



# The 2016 **GFAR** Annual Report

THE GLOBAL FORUM ON  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
AND INNOVATION

# The Big Change

## INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW GFAR

**T**oday about 842 million people are going hungry because they can't afford to buy adequate food. Many of them are smallholder farmers who, while producing about 80% of the world's food, cannot meet their own families' nutritional needs. In addition to the challenges of poverty, hunger and malnutrition, our world faces environmental degradation, climate change, gender discrimination, youth unemployment, political instability and mass irregular migration. The scale and complexity of these challenges are unprecedented and vary from region to region. It is clear that overcoming these challenges will require a scaling up of investment in agricultural research and innovation, but it will also require a change of approach. We need to transform our food and agriculture systems to be more productive, sustainable and resilient. They must ensure nutrition as well as food security, empower rural women and youth in agriculture, and prepare us in the face of a changing climate.

The beneficiaries of agricultural innovation – resource-poor farmers and their communities – have not been given sufficient voice. They have not been able to access the resources and develop the infrastructure necessary to turn innovation into results. But the answer is not in one-size-fits-all solutions delivered through a top-down approach. Farmers themselves are often the source of innovation in sustaining rural environments and agricultural resources. Farmers' own knowledge and traditional practices therefore need to inform research and innovation processes.

The only way to meet these challenges is by working together, exchanging information and best practices, promoting open and inclusive discussions, and involving and connecting smallholder farmers to other stakeholders along the value chain, including policymakers. Each sector must have a space for their opinions to be heard. No single organisation or entity can resolve our common challenges by themselves; partnerships and Collective Actions are key. This is where the value of GFAR lies –

a vibrant network of all those interested in working together towards a better common future.

Over the course of 2015 and 2016, GFAR has redefined itself to better meet these challenges. In line with decisions of the 2015 Constituent Assembly, the GFAR Charter was reformulated to better reflect the agricultural and food system needs and challenges of today and the future. These principles were resoundingly endorsed by the GFAR Partners' Assembly in April 2016. This Assembly, of the Partners that make up GFAR, is the strategic body that determines the direction and role of GFAR and shapes the Collective Actions among the many and diverse Partners involved. It provides a mechanism for representatives – from farmers and consumers to private sector players, policy makers, and upstream research – to discuss strategic needs as true equals and to set out the future direction and processes of GFAR.

GFAR plays a very active role in facilitating Collective Actions among the Partners in the Forum, working across the spread of areas prioritized by different sectors in the GFAR Medium Term Plan. In some cases, such as action networks on gender and youth, this is by direct support to networks mobilizing the constituencies concerned. In most cases, however, this is through GFAR facilitating, co-supporting or co-sponsoring Collective Actions among partners, themselves driving forward the changes required. This catalytic role of GFAR is seen in actions across each of the six work streams identified for transforming agri-food research and innovation systems.

In this report, the activities catalyzed among the Partners in the GFAR and carried out in 2016 are highlighted within the framework of our six work streams: Accountability for Action, Foresight for Better Futures, Partnerships for Impact, Transformative Investments, Capacities for Change and Research in Society.

## Laying the foundation for a new way of working

In 2016 the Assembly agreed upon the establishment of a new Steering Committee, which transparently represents – and is accountable to – stakeholders in each sector and region. In December 2016, 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 Partners that make up the Steering Committee are not there just to represent themselves. They have committed to advocate for the concerns of their constituencies and actively engage with and mobilize them. They will be directly accountable to other GFAR Partners in their sectors for catalyzing key Collective Actions to be taken forward with Partners in other sectors.

More information on page 24.

# Numbers At A Glance



**GCARD**  
CONFERENCE  
SOUTH AFRICA

6th-8th April 2016  
**500 participants**  
from 83 countries

Online boot camp training  
for **152 trainees**

**35X** increase in blog traffic  
**169,000** visitors  
**64,100** comments



**BLOG**

Monthly page views  
**up %3500**

Monthly comments  
**up from 6 to 40**



**GFAR.org**

Pageviews up **27%**  
Visitors up **29%**



Twitter followers  
**UP 32%**



LinkedIn subscribers  
**UP 26%**



Facebook likes  
**UP 74%**

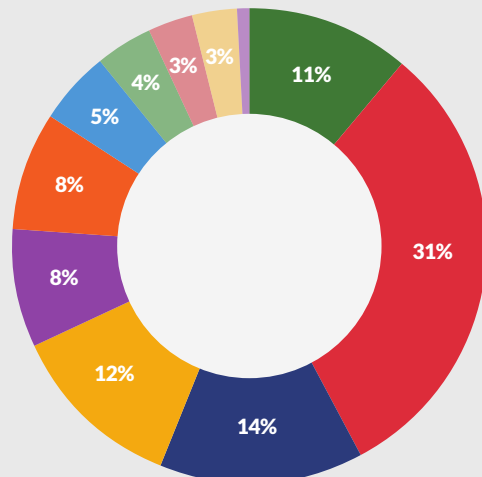


Monthly views  
**UP 236%**

## 2016 GFAR Partner growth



- National Agriculture Research and Policy Institutions
- Civil society and NGOs
- Higher education
- Private sector networks
- Farmer and agricultural worker organizations
- International public sector agricultural research
- Youth
- Regional Representation
- Rural advisory services
- Women's associations
- Consumer organization



# Contents

1 **A Message from GFAR Executive Secretary: “The Year In Review”**

## **Highlights from 2016**

2 **Accountability for Action**

A Case Study of Success: The GCARD Process 2015-2016

6 **Foresight for Better Futures**

A Case Study of Success: Grassroots Foresight

9 **Partnerships for Impact**

A Case Study of Success: Promoting Farmers Rights Through Partnership

13 **Transformative Investments**

A Case Study For Success: The Young Agripreneurs Project (YAP)

17 **Capacities for Change**

A Case Study For Success: The Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition Initiative (GODAN)

21 **Research in Society**

A Case Study For Success: The Mediterranean Dialogues

24 **GFAR Leadership: Growth in 2016**

26 **Contact Informati**

# The Year in Review

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



**O**ur agriculture and food systems are failing to meet today's needs, let alone those of tomorrow. The future we'd all wish to see—in which poverty and hunger are no more—requires managing the threats from climate change, ensuring women's economic empowerment, creating sustainable rural and food systems, giving our youth a viable future, and more. Meeting the huge challenges ahead in realizing the 2030 sustainable development goals means changing the way we work—and the way we think.

The only way to meet these complex challenges is by working together. No single organisation or entity can resolve our common challenges by themselves: partnership and Collective Action are key. Collective Action is the new mantra and mode of action for the world, not just in agriculture, but in business, IT, accommodation, transport and many other sectors.

GFAR works to make sure that agri-food research and innovation are effective, equitable and responsive to the development needs of the poor. As set out in the GCARD Roadmap, endorsed by the G8, G20 and many others, we need to break through the blockages and bottlenecks that prevent knowledge and innovation from benefiting the world's poor. We must create more equitable systems that truly reconnect science and society. We need to recognize farmers, poor consumers and rural households as the central actors and innovators themselves, not as just the recipients of a broken pipeline of technologies and innovations.

Making sure that GFAR can do so effectively has meant a radical reform of our own governance, to create a forum owned and driven by all. In the new GFAR all have a say, from smallholder farmers to upstream research and across all sectors—public, private and civil society. Each can find space for their opinions to be heard, lend their voices in a

collective movement for change and find new ways to work together, creating synergies and impacts well beyond the reach of any single institution.

2016 was an amazing year for GFAR, a true renaissance of this Global Forum to meet the needs of both today and tomorrow. The third GCARD event in South Africa and the first Assembly of the Partners in GFAR were the culmination of a long process of reflection and reform. They marked the start of a new era for GFAR.

Representatives from all sectors in innovation and all regions of the world came together, took ownership of the challenges themselves and agreed together on how they wanted to work as GFAR and how they wanted to be represented. Through these highly transparent processes, GFAR now truly encompasses all actors involved in the generation, access, transformation and use of knowledge in agriculture and food systems, working together in new and exciting ways to deliver the changes required for sustainable development.

The remarkable degree of consensus we have achieved, among sectors whose interests are often perceived as competing or even opposed, bodes very well for the future of this unique Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation and its ability to deliver and sustain new ways of working that can really make a difference in this world.

Innovation fuels the engine of development. GFAR, through this invaluable meeting of minds, provides the creative sparks and the coordinated actions required to make vital change happen.

## **Mark Holderness**

GFAR Executive Secretary



# Accountability for Action

Institutions are made up of people, who, like us as individuals, tend to guard their expertise and resist change. They may also find themselves distant from the concerns of the people they're meant to benefit. Accountability for Action is a call to actors at all levels of agriculture to hold themselves accountable, to each other and to their beneficiaries, in setting meaningful priorities and creating equitable and effective actions.



## A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESS

# The GCARD Process 2015 - 2016



Photo: IISD

### The GCARD3 Global Event

*“The GCARD3 Global Conference was a phenomenal success on many counts as articulated and perceived by those who attended it.” – Evaluation report of GCARD3*

**T**he GCARD3 Global Event – the Third Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development – was held in Johannesburg in South Africa on 5- 8 April 2016. The Global Event, In 2016, the governance and leadership of GFAR was strengthened through the addition of new voices to the GFAR Steering Committee – the body made up of representatives elected from each of GFAR’s constituencies. The new Committee now includes nine seats for representatives of Partners in GFAR working at the local level. This ensures 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. A new constituency – Women’s Associations – will help bring perspectives on women’s rights and economic empowerment to GFAR

Collective Actions. The new Steering Committee country-level perspectives now represents local and One-third of governance the center of GFAR’s work the needs of farmers, 2 new local seats to capture greater gender balance women’s perspectives and New constituency to bring in Growth in 2016 Leadership GFAR for a Sustainable World’.

GCARD3 was designed differently from previous GCARD events and involved an 18-month run up period which included a set of consultations at national and regional levels. Twenty large multi-stakeholder consultations at the national level as well as five regional multi-stakeholder consultations took place between October 2015 and April 2016. Both provided an opportunity for a variety of stakeholders in those specific geographic areas to discuss priorities and activities as well as to provide guidance on future activities. The purpose of these consultations was to promote effective, targeted investments and build partnerships and capacities in a bid to ensure that today’s agricultural research meets the needs of resource-poor.



Through these consultations, a set of five challenges was identified around which the debate at the Global Event was structured: Ensuring better rural futures; Keeping science relevant and future-focused; Scaling up: from research to impact; Showcasing results and demonstrating impact; Sustaining the business of farming. Participants in the process were largely unanimous in their views that the issues addressed during the consultation were relevant to their priorities.

The 400 participants represented a range of farmers' organisations, research and advisory institutions, donors, NGOs and the private sector. After four days of discussion and debate both in plenary and in working groups, they agreed on a set of outcomes for each of the five key challenges. The common denominator for all of these outcomes is *Collective Action*, meaning that regardless of which challenge they were talking of, GCARD3 participants agreed on the necessity of Collective Action to stand up to the same.

*"I learnt a lot and I was exposed to a lot of information that I didn't have before. I felt inspired to make an impactful contribution to the agricultural sector in Botswana."* – Private sector representative

In order to ensure better rural futures, the need for increased and improved use of foresight was highlighted, as was the need for collectively planned and implemented initiatives that aim to assist rural communities in designing their own future. From the GCARD3 the "Alliance for the re-appropriation of the rural futures by local people", was initiated with farmers' organisations.

With respect to keeping science relevant and future-focused, participants agreed to collaborate on educational reform and promotion of PhDs in agricultural research. Alongside the focus on academia, they also recognised the need for continued professional development in agriculture, including fostering of entrepreneurship and innovation.

The third challenge, scaling up from research to impact, resulted in an agreement to develop a culture of impact, lobby for investment and capacity building, and embed research into innovation systems. When it comes to how to showcase results and demonstrate impact, in addition to increase involvement with national measurements of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), participants agreed to create a platform to harmonise agriculture related indicators linked to the SDGs, in order to improve Collective Action for impact.

A number of activities that can help sustain the business of farming were identified and agreed upon. These include creating clusters of smallholder farmers, in particular to improve their links with finance and markets; building value chain partnerships for success while at the same time recognising traditional farming methods and practices; developing evidence-based and demand driven data to enrich policy and attract finance; protect smallholder farmers' access to resources and invest in improving their business skills; open up innovation platforms for farmers to gain access to new technologies, and; addressing public health and nutrition in agricultural research and innovation programs.

## GCARD3 Evaluation

The Agricultural Learning and Impacts Network (ALINE) was appointed as the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) partner for the GCARD3 Global Event. ALINE utilized a variety of methods to evaluate the different elements of the entire GCARD3 process and convey perceptual feedback. Some findings of the evaluation were:

- Theme sessions during the GCARD3 Global Event overwhelmingly met respondent expectations, with 97% of

evaluation form respondents stating that the sessions met their expectations "fully" (59%) or "to some extent" (38%).

- 62% of interview respondents, 89% of evaluation form respondents and 93% of conference survey respondents, stated that they made connections at the conference that could become partners in their work.
- 83% of survey respondents reported that they left the conference with specific actions for either themselves or their organizations.

## GFAR Partners' Assembly

Held back-to-back with the GCARD3 Global Event and attended by around 80 participants, the Assembly built on the outcomes of the GFAR Constituent Assembly, held in Bangkok in August 2015, which brought together over 100 representative stakeholders from all sectors and all regions, to consider and renew the role, purpose and governance of GFAR. The Partner Assembly is the strategic body that determines the direction and role of GFAR and shapes the Collective Actions among the many and diverse Partners involved. This landmark Assembly formed a key step in a process of governance review, reform and renewal of the Global Forum.

Participants analysed questions for clarity on Collective Action and explored what it meant to their constituencies in practice. The participants also discussed the need for a new governance arrangement in order to ensure a diverse body that engages the Partners in Collective Actions. A significant outcome of this discussion was the agreement to increase the size of the Steering Committee. This was the basis for a selection process initiated in December 2016 to establish an additional nine seats for representatives of Partners in GFAR working at the local level. This process ensured that they are truly credible in representing the interests of the Partners and the communities they serve, and are able to reflect a grassroots viewpoint, informed by local perspectives.

The results of a vote via an electronic system showed that over 90% of this diverse group of participants fully endorsed the new GFAR Charter tabled at the Assembly.

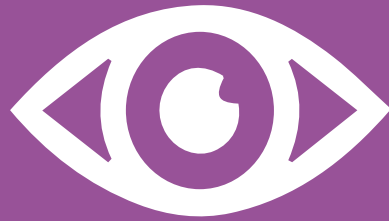
## GFAR support to international policy processes and strengthening coordination of bilateral and multilateral systems.

At the policy level, the value of the GCARD process was recognized in the Ministerial Communiqué from the G20 Agriculture Ministers meeting in China as an important mechanism for increasing exchanges in agricultural innovations and sharing relevant policy experience and successful practices. The work of GFAR was featured in the G20 magazine distributed to all national delegations at the G20 Summit. GFAR hosted a session at the Global Leaders in Agricultural Science and Technology (GLAST) meeting in China later in 2016.

*"We call upon G20 members to strengthen cooperation and capitalize on relevant mechanisms of Global Forum of Leaders for Agricultural Science and Technology (GLAST) and the Global Conferences on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD), so as to increase exchanges in the innovation of agricultural practices, technologies, policies and mechanisms, and to share relevant policy experiences and successful practices." - G20 MACS communiqué*

GFAR Secretariat took part in the UN Addis Ababa Development Investment Summit that led to the subsequent Agenda for Action. In this meeting, GFAR inputs ensured that innovation in agriculture became recognized alongside that in other disciplines.

GFAR also directly contributed to the European agricultural innovation policy development of the European Commission through the 'Designing the path' Conference on EU Agricultural Research and Innovation in Brussels, January 2016. The EU Strategy on agricultural research and innovation has many inextricable links to the global agricultural research and innovation community.



# Foresight for Better Futures

Foresight in agriculture is about putting farmers at the centre of innovation by tapping into their intimate knowledge of the everyday changes they live through. To do that, farmers need to be engaged in the discussions and able to contribute their accumulated knowledge.

# A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESS

## Grassroots Foresight



Photo: CIMMYT - Peter Lowe

**T**hrough its grassroots foresight programme, GFAR empowers partner farmers' organisations to use participatory foresight and futures analyses to better understand the evolving and persistent challenges of agriculture and rural development, and to improve their own decision-making to better adapt to these challenges and proactively contribute to the decisions shaping their own futures.

GFAR is uniquely positioned to unite traditional scientists, farmers' organisations and other relevant stakeholders in carrying out grassroots foresight. In 2016, GFAR Secretariat built on extensive work done through agreements with AFA (Asian Farmers' Association), Propac (Central Africa) and Coprofam (Latin-America),

to organize regional workshops aimed at training them in how to plan and execute structured foresight activities.

The Near East and North Africa region is a region that has experienced huge upheaval in recent years. Events before and after the Arab Spring have significantly altered the living conditions of rural communities. Foresight is a process that could and should be used to increase the capacities of these communities to stand up to the challenges, as well as to harness the opportunities, the future is likely to bring.

In December 2015, the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA), a Partner in GFAR, organised a Foresight



Workshop in Hammamet, Tunisia. The workshop gathered youth and research organisations, as well as farmer's cooperatives from across the region for three days of discussion, learning and action on what foresight is and to engage them in concrete thinking about the futures of food, agriculture and rural development in their region. Moreover, the workshop was a key element in facilitating AARINENA's strategy for promoting and using foresight in agri-food research and innovation in the Near East and North Africa.

During the workshop, participants shared their fears, concerns and hopes about the future of the region. In sub-regional groups, they identified a set of driving forces they believe have the potential to influence food, agriculture and rural development in their region. Thereafter, they developed alternative hypotheses about the evolution of these scenarios with a time horizon of 20 years and then they discussed what role foresight can play in improving innovation and enhancing development in each of these scenarios.

The final discussion formed the basis for an AARINENA strategy for developing and using foresight in the region. The core principles of this strategy include recognising the crucial importance of multi-actor, multi-stakeholder perspectives; taking a bottom-up approach both in inspiration and action; developing capacity, building awareness, institutionalising the approach and seeking resourcing.

Participants agreed to develop a brief on the benefit of structured foresight activities to be shared with the region's decision makers and were clear on the need for further, more thorough training that will enable them to continue their understanding and funding of foresight activities, and their use of foresight outcomes for advocacy. A set of training materials for the workshop, which GFAR adapted and provided at the workshop have been translated into Arabic for use regionally.

GFAR brings to the table the need for, and benefits of, incorporating the knowledge of the farmers themselves into the foresight work of conventional agricultural science. In August, at a meeting convened by ISPC, the

Independent Science and Partnership Council of CGIAR, foresight was one of the main topics on the agenda. The discussion centred on how CGIAR, in light of the multitude of studies produced around the world on foresight in agriculture, best can contribute constructively. The ISPC will focus on a series of precise exercises to complement the results of model studies with grassroots foresight set up by GFAR and to set up an agile process to allow for these studies to be carried out within a shorter timeframe. In the context of the ISPC, GFAR's goal is to reach agreements with more regional farmers' associations and then to nominate a representative of these on ISPC's foresight committee, where they would participate together with representatives of conventional science.

## **New Alliance for the re-appropriation of rural futures by local actors**

In the past, there has been a noticeable mismatch between agricultural research and innovation priorities as driven by development stakeholders and donor communities and what farming and rural communities generally consider as their own priorities and needs. At GCARD3, the expressed need to address this challenge, led Partners in GFAR to call for an *Alliance for the re-appropriation of rural futures by local actors*. The Alliance was envisioned to enable rural communities to improve their decision making and determine their own futures through grassroots foresight activities. By using its convening ability to bring different stakeholders together, GFAR and partners helped to catalyze this Alliance, providing the platform and an inclusive space for farmers' organisations, including youth and women, to engage with agricultural research, development and donor communities' representatives to mutually develop agricultural development and innovations agenda that give importance to farmers' priorities. The aim is to ensure that the foresight platforms are sustained by regional practitioners and that they truly work towards ensuring integrated systems that contribute to better futures for rural farming communities.



# Partnerships for Impact

Partnerships for Impact is about working together through inclusive, open dialogue and Collective Action to effect necessary change in areas such as agrobiodiversity, farmers' rights, nutrition and climate change. GFAR brings together the voices and actions of people at all levels of the agricultural sector, so that, as partners, we can understand and overcome the barriers to progress.



# A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESS

## Promoting Farmer's Rights Through Partnership



Photo: FAO - Yasuyoshi Chiba

*“As the world’s population continues to burgeon, we will have to produce the extra food needed and will have to do so in the face of mounting threats posed by changing climates, more austere weather conditions, less land, water and fertilizer, and intensified pest and disease attacks. The sharing of the world’s precious plant genetic resources for food and agriculture will become increasingly important as we strive to feed our growing world population. As countries take measures to more effectively implement Farmers’ Rights, so the whole world will benefit – from the conservation and greater sharing of plant genetic resources.”*

- Geoffrey Hawtin.<sup>1</sup>

**F**armers around the world have a clear right to manage their seeds, including saving, using, exchanging and selling farm-saved seed and propagating material. These rights are stipulated in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA). While the Treaty is there, many farmers are still not aware of their entitlements. Following the 2015 launch of a Joint Programme for Capacity Development in Farmers’ Rights, developed with the Secretariat of the ITPGRFA, in 2016, GFAR continued its deep engagement in promoting Farmers’ Rights. Not least of which was raising awareness of these among farmer communities themselves. Not only did the Joint Programme welcome three new members <sup>2</sup>,

building on experiences from similar projects in Guatemala and Malawi, GFAR also supported national capacity development programmes on Farmers' Rights and seed protection in Honduras and Costa Rica.

In Honduras, a wide range of partners,<sup>3</sup> collaborated in the production of a book on capacity building on Farmers' Rights and seed production: *Los derechos de los agricultores y las agricultoras de Honduras en lo que se refiere a los recursos fitogenéticos para la alimentación y la agricultura*. The book is comprised of ten chapters with different information and details on what Farmers' Rights are, what rights different groups have, including women and indigenous groups when it comes to deciding over their natural resources and preserve traditional knowledge. The book, which is written in the form of a manual, also covers the scope and mechanisms of the ITPGRFA. Finally, it includes relevant national law and policy framework in Honduras for the implementation of Farmers' Rights. Through the support of the Department on Agri-food for Science and Technology of Honduras, and the Fundación para la Investigación Participativa con Agricultores de Honduras (FIPAH), this book is now being distributed to smallholder farmers across the country.

Dynamic partnerships are instrumental to the success of projects of this sort, as is the involvement of smallholder farmers themselves. Both have been explored in this case: To introduce the book to Honduran farmers, GFAR participated in a national meeting between farmers' organisations, decision-makers, civil society organisations and international organisations. The meeting, which took place in Tegucigalpa, effectively represented the kick-off for a review of the National Seed Law and thanks to the efforts made there, civil society is actively engaging in the law review process.

A partnership between GFAR and UNDP-GEF has proved a very effective platform to promote Farmers' Rights. Among other things, the partnership has allowed the introduction of advice and training on Farmers' Rights into grants to civil society organisations managed by UNDP-GEF across the world. As a result, the programme is being extended further, starting with Ecuador and Peru, while grant requests for Egypt, Indonesia, Bolivia, Pakistan, Mexico, Kazakhstan, India, Thailand and Sri Lanka are in the pipeline.

## Strengthening the CGIAR

GFAR has continued to contribute extensively to the governance and reform of the CGIAR. When the CGIAR resolved to go through a further reform process from 2015-2016, GFAR has continued to provide the perspectives of external national partners on the programmes and strategy of the CGIAR system. Throughout 2015-2016, GFAR worked directly with the CGIAR Consortium (now System Office) on a series of dialogues in CGIAR focus countries, led by the CRPs most involved, to determine how best they could integrate their actions on the ground and respond to national needs. GFAR provided invaluable connection to a range of national partners in many of the countries concerned. GFAR also solicited and provided specific inputs to external reviews of CGIAR's work on gender, on capacity development and on partnerships and on monitoring of attention to farmers' rights.

GFAR reminded the Transition Team, established to help design the architecture of a new System Organization and prepare a new framework for the CGIAR, of the value of its contribution to the CGIAR in this process: bringing mutual

accountability vis a vis stakeholders; mobilizing partners from outside the system along the 14 innovation pathways concerned; and doing so not as a CGIAR entity, but as a forum that is objective and independent of the System.

GFAR's Senior Partnership Adviser was appointed Independent Chair of the Steering Committee of CRP Dryland Systems (CRP-DS) in April 2015. CRP-DS is a coalition of partners and 4 CGIAR Centers led by ICARDA. It engages in action research to develop and validate 'best-bet' intervention packages, and promote scaling-up in five target Regions. CRP-DS adopted a research-for-development approach for continual development of technologies (crops, livestock, agroforestry) integrating the reality of smallholder farming communities. The Chair provided guidance to the Steering Committee and participated in the CRP reporting to ICARDA Board. The SC agreed on integrating CRP-DS heritage at the end of the Program into an appropriate new Agri-Food System CRP as decided by the CGIAR Consortium.

## Engaging with EAT Forum on metrics and investments around nutrition

GFAR has from the outset been a direct partner in establishment of the EAT Stockholm Food Forum, a multi-stakeholder platform linking agricultural production, sustainability (including through climate change) and nutrition, attracting very high profile attention. In addition to active participation in the annual meetings of the Forum, GFAR has been building linkage with EAT Forum on metrics and investments around nutrition,

as part of the leverage brought to change production and consumption habits. This included a GFAR-EAT organized workshop, hosted by the Norwegian Embassy in Rome as a follow-on from ICN2, which explored the many challenges in finding acceptable and simple measures to link agricultural production and sustainability values with nutritional qualities of foods.

<sup>1</sup> The quote is from a post Hawtin wrote on the GFAR blog. You can read the full blogpost.

<sup>2</sup> The Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental, the MS Swaminathan Foundation and the Economic Research Services of Pakistan.

<sup>3</sup> including the Development Fund of Norway, the National Commission of Plant Genetic Resources of Honduras, Zamorano International University, the Collaborative Programme on Participatory Plant Breeding for Mesoamerica, the Association for Participatory Plant Breeding with Farmers of Honduras, smallholder farmers, the Rural Reconstruction Programme and the Honduras Association for Local Agricultural Research and Innovation,



# Transformative Investments

The success of agricultural research and innovation programmes is still largely measured by conventional criteria of production tonnage. However, this does not reflect the wider impacts of system sustainability, availability or access to food, or its nutritive qualities. The Partners in GFAR recognize that it's not enough to just make new and bigger investments in agriculture.

The data and rationale underlying these decisions must be meaningful and the way we measure success must reflect actual improvement. Through this work stream GFAR supports people and actions transforming the way we invest in agriculture.



## A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESS

# The Youth Agripreneurs Project (YAP)



Photo: GFAR

**E**ncouraging youth who want to create a future for themselves in agriculture has always been at the core of GFAR's priorities. The work to involve youth even more in rural development issues was taken to a new level in 2015-2016, when youth were involved directly in the third Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD3). With the support of Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), a Partner in GFAR, youth were made part of the consultative processes at national and regional levels that took place prior to the main event.

Then, in February 2016, GFAR announced the Young Agripreneurs Project (YAP). This was a pilot project to run

for one year (2016-2017) with the aim to support the start-up of selected projects idealised and realised by young agricultural entrepreneurs – agripreneurs – by providing them with seed funding (USD 5,000) for one year, along with mentoring, leadership coaching, business training and communication support. The project was financed by the European Commission, FAO Caribbean, Agropolis Foundation and private donors. IFAD has been a staunch supporter of the YAP project since its inception.

GFAR launched a global contest through online media attracting over 400 entries. Six projects were selected as the winning entries by over 120,000 readers on the GFAR Blog, who lodged over 60,000 votes as comments on

the blog entries. The entries were judged on a qualified appreciation of the project's feasibility, originality, impact and sustainability. Diverse and innovative, the projects include everything from organic honey production in Ethiopia to online agricultural marketplaces in Nepal and development of organic cosmetic products in the Caribbean.

The winners – six talented young men and women – were invited to the GCARD3 Global Event in Johannesburg in April 2016. Two of them, Lillian Beuttah from Kenya and Jony Girma from Ethiopia, were invited to the AU-EU Conference: Investing in a Food Secure Future where they were panellists in working groups discussing the role of the entrepreneur in climate smart agriculture. Later on in the year another young agripreneur in the YAP project, Josine Macaspac from the Philippines, was invited to AgTalks in Rome.

*“It was very exciting to be able to stand beside other young ‘agripreneurs’ in front of a whole room of seasoned, accomplished people in the agriculture field and be able to talk about our passion. For my part, being able to talk about my project and how it can help change the lives of Filipino farmers, was an experience I wouldn’t have missed for the world. I felt, in that moment, that I had conquered the obstacles – my mountain, if you will -, and that I was able to push the boulder right to the top, despite everything that stood in my way”*

– Josine Macaspac

A full overview of the winners and their projects is found in this blogpost.

In the first few months of their one-year engagement with GFAR and YPARD, the young agripreneurs have been trained in how to network and use innovative communication tools. They have shared their progress, achievements and challenges with the world through regular blog posts on the GFAR website. Their stories are inspirational and leave no doubt of the personal growth and professional achievements of the agripreneurs. As just one example, one of the projects aims to increase the resilience and adaptive capabilities of nomadic

pastoralists and other communities within the Kenyan arid and semi-arid lands by making use of high tech, low cost, and innovative solutions. After having spent a lot of time looking for a suitable plot of land and completing the construction of her greenhouse, the entrepreneur Lillian Beuttah describes her take on the building process this way:

*“The three months of the build have taught me not only the value of patience with yourself and others in the day’s failures but also the beauty and joy that comes when you crawl into bed tired and a bit dusty after a day of building your empire.”*

– Lillian Beuttah

In neighbouring Ethiopia, another of the GFAR-YPARD young agripreneurs, Jony Girma has employed a number of youth training them to become beekeepers and produce their own honey: They have entered into a contractual agreements exchanging technical support provided by the project for products they produce. In addition to producing honey from their own bee farms, youth have taken the responsibility to follow up and coach out-grower beekeepers. They will earn income from sales of their honey produced from their farm and incentives from honey collected from other beekeepers through a coaching system.

On the other side of the world, in the Caribbean, Kellyann Allcott asks if the road of an entrepreneur can ever be a straight one, sharing her experiences in this way:

*“I was given a rude awakening that sharing your ideas with others because you are excited about the whole process is sometimes not a good idea. Not everyone truly understands the meaning of “sharing the wealth. “As entrepreneurs, we interact with many different characters on a daily basis. There will be people who will add and share positively to your experience through this process. Then, there are those that are just there to see what they can gain. It is a harsh reality but a true one.”* – Kellyann Allcott

There is no doubt that the experiences of these young agripreneurs have sometimes been challenging. The YAP



pilot project is fulfilling its promise in assisting the young agripreneurs to turn their challenges into opportunities. That is a journey that the financial supporters donors as well as the participants appreciate following. Myriam Perez-Dumoulin from the Agropolis Foundation, one of the funders to the YAP pilot project has been following the progress done by the young agripreneurs. *“They’ve done a great job and I have appreciated a lot the reporting done via their blogposts. It was a pleasure to work with GFAR in this joint adventure”.*

## **New alliance for new measures of Sustainable Development impacts**

At the GCARD3 Global Event, an Alliance was set out to determine new measures for impact from agricultural innovation, that go well beyond conventional agricultural productivity and consider the many other impacts of agriculture and rural development in sustainable

development, including the synergies and trade-offs between these. The Alliance is mobilized through the GFAR Secretariat and led by Partners including IFPRI, ACIAR, APAARI and FAO.

## **Small enterprise development for rural women in Egypt**

Partners in GFAR have identified rural women’s wellbeing as an area of focus for GFAR Collective Actions. Small enterprise development for rural women has been identified as an effective way to raise their income, to develop their leadership and life skills and to improve their wellbeing and that of their families. However, success will depend on finding the right opportunities and intervention points through the full engagement of rural women and their communities.

As a pilot, GFAR started by applying a framework for needs assessment with rural women in five governorates in Upper Egypt, focussing on the poorest 24 villages. The study successfully identified the challenges to enterprise development, and the needs of women and solutions that could support women’s enterprise development projects. The Government and Governorates of Egypt have expressed strong demand for such an approach, which is now, through GFAR facilitation, being linked with IFAD loan investments in the country.



# Capacities for Change

Knowledge is important, but knowledge alone is not enough. Real change materializes through action. Through its initiatives, GFAR is working to transform agricultural education and build the essential capacities of people and institutions in agricultural research, while ensuring coherent global action. GFAR also draws on new technologies to improve information management and access within and between countries.

## A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESS

# The Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition Initiative (GODAN)



Photo: CIAT - Neil Palmer

If you run a business and you invest everything you have in that business, it's only natural that you are interested in potential risks to your productive abilities. Farming is, in this respect, no different from other types of businesses. A farmer has a vested interest in the conditions that affect her soil, her crops, the seeds she is using, the feed she gives to his animals and so forth. Moreover, the potentially disastrous consequences if farmers lack access to information that would help them adapt to changing conditions, affect not only the farmers but all of us that depend on the food they produce. Seen from that perspective, the push to make data that affects agriculture around the world accessible, in particular to smallholder farmers that do not have the power or ability to retrieve that data immediately,

is vital if we are to reach the goal of eradicating hunger by 2030. GFAR has the objective of empowering smallholder farmers by making the data they need available and accessible to them in a customised manner and by increasing awareness of farmers' data rights. This aligns with GFAR's approach of "putting the smallholder farmer at the centre of innovation and seeking change in their lives".

Originally conceptualized by the G8 countries in 2012, the purpose of the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition Initiative (GODAN) is the proactive sharing of open data at all stages of the food chain, from agriculture, forestry and fishery to nutrition. As such, it includes all of FAO's work areas. The purpose is to make information

about agriculture and nutrition available, accessible and usable to deal with the urgent challenge of ensuring global food security.

GODAN works with its 450 members on high-level advocacy towards government, industry, research institutions and academy to make data open, so as to better support decision making at all levels, increase transparency, improve service delivery and foster business creation. GFAR has worked on advocacy for better access to information since 2005 and was a founding member of the CIARD initiative in 2008. When GODAN was officially launched in 2013, GFAR became a partner and took a very active role. A member of the GFAR Secretariat sits on GODAN's steering committee and GFAR is one of the main driving forces of the initiative. In particular, GFAR has taken up a special role in emphasizing the impact of open data on farmers, and provides direct technical support to GODAN's operation, linking in the GFAR networks of thousands of organisations.

*“Increasing awareness of smallholder farmers to defend their rights to data, information and knowledge is crucial.” - GFAR report on “Rights of Farmers for Data, Information and Knowledge”*

GFAR hopes to assist GODAN in focusing on aspects of open data that are relevant to smallholder farmers. For instance, the types of data that are essential to them include everything from weather forecasts and predictions, for example concerning climate change, to finance data and legislation that concerns agriculture. Moreover, it is not only about making sure the data is available, it is also about customising it and facilitating farmers' access to it, for example via mobile phone services. Such data, made accessible and customised for smallholder farmers, will have significant impact on food security, both because of the risk-reduction it entails and because it is likely to increase sustainability.

Data-sharing is nevertheless a two-way street, so there is also the challenge of protecting farmers from data sharing “power imbalances”. Both GFAR and GODAN work to empower smallholder farmers through intermediaries such as farmers' organisations to ensure

that information does not end up in the hands of those who may take advantage of it in ways that are unfair or harmful to farmers. *“It is a matter of balancing openness and data rights in the interest of smallholder farmers”* says Valeria Pesce, GFAR's focal point for GODAN.

To increase awareness of these issues, GFAR Secretariat played a major role in the development of cornerstone GODAN documents, including “Responsible Data in Agriculture” and “Ownership of Open Data: Governance Options for Agriculture and Nutrition”, which have been extensively quoted and have evoked much interest around the opening up of agricultural data.

GFAR Secretariat was a co-organizer of a high-level GODAN summit held in New York in September 2016. With almost 800 participants, the summit was the largest event ever held on open data in agriculture and nutrition and brought together a range of high-level leaders for debate and discussion on the topic. While the summit was considered a success, one of the challenges remains to bring smallholder farmers and their representatives into the discussion as direct participants. This is an area of comparative advantage for GFAR as a multi-stakeholder forum.

## More coherent global action to strengthen capacities to support innovation system development

The Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) is the key mechanism by which FAO is now working to support the development of national agricultural innovation capacities in various countries of the world, through the EU-supported CDAIS programme.

Over the last year, and using EU programme support, GFAR has directly contributed financing and technical support to ensuring that the capacity development framework developed by TAP could be completed

through an expert workshop and then published and made available in several different languages. GFAR is also hosting the programme's TAPIPEDIA database and repository of agricultural innovations and learning materials, on the GFAR server, to ensure it can be maintained as an independent and non-institutional database of agricultural innovations and learning around the development of national agricultural innovation systems.

## New alliance for the reform of agricultural curricula and student leadership

One of the key actions determined by participants in GCARD3 was the formation of a new alliance for curriculum reform and student leadership. The Alliance was formed in order to address the chronic problem of young people turning away from agricultural careers and their perceptions that agriculture does not offer the rewards to be found elsewhere. The GFAR Secretariat built upon these ideas in partnership with the Global Confederation on Higher Education and Research in Agriculture, GCHERA, the global network of national agricultural university associations, a Partner in GFAR. This partnership led to a Global Dialogue at the

RUFORUM Conference in South Africa, in September 2016, in which GFAR used EU support to enable the participation of a range of non-university stakeholders, to express their concerns and needs to the university sector and avoid the discussion being internal to the university sector. The Alliance will engage over 900 agricultural universities and a range of stakeholders to catalyze curriculum reform and actions to create the agricultural leaders of tomorrow, equipped with skills and a sense of self and the importance of their calling that go well beyond technical skills alone.



## Research in Society

GFAR puts smallholder farmers' needs at the centre of the research and innovation agenda, ensuring that agriculture innovation is addressing the realities of farmer livelihoods, and drawing attention to other critical issues such as gender equity and the empowerment of women, the future of youth in agriculture, and the role of agriculture in protracted crises.



# A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESS

## The Mediterranean Dialogues



Photo: FAO - Khaled Desouki

**O**n both sides of the Mediterranean, rural communities have lived through several years of protracted crisis. The demand for social change that caused the political upheavals of the Arab Spring were in large part a result of the long-term devastating effects of rural poverty, crop failures and ensuing high food prices. Rural poverty is still leading many people to migrate to urban areas in search of new opportunities. If no such opportunity is found, the result is often urban poverty, despair, and over time, break-down of social structures. To avoid this downward spiral in the first place, it is essential to address the needs of rural populations at an early stage, creating opportunities for growth and of a sustainable future, especially for youth and for women.

In late 2015, research institutions, farmers' associations and youth associations came together in Milan, Italy, to discuss how to meet the challenges rural communities in the Mediterranean area are facing. The theme for the discussion was 'No Longer Left Behind: Mediterranean Rural Communities – National and Regional Policies favouring Neighbours' Development'.

In a joint declaration adopted at the Congress, four areas of action were identified as crucial to rebuild a future in rural areas in the region: innovation, investment, women and youth. While working to foster innovation and investment, collectively, partners agreed to promote both women' and youth's ability to re-appropriate their own future, in particular through education and job-creating initiatives.

The work initiated in Milan continued in 2016. GFAR and partners convened follow-up meetings in Montpellier, France, principally to build a collective response to the challenges, and in Rome, Italy, in October, to review the progress, share ideas and identify specific initiatives to be mobilised.

In Montpellier in March, discussions centred on how new technologies can address agro-environmental constraints as well as on how agri-food innovation can create new economic opportunity for women and youth in rural communities of the region. In particular, looked at how women and youth can implement climate-resilient agricultural systems mitigating land and resource degradation and which also create income and employment opportunities.

Participants, which included the GFAR Secretariat, AARINENA, ICARDA, CIHEAM, CIRAD, Agropolis International, the European Commission and the Foundation for South-North Mediterranean Dialogue, as well the heads of the national agricultural research systems of Morocco and Lebanon, although having different perspectives at the onset of the discussions, agreed to establish a working group to further address the issue of innovation- and agriculture-based rural enterprise for youth. They also agreed on the need to engage policymakers directly in the process and to expand the programme development to include greater involvement of stakeholders such as community leaders, social science researchers, educational institutions, private sector mentors and microfinance providers. Finally, they see it as essential that such a programme is community driven, nationally led, and regionally supported if it is to succeed.

In October 2016, GFAR and Partners held a second follow-up meeting in Rome. The Rome meeting focused on youth-led local enterprise and its role in furthering development in the region. As Mark Holderness, GFAR's Executive Secretary put it *"The disillusionment of young people is a challenge, but we also see a powerful energy among young people to drive change."*

YPARD Mediterranean, the Mediterranean chapter of the Young Professionals Network for Agricultural

Development (YPARD) had been established in 2015. At the Rome meeting, they voiced the concerns of young people while also highlighting the possibilities in increased youth participation in rural development. Furthermore, YPARD delegates identified practical steps necessary for the inclusion of young people in decision making: keep ensuring the active presence of young people in discussions; equip them with the confidence and skills they need, and; give them the space to be leaders of change.

The work to address the challenges facing rural communities in the Mediterranean area demonstrates GFAR's ability to catalyse Collective Action. Successful projects can only be achieved through collective effort, something that all stakeholders in this process recognise.

## Gender in Agriculture Partnership (GAP)

In 2016, GFAR continued supporting GAP, an open and inclusive community of institutions and individuals who have come together to develop Collective Actions and advocacy on gender-based issues in agriculture. A webinar bringing together presenters from FAO, CGIAR and the World Bank focused on metrics for women's empowerment.

# GFAR Leadership Growth in 2016

## The new Steering Committee

In 2016, the governance and leadership of GFAR was strengthened through the addition of new voices to the GFAR Steering Committee - the body made up of representatives elected from each of GFAR's constituencies. The new Committee now includes nine seats for representatives of the communities they serve, and are able to reflect a grassroots viewpoint informed by local perspectives. A new constituency - Women's Associations - will help bring perspectives on women's rights and economic empowerment to GFAR Collective Actions.

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

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

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

**Frank Begemann**  
Advanced Research / G20

**Nathaniel Don Marquez**  
Civil society and NGOs - Local

**Stephanie Barrial**  
Civil society and NGOs - Global

**Roberto Aparicio-Martin**  
Donor Support Group European Commission

**Rula Al-Kateeb**  
Farmer and Agricultural Worker Organizations - Local

**Fernando Lopez**  
Farmer and Agricultural Worker Organizations - Local

**Marco Marzano de Marinis**  
Farmer and Agricultural Worker Organizations - Global

**Ren Wang**  
Facilitating Agencies FAO

**Shantanu Mathur**  
Facilitating Agencies IFAD

**Agnes W. Mwang'ombe**  
Higher Education - Local

**John Kenelley**  
Higher Education - Global

**Trevor Nicholls**  
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**Anne Tutwiler**  
International Public Sector Agricultural Research

**Nana Osei Bonsu**  
Private Sector - Local

**John McMurdy**  
Private Sector - Global

**Alisher Tashmatov**  
Regional Representation Central Asia & Caucasus

**Zhang Huijie**  
Regional Representation East Asia

**Patrick Van Damme**  
Regional Representation Europe

**Maria Rodriguez**  
Regional Representation Latin America & Caribbean

**Bhag Mal**  
Regional Representation South, Southeast Asia & Pacific

**Ephraim A. Mukisira**  
Regional Representation Sub-Saharan Africa

**Mohammad M. AJLOUNI**  
Regional Representation - West Asia North Africa

**Shaibek Tentimishovich Karasartov**  
Rural advisory services - local

**Karim Hussein**  
Rural advisory services - Global

**Seemin Quayum**  
Women's Associations - Global

**Yogesh Jadhav**  
Women's Associations -Local

**Nidhi Nagabhatla**  
Youth - Global

**Keron Bascomb**  
Youth - Local

# GFAR Financials

<b>GFAR 2016 Assessed and Indirect Contributions Received</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>USD</b>
Overall net cash balance carried forward from 2015 Direct Contributions (less refund USD 668 to GIZ for closure of the account)	5%	291,260
European Commission (EC) (incl. end of Dec 2016 EC 4th contribution of the action)	82%	4,949,132
SDC for YPARD (Swiss)	3%	220,000
World Bank funds available for GCARD3 in 2016	6%	327,798
FAO 2016 (as credit on expenditures)	1%	50,000
Government of France externally provided resources (seconded staff) in 2016 (in kind)	3%	153,872
<b>Total Assessed and Indirect Contributions for 2016</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,992,062</b>

<b>GFAR 2016 Expenditure by Activity</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>USD</b>
GFAR Governance	11.0%	274,925
GFAR Administration and Support Services	9.0%	224,939
Foresight for better futures	3.0%	74,980
Partnerships for impact	17.0%	424,885
Transformative investments	2.0%	46,986
Capacities for change	6.0%	149,959
Research in development	27.0%	674,817
Accountability for actions	25.0%	624,830
<b>Total 2016 expenditures by activities</b>		<b>2,499,321</b>

(\*) N.B. Includes USD 50,000 spent against FAO contribution of USD 50,000 + World Bank funds spent for GCARD3 of USD 225,924 in 2016

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