documents and in the public domain must be approved by the CU.