



The 2017 GFAR Annual Report

THE GLOBAL FORUM ON
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
AND INNOVATION

2017 - A year of renewal and growth



A Message from the Executive Secretary

This has been year of real transition for GFAR. Now renamed as the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation, GFAR has a new Charter, a new mandate, a new Steering Committee and a new Chair, Bongwiwe Njobe, and Vice-Chair, Raffaele Maiorano, to guide these changes.

The transformed role and governance of GFAR is the result of a long and deep process of reflection, among the Partner organizations from all sectors that make up this unique global movement for change. Recognizing that public research and extension can only be effective if considered within the wider processes required of agri-food innovation, GFAR now brings together all required sectors as equals and is equipped to play the role demanded of it by its many and diverse partners: to make agri-food research and innovation more equitable, relevant and effective in meeting the world's sustainable development goals.

In doing so, the Partners that make up GFAR recognize that innovation in agriculture and food systems does not actually happen through a simple linear pathway from research to farmer, but in reality involves multi-directional flows of knowledge, ideas and innovations in complex 'innovation webs', through which new knowledge, tools and technologies are generated and made appropriate, available and accessible for use by the resource-poor. These processes begin with identifying future needs and demands from both national agenda and the perspectives of farmers and consumers – the drivers of agriculture and food systems - and then directly engaging farmers and rural communities at all stages in the development, transformation, uptake, scale-out and use of agri-food innovations, right through to markets and consumption.

Smallholder farmers and rural communities are at the heart of our agri-food systems, producing 70-80% of food, yet 3/4 of smallholders farm less than one hectare and rely on many on- and off-farm activities for their livelihoods. To be effective in sustainable development, research and innovation processes must

involve real engagement with farmers at the centre of such processes, as innovators in their own right, recognizing that agri-food systems are highly contextual and that sustainable development extends well beyond productivity itself.

Agri-food research and innovation are inherently multi-stakeholder processes, involving knowledge flow in many directions, linking science and society to meet development needs. The Partners in GFAR recognize this complexity and that the only way to achieve development impact in this sphere is to work together in equitable and effective ways, recognizing and valuing each other and breaking down the institutionalized walls and barriers to knowledge flow and use that are constraining development success. Catalyzing and enabling real partnerships is the role of GFAR, a purpose shared by hundreds of organizations across 13 different sectors, from research and advisory services and education to farmers and civil society organizations and the private sector and from grassroots actions through to policy work in the Agencies of the UN.

GFAR works as a networked action, at the cutting edge of new thinking, reframing the issues and agenda for agri-food innovation and learning together about the role and value of the true partnerships so urgently required, if we are to meet the 2030 sustainable development goals. GFAR partners own and drive GFAR as their forum, their space in which to work together beyond their own boundaries, through collective actions that deliver real change and impact on the lives of the rural poor. This Annual Report highlights how they are doing so in practice, valuing the work of each partner and celebrating the new spirit of collaboration and openness being delivered through this unique movement for change.

Mark Holderness
GFAR Executive Secretary



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The New GFAR Comes Into Focus

What is GFAR?

GFAR is a voluntary collective movement of over 560 self-declared Partner institutions and networks working together to shape a new future for agriculture and food. The extensive GFAR network together mobilizes millions of people around the world, from farmers and consumers to advanced research and international organizations.

GFAR enables open dialogue and Collective Actions to transform systems and processes of agri-food research and innovation. Through networked and Collective Actions, we are contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We break down barriers between institutions because we know that together, we can do what no one institution can do alone.

Why the need?

Agriculture and food systems impact on all aspects of the SDGs, yet agri-food research and innovation systems are failing to impact the lives and livelihoods of resource-poor smallholder farmers around the world. If we want to eliminate hunger and poverty, fight climate change, empower women in agriculture and get youth excited about careers in agriculture, we need to innovate. However, our systems of innovation are fragmented, outdated and under-resourced. Agricultural research takes 15-20 years to be taken up and benefit the lives of the poor. The choices we make now to fix our broken agri-food systems will directly determine our ability to meet the ambitious 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

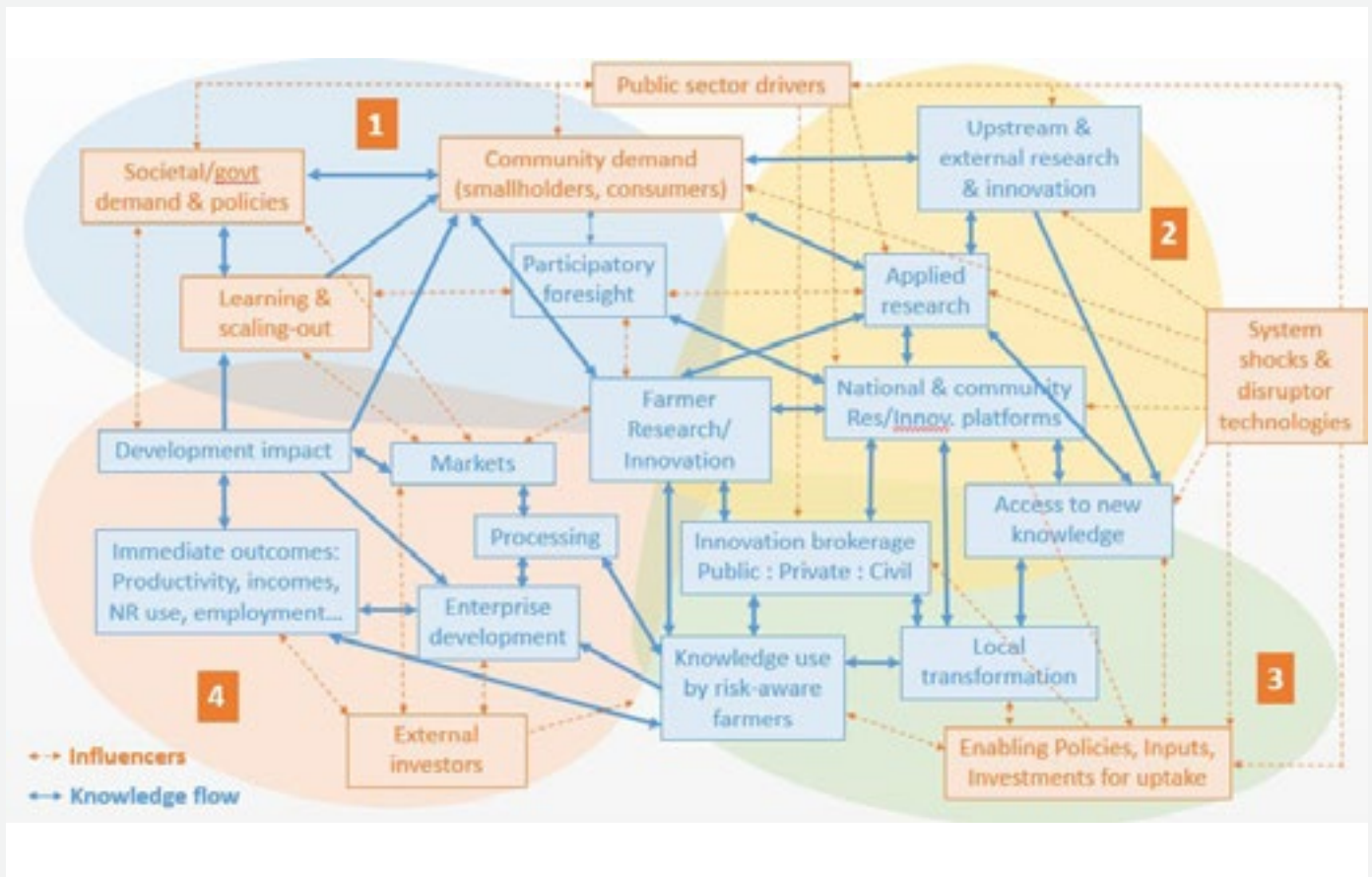
How does GFAR work?

Innovation fuels the engine of sustainable development. In the 21st century, networks and “networks of networks” of diverse actors have become an innovative and necessary solution in a world of complexity. GFAR recognizes and works with the complex reality of agri-food innovation webs, and coordinates systemic actions at different levels, constructively challenging institutions of research, extension, education and enterprise to each recognize and value the roles, and vital importance, of others.

The **Innovation Web diagram** on the following page visualizes how GFAR’s mission and work uniquely encompasses all the key elements in agri-food research and innovation systems, through an integrated global approach for development impact.

The pathways seem complex, yet the flow of knowledge and exchange of ideas in multiple directions and dimensions can be dealt with by working via multistakeholder networked actions. No single element of the system can achieve impact by itself; public, private and civil society are all required to play their parts across all 4 phases described.

- 1 Demand for agri-food research and innovation for development comes from many sources. As well as national policies, the desired futures of rural communities and consumer demands are of vital importance.
- 2 Resource-poor smallholders need to be empowered in multi-stakeholder innovation processes that directly involve farmers and rural communities as innovators in their own right contexts. Systems are disrupted by advances in new technologies and through shocks such as climate change and conflicts.
- 3 Use of new knowledge and technologies requires local awareness, adaptation, transformation and trust based on participatory innovation processes and innovation brokers. The right enabling environment for uptake is vital, managing risks and addressing power and resource imbalances that constrain success.
- 4 Sustainable rural development requires innovation in market access, quality and supply reliability, processing and value addition, storage and transport infrastructure. An integrated public-private approach is needed for specific value chains, to meet national agenda with key blockages recognized and overcome.



GFAR-enabled Collective Actions are managed and delivered by the Partners in GFAR. GFAR does not itself manage field programmes, but plays vital catalytic, mentoring, learning & knowledge sharing roles through multiple means that enable partners to learn from the knowledge and ideas of others, reflect on their own roles and transform their work and partnerships for greater SDG impact. The Partners bring their own commitments and extensive resources, to work together in new and exciting ways that really bring change and impact on the ground.

Highlights from 2017



Photo: GFAR

New Governance to drive Collective Actions

The Global Forum underwent very positive changes in governance and function in 2017. Following the 2016 Partners' Assembly, which greatly revised the governance and Charter of GFAR, attention has shifted to the roles of the self-declared Partners who make up the Forum. The programmes of GFAR have been realigned to reflect Collective Actions among multiple partners – a shift from previous support actions to the stakeholder networks themselves and towards their collective impacts.

The new GFAR Steering Committee was expanded in December 2016 through a transparent process to ensure that the body represents and is accountable to stakeholders in each sector and region. An additional nine seats for representatives of Partners in GFAR working at the local level were voted on and determined by their own constituencies. This process ensured that they are truly credible in representing the interests of the communities they serve, and are able to reflect a grassroots viewpoint, informed by local perspectives.

The New Steering Committee

The new Steering Committee was convened in February and June 2017. In a departure from typical governance meetings of the kind, a workshop format was preferred, to make the interactions and decision-making process as dynamic and engaging as possible. In June, the strategic workshop was preceded by a visit to an agricultural cooperative on the outskirts of Rome. The visit underscored the Committee’s commitment to work for farmers and keep sight of how farmers themselves will benefit from Collective Actions.

*“It was very clear from the beginning of this meeting, on the first day at the cooperative: ‘This is YOUR GFAR.’ All our opinions were sought out, all our perspectives were respected.” – **Sayed Azam Ali, representative of international public research institutions***

On day two, the Steering Committee got down to the challenging work of agreeing the criteria for what a GFAR Collective Action should be, and discussed in detail what those actions would look like in practice. By the close of three days of group work sessions, marketplace presentations, and open discussions, the Steering Committee members had designed 14 proposals for Collective Actions. With the proposals also came commitments: the pledge to engage the partners in their constituencies to really take forward these actions into practical programmes.

*“GFAR is the mechanism to join efforts and build bridges, for research and communities to work together.” - **Ren Wang, FAO***

New constituency to bring in women’s perspectives and greater gender balance

Mohammad M. AJLOUNI Regional Representation - West Asia North Africa

Rula Al-Kateeb Farmer and Agricultural Worker Organizations - Local Seat 2

Roberto Aparicio - Martin Donor Support Group European Commission

Stephanie Barrial Civil society and NGOs - Global

Keron Bascomb Youth - Local

Frank Begemann Advanced Research / G20

Nana Osei Bonsu Private Sector - Local

Patrick Van Damme Regional Representation Europe

Nathaniel Don Marquez Civil society and NGOs - Local

Karim Hussein Rural advisory services - Global

Zhang Huijie Regional Representation East Asia

2 new local seats to capture the needs of farmers, the center of GFAR’s work

John Kenelley Higher Education - Global

Yogesh Jadhav Women’s Associations -Local

Fernando Lopez Farmer and Agricultural Worker Organizations - Local Seat 1

Bhag Mal Regional Representation South, Southeast Asia & Pacific

Shantanu Mathur Facilitating Agencies IIFAD

Marco Marzano de Marinis Farmer and Agricultural Worker Organizations - Global

John McMurdy Private Sector - Global

Ephraim A. Mukisira Regional Representation Sub-Saharan Africa

Agnes W. Mwang’ombe Higher Education - Local

Nidhi Nagabhatla Youth - Global

Trevor Nicholls International Public Sector Agricultural Research - Seat 2

One-third of governance now represents local and country-level perspectives

Maria Rodriguez Regional Representation Latin America & Caribbean

Alisher Tashmatov Regional Representation Central Asia & Caucasus

Shaibek Tentimishovich Karasartov Rural advisory services - local

Anne Tutwiler International Public Sector Agricultural Research - Seat

Seemin Quayum Women’s Associations - Global

Ren Wang Facilitating Agencies FAO

Collective Actions

Concrete ways to act on complex issues

The multi-stakeholder Steering Committee is now clearly the driver of the GFAR programme and the GFAR agenda is determined by the issues they identify as priorities. The principle of Collective Action is gaining much understanding and momentum and is now directly expressed in the areas set out in the new GFAR MTP.

“Over two days we worked to develop “collective actions” that would use the GFAR platform to make real, on-the-ground impact and help the global community meet the Sustainable Development Goals. We must now engage and motivate all of our constituencies into the work plan. Rather than just talk the talk, GFAR must also be able to walk the walk, because unless we act now and collectively, the global community will fail to meet the SDGs.” – Will Surman, international private sector representative

Collective Action

A multi-stakeholder programme of work at national, regional or international level initiated by three or more Partners and prioritized by the Partners in the Global Forum, always including producers and with a particular focus on women and youth.

GFAR is an organization for the modern era, an institution without walls and one driven by networked actions of the partners themselves. Together, we are shaping a new way of working, which challenges rigid structures and offers innovative solutions for a multifaceted reality. As the world faces big challenges, the agri-food research and innovation community can look to “Collective Actions as concrete ways to act on complex issues” – Sayed Azam Ali, representative of international public research institutions

The Collective Actions that Partners in GFAR have committed to work on together are aimed at meeting big challenges, in four key focus areas:

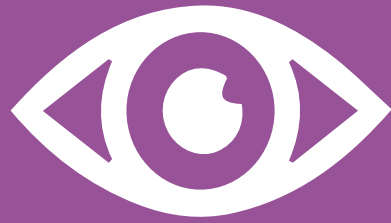
Empowering Farmers at the Center of Innovation

Demonstrating impact and Improving Investments



Transforming Organizations and Individual Capacities

Turning Knowledge and Innovation into Enterprise



Empowering Farmers at
the center of Innovation

Raising awareness for the implementation of farmers' rights

Since 2012 GFAR has supported resource-poor smallholder farmers in developing countries, increasing their knowledge and awareness of their rights over their plant genetic resources and traditional knowledge.

Under a participatory and inclusive methodology, printed capacity building materials have been developed and training workshops held, empowering farmers about their important plant selection contributions in agriculture, and their role has been visualized, recognized and valued.

Communication channels based on trust and common understanding between different stakeholders, including civil society, farmers' organizations, academia, research institutions and the private and public sector have been developed to identify ways to improve the implementation of farmers' rights at national level and ensure the effective co-existence of formal and informal seed systems.

In this framework, GFAR has provided legal advice to national decision makers when reviewing, adjusting or developing national measures, including seed policies, to ensure recognition of the informal seed system and promote the implementation of farmers' rights.

"I, and my fellow farmers, have the right to know how best to store our seed." - Paulina Nyasulu, a farmer featured in the GFAR video "Farmers' Rights to Seed - Experiences from Malawi"

Promoting Farmers' Rights at National and International Levels

In 2017, GFAR helped to increase the awareness and background knowledge of more than 25 parliamentarians and 30 advisors in Ecuador on farmers' rights and how these rights could be implemented at national level. Upon the request of the national government of Honduras and civil society organizations, GFAR Secretariat provided legal advice for a new seed policy currently under development in the country. Recommendations were made on elements and legal provisions recognizing farmers' rights and the importance of informal seed systems, for inclusion in the draft seed policy.

Capacity building materials on farmers' rights developed for Guatemala, Honduras and Malawi for smallholder farmers, academia, decision-makers, researchers and other relevant stakeholders were further distributed and socialized in 2017 in other countries in Africa, Near East, Asia and America, to increase awareness on how farmers' rights can be implemented and their important role for achieving food and nutrition security.

A workshop held in Costa Rica with the participation of 30 national coordinators of UNDP Small Grants Programme in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East and South West Pacific was the opportunity to introduce GFAR's work on farmers' rights as a key and strategic area of work to complement GEF/UNDP projects on landscape conservation, local communities and their rights over natural resources. The importance of GFAR's work on this matter through Collective Actions was highly recognized during the workshop. Communication channels were built with some national coordinators to explore ways and means to include farmers' rights in national projects. This may include development of capacity building materials on farmers' rights that specifically target the national and local realities and needs of Costa Rica.

GFAR has been recognized internationally as a key player on farmers' rights. During the Seventh Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, more than 140 Contracting Parties of the International Treaty recognized the support of GFAR for the implementation of farmers' rights. They requested the Treaty Secretary to continue implementing the Joint Capacity Building Programme on Farmers' Rights with GFAR and other relevant stakeholders.

A Side Event was organized by GFAR during the Seventh Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty, with a good number of participants, to discuss and identify best practices to ensure the participation of smallholder farmers in decision-making processes relevant for farmers' rights.

The theme of "forgotten foods" was re-prioritized by the GFAR Steering Committee as one of the key themes to be taken forwards in the next Medium Term Plan. Already in 2017, an informal agreement was reached with Crops for the Future/AIRCA, Bioversity International and the World Rural Forum to take forward this agenda as a Collective Action.



Photo: Agro-Insight

Farmer-to-Farmer videos on Farmers' Rights

Smallholder farmers seldom have a direct voice in shaping policies and understanding of their needs. To celebrate the often unsung work of farming communities, and enable farmers to shape their knowledge and their views GFAR commissioned a series of short videos telling the farmers' stories in their own words. In these videos, farmers relate first-hand their challenges and successes as guardians of crop seed and the breeders of new varieties. The videos tell a vital story of why the living conservation and use of these irreplaceable resources are crucial, not just to the communities concerned, but to all our futures.

To date, two videos on farmers' rights for farmer-to-farmer training have been developed in Malawi and Guatemala and are being broadly distributed. These videos complement GFAR's capacity-building materials for empowering smallholder farmers to use, save, sell and exchange saved seeds on-farm.

[Watch and download "Farmers' Rights to Seed - Experiences from Malawi"](https://www.accessagriculture.org/farmers-rights-seed-malawi) <https://www.accessagriculture.org/farmers-rights-seed-malawi>

[Watch and download "Farmers' Rights to Seed - Experiences from Guatemala"](https://www.accessagriculture.org/farmers-rights-seed-guatemala) <https://www.accessagriculture.org/farmers-rights-seed-guatemala>

"It is very important to organize ourselves... As women we need to empower ourselves regarding our own rights - our seeds - because we know that we survive because of our seeds." - **Amalia Pedro Jimenez, a farmer featured in the Guatemala video**

Two webinars on farmers' rights were also organized in 2017.

Farmers' Rights to Data

Farmers' awareness of their needs and rights is fundamental to determining their own needs and their own future. Farmers' rights to data are no different. This important issue is gaining recognition more than ever before, both in terms of access to data and ownership of data.

Through support to Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition initiative (GODAN) of which GFAR is a founding member, Partners in GFAR are working together to harness and assess the value of open data in the agri-food sector.

Through a number of actions in 2017 it became clear that specific issues related to data rights affecting smallholder farmers are a very important priority for GFAR partners and deserve special attention in the much broader discussion on open data.

Some of these occasions were:

- The publication in June 2017 of two GODAN papers on issues of data ownership and fairness, with contributions from GFAR: one on [ownership of open data](#) and one on [responsible data](#).
- A [training course](#) and [symposium](#) on farmers' access to data, convened by GFAR in Centurion, South Africa, in November 2017, organized with the Information Training and Outreach Centre for Africa (ITOCA) and co-sponsored by GODAN and the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA).
- The request from the German Federal Office of Agriculture and Food (BLE), our partner representing the G20/Upstream Research Organizations in the Steering Committee, for GFAR to convene partners in a discussion and decision making process on ethical and legal aspects of open data, starting with an expert consultation in 2018.

By the end of 2017, interest around these events, continued collaboration with GODAN and CTA on follow-up publications and webinars and discussions with BLE were clearly pointing towards the creation of a new GFAR Collective Action on Farmers' Data Rights.



Photo: GODAN Secretariat

Helping farmers negotiate their own agricultural futures

Foresight4Food Systems Initiative

Building from the previous GFAR Forward Thinking Platform and working with Oxford University, ACIAR, CIRAD and other partners, GFAR has played a key role in setting up the Foresight4Food Systems Initiative – a globally coordinated initiative and GFAR Collective Action that will enhance global agri-food systems foresight discussions, Identifying key gaps in food systems foresight and mobilize efforts to fill these gaps. GFAR Secretariat will be a key member of the Food Systems Foresight International Coordinating Group (ICG) being set up.

- a. Support to design of the Concept: GFAR participated actively in the concept design of the Foresight4Food Systems Initiative and will contribute to its implementation through facilitating engagements between members of the group and hosting meetings.
- b. Technical and Operational delivery: To help achieve the purpose of the ICG, GFAR will be providing direct technical and operational inputs in areas such as: supporting communities of practice, hosting events, capacity development through regional fora and the grassroots foresight initiative, promoting food systems foresight, supporting a foresight resource portal that will bring together knowledge and findings from various organizations, and will feed perspectives from local and regional foresight analyses into the global initiative. Partners also contribute funding and staff resources.

Enhancing Regional foresight capabilities

Through support from GFAR under the EU grant, the Regional Fora for Africa (FARA) and NENA region (AARINENA) are now being supported and capacitated to make better use of foresight for the process of their own institutional reforms and to engage communities in determining their own futures.

- a. Management of foresight training workshops. GFAR has implemented programmes to support FARA and AARINENA to conduct regional foresight training workshops and has provided technical guidance and resource persons for development of these workshops.
- b. Logistical Support: Through EU support, GFAR has provided technical and logistical support and funding for foresight training workshops in each region. This support

is being matched by partners with similar funding on their part (to provide for the accommodation, meeting space and feeding of participants) and through in kind contributions in staff time.

An African Foresight Academy is being established together with FARA to create a platform for trained African foresight practitioners to contribute their expertise to enhancing future-smart agriculture development policies and actions in the region.

GFAR contributed to the design of the concept of the Africa Foresight Academy and is contributing to its implementation through foresight capacity building workshops for African professionals, who will form the core of the Foresight Academy at the regional level. This will expand the scope of foresight knowledge and help mainstream the use of foresight into regional and national policies on agriculture, research and innovations, agribusiness etc. Similarly GFAR, through the grassroots foresight initiative, will focus on building foresight capacity in national research agencies and farmers' groups, contributing to the foresight academy at the national and sub-national levels.

Following the launch of the Foresight Academy by the end of 2017, GFAR will provide technical advice and guidance to its further development and to FARA as its hosting agency. Monitoring progress of the platform will be operated by FARA, mentored by GFAR Secretariat. Development and to FARA as its hosting agency. Monitoring progress of the platform will be operated by FARA, mentored by GFAR Secretariat.



Turning Knowledge and
Innovation into Enterprise

Supporting youth leadership and innovation through mentorship

The Youth Agripreneurs Project (YAP) came to a close in May 2017. YAP was a GFAR-YPARD Collective Action to address the lack of opportunities and access for youth in the agri-food sector. The YAP Project invested US\$112,680 to support 6 young “agripreneurs” from across the globe to develop their innovative agricultural businesses. Those selected, through open online voting, were each provided with US\$5,000 seed funding and an opportunity to showcase their projects online and at the Third Global Conference on Agricultural Research and Development (GCARD3). The YAP Project then supported the young agripreneurs with access to business coaching, leadership training, social media and communication support, quarterly coaching support from the YAP Team, professional and personal mentoring and peer-to-peer support. The project was financed by the European Commission, FAO Caribbean, Agropolis Foundation and private donors.

The YAP Project set out to:

- Increase the capacity and ability of the youth agripreneurs to financially plan and manage their projects and any future endeavours they might take on; and
- Increase the awareness and aptitude of youth agripreneurs in managing business and professional relationships that would contribute to their development and growth.

The young agripreneurs valued all aspects of the support provided by the Project and found each element to be highly useful. An independent evaluation of the [YAP project carried out by Storyscape](#), found that the young agripreneurs, through the opportunities, networking and training, gained confidence, knowledge and skills in how to financially plan and manage their projects. They also demonstrated greater adaptability and gained valuable learning in setting realistic achievable goals. The young agripreneurs developed and grew personally and professionally during their participation in the YAP Project.

*“In short, the GFAR and YPARD team that worked with us throughout the year kept us motivated... [they] taught us valuable life lessons. Altogether, YAP made a major contribution towards the goal of making my business not a one-off attempt but a sustainable business.” - **Young agripreneur***

Blog posts written by the young agripreneurs as a reporting mechanism throughout the Project enhanced their online visibility, while also providing learning for others. YAP donors and supporters viewed the blog posts as a positive means to hear the voices and stories of the young agripreneurs. And all the young agripreneurs saw benefits of having their material online and reported this visibility led to further opportunities, greater status and connections.

*“There was a huge visibility boost, and the local interest in my country that followed definitely helped me get in the door with both local government and private companies. There were offers of agronomical assistance, bookkeeping when needed in the future and volunteer labour for the building process.” - **Young agripreneur***

Beyond achieving these outcomes for the young agripreneurs, there was also evidence of wider impact in their communities as a result of their innovations. The YAP project demonstrated that the model has tremendous potential to deliver sustained economic value. One example of this was from the support provided to Jony Girma from Ethiopia, who is setting up a centre to train unemployed agricultural graduates and landless youth to be beekeepers and sell certified organic honey to international markets. In Jony’s project:

- 45 previously unemployed youths have been engaged in the project
- Each has received US \$405 for one harvest = USD \$18,225 total. In year two onwards there will be two harvests.
- Estimated economic benefit (without analysing possible added benefits from the farmers reinventing their income):

	Year 1	Year 2
total new income	\$18,225	\$54,675
return on seed funding	264%	993%
return on total investment (\$20k)	91%	273%

Promisingly, all young agripreneurs involved in YAP intend to continue developing their agri-business innovations. These innovations were successfully leveraged by the GFAR and YPARD networks and online presence and exemplify the vast potential of young people to succeed in the agri-food sector.

Snapshot of YAP Projects and their key achievements



Photo: Storyscape

A Collective Action to provide youth with a new mentoring tool

The future of agriculture depends on attracting young talent who are prepared to balance risk and reward, so that they can deliver the food we need, in a way that gives them sufficient return for their labour and capital. But agriculture is not seen as a profitable career and we could lose a generation of potential innovators, inspiring visionaries, transformational leaders, hard-working talent and good-standing community members.

Mentoring is a way to re-ignite the spark. Young people in agriculture who have received mentoring are more likely to see and promote agriculture as a viable career, have increased opportunities to access funding, from seed funds to business and good practices. They are seen as role models in their communities, enabling community resilience and better farming practices, leading to more secure and diverse food supplies.

Youth unemployment is one of the biggest challenges to stable societies, economic growth and sustainable development. Mentoring can change the game as it focuses on participants defining their own goals and being given support to achieve them, resulting in a more empowering form of truly sustainable development and lasting prosperity.

‘Mentoring was of tremendous help to me. The formal assistance and guidance from experts is always important in one’s entrepreneurial journey which is often full of so many ups and downs. The constant support and communication keeps you morally strong and uplifted... [My mentor’s] guidance at critical stages when I had completely no idea on how to proceed enabled me to work without wasting much time.’ – Young agripreneur in the YAP Project

The YPARD network, with its Global Coordination Unit hosted by GFAR Secretariat, has seen a strong demand for locally relevant mentoring. Numerous national representatives have requested support from the YPARD Global Coordination Unit to conduct their own programmes. YPARD, with GFAR’s technical support, has therefore designed a Global Mentoring Tool, a ‘living tool’ including case studies and stories of those who use it, which feed back into the experience of the tool.

This easy to use tool, to be released in 2018, will enable others to develop their own mentoring programme. The global mentoring tool synthesises YPARD’s learnings in mentoring and is used to support the development of locally relevant mentoring programmes enabling local groups to innovate and adapt the materials to their own context.

Enabling Successful Enterprise from Innovation

GFAR is proposing the use of Collective Actions to resolve complex problems and bring greater impact in the agri-food sector. GFAR Collective Actions bring on board the perspectives of relevant actors from all sectors and regions, including those from the rural and provincial sectors that are normally marginalized, to make development programmes more robust, community owned, and sustainable. Collective Actions put farmers and producers at the center.

At the national and local levels, innovation platforms are an effective tool for making this happen. The ultimate goal is to achieve transformational change and impact in national agri-food research and innovation for development systems. This approach is compatible with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to food, hunger, job creation, economic growth and partnerships.

Enabling successful enterprise from innovation using innovation platforms, means:

- building on the useful components of previous approaches;
- using new socio-technical methodologies to derive a robust and effective procedure for development of farm enterprises that provides greater economic opportunities for communities;
- helping communities to voice their desires and expectation for their own agricultural futures;
- facilitating equitable and effective partnerships;
- stimulating investments that will enable new enterprises

Initial Study in Ghana

This approach in Ghana has been demonstrated in the Gambia with a high level of success in addressing the SDGs, and stakeholders previously sought GFAR's support to see how the approach could work in practice in Ghana. Hence, the GFAR Secretariat visited Ghana in July 2017 to outline the approach and its previous successes to the Government and other stakeholders.

"...We need to take big steps like this to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. I congratulate GFAR for taking the bold step." - Dr. Isatou Touray, Honorable Minister for Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment, the Gambia.

The Government of Ghana had highlighted the poultry industry as paramount in their development agenda. A GFAR delegation met with stakeholders covering a wide range of sectors to discuss food security for the poultry sector. Although Ghana has some poultry farmers who seemingly were doing well, the Government has recognized that they currently need to augment food security in poultry through massive importation. This has been found to be largely unsatisfactory, because of the quality and import cost of such products. To bridge this gap and attain self-sufficiency, stakeholders identified future scenarios using foresight analysis. Desired scenarios included:

- Empowerment of farmers who were characterized as ageing;
- Empowerment of women to produce and close the gap;
- Empowerment of young men and women

The third scenario was favored by the stakeholders as the key focus and with them a rapid study was done to determine the pathway required, including all the processes and requirements. A project proposal based on the findings was developed and shared with the Government for funding. This proposal projected empowerment for about 10,000 youths with a reasonable income and attaining self-sufficiency for poultry products in Ghana. This should cascade into reduced need for outmigration, less societal disruption and disorder (or worse) and valuable economic development for the country. The jobs projected for tangential sectors like maize production, soybean production, marketing and others reached over 50,000 opportunities. The model has demonstrated that the SDGs are indeed attainable through integrated innovation platform approaches. It is intended to help ensure stakeholders in Ghana consolidate their work by engaging development investors to buy into programmes that have been developed, or those that will be developed in the future.

National Innovation Platform for Burkina Faso

Interested Partners in GFAR desired to scale the process and its benefits out to other countries. In October 2017, GFAR explored the possibility of supporting Burkina Faso and the Ministry of Agriculture in the establishment of a national innovation platform. Various actors would be involved, including the IFAD-financed Neer Tamba project, the Ouagadougou University programme on local innovation, Agrinovia, and the Confederation Paysanne du Faso (CPF), a Farmers' Organization bringing together more than two million members. The development of this alliance is leading to a partnership that will empower farmers to directly influence the national innovation policy in favour of farmer-led research, with concrete impact prospects at the scale of the communities supported by IFAD and beyond.

GFAR and Agri-Food Innovation Systems: Strategic Study in AR4D partnership

GFAR has joined forces with ISPC and FAO AGDR on country case studies to examine experiences at the country level, documenting best practices of multistakeholder partnership effectiveness capable of triggering systemic change impacts at the level of the SDGs. In November 2017, a first workshop was held in Tanzania, sponsored by GFAR and with the participation of GFAR Secretariat. The workshop goal was to provide background and purpose to stakeholders, share findings of the initial phase of the study, select cases for detailed analysis and agree on the process. The understanding of Partnership and Innovation Modes (nature of partnerships and related arrangements, key processes at play, innovation impacts) is expected to feed into the National Strategy for sustainable development of Tanzania.

GFAR is uniquely positioned to mobilize such actions, given the global scope of its partners, which allows for North-South, South-South, and triangular partnerships, required particularly at the trigger phase of the programme. In this way, GFAR will demonstrate the usefulness of the new approach for its partners to adopt in different countries and contexts.

Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN)

Open access to research data, government data and agri-food value-chain data is vital for agricultural development as well as food security and food safety. Efficient and transparent data flows across agri-food systems are an essential component of innovation systems.

Lack of institutional, national, and international policies and openness of data limit the effectiveness of agricultural and nutritional data from research and innovation. Making open data work for agriculture and nutrition requires a shared agenda to increase the supply, quality, and interoperability of data, alongside action to build capacity for the use of data by all stakeholders.

GFAR is a founding member of GODAN, created in 2013 with the objective of supporting global efforts to make agricultural and nutritionally relevant data available, accessible, and usable for unrestricted use worldwide. The initiative focuses on building high-level policy and public and private institutional support for open data. GFAR is part of the GODAN Steering Committee and provides staff support to the Secretariat. GODAN involves 700 partners across the globe, many of whom are GFAR partners: its multi-stakeholder nature and the inclusion of farmers make it an example of an action implemented in the “GFAR way”.

GODAN is an already mature Collective Action: self-sufficient, with a Steering Committee, some leading and committed organizations, many partners, a Theory of Change of its own and funding for the first 5 years. GODAN contributes to the common purpose of GFAR Partners of transforming agri-food research and innovation for greater development impact, through opening access to, and use of, agri-food data.

GFAR has exercised its facilitating role in GODAN in different ways:

- GFAR facilitated the creation of a GODAN Working Group on the harmonization of food classifications among international authorities: the group now includes teams from FAO, EFSA, IFPRI, USDA and semantic web partners. These authoritative bodies have agreed to harmonize or link their food classifications, also using semantic technologies, with the objective of facilitating cross-regional and cross-value-chain food data tracking, including food security and food safety monitoring and food consumption statistics.
- GFAR has a leading role in the stream of activities around data standards in the GODAN Action project funded by the UK Department of International Development, strengthening the inclusion of partners and attention to real needs and actual applicability of research results with impact demonstration. The focus is on more efficient use of data in the areas of weather, land and nutrition, with solutions to be applied in pilot use cases.
- GFAR has led the work around two publications on data standardization gaps: the general “Gap exploration of agri-food data standards” and the “Gap exploration report on weather data standards”

GFAR scaled up the global CIARD RING platform, facilitating access to datasets by aggregating datasets from different catalogs, thus moving from 1200 to 4833 accessible data services; the RING was also brought into the agenda of GODAN and to the attention of the G20 German presidency and the EU H2020 community, as a means to make data discoverable and better used.



Strengthening Organizational and Individual Capacities

Because we care: How Partners in GFAR are transforming agricultural learning

The Partners in GFAR care about the future of our youth and the future of agriculture, education is one of our most important agendas. Many young people in Sub-Saharan Africa leave school without being able to properly read and write, with their work prospects handicapped for life. An enormous number of young people are turning away from agricultural opportunities that they see as associated with poverty and drudgery, rather than success and promise, and are migrating to seek jobs that simply don't exist in the cities of their dreams. This is a recipe for the collapse of both rural and urban societies.

Education is vital to society and to sustainable development. Our futures depend on developing the agricultural leaders of tomorrow – and this requires radical change in the kinds of education being offered to our young people. Universities are places of great repute, yet are struggling for resources and facing demands from agri-food industries and from society, to equip young people with holistic skills and the inspiration, not just to find a job, but to create new agri-food-based opportunities and enterprise and themselves become community leaders.

Developing Collective Action among universities and stakeholders in Africa

A Collective Action on “Transformative learning and student leadership development”, was launched in 2017 by Partners in GFAR in Sub-Saharan Africa. The initiative was catalyzed by Dr. Iman El-Kaffass of the GFAR Secretariat, together with GFAR Steering Committee member Prof. Agnes Mwang'ombe of The University of Nairobi and Anthony Egeru of RUFORUM. The agenda is not just about reforming curricula, but creating fundamental transformations in the operation and practices of our higher education institutions, so that they meet the needs of our young people today and tomorrow.

Through GFAR Secretariat funding and technical advice, a workshop of 40 GFAR Partner organizations: University Vice Chancellors, Deans and former Ministers, students, private companies, research, CSOs and farmer organizations, came from across Africa to meet at the University of Nairobi and set out a new vision of how higher education must change if it is to meet society's needs. Facilitated by Fode Baudet of the Centre for Inter-Cultural Learning of Global Affairs Canada, the meeting was a really high-energy process over 3 days.

Transformational change means going beyond our comfort zones, thinking beyond the usual game. The participants first set out their vision of what the graduate of the future should look like and what technical and life skills (physical, mental, spiritual, emotional and professional) they will require to become the agri-food leaders of tomorrow.

From this, participants identified what characteristics were required of a university's functions and learning processes to make this a reality, listening to each other's views and together creating an exciting new vision of how universities should function and how they can contribute more effectively to society. Participants worked together in an incredibly positive and dynamic atmosphere to set out an exciting new agenda for African universities, to make their learning processes attractive to young people and to potential employers, finding the solutions required and not just obsessing on the problems, as happens in so many events.

Together, the Partners in GFAR are creating a truly transformative agenda, with universities becoming redefined as institutions fully engaged with society, and which enable learning and individual development, rather than static, and often dated, teaching.

“The Private sector needs graduates who are fit for purpose and ready for work!” -Hosea Machuki, FPEAK fresh produce exporters, Kenya

Inspiring ideas flowed from all, identifying key elements of transformative change that go well beyond curriculum reform, to open out our universities to engage with farmers and industry and, through their courses and co-curricular activities, develop young leaders of tomorrow. Ideas developed covered the technical needs for change, the essential enabling environment for success, the innovative investment mechanisms required and the communication needed to get uptake of the concepts into practice. Together these add up to a true transformation of our higher education institutions and systems.

From the outcomes of Nairobi a global GFAR Collective Action is developing, a Transformational Learning and Student Leadership Initiative to meet these needs. Key elements are:

- A shared model of the transformations required
- Multi-stakeholder platforms for transformational student leadership
- A common concept note for generating resources to transform individual universities and for the sharing of learning
- A number of universities are already volunteering to pilot the approaches involved.

The value of this new thinking was seen in the feedback from the meeting: The participants rated the workshop very highly, considering the meeting highly participatory, very practical and with great teamwork and equity among the participants, even though they came from widely differing backgrounds. The methods used to develop a common theory of change were welcomed, as was the honesty from all involved in exploring the challenges facing African universities and their willingness and openness to finding radical new solutions, with external partners from farmers to the private sector, to meet these daunting challenges.

The theory of change and concept note developed through the meeting are now being taken forward by multi-stakeholder working groups addressing

each area: technical writing; networking and communications and advocacy and fundraising.

The GFAR Initiative on Transformational Learning and Student Leadership Development aligns directly with the Africa RUFORUM agenda 2030. This is why our GFAR-RUFORUM partnership shows much promise for the future. The Collective Action was presented by Mark Holderness, GFAR Executive Secretary and Prof Maggi Linington, Dean at the University of South Africa, to 300 African University Vice-Chancellors and Deans at the well-attended RUFORUM Annual General Meeting in Lilongwe, Malawi during the last week of October.

The concepts were very enthusiastically received by the university heads present, who all recognized the challenges involved and the need for a fresh approach, a transformational change, in order to be able to fulfil their roles and create new generations of dynamic African agricultural leaders. Already, a further 20 African universities immediately requested to join this Collective Action and the initiative is growing fast.

Together, these active and willing partners are transforming university education through the GFAR collective learning initiative, first in Sub-Saharan Africa, next in the Near East and North Africa region and then into Asia.



Photo: RUFORUM

Inter-Regional Dialogues for the future of rural communities

The countries of the South and North of the Mediterranean are facing tremendous economic, social, demographic and environmental challenges. These challenges are particularly acute in rural areas. Slow economic growth is coupled with persistent inequalities of opportunities and high unemployment rates. Rural areas have become unattractive to the youth and to businesses. Outmigration to the cities and overseas is a major challenge.

GFAR, via its Partner organization IFAD, participated in the Steering Committee of AARINENA (Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East & North Africa) in Tunis in January 2017. Topics addressed included: 1) the strategic challenges specific to the Near East and North Africa Region with reference to the SDGs and the specific contributions of agricultural innovation and research for development; 2) review of alignment and priorities of AARINENA's Near East and North Africa activities in the light of GCARD3 and the upcoming GFAR Steering Committee; 3) consideration of AARINENA's governance arrangements including extension of the term of the Executive Secretary.

To help develop collective approaches in the Mediterranean Region, grounded at local and national level, a joint mission was organized with GFAR as part of the SAIL (Sustainable Agriculture Investments and Livelihoods) Project Supervision Mission in Egypt in December 2016 and in line with the IFAD country evaluation of needs (COSOP). Focus was on: a) enhancing innovation through support to the national innovation platform initiated with GFAR technical support, and b) providing advice to identify partners and operational activities in support of resource poor rural communities, and in particular rural women. The activities advised to the IFAD programme are based on local priorities and use of demand-driven technologies provided by national and regional research and extension institutions and networks. The SAIL Project has a budget of \$87 million directly benefiting 40,000 households in the period 2014-2022. GFAR-advice on associated innovation activities was focused on resource-poor rural communities in Upper Egypt and how they could be aided in association with the University of Aswan and other partners from the public and private sectors.

Fostering sustainable livelihoods in rural and peri-urban territories of the region

As part of an ongoing, long-term collaborative relationship with the Fondation Dialogue Sud-Nord Méditerranée (FDSNM), the GFAR Secretariat pursued development of a Mediterranean Initiative proposal to the European Union under DG NEAR and DG DEV, building on previous EU-funded work in creating multi-stakeholder dialogues on the future for rural communities in the Mediterranean region, as well as capacity development needs identification for rural development and women's agripreneurs in Upper Egypt. The initiative aligns with the renewed strategy of CIHEAM for agriculture and rural development of its member Mediterranean governments, adopted in Tirana in 2016. This aligns with the scope and results of the SAIL Supervision Mission in Egypt and overall IFAD and FAO objectives for the Near East and North Africa Region including youth employment, gender equity, sustainable rural livelihoods and addressing the root causes of migration from rural to urban areas.

The Proposal builds on:

- The Congress organized in Milan in October 2015 in partnership between the Foundation of South North Mediterranean Dialogue and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation on the theme "Rural Communities: no longer left behind", with the support of the European Commission
- The comments of the European Commissioner for neighbourhood policy during the Milan Congress
- The "Follow-Up" Seminar held in Rome in October 2016, which emphasized a comprehensive framework of development and reform and the important role of different societal institutions in creating a better future "l'agriculture n'est qu'une part du projet, il faut aussi des écoles, des hôpitaux et des nouvelles technologies. L'agritourisme, les médias et les réseaux sociaux ont un rôle à jouer."

GFAR and the Foundation are building on the above work and taking it further through field activities and actions, as well as multi-actor integrative workshops leading to impact on the ground. The actions and activities will have as a framework the theme: "From rural to regional development in Mediterranean regions: a regional development approach including viable villages, rural towns and small cities."

The local, regional and global partner institutions and networks that make up GFAR will be mobilized and engaged to ensure broad based multi-stakeholder involvement in the planned on-the-ground collective actions, field work, opinion polls and surveys. These will benefit from the local and regional knowledge of the partners in GFAR around the world which will be shared in an inclusive process of exchange of learning and experiences.

The project uses an integrated approach to analysing the needs of rural territories, i.e. rural communities and towns and cities nestled within these territories or at the peripheries; given that these towns and cities are important drivers and markets for food production and associated service industries that can provide opportunities beyond farming. Their role is crucial in retaining the youth in the service of their territories and reducing outmigration. This more comprehensive approach allows rural communities to be studied and addressed within the contexts of their own regions, with consideration of the agri-food value chains and employment opportunities that link rural and urban areas of a region.

The aim is to bring optimal development value to the villages and towns/small cities in rural areas, to achieve a prosperous and stable regional development, reduce outmigration and contribute to each country's development. We will be looking at how rural territories can develop their own solutions and growth, drawing in capacities, knowledge and innovation from inside and outside to help them specifically strengthen their production patterns and market chains and provide local economic opportunity for rural women and youth. These opportunities in communities and small towns are meant to go beyond farming to include for example IT-based service industries, off-farm processing for value addition, infrastructure roles in storage, handling, transport, marketing, catering to local tourist trade, agri-tourism and other businesses that have become more appealing.

The first workshop in this process for the NW region took place in December 2017 and a separate further funding request has been made for this regional action.

GFAR also contributed directly to the ICARDA Strategic review process, to help determine the way forward for ICARDA following the upheaval caused by the Syrian civil war.

Collective Action for the Reform of the Regional Research Fora

The Regional Fora, historically established as networks of national public research and advisory bodies to mobilize dialogue and share knowledge in their respective regions of the world, increasingly recognize the crucial need for more inclusion, equitability, democratization and legitimacy in their own regional processes, to provide effective mechanisms that are truly owned and driven by all those involved in agricultural research and innovation.

In 2017, three Regional Fora requested that GFAR help facilitate coherent and strategic processes of change in their own governance and roles: AARINENA in the Near East & North Africa, FORAGRO in the Americas and CACAARI in Central Asia and the Caucasus. GFAR therefore launched a Collective Action on Reforming and Strengthening the Regional Research Fora and Regional partners in GFAR, using a common approach and learning system, to help these bodies evolve

into truly multi-stakeholder Fora, taking on board the principles of multi-stakeholder action required in strengthening and transforming agricultural innovation.

GFAR Secretariat is working with the Fora concerned to help facilitate a comprehensive reform, looking at the environment and future expectations of each Regional Research Fora, the inputs to the current system, the processes and the type and quality of outputs as compared to the targeted and expected outputs. The role of leadership and governance approaches are thoroughly examined in this reform model. The aim will be to progressively expand this initiative and offer this state-of-the-art technical and facilitation support from GFAR to more of its partners, both regionally and in national systems.



The Collective action was launched on 10-11 December 2017 in Hammamet, Tunisia, with a workshop under the theme “Transforming AARINENA’s Capacity as a Multi-Stakeholder Futuristic Regional Forum for Research and Innovation for Development Tunisia”, organized by GFAR and the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East & North Africa (AARINENA).

The December workshop brought together around forty participants representing AARINENA’s agricultural research institutions and major stakeholders—the first Regional Forum and regional network to embark on such a comprehensive system-wide reform. The participants worked extensively during the two days of the workshop to develop a strategy for the transformation of AARINENA through exploring future scenarios for the NENA region; diagnosing the current environment and situation of research and innovation in the region in light of the global trends; and assessing the different stakeholders needs and societal and global expectations from AARINENA.

The facilitator of the workshop, Dr. Iman El-Kaffass, is spearheading this GFAR Collective Action and will provide guidance in the reform processes of the other Regional Fora. All participating Fora have agreed to change their business model, to diversify their funding sources, address institutional barriers to support the new goals and their sustainability. Needs assessment, foresight exercises and innovation platform techniques will be used at the start and along the reform process.

Following this workshop, a representative committee of stakeholders will be formed to develop the strategy of AARINENA towards 2035. The strategy review will take place through a second meeting of stakeholders in spring 2018, where the strategy will be finalized together with results framework, budget and action plan.

The exercise done with AARINENA will be carried out again with FORAGRO in 2018. Work with both will continue until needed systems are developed. Other Fora - in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Central Asia/Caucasus have also expressed strong interest in the approach to help support their own transformations.



Photo: AARINENA

Capacity Development in Agricultural Innovation systems (CDAIS-TAP)

GFAR has continued to support the EU-funded TAP-CDAIS project, developed by FAO and Agrinatura. The CDAIS project involves a range of partners, nearly all of which are Partners in GFAR. In addition to involvement in the TAP Steering Committee, direct support has this year included organizing and running two CDAIS-TAP Webinars through GFAR’s webinar platform, to spread awareness of the innovation capacity development processes implemented through the project. On behalf of the TAP Partners, GFAR hosts and maintains the TAPIPEDIA information platform on its server.



Demonstrating Impact and
Improving Investments

Innovative Communication



GFAR.org

Pageviews **16k+**

Visitors **14k**

2000+ GFAR Webinar
Participants



BLOG

Monthly page views

7k - 10k

Monthly comments
20 - 40



Twitter followers

17k



Facebook likes

17k



LinkedIn views

20k

Generating new forms of investment

In 2017, GFAR has continued to provide input to the processes of the CGIAR System Council and external reviews of the CGIAR, all the time emphasizing the need for the international agricultural research system to engage with national agenda and programmes with farmers as partners. GFAR also highlighted that investment in international research should add clear value to that of national partners and become more effectively linked to other partners delivering in national research, advisory services, NGOs, private sector and, of course, more directly responsive to the needs of its desired end-users in resource-poor rural communities.

GFAR has long championed better and greater investment in national agricultural research and innovation systems, including direct engagement with a wide range of development assistance agencies and development of both concepts and practicalities for how this can be better achieved within IFAD loan systems. Links with FAO, IFAD and major donors have further explored how investment in integrated systems for agri-food innovation can be better met through large scale funding support, a process that continues to develop.

Innovative Approach to New SDG Metrics for Agri-Food Innovation

A focus on productivity alone has long provided the key metric for agricultural research and innovation, yet this indicator, while easily measured, ignores the reality that agriculture and food are multi-dimensional in both their importance and their sustainable development impacts. The multi-stakeholder working group aiming to develop and integrate diverse metrics for other SDGs, developed from GCARD3, has met virtually to explore how best to move forwards. Diverse initiatives from both international agencies and civil society have expressed their interest in working together to change the metrics and hence also the value systems and success criteria associated with agricultural research and innovation. Resources have constrained deeper action so far, but this is a cross-cutting issue of vital importance and relevance to all GFAR Partners, from smallholder farmers to development assistance agencies.

Celebrating Collective Success

GFAR's communications outreach and engagement are aimed at advocacy, capacity building, and support to a Community of Practice among the Partners in GFAR that achieves longer term impacts. Communications is therefore not only a means to share what Partners in GFAR are doing, but also a means to make impact itself, by actively increasing knowledge and capacities. GFAR Webinars

Since 2015, the GFAR Secretariat has organized high quality, thought-provoking webinars based on the needs and requests of the Partners in GFAR. We now have a total of 2000+ people who have participated in at least one webinar, a number continuing to grow with every webinar.

In 2017, programme- and technical-focused webinars were launched, adding value to the ongoing series of webinars on communications tools and strategies. GFAR Secretariat works with Partners in preparing and running the webinars. The webinar planning phase itself becomes a capacity development exercise for the Partners, as the GFAR Secretariat offers support in convening presenters from within the GFAR network and by helping to set a broader frame and eliciting thought-provoking angles to address the topic in question. In addition to receiving this in-house expertise in crafting a webinar that draws ample interest, Partners also benefit from technical support in running the actual webinar.

"This webinar helped me think about different ways that we can share our work...I look forward to upcoming webinars. They were surely worth the time. It is hard to stay atop of all the new developments in the social media world and Peter does a terrific job keeping us informed and inspired." — Kathryn Clifton, ICARDA

In October, Partner in GFAR, Committee on Sustainability Assessment (COSA) teamed up with GFAR and the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) to "Brace for Impact": together they examined the question of how to design effective measurement tools for the understanding, management and acceleration of development impacts. The webinar distilled some of the recent innovations in how to measure sustainability and the diverse ways these are being applied in real-world situations. The presenters agreed that by identifying best practices and moving our research toward greater pragmatism, we can better serve the farmers and agricultural communities to identify the effective solutions that they need.

Other very successful webinars on technical topics included: "Beyond decision making: Foresight as a process for improving attitude towards change"; "Agents of change – the role of innovation facilitators" and "Sharing Knowledge on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation through TAPipedia". Two webinars were also held on the topic of farmers' rights. A first webinar was held in May bringing together renowned experts to discuss how to achieve complementarity between the informal and formal seed systems. A follow-up webinar was held in September to exchange information and best practices on how researchers and smallholder farmers work together in a complementary way towards the conservation of genetic diversity, food security and improving the livelihoods of the most vulnerable populations. All webinars had high attendance from a wide range of stakeholders.

Toolkits

In 2017, GFAR Secretariat sponsored the distribution of valuable management and leadership skills learning material produced by Managing My Life Institute in Canada. The learning package was disseminated free of charge to the least resourced Partners in GFAR, who were also able to add information about their own work and distribute the materials freely on to their own networks and to promote their work to sponsors.

Social Media Bootcamps

Since 2015, GFAR Secretariat has supported several online media/social media trainings for communicators, or “bootcamps”. The trainings were linked with events organized by GFAR or its Partners, and the trainees then did social reporting to cover the event (blog writing, live tweeting and other social media dissemination). While building up the team’s social media skills, the momentum generated also significantly increased the online outreach of these events to engage a much wider public beyond the meeting concerned. Trainees included experienced social media experts, professional communicators, and novices. In 2017, bootcamps were held for:

- International Conference for Youth in Agriculture: 15 trainees sponsored by Partners in GFAR
- FAO Forestry Twitter training: 40-50 participants
- 44th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS44): 29 trainees, sponsored by GFAR Secretariat or Partners

Support to CFS44 went beyond previous GFAR support to building social reporting teams around events. CFS44 trainees were chosen from among interested Partners in GFAR through a selection process to ensure they owned the issues, and committed to report back to their communities and back to GFAR Secretariat on their follow on actions. The trainees were asked to bring messages back to their organizations and networks that would raise awareness on relevant CFS policy recommendations and allow for ground-truthing by Partners in GFAR ‘in the field’ of the relevance and potential uptake of these policies.

Partner Spotlights

A new practice for advocacy this year has come in the form of the “Partner Spotlight”, a way of sharing and celebrating the work of our 450+ Partners. The Spotlights are an opportunity for Partners to share their work through the GFAR website, GFAR Blog and all our social media channels for one business week. This enables them to better reach not only other Partners in GFAR, but also the many and diverse subscribers to our blog and newsletter. These have been viewed very positively by Partners, and all have enthusiastically expressed their perception of a real added value, not only in terms of online exposure and increased reach, but in terms of engagement with other stakeholders. Through the process, Partners have come to better understand the mission and value of GFAR in providing a platform for advocacy and cross-sectoral collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The Partner Spotlights have been a significant source of blog content during this period, accounting for about a quarter of posts. To date, 18 Partners in GFAR — ranging from international research organizations to civil society and NGOs, youth organizations, private sector, GFAR facilitating agencies and farmers’ organizations — have benefitted from the Partner Spotlights.

Financial Statement

Total income received in 2017 by GFAR Secretariat (financial contributions received in 2017 plus cash carry-forward of USD 3,349,124 from 2016) was USD 3,720,990. Within this, the Government of Switzerland contributed USD 220,000 specifically in support of YPARD and FAO contributed USD 50,000. World Bank contributed funds of USD 101,866 in this year.

An overall total of USD 2,704,946 was spent or committed in the year 2017. Administration and support services amounted to 9% of expenditure and GFAR's governance bodies a further 11%. The remainder of funds and professional staff costs were dedicated to catalyzing actions in the six thematic areas of the GFAR Medium Term Plan.

We are very grateful to all those who have provided financial support to activities of the Global Forum.

In 2017, these were:

- European Union via European Commission
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- Switzerland (SDC)
- World Bank
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

GFAR 2017 Assessed and Indirect Contributions Received (USD)

90%	3 349 124	Overall net cash balance carried-forward from 2016 Direct Contributions (incl. end-Dec 2016- 4th EC)
0%	0	European Commission (EC) 2017 - Funds already provided in Dec 2016- 4th EC.
5.9%	220 000	SDC for YPARD (Swiss) 2017
2.7%	101 866	World Bank for GCARD3 still available in 2017
1.3%	50 000	FAO 2017
100%	3 720 990	Total Assessed and Indirect Contributions for 2017

GFAR 2017 Expenditure by Activity (USD)

Governance	297,544	11%	
Administration & support services	243,445	9%	
Foresight for better futures	220,000	13%	
Partnerships for impact	459,841	22%	
Transformative investments	54,099	6%	
Capacities for change	243,445	9%	
Research in development	432,791	16%	
Accountability for actions	387,692	14%	
Total 2016 expenditures by activities	2,704,946*		

*N.B. Includes USD 50,000 spent against FAO contribution of USD 50,000 + World Bank funds spent for GCARD3 and GAFSP of USD 101,866 in 2017

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