

Participatory Research Section in Barcelona

The Section organized six panel sessions at the Barcelona Conference. They were attended by a total of 169 people, and especially in some of the sessions vivid discussions were carried out based on the 36 papers presented. Especially contradictions around such concepts as social change, development and infotainment caused alert reactions.

Two of the six sessions were co-sponsored with the Community Media Section. In addition to the six regular program sessions – one in French --, two sessions were jointly sponsored with IDRC to bring African project directors to Barcelona to share their experiences with participatory communication. Projects ranged from land management, to environmental conservation and to agriculture. Guy Bessette and IDRC deserve thanks for supporting this project, and special thanks go to Annie Mear for coordinating the preparations.

Starting in 2000 the Indian Committee for Development of Communication (ICDC) has provided financial support travel grants to promising young Indian scholars to contribute to the Participatory Communication Research Section conference programs at IAMCR General Assembly and Scientific Conference meetings. This year the award was given to T.R. Gopalakrishnan, Lecturer in the Department of Journalism and Communications at the University of Madras.

In Barcelona it was also decided that the Section will be involved in planning HIV/AIDS collaboration for upcoming IAMCR conferences. The HIV/AIDS collaboration planning group spontaneously organized at Barcelona and headed by Marjan de Bruin has not circulated precise plans yet, but the PCR Section call for papers will include an invitation for papers related to participatory communication and HIV/AIDS.

The Barcelona Conference also meant a change of leadership for the Section. Tom Jacobson from University of Buffalo, US, has run the Section during the past four years, and the Section thanks him for the energetic way he has been organizing things. The Business meeting selected Ullamaija Kivikuru, University of Helsinki, Finland, as new head and as next Vice-President Rico Lie who has just moved from the Catholic University of Brussels, Belgium (Rico.Lie@pi.be) to a new job at the Wageningen University and Research Center (WUR) (new email address Rico.Lie@wur.nl).

The membership of the PCR Section has grown fast, comprising now 149 names.

Ullamaija Kivikuru