

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Our primary focus during 2006-07 remained on repositioning PARC to achieve accelerated growth of agriculture through research and innovations. The PARC Reforms Agenda initiated in December 2005 was formally approved by the Prime Minister in August 2006 for implementation. The reforms are aimed at prioritizing the PARC research agenda to align it with the emerging needs and challenges of agriculture sector in the 21st century and making PARC's research management system more responsive and efficient in delivering results.



The major areas of reforms include: (i) prioritization of research agenda in line with the current and emerging challenges of the agriculture sector; (ii) resource mobilization to secure adequate funding for sustained implementation of research agenda; (iii) administrative and financial reforms with focus on providing an enabling environment for high quality research through improved governance structure, service structure, and efficient financial management system; (iv) human resources development through merit based recruitment, training and promotion system with tenure track options, and re-tooling of staff skills to meet the needs of new research agenda; (v) forging stronger linkages and partnership with the national and international agriculture research systems and other stakeholders including farmers, NGOs, and agro-industry.

The implementation of PARC Reforms Agenda was the single most important activity during 2006-07 followed by resource mobilization to secure funding for a five-year period (2007-2011). The implementation of reforms proceeded at a fast pace during 2006-07. Some important reform measures have already been completed. These include: (i) restructuring of BoG; (ii) establishment of inter-provincial and technical committees; (iii) Ministry of Finance and Establishment's endorsement of special pay scales (SPS) for PARC; (iv) Chairman HEC's endorsement of the concept paper for the establishment of National University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology at NARC; (v) ECNEC approval of Rs. 3.0 billion development budget for upgradation of research infrastructure including equipment, laboratories, and green house facilities as well as incremental funding of high priority research programs/projects. The other items of the Reform Agenda are being vigorously followed for implementation including: (i) empowerment of BoG for all administrative and financial matters; (ii) introduction of tenure track system; and (iii) modernization of the financial management system (accounting, budgeting, auditing) which is *sine qua non* for effective and timely delivery of research products and services.

Another milestone event during 2006-07 was the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of PARC to mark 25 years of Excellence in agricultural research, technology dissemination and human resources development. In December 2006, the President of Pakistan graced PARC's Silver Jubilee Celebrations when His Excellency the President and other high-level dignitaries and diplomats visited NARC and commended PARC's role for successfully pursuing its

mandate of undertaking, coordinating, promoting and funding agriculture research in the country. On this occasion, a three-day exhibition of PARC agriculture research products and technologies was arranged to showcase PARC technologies developed and disseminated over the last 25 years.

The strengthening of linkages with the national and international research systems was yet another important aspect of PARC activities during 2006-07. At the national level, coordination with the provincial research system was strengthened through the PARC funded national coordinated programs for all major research activities in plant and animal sciences. Concurrently, research collaboration was strengthened with the international and regional research centers (APAARI, CIMMYT, FAO, ICARDA, ICIMOD IFPRI, IRRI) and bilateral cooperation was forged with several countries (Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Nepal, Sri Lanka, USA and Uzbekistan). Several foreign delegations visited PARC and entered into bilateral agreements on agricultural research and development activities. These linkages provided opportunities for participations in international seminars, symposia and conferences to our scientists and helped train them in high-tech areas of agricultural development such as biotechnology, molecular biology, climatology, etc.

In the coming year, PARC will continue implementation of the reforms with focus on improvement in service structure and financial management system. It would implement the prioritized research agenda on genetic improvement of plants and animals, accelerate development of varieties which are high yielding and resistant to biotic and abiotic stresses, strengthen research on development of hybrid varieties of sunflower, maize, rice, and vegetables and transgenic varieties of cotton, maize, and tomato. In the livestock sector, research to improve the productivity particularly that of milk and meat will be accorded high priority. The emphasis will be on genetic improvement techniques and improved nutrition and health technologies. The research in social sciences will be oriented to assess the impact of investments in agricultural research and development on poverty reduction, food security and improved competitiveness of agriculture.

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