

Making ARD more 'pro-poor', improving the accessibility and relevance of ARD results to the poorest

POLICY BRIEF



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This policy brief is intended to share knowledge and promote more efficient ARD policies. It does not necessarily reflect the official position of EIARD or of individual EIARD members.

Graphics:

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Table of content

Forewords	5
Main messages	7
1 Evidence and analysis	9
1.1 Definition of the poor	9
1.2 The Agricultural Innovation System approach and ARD	9
1.3 Analysis of present ARD policies and projects	12
1.4 Challenges and opportunities for pro-poor ARD	15
2 Policy implications and recommendations	17
2.1 For EIARD members	18
2.2 For EIARD	
Further reading	19

Forewords

The European Union (EU) member states and the European Commission support Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) in sub-Saharan Africa with an estimated US\$470million per annum. The Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP) of the EU aims “*to improve food security in favour of the poorest and the most vulnerable, and contribute to achieving the first Millennium Development Goal*”. The challenge addressed in this policy brief is to explore how to use these considerable funds effectively to alleviate poverty and hunger in the developing world by explicitly identifying the poor, involving them in the research process and making research results accessible to them.

Main messages

Definition of the poor: There is no agreed definition among EIARD members of ‘the poor’ and ‘poverty’ in relation to agricultural research for development, resulting in the term being used imprecisely, without clear targeting of specific groups facing particular challenges. There is a need to agree on a typology and definition of the poor in relation to ARD, and to use this definition to clearly target research interventions.

Targeting the poor as beneficiaries of ARD: This can be done by either directly targeting the poor (to ensure that ARD results are relevant for and applicable to their specific requirements), or by using ARD to benefit other target groups, but with secondary benefits to the poor (such as reduced food prices and increased food availability). ARD funders need to be more explicit in their choice of strategy and systematically monitor whether the desired outcomes are achieved. If the poor are directly targeted, programmes need to be able and willing to make the investments needed to undertake research in ‘difficult’ (in agro-ecological, socio-economic and geo-political terms) environments with potentially relatively low immediate returns to research investments.

Involving the poor in research priority setting, design, implementation and monitoring in order to make research outputs relevant to the poor: The Agricultural Innovation Systems perspective provides opportunities for targeting the poor by directly involving them in the research process at all stages. Women are over represented among the poor farmers and their involvement in research process requires specific attention. Changes in research governance are needed to improve the voice of the poor in decision making on research investments and design, and improve accountability of research programmes to the poor. Innovative mechanisms such as competitive grants targeting the poor should be considered as important complementary mechanisms to traditional research funding.

Making research outputs available to the poor: Poor people are ‘by definition’ less able to access and use research findings due to poor connectivity (by road, media or inter-personal contact with intermediaries such as extension agents and traders) and resource endowment. Specific efforts need to be made to ensure that: (a) the uptake environment is conducive to the poor (including infrastructure and policies), and (b) that dissemination mechanisms are catering for the specific needs of the poor.

Pro-poor ARD programmes among EIARD members: All the ARD programmes and policies of EIARD members include a general statement of intent to contribute to poverty reduction, but with relatively limited explicit targeting of the poor. Research uptake and use through targeted dissemination of research outputs to the poor also appears to receive limited attention. A number of promising programmes exist among EIARD members that have elements of targeting the poor, promoting gender equality and involving the poor during the different stages of the research process. Experiences from these initiatives need to be shared more widely between EIARD members to inform the design of future research. These should also inform EIARD members' decisions as regards funds allocated to intermediaries like the CGIAR, GFAR or the Continental and Sub-Regional research Organisations.

1 Evidence and analysis

1.1 Definition of the poor

The frequently used (including in EIARD Strategy 2009-13) Millennium Development Goal 1 definition of poverty is not specific enough to be useful in defining the targets for ARD. There are a number of definitions of the poor in the literature. From these, the OECD (2006) typology of 5 rural worlds in developing countries (Box 1) provides the most useful framework to identify the poor in relation to ARD, while recognising that poverty is a broad-based, complex syndrome with many (inter-related) causes and no single solution.

Thus when “the poor” is used in this brief, it refers to those from rural worlds 3, 4 and 5, who include landless households and some that are not practicing agriculture directly but are labourers or artisans contributing to the agricultural sector. The typology is based on the household, and does not specifically mention poverty issues within the household, or the fact that women are more likely to be poor than men due to their relatively limited access to resources.

Box 1 - OECD (2006) typology of 5 Rural Worlds (with our additions *in italics*)

The better-off

- Rural World 1 : large-scale commercial agricultural households and enterprises
- Rural World 2 : traditional agricultural households and enterprises not involved in international trade (*the de-facto beneficiaries of the majority of ARD*)

The rural poor

- Rural World 3 : subsistence agricultural households and micro-enterprises
- Rural World 4 : landless rural households and micro-enterprises

The poorest

- Rural World 5 : chronically poor rural households, many no longer economically active⁶.

There is also no simple “read-across” between the Rural World classes and the MDG-1/World Bank poverty thresholds of US\$1.25/person/day. It is acknowledged here that there can be a trade-off between returns to research investment in terms of productivity and income (greatest when the active poor and better-off are involved) and the social returns (often requiring more time and financial inputs) to reducing vulnerability and risk when involving the poorest. Donors need to be clearer in defining who they want to benefit, as the poorest will not usually benefit directly unless explicitly targeted. Productivity enhancing technologies in high potential areas might result in indirect benefits to the poor through reduced food prices and rural employment. However, in low potential areas, there is a need for a socially-differentiated approach that includes programmes specifically designed to identify and reach the poor in places where they live, with technologies that they can use with the resources that they have available to them to reduce risk and vulnerability. As the objectives are different to those of productivity/income-enhancing programmes, so also the indicators of success will also be different.

1.2 The Agricultural Innovation Systems approach and ARD

During the last decade the perspective on ARD and the agricultural innovation process has shifted. There is agreement that the traditional linear or ‘pipeline’ model of ARD, characterised by

sequential stages of technology creation by research institutes followed by diffusion through extension services and (passive) adoption by farmers, has not delivered the desired results. This has led to the concept of an Agricultural Innovation System (AIS), which can be described as a network of organisations that are focussed on bringing new processes, technology and knowledge into social and economic use as well as the institutions and policies in which there are embedded. The challenge for ARD is to create AIS that are responsive to the needs of the poor, something which has been severely neglected in previous ARD approaches.

Aspects of pro-poor ARD design in an Innovation System context

- a) *Targeting the poor.* The recent emphasis on innovation systems and value chains has many attractions, but runs the risk of excluding those with little or no land, capital or spare family capacity to innovate or to join the value chain unless special mechanisms are brought to play to assist them (e.g. group credit schemes and collective marketing initiatives). Successful value chains bring social changes (e.g. successful farmers buy more land and displace weaker farmers who become landless labour). For ARD to serve the needs of the poor, ARD policies and programmes must demonstrate in ex-ante analysis how the poor will benefit, either directly (through targeted information, knowledge, skills, materials, finance, organisation, facilities and policies) or indirectly from production and income gains by the better-off that in turn generate lower food prices, and improved food accessibility and rural employment.
- b) *Affirmative action to increase the involvement of women.* Women are important actors in the agricultural sector, producing between 60 and 80 percent of the food in most developing countries and responsible for half of the world's food production. Yet there is abundant evidence that their work is not formally recognized and that women have only limited access to inputs such as credit, land ownership and extension services in comparison to men. Women are also over-represented among the poorest (particularly the divorced, widows, and those left to cope when husbands are working away from home). There is potential to considerably increase agricultural productivity, sustainability and food security by ensuring that agricultural innovation takes into account the wishes, constraints and preferences of women and by ensuring women actively participate in setting ARD priorities.
- c) *Involvement of the poor in ARD.* Central to the AIS is the notion that innovation is shaped by (public-private) partnerships between stakeholders, including farmers, input suppliers, NGOs, government officials and extension staff. For this to happen there is a need to identify common values and goals by means of recurrent negotiations and discussion. Also, the design, governance and management of partnerships is important. Asymmetries in power have strong influence on the functioning of the partnership. Smallholder organisations tend to be the weakest members in the partnership, while scientists tend to have an advantage because of their accumulated experience with designing and conducting research. The Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge programme (SSA-CP) was designed to test the AIS approach in sub-Saharan Africa. A core element is the establishment of innovation platforms (IPs) to bring stakeholders together, create mutual trust and stimulate cooperation that improves and accelerates the innovation and learning process. A review of progress so far concluded that AIS and innovation platforms are valuable approaches that are already generating technical, institutional, marketing and local policy innovations for end users and that the platforms can be sustainable.

- d) *Representation of the poor in setting the research agenda.* An important element of the AIS is the institutional context, in particular the mechanisms and procedures to determine how research priorities are set, how research programmes are designed, how knowledge is built up, shared and used, and how research organisations are held accountable to different interest groups. It is important that these take into account the demands and needs of the poor. Mechanisms need to be implemented which ensure that small-scale farmers and landless workers, and in particular women, are able to participate in setting the (inter) national or regional research agenda. It also requires governance structures that enable farmers to exert control over the research budget and hold research organisations to account. Competitive research or matching grants that specifically target and involve the poor are an interesting new approach to increase the participation of the poor in setting the research agenda. A good example is the Farmer Access to Innovation Resources (FAIR) project, part of PROLINNA, in which farmers receive funding to commission locally-mandated research.
- e) *Empowerment of the poor.* The establishment of a pro-poor AIS requires a certain level of confidence, trust and belief by all stakeholders. The poor can only take part in multi-stakeholder partnerships and informal discussion with scientists if they are supported in building their own organisational capacity, representation and negotiation skills. On the other hand, scientists need to be trained in working and communicating with farmers. They also need to be made aware that there are alternatives to the linear model of research and development. Policymakers must learn to better understand the AIS and facilitate interaction between stakeholders to foster pro-poor innovation. Finally, for pro-poor AIS to become an accepted and mainstream approach, universities should incorporate these concepts into their curricula.
- f) *Relevance of the research results to the poor.* Assuming the project has correctly identified the poor, the next challenge is to ensure that the message is relevant and delivered in a form that is appropriate to the situation of the poor. This has a number of dimensions:
- the relevance of the technology or process to the circumstances and resources of the poor
 - the relevance of the content of the message to what the user wants to know
 - the language and level of the message
 - the relevance of the medium to the intermediate or end user
 - the complementarity of the different communication processes used
 - the flexibility and up-to-dateness of the message
- g) *Costs in making ARD results available to the poor.* There are two types of cost to providing access to ARD results: framework costs and direct dissemination costs. Framework conditions include adequate infrastructure, appropriate policies and local security. Direct dissemination costs include among others, development, production and distribution costs of dissemination materials for different stakeholders, and transaction costs of bringing people together to share and learn. Reaching the poor in remote areas with poor infrastructure, with tailor-made products in local languages costs more than reaching the better-off. These additional costs need to be specifically addressed in budgets and followed up with assiduous M&E.

- h) *Monitoring access*. The purpose of pro-poor ARD is to ensure poor people benefit sustainably from the results of the research in terms of improved livelihoods. Box2 suggests some of the key questions for M&E related to access of ARD results by poor people.

Box 2 - Questions for M&E

- What are the processes/mechanisms of making results accessible to poor people?
- Who is benefiting, and how (qualitative and quantitative – differentiated by wealth, gender and age¹⁸)¹⁹?
- Who is not benefiting and why? Are some disadvantaged by the new technologies or processes?
- What are the outcomes and impacts of these benefits (e.g. improved incomes, food security, progress towards the achievement of MDG-1, resilience to shocks, empowerment and voice, NRM), and how do these impact on poverty (differentiated by gender)?
- What is the cost:benefit of the technology/process promoted, and how replicable is it outside a special project environment?
- Are there any unintended negative consequences on the environment, employment, commodity prices, competing commodities, disadvantaged sectors of the community etc?
- Do projects have M&E processes to follow these questions? Do they include indicators related to these questions in their logframe? What ex-post processes follow progress, sustainability and the secondary consequences of the technologies/processes?

1.3 Analysis of present ARD policies and projects

The EIARD Strategy 2009-2013 list several principles pertaining to the involvement of the poor in ARD and access to information, including: alignment with developing countries ARD policies, partnerships, equity and balanced responsibilities between the South and Europe; and participation, including the adoption of an innovation systems approach. However, as the Strategy also points out, these principles still need to be translated into concrete instruments and mechanisms at all levels of European support to ARD. Indeed many bilateral donors do not have a specific ARD policy, and it is then left to research organisations and consulting firms to design projects without a clear policy framework.

While agricultural research is well funded and organized at national, regional and continental level, agricultural advisory services have not received comparable attention. Linkages between research and extension systems remain weak in many developing countries despite various efforts to integrate technology development and dissemination systems. Therefore, it is critical to revitalize advisory services and their linkages to research, complementing the investments being made in agricultural research. Extension programmes are shifting from prescribing technological practices, to an AIS model that focuses on participation, mutual learning and building capacity. DFID is in the forefront of this change. It has developed a new agricultural development strategy through a wide consultation process (Box 3), which has a strong emphasis on getting research into use.

Policy information publicly available indicate that six out of the 17 EIARD members refer to a specific target group for ARD, in most cases small scale farmers and family farms, and in particular women. Involvement of the poor is specifically addressed by seven countries, for which ARD policies are said to be ‘demand-driven’ and/or ‘participatory’. For instance, the Netherlands and Belgium identify this approach as a priority for ARD. But apart from broad statements such as ‘actively

including all stakeholders’, ‘partnerships with farmers’ and ‘joint determination of the research agenda’, limited details are available on the mechanisms that are used to involve the poor in steering ARD (excepted for Austria).

Box 3 - Proposed DFID Strategy for Research on Sustainable Agriculture

The proposed DFID Strategy for Research on Sustainable Agriculture 2006-2016 has been developed through a wide consultation with developing and developed country stakeholders. It sets out DFID’s approach to research to get new technologies to poor farmers and to help governments to make better policies. The SRSA recognises the agricultural poor-risk nexus and agriculture-growth nexus, and the interconnectedness of agriculture with other sectors. The SRSA maintains that to reduce poverty and increase the sustainability of agricultural production systems, the research process must become less isolated, more interconnected and more responsive to the demands of research output users.

Comments on the Strategy around the main themes of this paper are as follows:

- *Target group.* The ARD strategy is not clear about the target group it wants to address.
- *Gender.* DFID mainstreams gender analysis (including the gathering of sex-differentiated data) and encourages partners to do the same. It funds initiatives that focus on the causes of gender inequality.
- *Involvement of the poor.* The strategy gives private and civil society stakeholders more influence in setting research agendas to make them more demand-led.
- *Capacity building.* DFID will build the capacity of researchers to better engage with research users.
- *Accessibility of research results.* DFID provides around £7 million per year to three main areas: (i) Identifying and developing ways to enhance people’s access to research products; (ii) Strengthening the context that enables people to use research products; (iii) Contributing to the international debate and knowledge on communication of research.

Specific areas for new research include the use and regulatory environment of ICTs, and their relative merits for reaching different research users. The working paper provides directions for the future communication of research by: a) Making existing information more accessible; b) Analysing and synthesising research to provide tailored information services; and c) More harmonised and effective communication of research. It also recognises the need to track outcomes and learn lessons from communications activities. It has been estimated conservatively that for every £ invested in research, between £5 and £10 are needed to achieve widespread adoption of the technologies produced by that research. Consequently, by 2010 at least 30% of the research budget across all DFID-funded research programmes will be allocated to getting research communicated and into use.

There is generally a low priority given to the dissemination side of ARD. Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark and the UK have strong statements to do with actions that will enhance access to ARD results by the poor. In addition, Austria includes a statement that transparent dissemination of information is an essential component of ARD. Some countries fund networks to exchange information (Denmark) or have initiated North-South exchange programs for researchers (Finland, Germany). It is not clear if they actively involve the poor, and if, and how, they benefit the poor.

Given the large proportion of EIARD members’ funding in Sub Saharan Africa being channelled through the CGIAR¹, it is relevant to check that CGIAR research programmes are responsive to

¹ Financial data are incomplete, but it is estimated that total EIARD donor investment in SSA ARD is US\$163million per annum, of which 65% (i.e. US\$106million pa) is channelled through to the CGIAR.

the needs of the poor. Though the CGIAR programmes have been criticised until quite recently (Watts and Horton, 2010) for being supply driven, not receptive to learning and not participatory enough, corrective measures are being implemented as part of the current CGIAR reform, as demonstrated in the new CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework (March 2010) and the recently approved CGIAR Consortium Research Programmes (CRPs). The same preoccupation is also relevant for programmes implemented by Continental (like FARA) or Sub Regional Research Organisations (like ASARECA, the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa), as these programmes are funded for a large part by EIARD members.

Analysis of ARD projects funded by EIARD members

Eleven carefully selected projects were systematically reviewed for elements that relate to: (1) targeting the poor; (2) gender equality; (3) involvement of the poor, and (4) access to information by the poor. Project information was taken from the European Information System on ARD (www.infosysplus.org accessed April 2011).

- a) *Targeting the poor*: Only four projects mentioned their poverty focus. One project specifically targeted poor dairy smallholders while another focussed on poor livestock keepers. Another admitted that it worked with middle-wealth farmers. One project is dedicated to gender analysis, and assumed that women are among the poorest and most disadvantaged without providing further analysis. Apart from these projects, none of the other projects had an explicit focus on the poor (they did not identify the poor, or their needs; nor did they work with the poor or target the poor with dissemination outputs). However, several projects had an implicit poverty focus in that their topics (e.g. stress-tolerant, nutritionally-enhanced maize varieties) benefit poor farmers and consumers.
- b) *Gender equality*: Only a few projects touched upon gender issues. Only one project explicitly focused on the importance to address gender differences in ARD and the need to enhance the participation of women. Two other projects identified women as one of the stakeholder groups for consultation. Two project reports demonstrated that gender differences had been accounted for in developing ARD products and in their dissemination. Several final reports had no mention whatsoever of gender or of women.
- c) *Involvement of the poor*: As part of a shift towards agricultural innovation system approaches, some projects developed multi-stakeholder partnerships, including policy makers, research institutes, NGOs and farmer communities, while some others only highlighted the strengthening of linkages between stakeholders. However, projects did not explicitly include the poor as separate voices in stakeholder consultations.
- d) *Access to research results by the poor*: A wide range of approaches were used by the case study projects to provide access by smallholders and intermediate organisations to ARD results among others formal seed multiplication, capacity development, production of training and dissemination materials and development of software. Most projects also worked with a range of stakeholders, although there is a wide range in the numbers of farmers reached (from 500 up to 1million). Several admitted in their final reports that they had not got to the stage of institutionalising their outputs into the working practices and activities of country organisations. It is worth noting that the most expensive project (€1.2million) did a fantastic job over its three year period, but still felt it had failed farmers in some respects because of the short duration of the project. A final point is that even in the dissemination/access aspects of the projects, technical scientists are still driving the process

(three had substantial CGIAR involvement), rather than specialists in promotion, packaging, mass media interaction etc.

1.4 Challenges and opportunities for pro-poor ARD

a) *Commitment to action on poverty*: The EIARD Strategy states that the goal of EIARD is to "increase the impact of ARD on poverty reduction, food security and sustainable management of natural resources in developing countries". But because of a lack of mechanisms to define, characterise and identify the poor, they are not being effectively targeted, and therefore not being adequately addressed in most current ARD projects. Possible strategies for improving access to opportunities for the rural poor (a wider topic than improving access to ARD results) include the following:

- Designing policies, legal/fiscal frameworks and institutions to give poor people equal access to information, land, capital, and markets
- Ensuring economic policies don't discriminate against economic sectors, social groups or regions
- Biasing technologies, institutions, and social and economic policies in favour of poor people
- Designing agricultural R&D in ways that explicitly address the special needs of poor people

The third approach receives the criticism that it may slow economic growth because the same investment made elsewhere could result in greater production gains and contribution to national economic targets..

b) *Alignment with developing country policies*. EIARD and country policies should normally coincide if ARD results are to be sustainably adopted (*Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness 2005 and the Accra Agenda for Action 2008* (OECD 2008)). Ideally that means coherence/consistency with the national policies and synergies with their economic development plans, environmental plans and social development initiatives. Projects have to demonstrate their alignment with country policy direction, or, if not, provide the evidence that a change in government policy will benefit the country (examples of this include the demonstration that participatory plant breeding can complement on-station trials and changing policies on the release of new varieties).

c) *Strategies for improving access to ARD results*. Research organizations, like the CGIAR or the National Research Institutes, cannot be satisfied with just producing high quality science. It is essential that the outputs of research are communicated and put to use, in the village, in the lab, in the firm, or across the negotiating table. In this regard, there are signs of positive changes, for instance in the CGIAR with its new Strategy and Results Framework (March 2010) giving emphasis to the synthesis of outputs and the communication of results, or with the recently approved Consortium Research Programmes providing strong analyses of the uptake and adoption pathways and the estimated benefits to be gained from these actions.

d) *Getting research into use*. In order to increase uptake of research findings, farmers and agricultural extension workers need to be better supported to articulate demand and to become involved in action research activities. In the case of agriculture, a range of reasons for non-adoption have been identified, including poor dissemination and communication of research outputs, poor quality of public extension, lack of involvement of end-users in

the research process, poor linkages between researchers, end-users and other key stakeholders, and lack of enabling policies. As a response, programmes like the DFID “Research into Use” programme have been established with the purpose of getting agricultural research (technology, methodology, policy) into use and to stimulate research on gaining a better understanding of the process.

- e) *Access to Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs)*. ICTs already provide farmers with information on prices, markets, technology, and weather via SMS mobile phone messages, as well as providing a convenient rural banking system. Community-based telecentres have the potential to empower rural communities through e-mail, internet, phone, radio, TV and printing facilities that are complementary to conventional ways of delivering agricultural information. A shift in the preparation of researchers to include “soft skills” such as qualitative research methods, and facilitation, negotiation and communication skills, will enhance and accelerate this trend. Poor subsistence farmers, given access and able to use internet, will pose a constructive challenge to researchers in the future for more current and accurate solutions to their problems. Remotely located farmers and herders can also provide vital information by mobile phone on locust or army worm infestations, rinderpest outbreaks and severe weather incidents that can alert appropriate responses by research and development agencies. Given their aptitude for electronic media, targeting the rural youth in the development of ICTs might be a productive strategy.

2 Policy implications and recommendations

2.1 EIARD member countries are recommended, in order of priority, to revise their ARD policies to:

1. Have more explicit ARD policies which include strategies and interventions that are directed at the poor, including a workable definition of the poor.
2. Make tackling greater inclusion of women a core part of ARD.
3. Target the poor much more specifically in the dissemination of ARD results with messages, media, materials, inputs and services that are tailored to the specific needs of the poor. ICTs can play a useful part in the dissemination of ARD results to poor households, and might be particularly attractive to the rural youth.
4. Build the capacity of the poor to organise themselves and actively take part in consultations, multi-stakeholder platforms and other initiatives that shape the ARD agenda. As a start, capacity needs assessment of the partners of selected innovation platforms should be conducted, with an especially careful look at the needs of the poorer partners in those platforms.
5. Support, document and analyse programmes and projects that experiment with innovative approaches to involvement of the poor such as innovation platforms and competitive research grant funding.
6. Organise broad-based consultations to help formulation of donor ARD policy.
7. Require project proposals to include ex-ante analysis of expected impact on poverty, and independent ex-post analysis of whether this has been achieved. The proposals should include a broad-based analysis of the social, economic, political and technical context in which the project is to operate, and therefore the factors that are most likely to influence impact on poverty. Project design should incorporate greater use of experimental method in projects to document and demonstrate what works and why.
8. Ensure representation of the poor in research councils and research budget committees to steer direction of research that suits the needs of the poor. It might also be interesting to examine to what extent representation of the poor has resulted in more effective ARD interventions.
9. Fund more research to improve the effectiveness of ARD related strategies that target the poor. In some situations it might be more effective to give social protection instead of investing in ARD.
10. Shift the mind sets of researchers by raising awareness about demand-led approaches and advocating for university curricula that incorporate demand driven and AIS approaches, as well as the development of “soft skills” (communication, negotiation, facilitation) and the effective use of qualitative research methods

2.2 At EIARD level, it is recommended, in order of priority, to:

1. Help harmonized across members the definition of poor (of poverty) that is appropriate at the operational (project) level (e.g. the OECD framework). EIARD needs to be clear whether the chronic poor are included, as the poorest will not usually benefit directly unless explicitly targeted ;
2. Commission good practice guidelines for making research results available in relevant forms, putting more emphasis on making research results available to the poor (in the form of information, knowledge, skills, materials, finance and organisation) ;
3. Support a fund to encourage learning among actors involved in planning and implementing pro-poor ARD programmes to share experience from clear field examples, where emphasis is given to the “how to”, in terms of approaches and tools used against the prevailing context and costs.
4. Facilitate the comparison, harmonization and alignment of the ARD strategies of EIARD members, also taking into account the policies of developing countries and the international agreements on aid effectiveness. This will require proactive engagement of EIARD members, in particular national focal points.

Further reading

EC (2008). EC Guidelines on Agricultural Research for Development.
http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/B2_EC_Guidelines_ARD_june08.pdf

EIARD (2008). EIARD Strategy 2009–2013. EIARD.

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OECD (2006). Promoting Pro Poor Growth. DAC Policy Statement.

AGRINATURA is a new alliance formed by 35 European universities and research organisations working in agricultural research, education, training and capacity strengthening for development.

AGRINATURA members are involved in a broad range of issues related to agricultural research and education for development contributing through their expertise and experience.

AGRINATURA focuses on initiatives that open up new opportunities for farmers to enhance food security and improve the agro-food sector in general, whilst reducing the negative impact of agricultural activities on the environment.

Thanks to AGRINATURA's unparalleled access to major research institutions and universities in Europe and the rest of the world, it is able to nurture scientific excellence through training and exchanges and further sustainable development in agriculture through joint research and education programmes and projects.

AGRINATURA formulates and implements research and education programmes and projects in developing and emerging economy countries on every continent.

At the practical level, AGRINATURA partners interact with a single office (the management unit) that:

- can widely inform the European ARD community of partnerships opportunities;
- can directly enter partnerships and consortia that can respond to the Agrinatura objectives;
- can mobilise necessary experts from 31 research, training and development organisations to work almost anywhere.

AGRINATURA assets are:

- global coverage of key issues in agricultural research for development, focusing mainly on developing countries and countries with emerging economies;
- a broad spectrum of complementary expertise in disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and development which allows AGRINATURA to work at the interfaces;
- solid experience in integrative and participatory approaches at different scales;
- translation of development issues into a researchable agenda;
- inclusion of development projects into on-going research and education programmes;
- partnership which goes beyond the function of services provider; regular and continuous contacts with project partners in the field before, during and after operation of programmes;
- extensive experience in capacity development and scientific support for the formulation of international development policies, and the search for project funding thanks to its collaboration with and support for partner institutions and stakeholders.



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