



GFAR

GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Newsletter

Issue 16/2006 – April 2006

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In This Issue

This first issue of our newsletter contains news from and about a variety of GFAR stakeholders including the GFAR Secretariat.

The Secretariat provided updates on a number of important activities and events including: a short write up on the GFAR chair designate Dr Adel El-Beltagy who will preside over his first GFAR Management Team Meeting (June 1-2); a note on the 37th edition of the World Farmers' Congress which also coincides with the 60th anniversary of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP); the establishment of GFAR document repository which we hope will facilitate easy access and efficient dissemination of information on EGFAR by stakeholders; recent activities of one of our GPPs - PROLINNOVA - and two developing initiatives – linking farmers to markets and non-timber forest products; the completed GPP evaluation exercise the report of which will be deliberated upon by the Steering Committee during the forthcoming meeting in Sana'a, Yemen. Some information is also provided on the status of the planned second external review of GFAR which started on May 8th 2006.

Contributions to this newsletter also came from some of our stakeholders including Regional Forums - AARINENA, APAARI and FARA which shared some of the activities they carried out in the immediate past - and the CGIAR which featured the new CGIAR research priorities.

Finally we presented a short piece on the forthcoming GFAR 2006 mainly focused on some elements of a developing conference programme, with a promise for more details on the conference in a dedicated site on EGFAR by the end of May 2006.

O.S.

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News from the Secretariat

10 years after: GFAR's 2nd External Evaluation

This year, 2006, is GFAR's 10th anniversary. It is also 5 years since GFAR's first External Evaluation. The second External Evaluation is taking place this year and contemplates an overview of the institution and its achievements since its creation, while focusing on the evolution of GFAR over the last 5 years. In particular the evaluation will consider: (a) the GFAR concept and its continued relevance, (b) the governance, organisation and functions of GFAR, and (c) the GFAR business plan. The evaluation will provide a set of conclusions and recommendations as to how GFAR might more effectively and efficiently achieve its goals.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is providing the secretariat for the evaluation, which will be undertaken by a panel made up of a two-person review team and two resource persons. The review team is composed of Dominique Hounkonnou (Benin) and Julian Gonsalves (India), and the resource persons are Abdelmajid Slama (Tunisia) and Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil (France). The panel will meet for the first time from 8 to 12 May when it will plan the information gathering phase of the evaluation and meet with Rome-based stakeholders.

The reviewers will attend as observers the up-coming GFAR Steering Committee Meeting that will be held in Sana'a, Yemen at the end of June, where they will also have the opportunity to interview a number of key GFAR stakeholders. Following this, the reviewers will make visits to meet with other important persons and programmes associated with GFAR on different continents. Their report will provide an important input into the GFAR 2006 Conference deliberations in New Delhi in November as we debate the reorientation of the global agricultural research for development system so as to better meet the Millennium Development Goals.

R.B.

New Chair of GFAR takes over in June 2006



Dr **Adel el-Beltagy**, the chair designate of GFAR, will take over the mantle of leading GFAR over the next three years from June 1st 2006 when he will preside over his first GFAR Management Team Meeting.

Dr El-Beltagy obtained a PhD from the University of Wales, UK specializing in stress physiology and worked extensively in the area of arid land agriculture.

He was for many years (1995-2006) the Director General of the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and prior to that held various positions of responsibility in the Egyptian NARS including the establishment of the Arid Land Agriculture Laboratory at Ain Shams University in 1981 and as Director General of the Agricultural Research Center in Cairo, Egypt (1991-1993). He also contributed in many ways to the establishment of the National Agricultural Genetic Engineering Laboratory (NAGEL) in 1990.

He brings to GFAR, this unique combination of a solid and practical researcher, a NARS leader and leader of an International Agricultural Research Centre. We warmly welcome Dr El-Beltagy to the GFAR family, where his experience, expertise and network connections will be very much valued. Welcome Adel.


O.S.



The GFAR Document Repository

The GFAR document repository has been established with the key objective to bring information available on EGFAR and at GFAR Secretariat closer to the people who really need it. In line with the main goals of the re-design of EGFAR and with specific regard to documents, the document repository will allow all the stakeholders to easily access and disseminate information on the new EGFAR website, which will be the gateway to the repository. The system will also enable experts to share and exchange their documents with their peer groups.

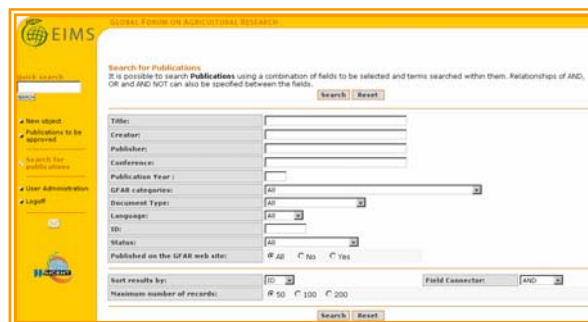
The GFAR Document Repository is a cooperative product of the GFAR Secretariat in collaboration with the Library and Documentation Systems Division of FAO and WAICENT.



The repository has been developed using a customized module of EIMS (Electronic Information Management System) of FAO: the metadata is stored in an Oracle relational database, while the documents are saved in a file server. This architecture ensures stability, scalability and robustness. Metadata records are stored and will be exported using XML in compliance with existing information exchange standard already widely promoted by FAO.

The system supports the integration of a fresh GFAR taxonomy, which aims at representing the technical knowledge of GFAR Secretariat, and its mapping to AGROVOC thesaurus.

Guidelines for the selection of documents have been established to create consistency in the enhancement and development of GFAR document collection. The idea was to have authors or producers of documents deliver the descriptive metadata and assign keywords to their documents in accordance with the Open Access practice.



The documents available at the GFAR Secretariat are being processed by an information specialist who creates the metadata records using FAO standards for management of agricultural information, and assigning categories according to the GFAR taxonomy.

The GFAR Document Repository will soon be populated with bibliographic material that has not been previously organized in a database which prevented its easy access by GFAR stakeholders and EGFAR users.

Maria Grazia Bovo

GPPs

GFAR reviews its Global Partnerships Programme mechanism

A two-man review team composed of Julian Gonsalves (India) and Oumar Niangado (Mali) are in the process of undertaking an internally commissioned review of GFAR's Global Partnership Programme (GPP) mechanism for promoting and learning about building multi-stakeholder partnerships. The team initially spent time with GFAR Secretariat personnel to plan the information gathering phase of the evaluation. Subsequently, an e-mail survey was conducted among different stakeholder groups to ascertain their opinions as to the effectiveness of the GPP mechanism for achieving GFAR's objectives and also with respect to the impact that novel partnership arrangements are having on achieving over-arching agricultural research for development goals. There has also been an



opportunity to interview some of these stakeholders personally.

Field visits were undertaken to three countries (Nepal, Uganda and Cambodia) where one of the global partnership programmes – Promoting Local Innovation in Ecologically-oriented Natural Resource Management, PROLINNOVA – has on-the-ground activities. This provided the team with an insight about how individual GPP can operate successfully at different hierarchical levels, from local through to global.

At the end of January, 20 GPP practitioners and resource persons came together with the review team in a 3-day 'learning and review workshop' to share experiences in the identification, design and implementation of GPPs to-date. The workshop reviewed the definition and the principles that guide GPPs, how they are governed, and the process for their formulation and approval. Workshop participants also examined how best to monitor and evaluate the process so as to be of maximum benefit in terms of learning about multi-stakeholder partnership arrangements and for improving the effectiveness of ARD projects and programmes in meeting their goals.

The report of the review team will be examined by the GFAR Steering Committee when it meets in Sana'a, Yemen at the end of June.

R.B.

Towards a GPP on Linking Farmers to Markets

Important steps are being taken this year to finalize the preparatory phase of a Global Partnership Programme (GPP) on the theme of Linking Smallholder Farmers to Growth Markets. Building on the consultations spearheaded by FAO-AGS and GFAR, and supported by the Post-harvest Action (PhAction) group of institutions, GFAR's Programme Committee endorsed in their December meeting in Marrakech the process for finalising the formulation of a GPP proposal.

Global Partnership Programmes are a GFAR mechanism for fostering the development of collaborative efforts that address strategic agricultural research for development (ARD) issues of global relevance; they are jointly developed, carried out and owned by a set of diverse stakeholders and are inter-regional in nature. The purpose of Linking Farmers to Markets (LFM) GPP is to add value to, learn from and share experiences of on-going R&D initiatives that support the transition of smallholder farmers from near subsistence to greater levels of commercially oriented production, building their capacity to engage in supply chains linked to growth markets. As such, the Linking Farmers to Markets GPP is closely aligned with priorities set by GFAR's developing country regional ARD forums.



During 2006, AARINENA, APAARI, FARA and FORAGRO will establish *ad hoc* working groups to prepare regional proposals for their participation in the GPP (see news from AARINENA in this newsletter). The working groups comprise specialists and practitioners from different stakeholder groups. Their task is to identify concrete examples in their regions (programmes, projects, methods, tools) that they consider can provide the basis on which to build the global programme. They will also define the specific needs that they would wish the global programme to fulfil in terms of helping the R&D community move from isolated cases of success to wide spread incorporation and institutionalisation of good practice. In September 2006 (11th-17th), delegates from each regional working group will meet during an inter-regional workshop to discuss their regional positions, reach consensus on a concrete inter-regional proposal and the establishment of an interim governance and



management structure for the GPP. If the proposal that results from this workshop meets the expectations of GFAR's Programme and Steering Committees, start-up funds will be released in 2007 to initiate the implementation of the GPP.

A.S.

PROLINNOVA 3rd Partners' Meeting

The 3rd Prolinnova Partners' Meeting was held from 5-10 March 2006 in Cambodia. Agriculture Minister Chan Sarun delivered the Keynote Address during the Opening Ceremony held at Juliana Hotel in Phnom Penh.



The PROLINNOVA Partners' Meeting, 5-10 March 2006

The annual event aimed to take stock of progress made by the various Prolinnova Country Programmes (CPs) as well as to define and discuss strategic plans for the immediate and near future.

From Phnom Penh, participants representing Prolinnova Country Programmes from Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nepal, Niger, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda traveled to Siem Reap where the workshop proper was held. Participants updated each other of the progress made in each of their respective Prolinnova CPs, discussed information-sharing strategies, implementation of innovation support fund (ISF), monitoring and evaluation, documentation of their efforts, and resource mobilization.

Also, participants had the opportunity during field visits to interact with Cambodian farmer-innovators and development professionals supporting them who shared their experiences in local innovation and participatory R&D that helped them meet their food-security needs.

Representatives from the Pacific islands and the Andean region of South America also attended the meeting to explore possibilities of expanding Prolinnova programme activities to those regions. Some concrete follow-up actions were decided upon.

The meeting was hosted by the CEDAC (Centre d'études et de développement agricole Cambodgiens), the Prolinnova country coordinator in Cambodia. DGIS, CTA, and GFAR provided funds for the workshop and its documentation.

For further information: www.prolinnova.net

*Oliver Oliveros
and Scott Killough (IIRR),
Prolinnova International Support Team*

Global NTFP Partnership launched in Marrakech

On December 2, 2005, the Global Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) Partnership was officially launched in Marrakech. Despite their vital importance for the livelihoods of many millions of rural dwellers, non timber forest products have not received the kind of institutional and financial investments that food and timber resources have had through forestry institutions and the CGIAR system. The many projects in NTFPs have not dented the situation because these have been scattered and largely short term; INBAR being the only exception for bamboo and rattan. The purpose of the NTFP Partnership will be to develop socially and environmentally sustainable economic solutions in partnership with rural communities, governments and private



partners by establishing a global institutional system.

The Marrakech Declaration was signed by the participants launching the Partnership, including the governments of Ecuador, India and Mozambique, ICIMOD, ICUC, IUFRO, BAIF, Zernike GmbH and of course INBAR. IFAD was also present at the meeting and inaugurated the workshop. The Chair of APAARI also attended. Several other partners including ICRAF, COL and Dabur are supporting the initiative and are expected to sign the declaration later.

Following the launch of the NFTP Partnership, Dr. Ramanuja Rao, INBAR Director of Programmes, made a

presentation to the GFAR Programme Committee on the proposal for the NFTP Partnership to come under the GFAR umbrella as Global Partnership Programme (GPP). The Programme Committee commended the consultation process employed for the development of this initiative. Its final approval as a GPP will be subject to its meeting the criteria established for GPP which are in the process of being reviewed by an external team currently evaluating the process and performance of the GPP mechanism.

[Extracted from INBAR News Volume 13 Issue 1 April 2006 and the NFTP GPP proposal]

News from the Regional Fora

AARINENA

The Meeting of the ad hoc Committee for a GPP on the theme of Linking Smallholder Farmers to Markets



AARINENA has launched the Post-harvest Initiative in the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) Region four years since the Cairo consultation.

The region is a pioneer in confirming the importance of post-harvest, marketing and enterprise related activities. Four commodity networks (olive, date palm, cotton, and medicinal plants) have been established and form the key elements of the Initiative. In March 2005, a meeting was held in Antalya, Turkey to identify cross-cutting needs of four commodity networks in the AARINENA region in the area of post-harvest handling and marketing and enterprise development. Three project ideas were elaborated during the meeting:

a) market-orientation; b) innovative and effective market-oriented and demand-driven extension services; and c) organic production and markets.

The *ad hoc* committee met in Abu-Dhabi during 22-23 February 2006 to promote the three project ideas and to review the actions taken since Antalya meeting. The respective conveners concluded that the concept notes share similar elements that can provide the basis for a unified set of proposals for an inter-regional proposal. The *ad hoc* working group established prioritizing criteria for subsequent selection of commodities, countries and, within countries and regions, candidate research and development interventions that could become an integral part of an inter-regional program. During the period of March to September 2006, efforts will be made to develop an action plan that will serve as a background document and an input for the inter-regional project planning workshop to be held in September.

AARINENA

Workshop on "The Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Industry"

Following the establishment of the Medicinal and Aromatic Plant (MAP) Network in September 2004, the first annual meeting for the Network was held in Malta (7-9 November 2005) in collaboration with the



University of Malta and the support of GFAR. This meeting was divided into two sessions: the MAP Network annual meeting and the MAP link to the Industry session.

The MAP Network annual meeting was aimed at the re-organisation of the working groups and functions of focal points. The link to the industry session was organised with the aim of familiarising the participants with the European Union rules and conditions of agricultural practices, manufacturing and marketing leading to better quality assurance to the European consumer. The participants included scientists from agricultural institutions in nine AARINENA member states: Egypt, Malta, Jordan, Sudan, Oman, Morocco, Iran, Syria and Yemen. The meeting was also attended by participants from the private sector dealing with the commercial potential of MAP within the European Union.

Coordinators of the four working groups: Post Harvest and Processing Technologies, Socio-economic and Commercialisation, Conservation and Sustainable Use, and Agricultural Practices, addressed the main activities of the network and constraints of the MAP industry. The MAP Network Members discussed the working plan and agreed to formulate a questionnaire to cover current projects and tools present in member countries. Building the capacity of NARS, and empowering local communities to better use MAPs was also flagged as an important activity.

The participants elected Dr. Mohamed Safwat from Egypt as the Network Chairman of the Board, and Dr. Mousa Fayyad from Jordan as MAP Network Secretary.

AARINENA

AARINENA Olive Network: Workshop on GAP and Annual Meeting

The meeting was cosponsored by GFAR, FAO/RNE and ARC-Cyprus. More than 20 scientists from AARINENA olive network member countries and representatives from ICARDA and ESCORENA met in Larnaca, Cyprus during 19-21 December 2005 to prepare guidelines on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for Olive in AARNENA

countries and to hold the annual meeting of AARINENA Olive Network.

The meeting included presentations with introductory remarks on GAP and the country profiles. The participants concluded that the guidelines prepared will be modified to include additional two chapters in the final handbook, the first chapter will include the importance of olive crop in AARINENA countries, while the second on harvesting and post harvesting handling.

The annual meeting of AARINENA Olive Network was held during the final session. Coordinators of the three Network Working Groups (Post Harvest & Processing, Socio – Economic and Commercialization, Production and Protection) presented the activities of their groups during the period from December 2004 to December 2005.

APAARI

Meeting of the Asian Representatives for the drafting of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA)



APAARI in collaboration with IPGRI organized a meeting of the Asian Representatives nominated by the Chairs of the FAO Regional Groups for the drafting of the Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA), under the FAO Treaty ITGRFA. The meeting was held from the 5th to the 6th of April 2006 at the Royal Princess Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

The objective of the meeting was to provide the Asian Representatives an opportunity to prepare a well coordinated Asian position for negotiation during the next SMTA Contact Group meeting to be held in Sweden in late April, 2006. This forthcoming meeting is an offshoot of the 10 November 2005 IPGRI-APAARI Roundtable meeting on the implementation of the International Treaty on Plant genetic Resources on Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA). FAO ADG and Regional Representative Dr He Changchui



inaugurated this regional meeting, which was sponsored by IPGRI.

Dr. Rashid Anwar from Pakistan is the Chair of the Asian SMTA Contact Group.

APAARI

APAARI General Assembly November 2006

The APAARI General Assembly will be held in New Delhi, India from the 6th to the 8th of November 2006. The theme of the meeting is "Agricultural Innovations: Linking Farmers to Market". The meeting will be hosted by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) which is under the leadership of its Director General Dr Mangala Rai.

The APAARI General Assembly will be followed by the GFAR General Conference scheduled for 5th to 11th November 2006 also at ICAR.

FARA

New partnership with the African Union



FARA signed an agreement with the African Union in October 2006, in which it becomes the Technical Arm of the AU's Department of rural economy and agriculture. This new development completes the strong link of FARA to African political bodies to whom FARA relates for support on policy issues and most importantly to NEPAD's CAADP.

This promising partnership started immediately, when FARA organized a visit to Hunger Hot Spot such as Niger in October 2006. The AU's commissioner for rural economy and agriculture, H.E. Rosebud Kurwijila, graced the tour together with the FARA Chairperson, Mme Njabulo Nduli. The tour provided insight on how different organizations (from government agencies to civil society organizations) could still profit from better coordination of efforts towards a common goal. The AU Commissioner appreciated the efforts of

FARA to understand the details at the grassroot level. She recognized that FARA could indeed provide guidance to AU in handling disaster prevention and management measures, among other issues identified in the CAADP pillar four and AU's strategic plan.

FARA

The African platform for agricultural information and learning systems (RAILS)

Although there have been enormous exchange of agricultural information globally, African national agricultural research systems have been left behind. Several international service providers provide different systems to facilitate exchange of information through internet or other media such as books, newsletters.

FARA in its response to its stakeholders to strengthen their capacity to access and contribute to the global knowledge exchange, developed the Regional agricultural information and learning systems (RAILS). RAILS provides the continental perspective to the subregional agricultural information systems which in turn responds to the needs and requirements of its member NARS.

A taskforce comprising representatives from the SROs, NARS, civil society organizations, GFAR and observers from international service providers such as infosys+, FAO, CABI, CTA provides FARA the oversight in implementing its activities. In its recently held meeting, the taskforce endorsed the RAILS main priorities for the next five years. These are: accessibility enhancement of NARS through ICT infrastructure support and training; advocacy for increased investment to ICT; facilitating synergies and learning of national, regional and international initiatives and consolidation of national agricultural information systems towards a functional African platform.

The final RAILS program of work will be finalized by May 2006 for initial startup by



June 2006 and full implementation by January 2007.

FARA

Providing a framework for African agricultural productivity programs

FARA is leading the process of developing a framework for African agricultural productivity programs (FAAP) that could provide guidance to the much needed evolution of African agricultural research systems. A number of guiding principles have been derived from consultation with Africa's agricultural people and with their development partners. The FAAP indicates how such best practice can be employed to improve the performance of agricultural productivity in Africa. Beyond improving the performance of individual initiatives, the

FAAP also highlights the need to replicate and expand such programs through increased levels of investment. It also stresses how increased funding must be made available through much less fragmented mechanisms as has been the case in the past. Harmonization amongst Africa's development partners therefore needs to be placed high on the agenda.

The FAAP process is moving in the right directions after several consultations with African stakeholders and most recently with development partners held in London in April 2006. The meeting provided insights from the investors to strengthen the FAAP initiative. The FAAP is being submitted to the African Union for endorsement by the African Heads of States in June 2006.

News from the other Stakeholders

CSOs

The sub-Saharan Africa NGO Consortium

In the [September issue of the newsletter](#) we reported that GFAR Secretariat in partnership with Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), supported a group of NGOs to enable them establish a sub-Saharan Africa NGO consortium which was launched during FARA 3rd biennial General Assembly held in Entebbe, Uganda in June 2005. Since the Entebbe meeting, it has been a busy period for the Consortium. In October 2005, the management of the Consortium met with other FARA stakeholders including representatives from the Sub-regional organizations, the private sector, farmers, IITA to discuss the effective inclusion and participation of CSOs in ARD in the region at all levels. In April 2006 the

Eastern and Southern Africa members of the Consortium met in Pretoria to develop methodology for case studies on multi-stakeholder partnerships; identify a number of proven technologies and innovations that will be documented for scaling up and out; and develop and design processes and tools for carrying out a typology/profiling exercise of NGOs. During the Pretoria meeting, members of the consortium met with Dr. Richard Mkandawire, Agriculture



SSA NGO Consortium visits
Agricultural Research Council of South Africa in Pretoria



Liaison Officer of NEPAD, to discuss NGOs participation in NEPAD activities and programs. One potential area of collaboration identified was the NGOs participation on NEPAD Peer Review Committees. Participants also took some time to visit the Agricultural Research Council of South Africa based in Pretoria to discuss and explore possible collaboration between the Consortium and the ARC.

The Western and Central Africa working group of the Consortium is scheduled to meet at FARA office in Accra during 16-17 May 2006.

The Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) has recently requested GFAR Secretariat to support NGOs in the Asia Pacific region to also establish a regional consortium in order to facilitate effective CSOs participation in ARD in the region. The Secretariat will work with APAARI in coming months on this new initiative that will lead to a stronger and more effective partnership between NGOs and research institutions in the APAARI region.

N.A.

CSOs

Environmental Alert wins Energy Globe's World Award for Sustainability



Environmental Alert (EA) won the first prize in the category earth of "Energy Globe Award" for its project on *Integrated Nutrient Management to attain sustainable productivity increases in East African Farming systems (INMASP)*.

Mr. Fred Kafeero, EA Executive Director, received the award during the Energy Globe gala held in Vancouver, Canada on 29 March 2006.

Congratulations!

See

http://www.energyglobe.at/web/energyglobe_en/view.php?MENUID=80&USERNAME=&T# for more information.



EA is Ugandan non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Kampala. To find out more about EA visit www.entalert.org.

N.A.

Farmers' Organizations

World Farmers Congress in Seoul, May 13th-20th 2006

Farmers from various parts of the globe will converge on Seoul, in the Republic of Korea, for the 37th edition of the World Farmer's Congress. Farmers from the 116 affiliated national organizations spread over 83 countries world wide will converge on Seoul not only to participate in this 37th congress, but also to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of their Federation, the International Federation of Producers (IFAP).

The theme of the congress is 60 years of empowering farmers for diversity, for sustainability, for health, for peace. A rich programme of discussion on several topics of interest to farmers worldwide has been put together to make this congress memorable.

GFAR will be represented at this land mark occasion to participate in the Congress and celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of one of its own. We wish all the participants fruitful deliberations with the hope that the outputs of this congress will contribute in some way to the aspirations and hopes of farmers worldwide, that of making a decent living, while contributing to the food security goals of their household, local and global communities.

We invite our readers to consult the congress site on the website of IFAP (www.ifap.org) for more information on the congress including the outputs which will be published in the near future.

O.S.



CGIAR

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) defines its research priorities for 2005-2015



The Science Council (SC) of the CGIAR initiated a process of System-level priority setting, in line with its aim to help develop a more cohesive and better-focused, high-quality research program to alleviate poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. There were several reasons for the initiative. First, despite many individual research successes in the past, the CGIAR System can have greater impact through a more consolidated research focus. Second, there is a need to avoid dispersion of research. As the goals of the CGIAR have widened and its total budget has increased, there has been selective funding of a large number of specific projects negotiated with donors. Many such projects address particular (local) research or development problems and do not exploit the core strength of the CGIAR as a research supplier of international public goods. Third, there is a need to mobilize research capacity across the CGIAR System more effectively. Projects addressing difficult issues for sustainable poverty reduction (e.g. smallholder productivity gains in Africa) need sharply focused, long-term, and multi-pronged approaches involving research on different commodities, themes, and disciplines. Fourth, there are opportunities to enhance coordination and cooperation. Centers have already shown increased willingness and capacity to coordinate and cooperate with one another. Well-defined System Priorities will help to develop more effective partnerships with national agricultural research systems (NARS) and advanced research institutes in both the North and the South. Fifth, clearly defined research approaches and routes to poverty alleviation will increase participation by stakeholders in priority setting, and assist donors in allocating their resources to the CGIAR project with potentially large impacts. Sixth, setting System priorities

provides the opportunity to enhance accountability.

The priority-setting process consisted of a multi-pronged approach that was both analytical and broadly consultative with stakeholders – including nongovernmental organizations, donors, and scientists both within the CGIAR System and in other research institutions, including NARS and advance research centres. Building on an assessment of emerging trends during the consultative stage of the priority-setting process, the SC reviewed the total research portfolio of the CGIAR, projected to 2015, and sought to focus the CGIAR research agenda on a smaller number of priority areas of research.

Major new research emphases in the System Priorities of CGIAR research for 2005-2015 focus on:

- > A re-emphasis of the CGIAR's role in research on major long-term issues
- > Development of specific System-wide contributions to the Millennium Development Goals
- > Research for development – not development *per se*
- > Explicit focus on income generation among the poor
- > A new collaborative approach to research on fruits and vegetables
- > Research on trade, markets, and food safety
- > Enhanced focus of research on drought, soil acidity, and temperature stress
- > Application of modern molecular science
- > Landscape-level approaches to the management of agricultural and natural resources.

More information on the CGIAR's System research priorities for 2005-2015 can be found in:
<http://www.sciencecouncil.cgiar.org/activities/spps/index.html>

Beatriz Ávalos-Sartorio
CGIAR Science Council Secretariat
Rome, Italy

**GFAR 2006****GFAR 2006
Tentative Programme**

Details of the conference programme are still being developed, but the draft programme currently features the following elements.

Wednesday 8th of November

Several parallel pre-conference events including the following:

- GFAR-India day that will feature plenary discussion, demonstrative displays and exhibitions highlighting the contribution of the Indian NARS to the MDGs
- Civil Society Consultations on the theme of the conference, the role and contribution of this constituency to future GFAR activities.
- Four focused workshops on selected issues raised in the sub-themes
- FARA-India bilateral consultation on ARD collaborative activities between Indian and African NARS
- Launch of the a new-AGRIS initiative on information communication management
- Launch of the Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD)

Thursday 9th of November

- Conference opening ceremony chaired by the President of India, His Excellency APJ Abdul Kalam
- Keynote address session
- Information sharing sessions with updates from two major assessments – the Millennium Ecosystems Assessment and the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for

Development highlighting implications for agricultural research and development

- GFAR triennial report
- Parallel working group sessions on the sub-themes
- Start of the competitive poster session on: Evidence based contribution of ARD to specified MDGs.

Friday 10th of November

- Parallel sub-theme discussion sessions
- GFAR stakeholder groups consultation
- Special side events (e.g. European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development side event on north-south collaboration)
- Field visits to Agricultural Research Institutions

Saturday 11th of November

- Presentation and discussion of sub-thematic groups reports in Plenary
- Presentation and discussion of stakeholder groups reports and statements in Plenary
- Results of the Competitive Poster Session
- Closing ceremony

The GFAR 2006 Triennial Conference website, which will be available on line at www.egfar.org/gfar2006 from 1st of June 2006 will have current details on all issues related to the organization of the GFAR 2006 Triennial Conference.

A.M.

**People at the
GFAR Secretariat**

Nur Abdi
Rupert Best
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Gianna de Cesare
Ajit Maru
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Ola Smith