



GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
FORUM MONDIAL DE LA RECHERCHE AGRICOLE
FORO GLOBAL DE INVESTIGACION AGROPEDUARI

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And so, here is the second issue of the GFAR electronic Newsletter. Since it's first release in February 2002, GFAR has gone through a very interesting and challenging phase.

The last five months have been very fruitful and exciting. Three Global Partnership Programmes (GPPs) were launched, namely: (i) Direct Sowing, Mulch-based and Conservation Agriculture (DMC); (ii) Under-utilized Species and (iii) Coconut. Discussions are also underway for other initiatives such as on Trypanosomoses Control and on Rural Innovation. This issue provides the readers interesting updates on these GPPs as well as conclusions from the Workshop on "Facilitating Research Partnership in Commodity Chains" held in Montpellier, France, in June 2002.

This issue also provides a glance at the on-going activities in the regions, such as the launching of the South African National Agricultural Research Forum, the First FARA General Assembly, the AARINENA General Conference, the FORAGRO General Meeting, the 2nd EFARD Conference and the July CORAF Meeting, among others. The main issues and decisions taken by the GFAR Steering Committee in its May 2002 meeting are also summarized. Readers can browse through the "News from the Stakeholders" section where initiatives from Ugandan and European NGOs are presented. There is also a report on GFAR's participation in the World Farmers' Congress held in Egypt last May 2002. The summary of the e-discussion and other suggestions in enhancing the proposal on Strengthening the Participation of CSOs in Global ARD can be accessed in this electronic Newsletter and in the newly re-designed EGFAR website (launched last June).

The new EGFAR appears completely different from the old one, both in its organization and in its design. It has a search engine that allows users to rapidly look for the information. Check it out and let us know what you think.

The countdown towards the GFAR 2003 Conference in May 2003 in Dakar - Senegal, begins! A Conference Working Group, led by FARA Chair Joseph Mukiibi, was established to complement the National Senegalese Preparatory Committee, chaired by the General Director of the Institut Sénégalais de Recherche Agricole (ISRA).

These two last issues - EGFAR and the 2003 GFAR Conference - will be in depth discussed during next GFAR Mid-Term Meetings in the Philippines, 19-23 October 2002. The agenda will also highlight a critical issue on the sustainable funding strategy for GFAR, to be discussed during the GFAR Steering Committee Meeting and endorsed by our Donor Support Group.

Finally, GFAR is gearing itself up for a challenging future. Drs. Raj Paroda and Henri Rouille D'Orfeuille will complete their terms as GFAR Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. A new GFAR Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected during these GFAR Mid-Term Meetings. A new GFAR Executive Secretary is about to be coming on board by then. We will of course keep our readers posted on these exciting developments. Enough said, watch out for our final-year issue this December!

JF.G.
O.O.

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Letter from GFAR Chairman

Dear Colleagues,

I am happy to inform you that I shall be stepping down as Chairman, Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and we shall be electing the new Chairman in the forthcoming meeting in October, 2002. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all the members of the GFAR Steering Committee and all colleagues from national and international systems for having reposed their confidence in me for all these years since 1998.

In retrospect, it had indeed been a great experience for me to be associated with GFAR. It was a unique journey, which started with the initial negotiations to house the Secretariat and the signing of MOU with FAO. The organization of 'Global Forum - 2000' with two Dresden Declarations and the emergence of new regional organizations such as EFARD, FARA, CAC-RF, and FORAGRO had been the landmarks. Many regional research priority setting exercises have also been accomplished paving way for greater support for new partnerships in agricultural research for development (ARD). The excitement to have an electronic forum (EGFAR) established with GFAR home page and important regional initiatives like formation of Agricultural Research Information System (RAIS), a multi-donor agreement with FAO, and to have a place for GFAR in the Executive Committee (Ex. Co.) of CGIAR are still quite fresh in our memory. Also, GFAR accelerated the process of partnership with NGOs and farmers' organizations, formation of a Federation of Advanced Research Institutions (ARIs) in North America as well as Global Partnership Programmes for closer north-south linkages. You would perhaps agree that these were all very critical components of an emerging dynamic institution, which we jointly strived hard to establish.

For me, GFAR would always be a global institution of great hope for the better future of our younger generations. All this could be possible only because of the active support and involvement of colleagues like you, which enabled GFAR to take such a big leap from its inception phase that today it has become a great 'Movement' to reckon with. Let us

continue our best efforts to nurture the GFAR!

Raj Paroda
GFAR Chair

New Staff



Welcome to Samuel Bruce-Oliver and Antonio Schiavone

The GFAR-Secretariat has swollen in ranks with the recent addition of new staff members.

The first one is a **NARS Senior Visiting Expert** in the person of **Dr. Samuel Bruce-Oliver**, Director General of the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) of The Gambia in West Africa. Dr. Bruce-Oliver who joined GFAR on July 1st, 2002, brings to GFAR several years of NARS management experience and in-depth knowledge of African Agricultural Research issues having headed an African agricultural research institution and from a lengthy involvement in the activities of African sub-regional and regional fora. Prior to joining GFAR, he held the position of Vice President of [CORAF/WECARD](#), membership of the CORAF/WECARD Executive Committee and represented CORAF/WECARD in the committee that guided the transition process culminating in the establishment of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) from the World Bank's Special Programme for African Agricultural Research (SPAAR). Dr. Bruce-Oliver also has North American and CGIAR research experience having worked at the University of California Cotton Research Station, Shafter, California as Postdoctoral Research Entomologist and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture ([IITA](#)), Benin, as Research Fellow. During his assignment as NARS Senior Visiting Expert, his main tasks will be to develop in close collaboration with NARS leaders around the world, an agenda of strategic issues related to the new challenges and opportunities that agricultural research confronts and the implications of this new environment for the NARS. Dr. Bruce-

Oliver holds a Ph.D. in Entomology (specialisation in Biological Control) from the University of California, Berkeley, USA. He is married and has three children.

The second new member of staff is **Mr. Antonio Schiavone**, an Italian FAO volunteer who joined the GFAR Secretariat on June 13th. Mr. Schiavone, a graduate of the University of Florence, Italy, holds a degree in Economics, with a specialisation in Economics of the developing countries of Latin America and Africa. While at GFAR, he will be carrying out research in the area of rural innovation, innovative funding mechanisms for the rural poor and development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's), as part of a collaboration agreement between GFAR and the Istituto Agronomico per l'Oltremare ([IAO](#)), Italy. Mr. Schiavone's research has been programmed such that it actively integrates with some of the recent activities of the GFAR Secretariat, particularly those concentrating on projects concerned with the development of agrarian economies through rural innovation and agro-industrial development. His tasks will be to follow all GFAR initiatives in the above mentioned thematic areas.

Mr. Schiavone's other duties will be to furnish, in close collaboration with the leading stakeholders, bottom up information in order to effectively contribute to the global discussion on agricultural research and to the elaboration of new projects. He will also be involved in strengthening the participation of the private agribusiness sector in the debate on strategic ARD issues.

JF.G.

ICT



The new EGFAR has been launched!

The new EGFAR was launched at the end of June. As you can see, it is completely different from the old one, both in its organization and in its design. In contrast to the previous site, all the information is stored in a relational database system that allows

better management of the contents. It also has a search engine that allows users to rapidly search for the information.

Some pages are still "under construction" because we are collaborating with the stakeholders with regards to the content of their pages. We apologize for the delay but as GFAR is a discussion platform, we wish to ensure that all stakeholders can (and should) contribute to the development of EGFAR.

For example, in the "Research Partnership" section you can find information provided by different Facilitating Units of various initiatives in which GFAR is involved; the "Stakeholders" section where each Regional Forum can contribute both in the introductory text and in the information on ARD Institutions at regional and national level, etc...

Comments, new ideas and information updates are welcome: please write to the [EGFAR Webmaster](#).

F.B.

ICT

Summary of the e-Discussion on the Proposal: "Strengthening the Participation of Farmers' Organisations and of NGOs in the Global Agenda of Agricultural Research for Development"

This e-discussion was one of the first discussions hosted on the new EGFAR. Despite the fact that the turn-out was small, this e-discussion has furthered the ongoing dialogue on the project by introducing some new ideas and reinforcing previously mentioned comments on the proposal. It has provided the GFAR Secretariat first hand experience with using the internet as medium of consultation with various stakeholders on ARD issues.

The proposal on *Strengthening the Participation of Farmers' Organizations and of Non-Governmental Organisations in the Global Agenda of Agricultural Research for Development* was the subject of a three-week electronic discussion among stakeholders.

In general, the proposal was found to be interesting as it was responsive to the capacity building needs of

farmers' and non-government organizations (FOs and NGOs), in facilitating the involvement in the research process. The project's emphasis on facilitating the interaction of Civil Society Organisations (CSO) with other stakeholders from the national to global level is also found useful and innovative as it will promote an exchange of experience and knowledge among and across farmers organizations and NGOs.

Representativity was a focus of many of the suggestions, some of which are included below. CSOs that will be involved in the project will have to be chosen by their constituents and should have clear, endorsed mandates. Their role vis-à-vis the project will have to be defined and accountability issues should be addressed. Representatives of constituencies of the project should be responsible for providing feedback to their constituents. The project should be flexible, that is, highlight activities identified and agreed by stakeholders.

Another recommendation was with regard to project coordination which should ensure that various regions are covered and should work towards reinforcing research institutions for them to engage more civil society organizations at the country level. The project should also deal with "professional agricultural organizations" which have experience in working with rural communities and in building networks of CSOs as it is essential to build on to existing efforts and to reinforce them rather than to create new ones.

It was also suggested that the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) component of the project should be enhanced, with capacity building activities aimed at enhancing NGO's and FO's capabilities to monitor and evaluate their own activities introduced.

The proposal should also address sustainability issues so that continuity of collaborative programmes envisioned under the project can be continued even after project completion.

O.O.

ICT

GLOBAL.RAIS Project: Where We Are

The GLOBAL.RAIS Project, submitted to the European Commission, is on its way to formal approval. GFAR has had contact with Regional Forum Information System Managers and the prospect of regional workshops has been warmly welcomed, including receiving proposals for hosting workshops in the different Regions during the GFAR Mid-Term Meetings.

GFAR has started collaborating with the [EIARD-Infosys](#) group in order to set up the basis of a database system for storing data and permitting cross database searches. This will allow easier exchange of information both at the GFAR-RAIS and the RAIS-RAIS levels and a true decentralization of information that will be hosted at the Regional (and National in the most advanced cases) level and completely managed by each RAIS.

Finally, two events related to the GLOBAL.RAIS Project will be organized.

The first one is an "ICT Expert Consultation on the Development of Second Phase of APARIS", organized by [APAARI](#), to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, on October 24-25, 2002.

The second one is the "Expert Consultation Meeting", organized in cooperation by [AARINENA](#), GFAR, [FAO](#) and [ICARDA](#), for the Regional Agricultural Information System (RAIS), to be held in Egypt during the second half of December.

More detailed information is available on EGFAR [Events](#) section.

F.B.

GFAR Meetings

GFAR 2002 Mid-Term Meetings

The 2002 GFAR mid-year meetings were held 13-14 May in Rome, Italy. During the meeting, stakeholders agreed that the year 2002 presents an interesting and challenging period for GFAR with changes taking place in leadership, the launching of and increasing activity in several Global Partnership Programmes, and preparations for the GFAR 2003 Conference.

Major changes in GFAR leadership have taken place starting with the

departure of GFAR Executive Secretary, Fernando Chaparro. Jean-François Giovannetti assumes the position of Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the Secretariat until a new Executive Secretary is appointed. An Interim Executive Council comprising Rodney Cooke ([IFAD](#)), Dietrich Lihner ([FAO/SDR](#)) and Henri Rouille D'Orfeuil (GFAR, Vice Chair), was also nominated to guide the OIC. Meanwhile, the GFAR stakeholders during the meeting welcomed Drs. Joseph Mukiibi and Adama Traore (FARA Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively); Dr. Ndiaga Mbaye ([CORAF](#) Executive Secretary); and Dr. Raghu Sapkota ([APAARI](#), Chair). Dr. Samuel Bruce-Oliver was also welcomed as the NARS Senior Visiting Fellow to the GFAR Secretariat.

GFAR stakeholders were updated on the status of several Global Partnership Programmes (GPPs) facilitated by GFAR. The [DMC](#) (Direct Sowing, Mulch-based, and Conservation Agriculture) Facilitating Unit in Montpellier is fully operational with Ms. Fatima Ribeiro, a Brazilian researcher from Instituto Agronômico do Paraná ([IAPAR](#)), as the Facilitator. The Global Facilitating Unit for the Under-utilised and Orphan Crops, housed at International Plant Genetic Resources Institute ([IPGRI](#)) in Rome, has also been established with Ms. Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon from Germany as the Facilitator. Dr. Hubert Omont of the Facilitation Unit on International Commodity Chains in Montpellier shared lessons learned from the establishment of such a mechanism. GFAR stakeholders were apprised of other on-going international initiatives such as the GPP on Trypanosomosis Control (with [CIRAD](#)); Global Initiative on Post Harvest Technology-GIPhT (with [FAO/AGSI](#)); PROLINNOVA, Promoting Local Innovation, (with the NGOs); and the Global Conservation Trust campaign (with [IPGRI](#)).

During these meetings, proposals in the pipeline aimed at assisting GFAR stakeholders in various activities related to ARD were presented. These include the DURAS Project (submitted to Ministère Français Des Affaires Etrangères); and Strengthening the Participation of Farmers' Organizations and NGOs in the ARD Agenda in ACP countries (submitted to the European Commission).

With regard to the GFAR 2003 General Conference, it was agreed that it would be held in Dakar, Senegal, back-to-back with the FARA General

Assembly scheduled for May 2003. A Working Group at the GFAR level chaired by Dr. Joseph Mukiibi was established to complement the Senegal National Preparatory Committee headed by Institut Sénégalais de Recherche Agricole ([ISRA](#)).

GFAR Meetings



GFAR 2003

The next GFAR Conference, a follow up to the Dresden 2000 conference, will be held May 26-28, 2003 in the city of Dakar in the West African country of Senegal. The tentative theme of the conference is "Linking Research, Rural Innovation and Development: from Regional Priorities to Global Action". The GFAR 2003 Conference follows closely behind the 2003 General Assembly meeting of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) taking place May 20 – 24, 2003 in the same city of Dakar. Over 400 participants are expected from all regions and from all GFAR stakeholder groups (i.e., NARS, regional & sub-regional fora, farmer's organisations, NGOs, private sector, Advanced Research Institutes, CG Centres, donors & the FAO).

As preparations for the conference get underway, the composition of the Conference Working Group (CWG) is being finalised. The CWG constituted from representatives of all GFAR stakeholders, will be tasked with defining the theme and structure of the conference, the expected outputs, identifying the keynote speakers, facilitators for the working groups and agreeing on the overall programme of the conference. It will complement the activities of the Preparatory Committee at the level of GFAR and the National Preparatory Committee of the host country. A more consolidated draft on the GFAR 2003 preparations will be ready for circulation by the time the GFAR Steering Committee meets in October 2002 in Manila, The Philippines.

S. B-O.

GPPs



The DMC Network: Linking Local Initiatives in a Global Program

O.O. The [DMC](#) Initiative (Direct sowing, Mulch-based systems and Conservation agriculture) is a Global Partnership Program (GPP) which aims to pull together and transform decentralized initiatives into global initiatives using a bottom-up approach.

It endeavours to strengthen the capacity of key stakeholders to develop suitable DMC systems by developing a framework for analyzing and comparing stakeholder experiences with DMC systems; identifying gaps in what is known about developing and fostering the use of DMC systems, and encouraging stakeholders to fill these gaps; providing support and feedback to decentralized stakeholder initiatives; and fostering the multiplication of successful experiences.

The DMC Initiative features a process of learning and synthesis. By analyzing and comparing experiences from decentralized initiatives, by synthesizing and systematizing lessons learned, and by identifying and filling gaps – not only on technologies, but also on processes – DMC practices can be harnessed by a wider range of stakeholders.

It was formally launched in January 2000 by various stakeholders such as National Agricultural Research Institutes, NGOs, International Agricultural Research Institutes, and regional networks. The Global Facilitating Unit (GFU) is housed at [CIRAD](#) Office in Montpellier, France with Ms. [Fatima Ribeiro](#), a Brazilian researcher from Instituto Agronômico do Paraná ([IAPAR](#)), as Facilitator. Currently, the GFU is conducting an inventory and documenting some cases on DMC research and development projects. Should you and your organization wish to take part in this activity, visit the [DMC website](#).

O.O.



Global Facilitation Unit for Under-utilized Species established

During the first [GFAR Conference](#) held in Dresden, Germany, in May 2000 a working group strongly recommended the involvement of GFAR in the topic of **Under-utilized and Orphan Commodities** and suggested that there should be a Facilitation Mechanism operating at global level.

GFAR initiated an informal group consisting of representatives of [FAO](#), [IPGRI](#), [ICJUC](#), [IFAD](#), and [BMZ](#), all committed to support the development of under-utilized species, to explore ways how to implement these recommendations. BMZ, Germany, provided funds for a coordinator position of a Global Facilitation Unit (GFU) for 3 years. The unit is hosted by IPGRI Rome, Italy. The coordinator, Ms. [Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon](#), has started working in May this year.

The objective of the GFU is to establish under the umbrella of GFAR a mechanism, which supports and facilitates the work that is undertaken on different aspects of under-utilized species worldwide at different levels by networks, agencies, organizations and others. It will cover the identification, assessment, improvement, development, sustainable use and marketing of these species for the benefit of local farmers and users. It will encourage the development of common tools and approaches that can be applied to different contexts and situations. It will facilitate the determination of priorities at a regional level and draw attention to gaps. It will provide a common forum for discussion and suggestions for action.

During a recent meeting held the steering committee was confirmed and it was decided to call the unit "**Global Facilitation Unit for Under-utilized Species**". The unit will initially work on plant species only.

The main activities of the GFU will be in terms of:

- Facilitating the improved access to information on under-utilized species

- Providing a platform for discussion of concepts, strategies and instruments to promote and facilitate the sustainable use of under-utilized species
- Facilitating stakeholders' access to financial resources
- Identifying modalities to develop a sustainable mechanism to support under-utilized species

Irmgard Hoeschle-Zeledon
GFU Coordinator

GPPs

GFAR dialogue with the Donors on Rural innovation

In its constant dialogue with the donor community, GFAR has developed, in collaboration with [IFAD](#), a thematic study on the *Rural Development and Market Mechanisms in Latin America and in Western and Central Africa*. The aim of this study is to highlight the Fund's experience in financing projects for the agribusiness sector development and to possibly design a joint program with the Italian Government. This study has been carried out following the signature of a Partnership Agreement between IFAD and Italy, the overall objective of which is to identify new financial mechanisms for common priorities of investment for rural development. The *Rural Innovation* theme is of priority interest for the stakeholders involved in R&D activities for agribusiness promotion. IFAD is supporting GFAR in the preparation of a program proposal on *Rural Innovation* to be submitted to the Italian Authorities for consideration for co-financing.

GPPs



PROCORD: The Coconut Farmer's New Ally in Fighting Poverty

Coconut Research for Development Programme (PROCORD), a coconut commodity chain (production to consumption) programme, was launched during the 39th COCOTECH Meeting in Pattaya, Thailand. PROCORD is a collaborative

programme established by the [APCC](#) (Asian and Pacific Coconut Community), [BUROTROP](#) (Bureau for the Development of Research on Tropical Perennial Oil Crops), [COGENT](#) (International Coconut Genetic Resources Network) and [IPGRI](#) (International Plant Genetic Resources Institute). The Memorandum of Agreement was signed by Rifana Ernie Arjakusumah, Chair of the APCC Session; Willem van Vuure, Chair of BUROTROP's Board of Administrators; Carlos Carpio, Chair of COGENT's Steering Committee; and Geoffrey Hawtin, Director General of IPGRI.

The primary aim of PROCORD is to generate and bring benefits to coconut stakeholders, especially resource-poor coconut farmers and consumers as well as to promote the sustainable development of the coconut industry. Coconut farmers, 96% of whom are smallholders (tending less than 4 hectares), are suffering because of declining farm productivity and unstable markets for their traditional coconut products which are copra (dried kernel) and coconut oil. Inadequate support to enable the research community to effectively address the major problems and opportunities of resource-poor smallholder coconut farmers has also contributed to the suffering.

PROCORD is envisioned to improve returns to coconut for farmers and coconut-producing countries. The programme hopes to achieve this by (1) promoting the development of improved coconut varieties, controlling the spread of pests and diseases, developing coconut-based ecosystems, improving processing techniques, producing high-value coconut products, and studying the socio-economic issues affecting the coconut sector; (2) strengthening and stimulating partnerships among stakeholders of the coconut community to increase the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of global coconut research efforts; (3) enhancing access to information and documentation and disseminating research findings; (4) generating training opportunities to researchers and technicians to improve their knowledge and skills; and (5) providing effective coordination of research and generating institutional and funding support to the programme.

Six priority research areas were identified, with two areas assigned as lead responsibility to each of the three

F.A.

organizations, namely: genetic resources and improvement and socio-economics and policy support (COGENT); agronomy and coconut-based farming systems and crop protection (BUROTROP); and processing and marketing (APCC). COGENT will initially coordinate the programme for the next three years and a PROCORD Secretariat is being established at the IPGRI Regional Office for Asia, the Pacific and Oceania in Serdang, Malaysia.

Pons Batugal
Regional Coordinator, IPGRI Regional Office for Asia, the Pacific and Oceania

GPPs

GPP on Trypanosomoses Control

A research proposal for a Global Partnership Programme on Trypanosomoses control was presented during the last GFAR Steering Committee meeting held in Rome, FAO, on 14th May 2002. Following this presentation, GFAR launched an informal discussion forum among interested stakeholders in research for livestock development, in order to exchange technical and scientific ideas for the design of the GPP.

The aim of this GPP is to exploit biotechnology and animal genetic resources for the improvement of livestock productivity through the control of Trypanosomoses. Possible linkages between R&D institutions are under discussion.

F.A.

GPPs



Workshop on Global Programmes for Commodity Chains 6-7 June 2002 Montpellier, France

A Workshop on Global Programmes for Commodity Chains was held 6-7 June 2002 in Montpellier, France, with the aim of reviewing the progress of activities of the Commodity Chains

Facilitation Unit, and to discuss the future of this initiative.

The workshop, attended by about 35 participants from various stakeholder categories of agricultural research for development (ARD), also reviewed the conceptual approach used and the actions undertaken by the Facilitation Unit. Challenges faced and lessons learnt during the last 2.5 years were also debated. These issues range from institutional to partnership and financial aspects of global programmes for commodity chains. Progress on the development of the global programmes on Coconut and Cocoa was also presented as well as the objectives and work plan of a Facilitation Unit for Under-utilised crops, set up by [BMZ](#) and hosted by [IPGRI](#) in Rome, Italy.

In general, the report of the facilitation unit highlighted the general trends and strategic issues that justify GFAR involvement in commodity chains research. The concepts used a "commodity chain" or "filière" approach, and the global programme approach, were detailed and refined. [PROMUSA](#), a global programme on banana served as a model of what could be done on other commodities.

Some of the highlights of the workshop include the following:

- There is a need for a certain degree of formality, for participation and fund raising, but it is recommended to avoid creating new structures or "legal status". GPPs should build on existing structures, being careful that existing host institutions do not take ownership of the programme.
- It is essential to have a strong representation of farmers' organisations in GPPs. The seven categories of stakeholders, as established by GFAR, are indicative and could be adapted to each commodity community situation. Consumers must be included as important stakeholders in many commodities, or at least their main concerns must be taken into account.
- Stakeholders involvement should be ensured from the start of the preparation of a global programme. Lead stakeholder(s) are important to promote the initiative, but information dissemination should be ensured to allow other stakeholders to be

represented and to participate in the initiative. It was particularly noted that good representation at a global level could only be achieved if representation and representativeness are satisfactory at national and regional levels in the bottom up approach favoured by GFAR.

- There is consensus on the need to fund transaction costs in the preparation phase, which must be kept at an "effective minimum", avoiding bureaucracy and concentrating efforts on the weakest stakeholders.
- When the global programmes have been set up, the rule for transaction costs must be cost sharing. Overheads included in projects have been seen as a possible way to deal with this issue. Agreement among donor agencies to include in their projects overheads for global programmes coordination and functioning (meetings of working groups) could be a positive and effective step ahead.
- Projects must look for competitive bids, but enhanced exchange of information between GFAR, GPPs and donor agencies could improve the rate of success.

At the end of the Workshop, participants underscored the value of continuing the initiative to a second phase, with the objectives of (a) increasing effectiveness of the programmes under preparation; (b) identifying critical elements and bringing out problems and challenges at a global level for other commodities; and (c) considering other commodities, among others. There is an agreement that it is necessary to capitalize on information gathered, and contacts already established.

The Workshop concluded that the Facilitation Unit is in a learning process, where flexibility must be the rule, without too strict a model to work with, but with emphasis on sharing common values and common ways of operating.

O.O.
Hubert Omont
Commodity Chains F.U. Coordinator



2nd EFARD Conference May 2002, Rome, Italy

The 2nd [EFARD](#) Conference was held 15-17 May in Rome, Italy. One year before, EFARD launched a consultation process at the European level, through the National Fora, aiming at identifying inputs for the development of European or Global Research Initiatives. At the same time, EFARD also interact with GFAR and the Regional and Sub-Regional Fora in the different continents, so that to collate the European 'supply' side and the developing country 'demand' side. The resulting inputs have been clustered into 19 proposals, related to the major themes identified by GFAR and EFARD. For each proposal a basic and preliminary description has been prepared which gives indication on the objectives, characteristics, participation, logic/arguments and envisaged activities, as well as on indicative funding figures, ranging from 4 to 30 million Euro. The total amount deemed necessary to carry out the full range of proposals would require 245 million Euro.

The purpose of the 2nd EFARD General Meeting was to develop concrete outcomes for each of the Global Research Programme Initiatives, i.e. development of complementary actions based on the 19 EFARD Action Programme Proposals for the EU-NFP-instruments, the GFAR-Global Partnership Programmes and CGIAR-Challenge Programmes.

The participants confirmed the critical role of the sciences, especially Agricultural Research for Development (ARD), education and training in meeting development challenges, and recognized that Europe has an extensive and valuable expertise in ARD. They also fully recognized that knowledge, competence and expertise is shared among stakeholders both in developed and developing countries, and pledged to increase cooperation between the North and the South.

It was reaffirmed that partnership is the basis of scientific cooperation in ARD, and the importance of involving all stakeholders in setting ARD priorities, designing and implementing programmes, monitoring and evaluating their impacts, as well as in

developing new approaches and methods for greater efficiency was stressed.

Participants also welcomed the concept of the European Research Area (ERA) adopted by the European Union, stressed that ARD should be an integral component of the three ERA domains, and emphasized the contribution of the European ARD knowledge base in formulating European development and science policies.

They stressed that increasing competition for funds should be rooted in a transparent and structured cooperation framework and finally they urged greater coherence in policies relevant to ARD within the European Commission, Member States and other donors, and called for better coordination between them in their support for ARD scientific cooperation, research capacity building and knowledge generation and adoption, and recognized the critical role at the policy level by the European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development (EIARD) for such a coordination.

To translate these principles into concrete and efficient actions, participants decided to: raise European public and political awareness of the importance of ARD; develop mechanisms that will strengthen and sustain the EFARD initiative and increase its legitimacy as a key player in ARD strategy formulation and ARD policy issues in support of and in close collaboration with EIARD; promote and support research proposals that mobilize and strengthen the ERA-ARD expertise to contribute to meeting development objectives; call on the World Food Summit: *five years later* and the World Summit on Sustainable Development to recognize the essential contribution of ARD to achieve poverty alleviation, food security and sustainable development and, with that view, fully support the EIARD paper to the World Food Summit: *five years later*. Next steps include to design and implement an action plan for the 2002-2005 period that will facilitate and support: a) the development and strengthening of National ARD Fora in Europe, b) the formulation of European ARD Action Programmes, and particularly Networks of Excellence or Integrated Projects within the 6th Framework Programme of the European Union, c) the reinforcement of partnerships with partner regions and organizations, d)

an increasing scientific and financial contribution from Europe to GFAR Global Partnership Programmes, CGIAR Challenge Programmes, and regional networks, e) the contribution to the organization of, and active participation in, the next GFAR global triennial meeting to be convened in Dakar, Senegal, in May 2003 and f) the participation of EFARD in relevant international Conferences, meetings and events.

[Conference's proceedings](#)

*Information provided by
Fabien Boulier
EFARD Executive Secretary*

Europe



ECART News

[ECART](#) (The European Consortium for Agricultural Research in the Tropics) was established in the early 1990's as a group of likeminded European institutions working in agricultural research for development. The current membership is [CIRAD](#) (France), [GTZ](#) (Germany), [IAO](#), (Italy), [IICT](#) (Portugal), [NRI](#) (UK) and [NRIL](#) (UK). ECART's members represent more than 3000 professionals with experience in development across the world.

At a meeting of the Director Generals of the organisations making up the Consortium in Brussels in May, several important decisions were made. Firstly, the Wageningen University and Research Centre ([WUR](#)) in the Netherlands formally joined ECART and will be represented at ECART functions by the newly established WUR North South Centre under the direction of Bram Huijsman. Secondly, the ECART DGs agreed in principle to give ECART a more formal status, probably that of an "European Economic Interest Group". Also under consideration were proposals for ECART to appoint a full time director to lead its activities and for it to have a permanent office in Brussels. Final decisions on these matters are due to be made before the end of the year with implementation starting in 2003.

In the mean time, ECART is working with [NATURA](#) and the [EFARD](#) Secretariat to facilitate an "event" as part of "Europe Research 2002" in Brussels November. Europe Research 2002 between the 11 and 13th of

November will be the formal launch of the European Research Area and the New Framework Programme. ECART is playing an active role in designing a workshop as part of this event which will present Europe's long and productive history of joint agricultural research with partners in the South and the importance of maintaining a clear profile for ARD in the future.

Guy Poulter
ECART Executive Secretary

Europe



InfoSys Workshop on Cross-Data-Base Search Florence, Italy

In June colleagues from GFAR, [METAFRO](#), [INIA](#) and [EIARD-InfoSys](#) where invited to [IAO](#) in Florence.

The partner institutions have developed a software for cross database search called **NodeXML** and have already linked their databases. NodeXML is an Open Source Software for cross-database-search.

It is being programmed and implemented in cooperation between InfoSys partners in order to allow a cross-database-search on servers in different locations. Due to the fact that a decentralised approach of dataholding has shown to allow a more efficient maintenance of dataquality, nodeXML was designed to link partners and at the same time assures that information remains in the hands of the data-holder.

InfoSys is the European web resource on Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) composed of a network of European Partners in various Nations. These Partners we call "Nodes", thus the name of our software "nodeXML".

The present status of this software can be viewed under the topic "Projects" on [EIARD-Infosys](#) Website.

Henning Knipschild
EIARD-Infosys Coordinator

Latin America &
Caribbean



The Third FORAGRO International Meeting, 23-26 April, Brasilia, Brazil

The 3rd FORAGRO international Meeting was held 23-26 April 2002 in Brasilia, Brazil, together with the 4th [FORAGRO Executive Committee Meeting](#).

The title of the event was "*Agricultura y Desarrollo Tecnológico: hacia la Integración de las Américas*".

The participants considered that as part of the process of hemispheric integration, it is necessary to promote the development of a regional agenda for technology innovation founded on alliances among the countries of the Americas. Such alliances, with the active participation of governments and members of society in general, especially those who live and work in rural areas, and the support of international technical and financial cooperation organizations, should be aimed at achieving the following **purposes**:

1. To shift agriculture toward an agribusiness system in order to recognize its economic and social importance and fundamental role in national development.
2. To promote increased production, productivity and quality, with a view to improving the competitiveness and diversification of agriculture in the region, food security and sovereignty and the development of new opportunities to produce and add value.
3. To balance agricultural and environmental development, promoting the use of technologies that are less harmful to the environment, and the sustainable management and conservation of natural resources, especially biodiversity and water resources.
4. To promote the combined use of new and conventional technologies, with a view to obtaining products that are profitable, of the highest quality and safe in terms of the environment, agriculture and human health.

5. To contribute to the alleviation of poverty by generating production alternatives based on technologies that will improve living conditions in rural areas and thereby stem the migration of the population, and encourage the management of fragile ecosystems, especially in the tropics.

With this in mind, the participants declared their **intention**:

1. To continue to identify and implement research priorities that will make it possible to tap the opportunities of the new world economic order, reduce rural poverty and conserve natural resources.
2. To ensure that the development of knowledge via agricultural technology innovations is placed high on the agendas of policy makers in the FORAGRO members countries, and of hemispheric integration efforts.
3. To optimize agricultural technology systems in the Americas, so that greater use is made of them and they have a bigger socioeconomic impact.
4. To draw attention to the need for both the public and private sectors to invest more, given the chronically low level of investment in science and technology in most of the countries.
5. To support the modernization of education based on new knowledge and technologies, but also respecting traditional practices, incorporating the new technological paradigms and taking all farmers into consideration, especially small-scale ones.
6. To work to ensure that science and technology figure more prominently on the economic integration agenda, strengthening cooperation between research and development institutions and programs.
7. To continue to call attention to the urgent need for markets to become even more open, and for industrialized countries to reduce the subsidies they grant to their farmers.

The participants considered the following **topics**, presented in random order, to be the most relevant in terms of hemispheric cooperation:

- Water resources (sound use, conservation, quality and availability)
- Genetic resources (conservation, characterization and use)
- Sustainable management of natural resources (soil and biodiversity)
- Promotion and development of agribusinesses
- Technologies using agroecological principles
- Incorporation of small-scale agriculture into agrifood chains
- Clean production (as a prerequisite for market opening, consumer demand and harmonization with nature)
- Development and use of new agricultural technologies (biotechnology and precision agriculture)
- Integrated pest management and integrated crop and livestock management
- Information systems and human resources training
- Climate change

To address these topics, the following **proposals** should be implemented:

1. To consolidate FORAGRO as the most appropriate hemispheric mechanism for facilitating dialogue among the public sector, private sector, universities, NGOs, producers and the international research sector on topics of strategic importance for agriculture, from the perspective of technology. To do this, the Executive Committee must take an active role, strengthening the development of the Technical Secretariat, so that both can participate more effectively in the global system.
2. To promote institutional strengthening, to encourage the reorganization and consolidation of agricultural research programs and networks, recognizing the importance of the Sub-Regional Fora (PROICs), and using them, with support from the countries, as strategic mechanisms in strengthening regional cooperation.
3. To draw attention to the importance of, and strengthen, mechanisms for the funding of

agricultural research, such as the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund- FONTAGRO.

4. To promote strategic alliances with the international and regional centers in areas of research that are a priority for and have an impact on the Americas.
5. To ask the General Directorate of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) to set aside time during the Ministerial Meeting held in conjunction with the Twelfth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) for the presentation of the conclusions of the Third International Meeting of FORAGRO.

All documents can be downloaded from the [FORAGRO website](#)

F.B.

Sub-Saharan Africa



The 3rd CORAF/WECARD General Assembly 23-26 July 2002, Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire

The Third [CORAF/WECARD](#) General Assembly was held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire from the 23rd to the 26th of May 2002. The opening ceremony was attended by traditional leaders of Côte d'Ivoire, the Mayor of Yamoussoukro, government dignitaries, scientists from the host NARS, scientific partners and development partners of CORAF/WECARD. The Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology, Prof. Sery Bailly chaired the ceremony. While declaring open the 3rd General Assembly, he recalled the importance of agriculture to Côte d'Ivoire, and thanked CORAF/WECARD for choosing Côte d'Ivoire for the Assembly.

The Executive Secretary and the Scientific Co-ordinator of CORAF/WECARD presented the annual report of activities of the CORAF Secretariat during the end of the first morning. The afternoon session of the first day was dedicated to a set of

presentations of the partners and donors. 15 presentations have been achieved during this session: (a) 5 presentations from the IARCs ([ISNAR](#), [ICRAF](#), [ICRISAT](#), [ADRAO](#) and [ILRI](#)), two directors of these International Centres were attending at this General Assembly, (b) donors or support Institutions were IFS, SDC, [CTA](#), USAID, EC/DG Research, and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. SDC announced that they were about to stop their support to the ROCAFREMI Network on Millet, (c) other partners such as Greneweca, SAFGRAD, [ECART/EFARD](#) and GFAR.

The round table discussions on NARS' evolution were articulated during the morning of the second day through three main themes: (a) privatisation of agricultural research with Dr. Sie Koffi, General Director of the CNRA of Ivory Coast, as keynote speaker, (b) the role of biotechnologies and the regional study of the P. W. Alhassan for CORAF/WECARD, (c) sustainable production systems have been introduced by Dr. Paco Sereme. Within the panellists involved in these round tables the ASTI ISNAR Initiative and the Challenge Programme led by ICRISAT on biological Nitrogen Fixation were also presented.

A specific meeting of the financial partners has been held as well as a meeting of the scientific partners of CORAF. During this meeting at which GFAR was attending, 7 issues have been addressed: (1) the African Challenge Programme at the stage of pre-request to be discussed during the next AGM in Manila. This Programme was presented as a NARS/FARA led Programme, (2) the regional programmatic integration involving ADRAO, ICRISAT, [IITA](#) and CORAF, (3) Biotechnology, (4) Private sector and access to market, (5) Impact assessment and technology transfer, (6) Scientific capacity strengthening, (7) Management of the General Assembly by the CORAF Secretariat.

The meeting of the Directors of the Institutions Members of CORAF/WECARD led to a renewal of the Executive Committee of the CORAF/WECARD.

The following key decisions and recommendations have been achieved.

New Executive Committee was elected as follows:

- i) Chairman Dr Koffi Sie, Director General of CNRA, Côte d'Ivoire

- ii) Vice Chairman Dr Emmanuel Owusu-Bennoah, Director of NARP (CSIR) Ghana
- iii) Dr Rogers A.D. Jones, Director, NARCC, Sierra Leone
- iv) Dr Papa Abdoulaye Seck, Director General, ISRA, Senegal
- v) Dr Agbobli Comlan Atsu, Director General, ITRA, Togo
- vi) Dr Bani Grégoire, CRAL/ DGRST, Congo
- vii) The place of representatives of NGO, the Farmers' Organisation and the private sector (3 places) were left vacant pending their due nomination.

Africa Challenge Program (CP)

It was clarified that the Africa CP is at a pre-proposal stage and a stakeholders Task Force comprising sub-regional organizations and CG Centers operating in Africa are setting the stage. NARS DGs are involved in the process. The Africa CP must be led by FARA, CORAF/WECARD (for WCA) and NARS, with a Steering Committee.

CORAF/WECARD Calendar

a. Meetings of the Executive Committee:

- i) November 2002 in Dakar – Budget session; adoption of the work plan and annual budget. The Chair will consult with the Secretary for the choice of a convenient date.
- ii) 3rd week of March 2003, during the 4th General Assembly to be held in Abuja (Nigeria) or Bamako (Mali).
- iii) June 2003 – midterm review of the activities of Executive Secretariat and operational units.

b. CORAF/WECARD General Assembly:

4th General Assembly: 3rd week of March 2003 at Abuja (Nigeria) or Bamako (Mali).

Sub-Saharan Africa



Elements of NEPAD's Agricultural Development Strategy

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a commitment by Africa's political leaders to eradicate poverty and reposition Africa on the road to sustainable growth and development, has generated tremendous enthusiasm and excitement world-wide as a harbinger of economic prosperity for the African continent. Born from a merger of the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP) and the Omega Plan, NEPAD is the brainchild of five African Presidents; Bouteflika of Algeria, Mbeki of South Africa, Mubarak of Egypt, Obasanjo of Nigeria and Wade of Senegal. It was established on October 23, 2001 with its secretariat hosted in Pretoria, South Africa.

NEPAD has many diverse pillars, regrouped into three distinct but overarching areas: a) conditions for sustainable development; b) sectoral priority interventions and c) mobilisation of resources. It considers the pre-requisites for achieving sustainable development to be the following: i) peace, security, democracy and political governance; ii) economic and corporate governance; and iii) regional & sub-regional approaches to development.

Agriculture features prominently among six sectoral interventions identified as highest priority to be addressed by NEPAD. This is at a time when agriculture is begging for renewed focus, against the backdrop of too little donor and multilateral development agency commitment and support to the sector. NEPAD has recognised agriculture as a key area of intervention because of its obvious links to food security and because it is the largest contributor to employment creation and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in most African states. The other sectoral priority areas are: infrastructure (especially information, communication technologies, energy, water and sanitation); human resources (including education, skills development, reversing the brain

drain and health); science & technology, environment and culture.

Considering the magnitude of the NEPAD programme, enormous resources have to be mobilised for implementation. NEPAD proposes to access resources through i) financial structures & instruments (banks; debt relief, foreign direct investment and overseas development assistance) and ii). markets (exports, product diversification, reduction of developed country subsidies, tourism, manufacturing and mining).

What are NEPAD's prescriptions for African agriculture given its generally weak and unimpressive performance? NEPAD will focus on six major constraints hindering progress in African agriculture: namely, the problem faced by rural populations in accessing resources required for investment in agriculture; inadequate and inefficient agricultural systems; low purchasing power of rural people; climate uncertainty and lack of access to irrigation; weak institutional support (e.g., research and extension services). These challenges to agricultural development will be tackled through four priority interventions (projects or programmes) to be fast-tracked for implementation in the short term (i.e., phase one projects). These programmes when implemented will contribute to improving agricultural productivity while at the same time guaranteeing the sustainability of Africa's natural resources. Of particular interest to practitioners and stakeholders in agricultural research at the national, regional and global levels is the programme being proposed to strengthen and refocus the capacity of Africa's agricultural research and extension systems. This programme will address the issue of upgrading of the physical and institutional infrastructure that supports African agriculture, and investment in effective and sustainable agricultural technology generation, adoption and education systems. Alongside this programme, are the integrated land and water management plan for Africa, promoting the expansion of rice and cotton production and resource mobilisation. A governance structure comprising a Council of Ministers of Agriculture at the highest level of decision-making is being recommended.

S. B-O.



South African National Agricultural Research Forum becomes a reality

The long-awaited National Agricultural Research Forum (**NARF**) was launched on the 22 – 23 May 2002 when the 'terms of reference' were adopted and a steering committee appointed. The formal establishment of the Forum will take place later in the year when Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs, Ms Thoko Didiza approves the work plan.

The Secretariat of the Forum lies with the Department of Agriculture in the person of Mr R J Sebola, Senior Manager: Scientific Research and Development. Members of the Steering Committee were chosen from organizations doing research, government and organized agriculture.

One of the directives in the Agricultural Sector Plan is ensuring that agricultural research efforts of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), the University Faculties of Agriculture, the Provincial Departments of Agriculture (PDA)'s and other agricultural research institutions are coordinated and focused on strategic priorities aimed at sustained competitiveness. The Forum is part of reaching this goal.

A long series of consultative sessions and extensive consultation among major stakeholders led to a consensus agreement to establish a National Agricultural Research Forum. The primary aim of the Forum will be the facilitation of an integrated approach to agricultural research and technology development. The Forum will also act as advisory body on research and development to the Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs, and make proposals to government on matters relating to research and technology transfer.

In her keynote address Ms Njabulo Nduli, Deputy Director-General: Agricultural Production and Resources Management, said that calls were being made to increase funding for research. Dr Owen Masemela of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, said that government spending on research and technology lags far behind their counterparts in

the southern hemisphere: 0,69 % of GNP compared to 1,49 % in Australia and 2,47 % in Korea. South Africa also has only 7 researchers for every 10 000 members of the labour force, compared to 27 in Korea and 48 in Australia.

According to Ms Nduli, the Forum would ensure better collaboration between different parties. Duplication can be avoided and assets better utilised. It would also make research more demand-driven and competitive. Mr Jack Raath, CEO of Agri SA, said that agriculture in South Africa is a success story, and that research and development made a huge contribution to that success.

*Information provided by
Njabulo Nduli
Deputy Director-General
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West Asia & North Africa Region

The First FARA General Assembly 21-22 March, Maputo, Mozambique

The transformation process from the Special Programme on African Agricultural Research (**SPAAR**) under the World Bank to an African-owned, Africa-based and African-led Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (**FARA**) came to an end with the holding of the 1st General Assembly meeting of FARA in Maputo, Mozambique, March 21 – 22, 2002. A hundred participants representing a cross section of actors and stakeholders in African agricultural research attended the meeting. The FARA General Assembly was officially opened by the Mozambican Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development and featured addresses from the Mayor of Maputo, the Vice Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, representatives of SADC, the World Bank and the Chairman of FARA.

The following significant decisions and recommendations arrived at constitute the major highlights of the FARA General Assembly:

- i)** Ratification of the FARA Constitution;
- ii)** Adoption of the FARA/FAO agreement for hosting the FARA

Secretariat within the FAO sub-regional office in Accra, Ghana;

iii) FARA's new governing body elected by acclamation with members consisting of:

- Chair – *Joseph Mukiibi*
- Vice-Chair – *Adama Traore*
- Representatives of sub-regional organisations – *Romano Kiome (ASARECA), Adama Traore (CORAF/WECARD) & Keoagile Molapong (SACCAR)*
- Private Sector representative – *Gisele d'Almeida*
- Farmer's Organisation representative – *Ann A. Wambaa*
- NGOs & Foundations representative – *Florence Wambugu*
- International Scientific Partners representative – *Kanayo Nwanze*
- Development Partners representative – *World Bank*
- Ex-officio member – *Monty Jones (Executive Secretary of FARA)*

iv) Review and endorsement of FARA's programme proposal for NEPAD;

v) FARA to establish linkages and engage agro-industry and trading sector on the continent, UN Conventions on the environment (climate change, biodiversity and desertification), emerging initiatives on African agricultural development and political and financial bodies (advocate for increased public funding for agricultural research);

vi) Endorsement of need for national and regional level action-oriented programmes in HIV/AIDS awareness and appropriate technologies to cope with HIV/AIDS;

vii) Establishment of a working group to develop guidelines on regional competitive funds. Following the World Bank's concept note on Sustainable Financing and the presentation made by the DG Research of the European Commission, EC invited all three Sub-Regional Fora to a meeting in Brussels in order to design and harmonize the management system of competitive grant for the SRF, based on their own strategy and priorities;

viii) Endorsement of the formulation of FARA's strategic plan;

ix) Need for advocacy to stimulate recognition and legitimise FARA as the technical advisory body for agricultural research in Africa.

The FARA General Assembly was preceded by African Agricultural Research Week (March 17 – 20),

during which seminars on NEPAD, Sustainable financing and HIV/AIDS were held and participants afforded the opportunity to visit the Chokwe District in Mozambique's Gaza Province, an area badly affected by flooding the past two years.

NGOs



Farmers' Organizations



S.B.-O.

Uganda Agricultural Research and Development Network (UARDN)

A Workshop on Research-Extension-Farmers and Market linkages in Uganda was held last 14-17 May 2002.

The 3-day workshop brought together 35 participants from 23 institutions representing six categories of Actors in agricultural research for development (ARD), namely international research centers; national agricultural research institutes; local, national and international NGOs; religious sector; farmer organizations, and private sector.

The workshop, jointly convened by VeCo-Uganda and the NGO committee of the CGIAR, looked into the various organizations and initiatives in ARD that are taking place in Uganda. Participants discussed gaps in information access and involvement by the different actors in ARD. They also proposed a way forward for a more meaningful engagement by all stakeholders in ARD.

One of the main outputs is the establishment of the Uganda Agricultural Research and Development Network (UARDN). Its mission is to facilitate information exchange for improved competence in the Agricultural sector in order to improve the welfare of the people of Uganda. It will be focusing on addressing issues related to capacity building, service provision, support structure and marketing, and various constraints related to information, participation and networking.

Further queries can be addressed to Ms [Monica Kapiriri](#) Co-Chair of NGOC of the CGIAR and affiliated Environmental Alert, Uganda.

O.O.

GFAR at the 35th World Farmer's Congress in Gizah, Egypt

These last few months have been very active for agriculture and Farmer's Organizations: the 35th World Farmer's Congress (WFC) in Gizah, Egypt; the World Food Summit: five years later and the NGO Forum for Food Sovereignty which established an action agenda and several strategy statements relating to civil society concerns on food, among others.

GFAR attended the 35th World Farmer's Congress and played a coordinating role in first session of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) Science and Technology Committee. The discussion focused on farmer and Farmer's Organization's participation in agricultural research, particularly in the context of the breakdown of the Researcher-Extension Worker-Farmer triangle. It was stressed that this time of change provides an opportunity for the farming community to ensure that any new structures that are being established will benefit farmers by increasing their participation in research and their access to relevant research results. Farmers must participate in the reforming of research processes and agendas to ensure that they are included in every step of the research process, and that the research is conducted according to their needs and demands. IFAP identified it's regional focal points for Agricultural Research for Development and GFAR looks forward to working with the committee on ARD activities and promoting people- centered research processes.

During the conference a proposal for a GFAR Initiative on Strengthening the Participation of Farmers' Organisations and of NGOs in the Global Agenda of Agricultural Research for Development was also presented. This initiative is designed to ensure that civil society, including farmer's organizations, have an active and effective representation in ARD decision-making bodies. The presentation was part of a multi-step consultation process to ensure that the potential participants of this project contributed to its design and

West Asia & North Africa Region



AARINENA 8th General Conference 26-28 May, Amman, Jordan

The 8th General Conference of the Association of Agricultural Research Institutes in the Near East and North Africa ([AARINENA](#)) was held last 26-28 May 2002 in Amman, Jordan.

Dr. Abed Al-Nabi Fardous, Director General of Jordan's National Centre for Agricultural Research & Technology Transfer (NCARRT), was elected President with Dr. Mohammad Roozitalab of the Agricultural Research, Education and Extension Organization ([AREEO](#)) in Iran, as Vice-President.

During this regional conference, it was decided that the seat of AARINENA will be moved to Amman, Jordan with NCARRT hosting the Secretariat, and Mr. Ra'ed Badwan will be its Executive Secretary.

AARINENA, in collaboration with the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute ([IPGRI](#)), will establish two networks: the first a Network on Olive (oil and crop) and second one on herbal and medicinal plants. In order to promote collaboration and synergy, the AARINENA Date Palm Network and the Global Network on Date Palm established by the United Arab Emirates University will be merged.

Other upcoming activities include a workshop on regional and national agricultural information system in November/December 2002 in collaboration with GFAR, [FAO](#) and [ICARDA](#).

thereby ensured that it was tailored to their needs. To find out more about the project please contact the GFAR Secretariat.

Farmer's Organisations will also be involved in the preparations and organization of the GFAR 2003 Conference which will take place in Dakar, Senegal in May, 2003. The general theme of the conference will be on the linkage among research, rural innovation and development.

There will be a change of Staff at the Farmer's Research Desk of the GFAR Secretariat in the coming months. Sara McHattie, who has held the position since September 2001, has left at the end of July. In September, Lani Trenouth will join the team. She will be sponsored by the Canadian government through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. Ms. Trenouth has experience working in Central and South America and is interested in Environmental Sciences and Land Management.

S.M.

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