

FOREWORD

The Symposium “Research in Applied Nutrition in Developing Countries: Challenges and Expectations” took place in Brussels at the “Palais des Académies” on December 3, 2004. It was jointly organized by the Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences and Nutrition Third World, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of this association.

The Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences responds to one of its missions, which is to consider from an independent and multidisciplinary angle, the broad spectrum of problems faced by developing countries and related research. In that light the present publication — assembling papers coming predominantly from the South — should be seen as a contribution to “development research” in general.

The scientific programme of the symposium included two parts. In the first part six scientists, present or past grantees of Nutrition Third World, submitted their research, answered questions, and briefly commented on their challenges and expectations. The organizers had left time for questions and discussions: the public participated actively.

The second part was a Round Table, introduced by Prof. Ruth Oniang’o from Kenya and dedicated to the main theme of the symposium. The guests, all specialists or researchers in applied nutrition, had a brief exchange of views, which they then shared with the public during a lively discussion.

About eighty people belonging to public and private organizations concerned with development issues (including NGOs, foundations, universities, private companies, Belgian and foreign researchers on the subject) attended the meeting, among whom participants representing twenty different developing countries. Such a high level of attendance by researchers and students from the Third World is another noteworthy feature of the symposium.

On behalf of the organizers, I would like to express my thanks to Mr Armand De Decker, Minister for Development Cooperation, for his presence and stimulating talk; to the speakers and discussants, some of whom had come a long way. We are grateful to FNRS and FWO-Vlaanderen for the financial support.

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