



GFAR

GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Newsletter

Issue 23/2008 – February 2008

Editorial

News from the Global Forum

> Decisions made in Maputo pave the way for big changes in agricultural research for development

Areas of Focus

Partnerships in Practice

- > AARINENA General Conference discusses future work plans
- > The Global Forum Moves to Strengthen Civil Society
- > Innovation and Knowledge Prove Vital at the FORAGRO General Assembly
- > FP7 Programme of the European Commission

Global Advocacy

- > Looking towards the Science Forum 2009: Using Innovative Science to Address Poverty Alleviation
- > APAARI: A Declaration on Climate Change
- > Global Climate Change Conference in Alexandria discusses dryland regional response to environmental changes
- > Agriculture Must be Considered to Combat Climate Change

Institutional Change

- > CGIAR: The Transition Begins

Knowledge for All

- > Global Forum participation in the World Conference on IT in Agriculture
- > Workshop on New Ways of Sharing Information Benefit Many in Maputo
- > The launch of the CIARD initiative
- > The CGIAR Knowledge Sharing in Research (KSiR) Program
- > FARA communications: the FARA Blogger
- > Knowledge "Share Fair" makes an impact at FAO Headquarters

Other News

- > Dr Raj Paroda receives Lifetime Achievement Award

2009 brings many new challenges for us all in our commitment to creating a world free from poverty and hunger. These past few months have seen some important milestones for the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR). Perhaps the most immediately significant is the role played by GFAR in the Change Management Process of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural research (CGIAR). By bringing together the perspectives of all those concerned with the future of agricultural research for development, GFAR has played an important role in ensuring that your views have actively contributed to this process. Through these discussions, effective partnership and delivery of development outcomes are now central to the purposes of the reformed international research system.

Formal agreement on change in the CGIAR was reached at the CGIAR AGM in Maputo, but the real work only starts there. A Transition Management Team (TMT) is steering the transition process to establish the new arrangements and ways of working now required of the international agricultural research system. I have been invited to represent GFAR in this Team and will do all I can to represent and link the needs of the CGIAR's many partners into these processes. Your thoughts and inputs will always be welcome.

During the CGIAR AGM 2008, it was also agreed that GFAR would take the lead in organizing, together with the Alliance of CG Centers and our other stakeholders, a biennial Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD). The first of these will take place in February 2010 in Montpellier, France. To lead design and programming of this major event, a multi-stakeholder Task Force is being established under the chairmanship of Dr Monty Jones, World Food Prize Laureate and Executive Director of FARA.

This Conference will replace both the CGIAR annual AGM and the GFAR Triennial Conference and will highlight the importance of inclusiveness and working together to achieve today's agricultural research and humanitarian goals. It will review international research needs and establish forward plans on priorities, partnerships and the resources and capacities required.

Over the year ahead, through GFAR's networks of partners, we aim to foster and support processes of consultation in each region, mobilizing knowledge and opinion on priority needs of countries around the world from the research systems and stakeholder communities concerned. GFAR's roles in global advocacy on agricultural research issues, fostering institutional change in research, extension and education, innovative international partnerships and knowledge dissemination are increasingly drawn on by a wide range of development partners. In 2009, all of the constituents of the Global Forum from around the world look forward to working closely with the renewed CGIAR in this new era of agricultural research *for development*.

Mark Holderness
Executive Secretary



News from the Global Forum

Decisions made in Maputo pave the way for big changes in agricultural research for development

The GFAR Steering and Programme Committees, as well as the GFAR Donor Support Group met from 26 November to 29 November, before the 2008 CGIAR AGM, to discuss important issues surrounding the future plan of action and course for GFAR.

A wide array of issues were discussed during the GFAR Steering Committee meeting, from GFAR's involvement in the CGIAR Change Management Process and its proposed outcomes to processes for strengthening GFAR's regional networks and engagement with the private sector and civil society. The Committee placed particular emphasis on Global Forum's role in policy and advocacy work in areas such as climate change, support to the wider involvement of civil society in research planning and implementation and an expansion of information and communication management activities. Promotion of inter-regional learning and partnership also featured strongly, particularly in areas such as linking farmers to markets, where a new initiative has been developed through an inter-regional task force and is now awaiting external support.

The resources required for GFAR to deliver on the various roles expected of it over the coming years were requested from the GFAR Donor Support Group, who will be meeting again in February to firm up their commitments against the GFAR Plan of Work.

Following the GFAR Statutory meetings, GFAR and the Alliance of CGIAR Centers co-organized a day of plenary discussion and 'world café' roundtables around priority needs and behavioural changes required to create a more effective, impact-centred system. Several hundred participants finished the day making personal pledges towards achieving constructive change. Many participants were asked to identify one personal commitment to change, as well as a key change that they thought was necessary to improve output both within their own centres as well as within other institutions. Would you like to know what everyone said? Check the Global Forum's website at www.egfar.org for these documents and others new additions to the Document Repository.

The CGIAR AGM later unanimously approved the proposed changes to the CGIAR. Among these recommendations was a proposal for a biennial

Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development, to be organized through GFAR in collaboration with the Alliance and Science Council of the CGIAR. The processes leading to this Conference will review global research needs and determine future priorities, partnerships, and resources available to address



Dr Adel El-Beltagy, Chair of GFAR, speaks with His Excellency Armando Guebuza, President of Mozambique. Katherine Sierra, Vice President for Sustainable Development at the World Bank also at the GFAR booth.

these needs.

The first of these conferences is scheduled for February 2010, to be held in Montpellier, France. GFAR will now be establishing a multi-stakeholder task force to lead the design and programming of the meeting.

For further information about GFAR's involvement in the CGIAR Change Management Process, please click [here](#)¹ or for a summary of CGIAR Business Meeting, please click [here](#)².

If you would like to know more about upcoming GFAR Statutory meetings or the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development, check back for updates [here](#)³.

L. B.

¹ http://www.cgiar.org/enews/december2008/story_04.html

² http://www.cgiar.org/pdf/agm08/agm08_business_meeting_sop.pdf

³ <http://www.egfar.org/egfar/website/new>



Partnerships in Practice

AARINENA

AARINENA General Conference discusses future work plans



The 11th General Assembly of the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA) held from 12 to 14 October 2008 in Damascus, Syria discussed the organization's work plan and areas of focus for the 2008-2011 period and produced a series of recommendations for further work.

For the upcoming three years, AARINENA will continue to strengthen its Regional Agricultural Information System (RAIS) through training workshops and improvement of its current website, which will enable information to be uploaded and organized quickly and more

to the current challenges faced in the WANA region, AARINENA requested adequate financial support from the CGIAR and donor organizations to further regional agricultural research and development. To learn more about the outcomes, recommendations and discussion items of the AARINENA General Assembly, please click [here](#).

L. B.

Civil Society

The Global Forum Moves to Strengthen Civil Society

GFAR is keen on strengthening Civil Society engagement amongst those who care about the future of agriculture. To this end, the GFAR Secretariat has engaged Ms Monica Kapiriri as a consultant to examine the current status of Civil Society engagement and research planning processes around the world and to propose ways of strengthening the voices of the poor in the prioritization and implementation of research.

If you are interested in contributing or wish to take part in this survey, please contact Ms. Monica Kapiriri via GFAR-Secretariat@fao.org.

L. B.

FORAGRO

Innovation and Knowledge Prove Vital at the FORAGRO General Assembly



Centered around the idea that agricultural knowledge and innovation are the key factors in alleviating the global problems that face the world's poor; the Fifth International Reunion of FORAGRO from 31 July to 1 August 2008 brought together constituencies from around the world to speak about how to better address these pressing global issues.

Participants called on constituencies at every level to form renewed partnerships, which should follow a set of objectives set forth in the "Declaration of Montevideo 2008." While focusing on the theme of innovation, the Declaration vows to counteract the effects of climate change on agriculture through technological innovation; encourage institutions at every level to promote the use of research,



Damascus, Syria. Participants in the AARINENA General Assembly

efficiently. AARINENA will also place strong emphasis on redefining the priorities for the WANA region through an Expert Consultant as well as support the establishment of a global partnership programme for Linking Farmers to Markets (LFM).

Recommendations from the Conference included a commitment from both AARINENA and its member national organizations in identifying the priorities for each area of agricultural research where knowledge sharing will produce the most benefit for sustainable development. In addition, AARINENA also committed to updating the assessment study of the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) of the WANA region which was conducted in 1990. Due



knowledge-sharing and scientific modernization; and improve food stability and development of nations by promoting sustainable agriculture. Some of the topics which the participants considered to be of the highest global importance included conservation and use of genetic resources, adaptation to climate change with a focus on soil and water, further increased technological innovations, and the development and safe use of new agricultural biotechnologies.

Please click [here](#) for more information on the [Fifth International Reunion](#)⁴ and its [Declaration](#)⁵.

L. B.

EFARD

FP7 Programme of the European Commission



The 3rd Call of the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) of the European Commission (Food, Agriculture, Fisheries and Biotechnology) has been published.

It contains a number of research topics which are directly related to Agricultural Research for Development and the MDGs.

The main research topics include:

- (1) Agricultural Innovation Systems & Traditional knowledge (CSA-SA)
- (2) Optimisation of methods to maintain animal biodiversity (CP-FP-SICA)
- (3) Conservation agriculture in Developing Countries. (CSA-SA)
- (4) Improving performance and quality of crops in the context of organic and low-input systems by breeding and management (CP-IP – Targeted opening)
- (5) Irrigation water saving solutions for Mediterranean agriculture (CP-FP-SICA)
- (6) Water stress tolerance (large scale integrating project – Targeted opening)
- (7) Policy and institutional aspects of sustainable agriculture, forestry and rural development in

⁴<http://infoagro.net/shared/docs/a2/FORAGRO2008.html>

⁵<http://infoagro.net/shared/docs/a2/FORAGRO2008/DeclarationMontevideo.pdf>

the Mediterranean partner countries (CP-FP-SICA)

(8) International food trade: anticipating the impact of climate change on the safety of European and global food markets (SICA)

(9) Valorisation of by-products in food processing

The expected EC contribution for the above projects can be estimated to be around 24 million €.

Please visit the EC website for more updates at cordis.europa.eu⁶.

*from the desk of
Jean-Luc Khalfaoui
Executive Secretary
European Initiative for Agricultural
Research for Development*

Science Council

Looking towards the Science Forum 2009: Using Innovative Science to Address Poverty Alleviation

The CGIAR Science Council is organizing a science forum in partnership with The Alliance and Global Forum on Agricultural Research, to be co-sponsored and hosted by Wageningen UR in the Netherlands, on **16-17 June 2009**.

The Science Forum directly contributes towards the 2010 Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD). Specifically concerned with the issues and prospects around mobilizing advanced science, it will inform both regional consultations and subsequent global discussion as to how advanced science might better benefit the poor and how it should best be mobilized in support of international development.

If you would like to read more on the upcoming Science Forum in June, please click [here](#)⁷.

L. B.

⁶http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7DetailsCallPage&call_id=143



Global Advocacy: Climate Change

APAARI



APAARI: A Declaration on Climate Change

A recent international conference: 'Global Climate Change - Imperatives for Agricultural Research and Development', co-organized by the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) and the Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences and co-sponsored by GFAR, has released an important Declaration that commits each sector in the agricultural world to pledge their support to mitigating the effects of climate change. The "Tsukuba Declaration on Adapting Agriculture to Climate Change" was formulated during the conference from 21 to 22 October 2008 in Tsukuba, Japan.

During the conference 158 participants from 30 countries discussed the vulnerability of the Asia-Pacific region which sustains almost half of the global population, has a high rate of population growth as well as staggering poverty. These participants re-affirmed the IPCC's assertion that the developing countries of the Asia-Pacific region, especially the megadeltas of Asia, are extremely vulnerable due to their predominance in agriculture and over-exploitation of natural resources.

Prominent constituencies vowed to take the necessary steps to enhance water efficiency, increase food security through boosting local food production, further agricultural research for genotypes more tolerant to the stresses of climate change, and increase investment in severe weather early warning systems.

To find out more about the acknowledgements and pledges for support in the Tsukuba Declaration, please click [here](http://www.apaari.org/new/images/AP_Documents/Meetings_OR_Events/ClimateChange_Oct2008/tsukuba%20declaration.pdf)⁸.

L. B.

⁸http://www.apaari.org/new/images/AP_Documents/Meetings_OR_Events/ClimateChange_Oct2008/tsukuba%20declaration.pdf

IFAP

Agriculture Must be Considered to Combat Climate Change

The United Nations Conference on Climate Change, which took place in Poznan, Poland in December 2008, was a vital stepping stone in laying the groundwork for an international response to climate change from governments throughout the world.

During this Conference, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) in cooperation with the private sector platform CropLife International and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research hosted a side event which detailed the importance of agriculture in climate change policy.

The event was moderated by the Vice President of IFAP, Elisabeth Gauffin. The session reviewed ways in which agriculture has an impact on climate change and covered an array of issues such as the challenges and opportunities of livestock grazing, the potential of conservation tillage and plant biotechnology, as well as inventive ways of using manure for clean energy and bio-gas.



Al Gore speaks at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Poznan, Poland

Mark Holderness, GFAR Executive Secretary, served as the keynote speaker during this session and presented a paper entitled, "Climate Change and Agriculture: New Knowledge Needs in a Changing World", in which he highlighted the vital role that agricultural research plays in



mitigating and adapting to climate change and the commitment that is required from all those who care about not just agriculture, but the environment.

If you would like to watch a video of the presentations in this session, please click [here](#)⁹.

L. B.

empower the communities to benefit from the outcome of these efforts as they face the climate change."

Please click [here](#)¹⁰ for the IDDC website if you would like to learn more about the Conference.

L. B.

IDDC

Global Climate Change Conference in Alexandria discusses dryland regional response to environmental changes

The Ninth International Conference on Development of Drylands (ICDD), with the theme "Sustainable Development in the Dry Lands - Meeting the Challenge of Global Climate Change" was co-sponsored by GFAR. This event hosted more than 450 participants from over 40 countries, as they convened in Alexandria, Egypt from 7 to 10 November 2008, to discuss and set clear actions on how to move forward to cope with today's climate change crisis as it affects the arid land areas. As many as 144 oral presentations were presented by scientists and agricultural representatives alike to discuss critical issues such as desertification processes, biodiversity conservation, and the reduction of greenhouse gases through the harnessing of renewable energy, to name a few.

These highly critical issues captured the attention of the Egyptian government and other major players in agricultural research. Dr Ismail Serageldin, President of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, kicked off the inaugural session with an astounding speech which opened the floor for the crucial deliberations that followed. The inaugural session, chaired by Prof. Adel El-Beltagy, chair of the IDDC, was also attended by H.E. the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, as well as Senior Officials from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and the Ministry of Energy.

The conference discussions clearly concluded that it is vital to "enhance the awareness of the impact of climate change at all levels of society, attract investment in research to develop coping strategies, forge regional and international linkages for mobilizing cutting-edge science integrated with traditional knowledge for developing adaptive and mitigation measures, and bring about institutional reforms and



Dr Adel El-Beltagy speaks at the Global Climate Change Conference at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Alexandria, Egypt

⁹<http://copportal1.man.poznan.pl/Archive.aspx?EventID=86&Lang=floor>

¹⁰ http://www.icarda.org/Announcement/2008/9th-IDDC/9th-IDDC_FirstAnn.htm



Institutional Change

CGIAR

CGIAR: The Transition Begins

From the CGIAR website: Now that the proposal for a revitalized CGIAR is approved, we will enter into a transition phase. The CGIAR Members appointed a Transition Management Team (TMT) to oversee implementation of the agreed changes. The TMT provides monthly progress updates. [Click here for the "TMT Updates"](#).

Over the course of 2009, the Consortium of Centers and the new CGIAR Fund will be established. In addition to making changes to our structures, we [the CGIAR] will need to change how we work together, continuing to build a system mindset and strengthen our partnerships. Streams of work, deliverables and timelines to implement the transition are currently being developed by the TMT. These will focus on the key elements of the new CGIAR, namely the Consortium, Fund, Strategy and Results Framework, Mega-programs, Partnerships, the Conference on Agricultural Research for Development, accountability, monitoring and evaluation, positioning of the CGIAR, system-wide issues, and culture change and behavioural shifts.

During the transition, changes will be monitored to ensure that they meet the criteria of clear strategic focus; increased research output, outcome and impact; greater efficiency, effectiveness and relevance; simplicity and clarity of governance; enhanced decentralized decision making; and active subsidiarity to capitalize on complementarities between the Centers.

For more information in the Change Management Process, please click [here](#)¹¹.

¹¹ <http://www.cgiar.org/changemanagement>

¹¹ <http://www.scienceforum2009.nl/Home/tabid/259/Default.aspx>

CGIAR

Meet the members of the Transition Management Team

At the Annual General Meeting 2008, the CGIAR established a Transition Management Team (TMT) to oversee the agreed revitalization of the CGIAR. Led by **Katherine Sierra**, CGIAR Chair, members of the TMT include:

- **Stephen Hall** (CGIAR Alliance Executive Chair; Director General, WorldFish Center)
- **Mark Holderness** (Executive Secretary, Global Forum for Agricultural Research)
- **Jonathan Wadsworth** (Senior Agriculture Research Advisor, Department for International Development, UK)
- **Ren Wang** (CGIAR Director)

Rudy Rabbinge (CGIAR Science Council Chair) will act as Adviser to the TMT Chair, and **Iftikhar Mostafa** (CGIAR Secretariat Governance and Partnership Advisor) will serve as Secretary to the TMT. The following associate members will be called on to provide specific advice as needed:

- **Isabel Alvarez** (Director of the Research and Extension Division, Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO) will advise on connecting the new CGIAR with multilateral organizations
- **Derek Byerlee** (Science Council Member) will advise on scientific matters
- **Vicki Wilde** (Director, CGIAR Gender & Diversity Program) will advise on gender and diversity matters



Knowledge for All

GFAR

GFAR participation in the World Conference on Agricultural Information and IT 2008

The World Conference on Agricultural Information and IT was held in Atsugi (Tokyo), Japan, from 24 to 27 August 2008.

The joint Conference included three major events: the 12th World Congress of the International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists (IAALD), the 6th Conference of the Asian Federation of Information Technology in Agriculture (AFITA), and the 6th World Congress on Computers in Agriculture (WCCA).

GFAR sponsored a pre-Conference joint theme workshop on "Adoption of ICT Enabled Information Systems for Agricultural Development and Rural Viability" facilitated by Ajit Maru and Ehud Gelb, who reported to the Conference summary plenary.

The goal of the workshop was to provide a venue for an exchange of experience, opinions and solutions on the core issues of Information Systems for Agricultural Development, their adoption, impact and constraints. The outcome of workshop discussions is being captured in a Report, available in the first months of 2009, which includes recommendations for alleviating constraints and allocating development and application priorities.

GFAR also presented the Global ARD Web Ring concept in the IAALD session on "New Developments in Information Systems to Access Agricultural Research Outputs" and participated in the series of sessions on "Extension Service, Rural Development, ICT Adoption and policy" and in the 9th AOS workshop organized by FAO.

A. M., V. P.

CIARD

CIARD launched on 28 August 2008

The Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development (CIARD) initiative, for which GFAR and FAO provides a hub facilitating linkages between the many organizations

involved, was officially launched on August 26th 2008 during the World Conference on Agricultural Information and IT, jointly organized by IAALD and AFITA in Atsugi (Tokyo, Japan).

Ajit Maru (GFAR) introduced the initiative, Stephen Rudgard (FAO) discussed the background of CIARD and its objectives, Peter



Professor Mei from China, Ajit Maru, Peter Ballantyne and Stephen Rudgard: August 2008 at Atsugi, Japan
* From the IAALD Flickr channel

Ballantyne (IAALD) introduced the Manifesto, Myra Wopereis (FARA) referred to CIARD's focus on the perspectives of the National Agricultural Research Systems, and lastly Chris Addison (Euforic) synthesized what it means to participate in CIARD.

The launch was attended by around 200 participants in the Conference whose response was very positive. The speakers called for interested parties to join the initiative, and as a first action to contribute to the finalization of the guidelines in the Manifesto.

from the CIARD website
www.ciard.net

GFAR

Workshop on New Ways of Sharing Information Benefit Many in Maputo

A group of actors representing several prominent organizations active in generating and enabling use of information, knowledge, skills and technology met on 4 and 5 December at



Maputo, Mozambique to discuss how to improve knowledge sharing and exchange, agricultural education and learning in communities especially through partnership and collaboration. This meeting was organized by GFAR along with CGIAR, COL and YPARD.

Previous pathways to new information and knowledge from universities and research institutions for agricultural communities were linear, passing from scientists to extension agents onto farming communities. New information and communications technologies have demonstrated potential to change knowledge pathways for these communities. These pathways can now be as in a network with multiple sources of new knowledge beyond the local university or research institutes and their platform. This has potential to usher new systems and processes for knowledge sharing and exchange, not only from scientists to agricultural communities but vice versa, enabling blending of knowledge from various sources and making the knowledge more relevant and useful.

The Workshop considered the needs for improving knowledge sharing and exchange from research institutions such as the CGIAR Centres and universities with the ultimate goal of enabling agricultural communities to learn and innovate. The Workshop recommended that universities generate these new skills in its alumni.

This workshop also generated fresh ideas for better connectedness and led by example via another fresh and effective tool coined as "social reporting" for allowing participation of those in the Workshop who could physically be at Maputo. As described by Josien Kampa, who coordinated the online reporting, "Social reporting is where a group of participants at an event interactively and jointly contribute to some form of reporting, in text, photos, images or video. The resulting 'social report' is made accessible, usually online, as soon as possible, sometimes as a half-product. This allows others to join in, to extend, to adjust or remix."

Hours before and after the workshops' start, there were already blogs made and pictures and videos posted. This type of up-to-the-minute communications style is gaining more popularity in the world of agricultural research for development.

More information on this Workshop can be found [here](#)¹².

L. B.

FAO

Knowledge "Share Fair" makes an impact at FAO Headquarters

Ever wondered exactly what micro-blogging is, or how to edit video so that it contributes to knowledge sharing in an organization or a community? From 20 to 22 January, participants found out how to do just this and more at the FAO-hosted 3 day "Knowledge Share Fair", jointly organized by Bioversity International, CGIAR, ICT-KM programme, FAO, IFAD and WFP,

Offering hands-on training sessions and lectures in methods for knowledge sharing such as blogging, using wikis, creating effective



Valeria Pesce, GFAR ICT Specialist and Mark Holderness, GFAR Executive Secretary [pictured far right] present GFAR website at the FAO Share Fair

newsletters, video editing, social bookmarking, podcasting and countless other useful topics to make for a more connected world of agricultural research for development, the Share Fair was a huge hit.

GLOBAL FORUM Staff not only participated in the Share Fair, but also contributed through seminars and discussing website functionality for knowledge sharing.

During a session entitled "Knowledge Gateways", Valeria Pesce, GFAR ICT Specialist and Mark Holderness, GFAR Executive Secretary made a presentation on the GFAR's web space, www.egfar.org Also presented alongside [egfar.org](http://www.egfar.org) were two of FAO's own websites, the "UN Atlas of the Oceans" and "European Forest Week". This session discussed the common goal between the 3 web spaces, in which they aimed to share large amounts of information contributed from many different sources.

¹² <http://ictkm.wordpress.com/tag/kelmaputo/>



In an interview conducted by Paul Van Mele of the Africa Rice Center (WARDA) during the Share Fair, Dr Holderness spoke on the importance of searching out the many media and methods by which knowledge can be shared amongst rural communities and research institutions. He noted that WARDA also captures the idea of a "multitude of learning", which is so necessary in reaching the largest number of people through communications. To hear more of what Dr Holderness had to say, please click [here](#)¹³ to watch the video.

Should you wish to read more on the Share Fair and it's outcomes, please visit the [official website](#)¹⁴.

To watch on-the-spot interviews of what participants had to say about their views on effective knowledge sharing, please click [here](#)¹⁵.

L. B.

FARA

FARA communications: the FARA Blogger



The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) has been running a very active blog for over a year.

Thanks to a small group of very active bloggers this tool has become an interesting place where one can find regularly updated information on ARD-related activities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The blog posts are often accompanied by video interviews with people commenting on the events and issues covered by the articles.

The articles cover regional events, like the recent FARA meeting with AGRO ECO in November 2008 and the SCARDA Agricultural Research Management (ARM) Course in December 2008, as well as relevant international events having an impact on ARD, like the recent meeting on "Agricultural Knowledge Sharing, Education & Learning: Needs and Priorities" (co-organized by GFAR, CGIAR, COL and YPARD) and the CGIAR AGM, both held in December in Maputo, Mozambique.

Please click [here](#)¹⁶ for the FARA Blog.

V. P.

¹³ <http://www.warda.org/warda/guide-feedback.asp>

¹⁴ <http://intranet.fao.org/offsiteframe.jsp?uu=http://www.sharefair.net/>

¹⁵ <http://sharefair.blip.tv/#1695926>

¹⁶ <http://farastaff.blogspot.com/>

CGIAR

The CGIAR: learning how to improve its research effectiveness and impact through knowledge sharing

The CGIAR Centres and Programs together with their many partners, are creating a wealth of knowledge that is aimed at helping to increase productivity within agriculture and improve livelihoods of people, primarily in developing countries. While all players are doing much to ensure that this knowledge is widely shared and applied, certain obstacles to the uptake, use and impact of this wealth of knowledge continue to exist. One of the missing elements between knowledge generation and the application of such knowledge is knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing involves learning from stakeholders what knowledge gaps exist and what is needed to close these gaps; increasing collaboration and interaction of all actors throughout knowledge generation processes; and finding more effective ways of delivering knowledge in a manner appropriate to the particular target groups whose decision-making and actions we seek to influence and support. This requires better understanding and support of new knowledge systems, knowledge sharing approaches, and innovation mechanisms.

To address this, the CGIAR through its system-wide program on Information Communication Technology and Knowledge Management (ICT-KM¹⁷) initiated a two-year project starting in 2007 entitled '[Improving the effectiveness of the CGIAR through knowledge sharing](#)'¹⁸ with a major component focused on Knowledge Sharing in Research (KSiR¹⁹). The goal of the KSiR Project is to help improve the effectiveness and impact of CGIAR research through providing options and lessons around good practices of knowledge sharing in research.



¹⁷ <http://www.ictkm.cgiar.org>

¹⁸ http://www.ks-cgiar.org/images/stories/pdf/ip_2006_ks_project.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.ks-cgiar.org>



KSinR's main learning vehicle is six on-going CGIAR research projects which are using knowledge sharing approaches integrated into various stages of the research process, representing a new way of doing research aimed at greater impact. This includes the use of a multi-stakeholder framework for conducting research as being tried by IWMI through its use of the Learning Alliance approach in the 'Wastewater , Agriculture and Sanitation for Poverty alleviation' (WASPA) project aimed at improving coordination amongst stakeholders and getting research into use. This project is also developing a process mentoring method to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Learning Alliance approach. The ICARDA Farmers' Conference project is providing lessons on mechanisms for sharing knowledge with and learning from farmers to help with better design and carrying out of plant breeding research. The CIFOR Pilot is exploring better ways to share research priority assessment methodologies and the experiences around using them, as this is an important tool in figuring out those areas and types of research which can provide the greatest impact. The IWMI Wastewater project is testing various dissemination methods to improve uptake and use of research results. This includes use of radio programs, training videos, contribution to curricula, and flip charts with printed messages and visuals to get across good practices in using wastewater.

Similarly the IRRI-lead Pilot is also exploring innovative dissemination methods through the development of the Laos Rice Knowledge Bank (LRKB) as a mechanism to make research accessible for extension agents to use with farmers.

Information packets based on research identified by a variety of stakeholders are being developed in appropriate formats to be included in the LRKB. The WorldFish Centre Pilot Project is also trying out participatory monitoring and evaluation, as well as impact assessment methodologies with the aim of learning together with stakeholders throughout the research process, and gaining their perspective on progress and impact.

Synthesis of the results across KSinR and all of its Pilot Projects and other activities will be documented in a variety of media including the KS website (www.ks-cgiar.org), the KSinR

<p>GFAR Secretariat L. B. > Leighla Bowers G. D.C. > Gianna de Cesare M. H. > Mark Holderness A. M. > Ajit Maru V. P. > Valeria Pesce</p>
--

blog²⁰, and through the development of practical how-to documents to be made widely

²⁰ <http://ictkm.wordpress.com/category/knowledge-sharing/>

available and presented at upcoming CGIAR and other fora.

Contact person:
Nadia Manning-Thomas, KSinR Project Leader,
n.manning@cgiar.org
IWMI Nile Basin and East Africa office, ILRI Campus,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Other News

APAARI

Dr Raj Paroda receives Lifetime Achievement Award

We at GFAR are delighted to report that Dr Raj Paroda, Chair, GFAR Programme Committee, Executive Secretary, APAARI, and Chairman, Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS), has recently received a **Lifetime Achievement Award** for his outstanding work towards growth and development of agriculture in India. Sponsored by "Agriculture Today", the award was presented by the Honorable Speaker of the Indian Parliament, Dr Somnath Chatterjee on 19 September 2008 at the Taj Palace Hotel in New Delhi, India.

Dr Paroda is an accomplished plant breeder, a geneticist by profession, and an able research administrator. The award emphasized Dr Paroda's significant contributions toward crop improvement, and his work strengthening the



Dr Somnath Chatterjee, Honorable Speaker of Indian Parliament presents the Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr Raj Paroda, Executive Secretary of APAARI

agricultural research systems within India, Central Asia and the Caucuses. He was instrumental in establishing the Asia Pacific Seed Association (APSA) and the Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) and is also credited for being the main architect of the world's three largest and most modern national gene banks.

L .B.