Early Career/ Young Professionals

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13 participants from 5 Countries

- Bangladesh
- Ghana
- Kenya
- Nigeria
- USA*

Question 1 and 2

Engagement & Communication

❖***State of interaction between developers and regulators/steps taken to increase communication among the two:***

- Communication between government departments and agencies is “good” in plant sectors, the animal biotech sector is still finding it’s flow..
- Interactions between developers and regulators occurs mainly when seeking for permits but there are several bottlenecks to overcome
- Developers should walk together with early career regulators – identify appropriate platforms to engage e.g. conferences, bi-yearly; quarterly or annual

A knowledge Center is a good idea: regulators should be responsible, working together with the developers but needs an Administrator

Question 3

Marketing & Trade

Steps to ensure consumers have a positive mindset towards modern animal technology and its products

- Effective communication - engagement and consistent advocacy at different levels to reduce skepticism about new products mostly due to ignorance.
- Having products to show, not just “empty” talk (managing of expectations
- Trust in the person communicating
- Having good products to demonstrate impact through demonstrations

Marketing to young people can work wonders – young generation are more educated and open minded to new opportunities

Question 4

Is labelling helpful or detrimental to 'GMO' acceptance? In what ways?

- Labeling would be advantageous in promoting GMO, to enable consumers easily find the products because of their safety record e.g. Bt maize with reduced aflatoxin

- Labeling helpful for regulation & compliance.

- Can attract younger people who have been convinced GMOs are ‘cool’

Labeling can be financially constraining, raising the cost to consumers and sometimes stigmatize products or companies

Intellectual Property(IP) Policy

How much are IP issues an impediment to innovation for young scientists and what can be done to address IP issues?

- IP issues are major, but for now it's more of an issue in plants than animals
- It's helpful to protect young innovators - if they are not assured of benefiting, it can be an impediment to innovation
- The process should be made easier, putting young scientists into consideration, current process discourages young people

Young people should be educated and encouraged to patent their innovations. Many don't understand IP and it's importance until it's too late

Training and Support

- ***Existing prospects for young career professionals to move products to market? How this group can provide guidance and mentorship to young animal biotechnologists in developing countries:***

- Create doors for mentorship and collaborative research
- Young people should be made to understand research, not end in a publication
- Mechanisms developed to support promising innovations to get to the market – venture capital; short fellowships
- Improve linkages between universities; research institutions and the private sector
- Provide entrepreneurship course for young scientists
- Establish incubation centers at the universities

Young professionals should familiarize with national research priorities to orient their research towards solving a national problem – not just donor driven

Next steps

General advice to early career professionals (by Dr. Rufus -Nigeria)

- Have courage, take decisions when need be (competence and confidence key)
- Be ready to interact with other departments and other regulatory agencies
- Be ready to engage the media and give the right information (re:policy makers)
- Be open and transparent in their dealings
- Stand with biosafety decisions made even in the eyes of anti-GMO who try to intimidate regulators

Have trust with our scientists and believe in our own capacities, capabilities

Collaborate with others, break the "silo" mentality!