The Global Forum on Agricultural Research

Together we’re shaping the future of agriculture
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# GFAR Annual Report 2014

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research  
Together we’re shaping the future of agriculture

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What is GFAR

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) is the world’s agricultural research and innovation community working together to transform and strengthen systems of agricultural research and innovation to increase their impact in development.

Agricultural research and innovation can help bring about a better future: a world without poverty, hunger or malnutrition, and where natural resources are used sustainably. But to get research and innovation out of the laboratory and into the hands of farmers in the developing world, national agricultural innovation systems need to become much more efficient and effective.

GFAR was established in 1996 to mobilize the global scientific community, and all those with a stake in agriculture and rural development, to work together to transform AR4D through dialogue, and by building partnerships for action on critical issues. Today, GFAR provides a unique global platform for research and innovation, encompassing all sectors, and bringing together public, private and producer partnerships that consider entire food value chains and their many stakeholders.

GFAR aims to:

- **Create the space** for all those concerned with the role of knowledge and innovation in agriculture and agri-food to share information, define research priorities and to co-ordinate work programmes.

- **Build effective and equitable** partnerships within the sector, locally, nationally, regionally and globally, to turn ideas into results and innovation into impact.

- **Advocate for greater investment** in human, institutional and financial capacities so countries can lead and participate in their own agricultural development.

- **Catalyze action**, mobilizing resources to support practical actions that are delivered by our constituent organisations to the priorities set out in the **GCARD Road Map** for agricultural system change.

- **Speak for the world’s agricultural innovation community**, bringing stakeholders’ perspectives to global discussion and multilateral processes and giving voice to the people.

- **Seek and share knowledge and technologies**, ensuring that they are relevant, available and accessible to all stakeholders – especially to farmers who are themselves innovators, and whose knowledge and experience must also be counted.

- **Focus on the future**, by building the capacity of countries to think ahead and plan their own agricultural futures.

- **Be accountable for our actions**. Effective transformation needs clear reporting and accountability, using measures that are relevant to our farmer stakeholders, and approaches in which they can participate.
Message from the Chair

There are more than 500 million family-owned farms around the world, contributing more than 80 percent of the world’s food supply. Many smallholder farmers are themselves poor and hungry. They are under huge pressure to produce more, but with limited access to water, land, energy and other resources. They need access to information and technical support that reflects their realities and meets their needs – whether they farming olives in Egypt, or maize in Guatemala.

Over the past 12 months, guided by the GCARD Road Map and working to the outcomes in our Medium Term Strategic Plan, GFAR has continued to mobilize and support research, education, extension and enterprise activities to benefit farmers in developing countries. This 2014 Annual Report provides some key examples where GFAR is making a difference, through its partnerships, collective advocacy, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building across the globe.

In 2014, The International Year of Family Farming (IYFF), the United Nations recognized the importance of family farmers in reducing poverty and improving global food security. But for the scientists, researchers, academics, policy makers, rural advisors, educators and civil society and farmers’ groups who come together in the Global Forum, every single day is focussed on how research and innovation can best meet the needs of resource-poor smallholder and family farmers. As GFAR works to improve the operations and governance of agricultural research systems globally, we have continued to progress the reform and renewal of the Forum’s own governance to ensure it is more representative and inclusive of the people we serve. The Strategic Working Group met at the end of 2014 in Johannesburg and has produced a Working Paper setting out options for a new governance structure, which will be considered by
the GFAR Constituent Assembly when it meets in August 2015.

An important part of GFAR’s purpose is to foster more effective partnership between national regional and international agricultural innovation systems. GFAR brings the international agricultural research system of CGIAR into better connection and understanding with partners from civil society and the public and private sectors around the world. Over the course of 2014, GFAR has captured the voices of civil society and fed these into the reform of CGIAR and the way it operates.

In Asia, Africa and Latin America, for instance, farming organizations and the agricultural research for development community are coming together to undertake the kind of forward-thinking – or foresight – that will lead to better research and more effective policies for equitable and sustainable development. The 3rd Foresight Exchange Workshop, held in Montpellier in June, alongside the GFAR-supported International Encounters “Family Farming & Research”, resulted in a comprehensive action plan for a Grassroots Foresight Initiative, supported by GFAR through the Global Foresight Hub.

Climate change is a critical issue for small-holder farmers. This year GFAR enabled the participation of civil society in preparatory work for the Climate Summit in New York and in the ongoing discussions around the establishment of the Global Alliance on Climate Smart Agriculture. In the interests of truly equitable partnerships, it is essential that such perspectives are included in considering these vital development issues.

During the year GFAR launched new training materials on Farmers Rights to plant genetic resources. These innovative training guides were prepared in partnership with farmer and civil society organizations in Guatemala, and have now resulted in changes in national policies to better reflect Farmers Rights. This approach is now being rapidly scaled-out in Latin America and Africa.

The GFAR Secretariat began development of an exciting new initiative that will transform the way research, innovation and enterprise is funded and delivered. The Investment Facility for Agricultural Innovation and Enterprise continues to gain momentum among our constituents who understand the need for better way to ensure national research and innovation systems are properly resources to deliver development outcomes for farmers at scale.

Information and communications technology (ICT) holds tremendous promise in building new skills and capacities of family farmers. GFAR was a major sponsor of the Agrifuture Days 2014 International Conference and supported the e–Agriculture Community of Practice to host two major e-discussions on ICTs and Family Farming. In this report, you can read about how the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) – one of six Regional Fora in GFAR – supported the promotion of a unique initiative in India that is bringing the benefits of digital technology to farmers and improving the quality of life in rural communities across the country.

Finally, the future of agriculture depends on addressing the needs of the farmers of today – many of whom are women – and the agriculturalists of tomorrow, who need sound skills and viable careers. Two GFAR-supported initiatives, the Gender in Agriculture Partnership (GAP) and the Young Professionals in Agricultural Development (YPARD) continued to grow from strength to strength during the year. Their progress is outlined in this report.

It has been another busy and productive year for GFAR and its partners and we can reflect with much satisfaction on our achievements. I would like to express my thanks to the GFAR Secretariat which has acted as a catalyst for many of these activities, and to the Steering and Executive Committees which have continued to guide the Forum and keep us to our path.

Most importantly, I would like to thank the many stakeholders and investors to the Global Forum – without your commitment and support we simply would not exist.

We have set ourselves an ambitious goal: the transformation of the world’s agricultural research and innovation systems. The need for change is just as critical as it was when we met as a sector at GCARD1 four years ago. We must not lose momentum – the world’s farmers are depending on us.

Juan Lucas Restrepo Ibiza
Chair, GFAR Steering Committee
GFAR’s focus is to ensure that agricultural innovation systems, encompassing research, extension, education and enterprise – deliver the best development outcomes to resource-poor farmers and rural communities.

The GCARD Roadmap describes the broad transformative changes needed in national systems, as articulated by the sector, while GFAR’s Medium Term Plan sets out how we will get there, specifying the practical actions we need to take collectively through six Work Streams. These actions are catalyzed through the GFAR Secretariat and delivered by stakeholders from farmers to researchers.

### 3.1 FORESIGHT FOR BETTER FUTURES

GFAR is committed to ensuring that farmers and national stakeholders are empowered and informed to better negotiate their own futures. Changing climates, economic and social crises and new technologies are among many factors that make the future of agriculture hard to predict. Foresight is about creating a clear view of new challenges as they begin to emerge and about using this knowledge to help societies choose the future they want. Forward-looking, anticipatory research and analysis needs to integrate a range of perspectives – farmers and other stakeholders – on key issues.
PHOTO CREDIT: FAO - SIMON MAINA

PROBLEMS

1. Lack of water
2. Lack of permanent fence
3. Lack of Pesticides
4. Lack of fertilizers

LEOPARD KWANDI

8 BEANS

No. of Leaves = 16

No. of holes = 57

No. of Pest = Ladybird
FROM THE GRASSROOTS UP: ASIA’S FARMERS EMBRACE FORWARD THINKING

By Esther Penunia, Secretary General of the Asian Farmers’ Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA).

Family farms account for most of the farm holdings across the globe. As GFAR’s farmer’s organization representative, I am interested in the relevance of foresight work to farmers at the ground level and how they can be the ‘doers’ of foresight work, bringing their perspectives and contributing to global foresight practice.

As an active partner of GFAR, and as the Secretary General of the Asian Farmers’ Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), I had the pleasure of participating in a foresight meeting in Montpellier, France in June 2014.

Clearly this Montpellier workshop was multi-stakeholder in approach, with input from agricultural policy researchers and several national and international non-governmental institutions and farmer organizations. GFAR and its partners, like AFA, know the importance of looking to the future and the need for the transformation of Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D). I realized during this workshop that the global AR4D community is fostering collective foresight action to prioritize research and pinpoint appropriate innovation systems in the communities where they work. I was delighted to see that there was appreciation for such work through a bottom-up approach, with a commitment to pilot it across three continents: Asia, Africa and Latin America. This is important because we need to encourage governments to support and empower family farmers, especially women and youth, by creating policies that lead to equitable and sustainable rural development.

Through my participation in the workshop, AFA has been able to scale out the learning, with further support from GFAR, and conduct pilot implementation of local or grassroots foresight work in three countries: India, Indonesia and the Philippines.
We will start implementing the project on grassroots foresight in early 2015 with commitment to conduct initial research from leaders of local rural communities in the Boru local community in East Nusa Tenggara province in Indonesia, in the central part of Uttarakhand state in India, and in the southern part of Palawan Island in the Philippines.

We’ve also seen other benefits from our engagement as a GFAR partner. Through our association with GFAR, AFA has been able to promote small-scale family farmers’ views and perspectives in international gatherings and provide input into the policy documents of international AR4D institutions. As an example, through GFAR, we were able to contribute to CGIAR’s consultations and to discussions on climate smart agriculture. This led to AFA’s being at the ‘negotiating/discussion’ table and a partner in promoting integrated, diversified, agro-ecological approaches.

We want to see upscaling and outscaling of resilient and viable agriculture production and marketing practices, especially building from where we are, and what we already know.

We hope organizations of women and men farmers/producers are empowered to shape their future so they will have a better destiny.

A selection of 2014 media stories under the theme “Foresight for Better Futures”:

- **Foresighted Farmers to Face Future Challenge**
- **Action plan – Grassroots Foresight Initiative**
- **“Future Smart” Farmers: the urgency of democratizing foresight**
- **Full version of the Glossary of Terms commonly used in Futures Studies**
- **Global Donor Platform – Annual General Assembly**
- **What could research do for the futures of family farming?**
- **ICT and family farming: local, systemic and future-oriented**
- **E-Discussion summary – “Forward Thinking for ICT use in Asian Agri-Food Chains”**

PHOTO CREDIT: FAO – JAMES BELGRAVE
To achieve sustainable development impact, public, private, community and civil society actors must come together and reconcile their different aims and interests through partnership. Through co-ordinated, collective action we can ensure agricultural research and development systems are more efficient and effective, and that each actor can contribute valuable expertise and experience. GFAR aims to build equitable and effective demand-driven partnerships among multiple stakeholders that can transform agricultural research and innovation into meaningful impacts at scale.
Giving Civil Society a Voice on Climate Change

By Sonali Bisht, Founder and Advisor to the Institute of Himalayan Environmental Research and Education (INHERE) and Member of the Civil Society Organizations Group on Agricultural Research for Development (CSO-GARD).

In 2010 the CSO–GARD was formed on the sidelines of the GCARD1 in Montpellier. I’m proud to be one of the founding members of the group that I’ve seen grow in strength since then. We now have 212 members from across the world bringing together people from civil society organizations that are committed to multi-stakeholder collaboration and working on issues around smallholder agriculture with natural resource conservation and sustainable utilization. Working as an electronic forums we encourage sharing of views, events and discussions around issues of common concern.

Clearly one such area of concern is climate change. Within the CSO–GARD we are adamant in protecting farmers’ rights, livelihoods and ecosystems, while increasing their resilience to climate change. I represented CSO–GARD in a Regional Consultation co–organized by GFAR to build a Global Alliance of Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA) in Asia in Hanoi, Vietnam in June 2014. This was a particularly useful meeting in that we spent time focusing on the Asian context and sharing experiences from Asia, as well as from Africa and Latin America. In my opinion a key outcome from this meeting was that I was able to take back to the CSO–GARD community the process and the key messages regarding the formation of the GACSA.

The regional consultation was also useful in preparing for my participation (again supported by GFAR) in the Alliance for Climate–Smart Agriculture Global Conference held in The Hague in July 2014. This meeting brought together the outcomes of all consultative meetings and initiatives and became part of the formal preparation for launching the Alliance for Climate–Smart Agriculture at the UN SG’s Climate Summit in September 2014. I found it valuable to participate in these meeting and get to know the views of the various stakeholders, the commonalities and the divergences.

Civil society organizations are committed to actions on the ground to protect poor and vulnerable farmers from climate change while creating environmentally–sound and socially–just global food systems. Engaging in these preparatory meetings provided me, on behalf of the CSO–GARD, an opportunity to interact with other civil society networks and to work on a joint statement to present to the Climate Summit in New York.

Civil society has been, and continues to remain, concerned on the loose framework for policy and action we see in the Alliance. There are CSO–GARD members that have expressed unease that GACSA, as an open alliance, will become dominated by multinational corporate interests and powerful groups, and might push solutions which are in their economic and political interest and not in the interest of smallholder farmers.

Preparing and sharing the joint statement is an important step in getting the voice of civil society heard in the decision making and policy processes associated with climate change. The statement we prepared highlighted our concerns on the importance of ecological agriculture and its variants in helping smallholder, resource poor and vulnerable farmers adapt to climate change and at the same time minimize greenhouse gas emissions.

I was pleased that the CSO statement received a positive response from the media and from the people present at the Climate Summit. As a further reinforcement of the key messages I joined a panel representing civil society at the launch of the Global Alliance of Climate Smart Agriculture on Sept 24 in New York.

Even though the CSO–GARD has decided not to become a member of the Global Alliance on Climate Smart Agriculture at this stage, our members are willing to engage in the ongoing discussions and processes of the Alliance. Our member institutions have indicated interest in being observers at the Alliance’s events and on behalf of CSO–GARD I will continue to be engaged and keep the CSO–GARD informed and aware.
High in the mountains of Huehuetenango, in western Guatemala, a generational effort is contributing to global food security. In this region, located hundreds of kilometers from the capital city, lives Mr. Isabel “Don Chabelo” López García. In a country that has some of the greatest diversity of maize varieties in the world, 70-year old Don Chabelo is conserving and using the same maize varieties as his grandfather and father did. For him these local varieties are hugely important, not only because they are part of his cultural heritage and social memory, but this wealth of variety means that he, and his fellow farmers, are better able to adapt to the changing climate, new diseases and pests.

Today’s seeds are the result of the collective work of hundreds of generations of farmers that have domesticated, conserved, used and exchanged them. For Don Chabelo, seeds are the heritage passed from parents to children. When he got married, his father gave him seeds. When his son got married, Don Chabelo did the same thing. “Seeds are life and when giving seeds to my son, I am ensuring food security to his descendants,” he explains.

Nevertheless, some local maize varieties have been lost or are under threat. One solution is community seed banks, like the one located in Don Chabelo’s small farm, that aim to conserve local seed varieties, ensuring seeds are available for the next harvest and in case of natural disasters. Sadly, with the loss of maize local varieties, traditional knowledge and practices often become forgotten.

“Traditional names, recipes and conservation methods are not transmitted to younger generations anymore,” laments Don Chabelo. He is aware of what losing traditional knowledge and local maize varieties will mean for him, his sons and future generations. Don Chabelo goes to seed fairs organized in the Sierra de los Cuchumatanes and local markets to exchange seeds of maize and recover varieties that were once used by him or his family.

However, the current laws in Guatemala prevent Don Chabelo, and other smallholder farmers like him from selling their seeds.

When asked what he and members of other farmers’ organisations in Guatemala most need to exercise their rights as smallholder farmers, Don Chabelo’s answer is emphatic: “We need information about our rights.”

Juanita Chaves Posada is a Colombian lawyer specializing in intellectual property law, working with GFAR to promote the implementation of
farmers’ rights. Working in Guatemala, and through workshops and meetings with multiple stakeholders, including farmers’ organizations, Juanita has developed capacity-building materials to help farmers better understand their rights to save, use, exchange and sell seeds and propagating material. As a result of her efforts, Don Chabelo and his fellow smallholder farmers better understand the importance of protecting their traditional knowledge in conserving and using seeds and propagating material. This work has also led to the identification of policy actions the government of Guatemala could take to support farmers’ rights at the national level.

While Don Chabelo and smallholder farmers like him may have little access to bigger markets, they actually enable bigger markets to exist. Without their quiet innovation, adapting the genetic properties of seeds to meet the needs of real farmers and climatic conditions, consumers would not have the variety and quality of food that is today taken for granted. In fact, without the traditional knowledge and generosity of smallholder farmers like Don Chabelo, the world’s food security would be seriously threatened and unable to cope with threats such as climate change.

GFAR actively supports the implementation of farmers’ rights at local and national levels and into international policies and research programs. Technical and legal support is given to the Latin American and African Region (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and Malawi); and soon will be offered to other countries and regions in Near East, Asia, Latin America and Africa.

A selection of 2014 media stories under the theme “Partnerships for Impact”:

- Capacity-building material for local and indigenous agricultural communities
- Farmers’ Rights Capacity-Building Workshop in Honduras
- Strengthening the implementation of farmers’ rights in Guatemala
- Farmers’ rights meeting in Malawi
- Abu Dhabi Ascent – In support of Climate Summit 2014
- Climate-Smart Agriculture Hits the 21st Century
- Climate Change is Real!
- Partners’ Meeting for the Global Alliance on Climate-Smart Agriculture

PHOTO CREDIT: JUANITA CHAVES
3.3 TRANSFORMATIVE INVESTMENTS

To deliver development outcomes at a global scale, we need more investment in the sector, and more innovative ways to stimulate new income opportunities for smallholder farmers, especially women and youth. At the first Global Conference on Agricultural Research (GCARD), stakeholders requested a more integrated system for understanding the scale and value of investments and basis for investment approaches in the sector. In 2014 GFAR continued to develop the Investment Facility for Agricultural Innovation and Enterprise, an innovative concept for radically increasing the funding available for new forms of agricultural innovation systems.
Chronic underinvestment has weakened national agricultural research and enterprise systems in low income countries. International aid has been fragmented, short term and project-based. As a result, many research and development agencies lack the necessary capacity and capability to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

So, how do we rebuild national agricultural systems to that they can delivery change at scale while ensuring that there is long-term investment to sustain this? How do we enable all the relevant actors – whether from the private and public sector, farmers or consumers – to generate, share, and use agricultural knowledge? And, most importantly, how do we ensure women and young people benefit from agricultural innovation and the opportunities it can bring?

In response to these challenges GFAR has developed an innovative concept for radically increasing the funding available for new forms of agricultural innovation systems: the Investment Facility for Agricultural Innovation and Enterprise.

Dr Mark Holderness, Executive Secretary of GFAR, explains.

“We know that innovation and enterprise flourish when they are actively valued and promoted at each step along the agri-food value chain, and when all sectors of society are engaged. Yet the focus for much agricultural innovation has been solely on productivity, rather than on the opportunities it can create for rural communities. It has neglected to involve all those in science and society who have a role to play.”

"Unblocking the value chain involves several steps", Dr Holderness says. “We need to incentivize scientists for technology transfer and develop alternative end products. If we can provide rural enterprises with the management support, services, and training they require there is a stronger likelihood that innovation will be thrive. Most importantly, this has to be driven by the national systems and across all relevant sectors – public, private, and producers.”

The concept for the Investment Facility for Agricultural Innovation and Enterprise was developed through the GFAR Secretariat and presented to International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Global Agricultural and Food Security program (GAFSP) and FAO in early 2014. It was warmly welcomed by IFAD and GAFSP as addressing key agendas now largely absent in their existing funding portfolios to client countries - the role of agricultural research, extension, education and enterprise in development.

The Facility is comprised of three core, inter-related elements, that together aim to fund and deliver coherent integrated actions to turn agricultural innovation into opportunity and enterprise to improve the lives of the rural poor, in particular for women and youth:

- A multi-stakeholder fund, linking GFAR’s multi-stakeholder governance with key funding agencies, to leverage more, and better, investment in the strengthening of local and national innovation and enterprise development.
Co-ordinated national delivery of research, extension, education, training and enterprise services through innovation platforms, in particular to benefit women and youth; and

Integrated networked technical support, drawing on GFAR networks and both south–south and south–north partnership, aligned with the actions in the GFAR Road Map.

The benefits of the Facility are clear. “Integrated investment is directed to where it’s needed most, addressing national priorities, aligned with country development plans, and delivering sustainable economic results. We see it strengthening the organizational and institutional capacities in national agricultural innovation systems so that these countries will be able to effectively and efficiently deliver on development outcomes.”

The Facility is strategically aligned with the principles and action of the GCARD Roadmap in that research and innovation will continue to be farmer–centered and aimed at coordinated, collective action by public–private–producer partners.

“The Facility has been welcomed by the G20 Chief Agricultural Scientists,” Dr Holderness says.

We are now working with a cluster of funding agencies, to develop the right focus for the Facility as a sustainable funding mechanism and with national governments in identifying needs and priorities for their national innovation systems and piloting the approaches required.”

Over the course of 2015, further consultations on how the Facility is designed and managed will continue as part of the GCARD3 process, with the aim of implementing the Facility in 2016.

A selection of 2014 media stories under the theme “Transformative Investments”:

- A national policy of seeds recognizing farmers’ rights: Guatemala, an example to be followed
- Farmers’ Group ApproachBoosts up Small Scale Farming
- GFAR at the General Assembly of the World Farmers Organization
- Family Farming at the Centre: Asian Farmers’ Association General Assembly
- Providing Better Extension Services for Family Farmers

Investment Facility

Multi–donor funding of multi–stakeholder innovation platforms in national systems

Co–ordinated national delivery of research, extension, education, training and enterprise services

Integrated, networked technical & capacity development support, drawing on GFAR networks & partners, based on GCARD Roadmap principles
The scale of transformation needed in agricultural research and innovation systems is demanding new skills and capacities and the reconciliation of two different kinds of knowledge— that from science which is reductionist, trusted and validated by its method, and the experience of farmers, which is holistic and trusted and validated by experience. There is now a wealth of information available, yet farmers are starved of knowledge. There are many new forms of advisory services yet the sector is grossly under-resourced. However, the use of new information and communication technologies is creating entirely new ways of sharing knowledge and managing information. Farmers must be able to benefit from these new technologies and to access information which can they can use to improve their livelihoods.
LEARNING AS WE GO:
HOW ICT IS IMPROVING RURAL LIVELIHOODS IN INDIA

A story from a GFAR partner – the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI).

A key strategic objective for GFAR is to “boost knowledge and improve communication of agricultural research and innovation”. As a global forum, it aims to provide a knowledge hub for stakeholders where they can share information and ideas. With that in mind, in 2014 the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) published a case study about a unique initiative in India that is bringing the benefits of digital technology to farmers and improving the quality of life in rural communities across the country.

ITC e-Choupal – Innovation for Large Scale Rural Transformation: A Success Story describes how ITC, one of India’s largest private companies, developed the e-Choupal initiative as a more efficient basis for information access around agricultural value chains, linking farmers with critical information on farm productivity, prices and markets.

The publication, produced by APAARI, sets out the challenges of Indian agriculture, ITC’s rural development strategy, and how the e-Choupal initiative is providing information, knowledge and quality inputs to farmers and expanding market access. It also outlines how ITC is helping to generate supplementary income through livestock development, women’s empowerment, and vocational training, and augmenting natural resources through watershed development and social and farm forestry.

In Hindi, choupal means a meeting or gathering place where people can get together to discuss news and events. The e-Choupal initiative comprises a network of internet access kiosks in villages across rural India, which provides farmers with access to a specially-designed ITC agricultural website. There farmers can find critical information on weather, farming practices, markets and prices – those offered by the government-run mandis (market places) and those offered by ITC. As a result, they can make more informed choices about where to sell their products and how much for.

“ITC e-Choupal is a pioneering milestone in India’s rural economy,” explains Raghunath Ghodake, Executive Secretary of APAARI, one of GFAR’s six Regional Fora.

“It is our hope that policy makers, planners, researchers, extension officials, farmers and farming communities across the Asia Pacific will be inspired by this rural development success story.”

ITC e-Choupal – Innovation for Large Scale Rural Transformation: A Success Story is published by the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions, Bangkok, Thailand. It is available to download here: http://www.apaari.org/publications/itc-e-choupal.html

A selection of 2014 media stories under the theme “Capacities for Change”:

G20 Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists

CGIAR Capacity Development Survey Highlights and Comments

New RING platform launched: focus on datasets

Smallholder’s Access to ICT

Rights of Farmers for Data, Information and Knowledge – CIARD E-Discussion

GFAR participates in the 4th Research Data Alliance (RDA) plenary meeting in Amsterdam

Open Access to Agricultural Knowledge for Inclusive Growth

China and GFAR – together opening new ways of sharing knowledge

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Open Access to Agricultural Knowledge for Inclusive Growth

China and GFAR – together opening new ways of sharing knowledge
Ensuring that research is effectively addressing the realities of farmer livelihoods, and the wider external factors affecting them, is a key challenge in transforming agricultural research and innovation for development impact. A high proportion of smallholder producers are now women; in some countries they are the majority. Yet despite this, research is still focused on needs articulated by men, such as input provision and productivity, rather than those voiced by women, such as labour saving measures, post-harvest value addition or child nutrition.

Viable career opportunities in agriculture are also vital for the future. In many countries, young people are struggling to obtain a living in rural areas and are moving to cities in search of work. An ageing farmer population and lack of skilled support services create major concerns for the future.

In response to these issues, GFAR is fostering two major initiatives: the Gender in Agriculture Partnership (GAP) and the Young Professionals in Agricultural Development (YPARD). Through the Gender in Agriculture Partnership, GFAR is enabling an inclusive movement that works across institutions and provides a collective voice to push for gender equity and the economic empowerment of women in agriculture. The Global Forum also directly supports the establishment and ongoing activities of YPARD – a global platform for young people to participate in and contribute to global AR4D reforms.

Under the patronage of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan and Prof. Catherine Bertini, the Gender in Agriculture Partnership (GAP) is an open and inclusive GFAR initiative, that aims to contribute to closing the gender gap by making agricultural innovation better serve the economic empowerment needs of women farmers.

The GAP website, launched at the end of 2013, has grown rapidly and is now a major open resource for information on gender-linked actions in agriculture around the world. It provides the agricultural portal for the women’s economic empowerment website of UN Women. The website is now also providing an external link point for the FAO Gender Technical Network, Empower Women, the CGIAR Gender and Agriculture Network, the ICAR-Central Institute for Women in Agriculture, among others.

There are now over 250 GAP “catalysts” directly committed to the GAP, ranging from farmer organizations and civil society organizations to UN agencies and CGIAR centres. Together they are providing and sharing information and building practical partnerships. The GAP LinkedIn group was established in 2014 and now has over 500 members actively contributing to dialogues on these issues.

A popular video was produced by GFAR and Food Tank for the GAP in 2014 – Funding Female Farmers for a Less Hungry World.
I think that YPARD has really come of age in 2014. As we started the year, I found that my role in creating a space for young professionals in agriculture was truly starting to pay off. I am reflecting on how the movement’s organic growth and its compelling narrative had attracted young professionals in agriculture to reach out to each other and make decisions on what’s important to them and other young professionals.

However, as fantastic as that growth had been (34% membership increase in 2014 and a total of 60 national representatives), I think all of us in the movement started to see that we needed some structure: a frame to focus our energy and work. So we started the year by setting out a strategic path forward. Strategy development is as much about the product as it is about the process and in we entered into the planning with our trademark YPARD enthusiasm. It’s not often that, as a group, we can get together in the one place and so I’d like to acknowledge the donors who helped make this happen. Our gratitude extends to GFAR, the Swiss Agency for Development Corporation, the Netherlands Directorate General for International Cooperation and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation who, through their generous contribution to YPARD, enabled us to take this important step forward.

Clearly the strategic planning was a key moment for our members, representatives, regional coordinators, staff, steering committee members and partners. All of us are aware that viable career opportunities in agriculture are vital for the future and I feel that the outcome of our strategic planning – the YPARD 2014-2018 Business Plan – provides the solid actions we need to take to influence, advocate and promote youth contributing to a more dynamic agricultural development that will bring strong leaders to the fore.

What I really like about this plan is that the structure helps give YPARD a stronger focus without losing the freedom for ideas to flourish. I find that our YPARD membership appreciates this, especially the new members who now can better understand what YPARD is doing and engage more quickly.

In true YPARD fashion we’ve moved from planning to action in an enthusiastic way. In 2014 we saw the new Asia coordination unit, hosted by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), mobilize a strong regional team for a range of activities. The European coordination unit brought in a large number of new representatives and the regional meeting set a team of passionate young people loose on the agricultural sector. The African coordination unit saw representatives mature into stronger youth leaders at the national level and the Latin American and Caribbean coordination unit developed one of its first comprehensive plans of action.

Of course there have been a lot more activities in YPARD in 2014 through which YPARD members engaged even more strongly with the wider agricultural research for development arena. I’m seeing more youth engaged in high-level meetings and actually being asked to contribute and be a part of policy and decision making events. Some of the examples that demonstrate to me that YPARD is being seen as a legitimate and credible partner in agricultural research for development...
include becoming a member of the GFAR Steering Committee, and having YPARD representatives on the African Agribusiness Innovation Network and the EFARD management team. A very important indicator for me was YPARD joining CGIAR Research Program (CRP) leaders in discussing how to raise the profile of youth engagement and contributing significantly to the Dryland Systems youth strategy development, the first among the CRPs.

Are we in YPARD making a difference? Yes...I really think so. Can we continue to do this? Well, certainly the enthusiasm is there – and now we have focus and direction through our Business Plan. Of course, the challenge is to ensure we have adequate funding to make all this happen. As we look forward we are certainly taking this up and will be engaging with those who want to invest in today’s youth for tomorrow’s agriculture.

Read more on YPARD achievements in the YPARD 2014 Annual Report.

A selection of 2014 media stories under the theme “Research in Society”:

- Gender Dynamics in Changing Rice-Based Agricultural Systems in Bangladesh
- GFAR Bridges the Gender Gap, Uniting Agricultural Research & Concrete Projects
- Women Farmers Lead Innovation
- CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Agricultural Production Systems – Gender Strategy 2014
- Five Ways to Make Agriculture Innovation Better Serve the Needs of Women Farmers
- Why Agriculture Needs Young People
- Youth, the Future of Family Farming
- Making Agriculture “Cool” for Youth
To achieve real change in agricultural systems and to deliver tangible results for farmers and rural communities requires commitment to collective action across the agriculture research and innovation for development continuum, being accountable for our results, and transparent in how we work together. Delivery into practice of the GFAR Medium Term Plan and open consultations through the GCARD process together ensure mutual accountability and transparency, feedback and learning among the many GFAR partners involved in agricultural innovation systems. We are now working to implement a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system that will include new measures of social impact, empowerment and behavior change across all GFAR Collective actions. GFAR is also strengthening its governance to be more inclusive of all stakeholders, including supporting change in six Regional Fora to be more effective agents of national change and regional collective actions and providing direct catalytic support to actions led by farmer organizations and civil society organizations.
In recent years, AR4D systems and thinking have changed substantially. Many new institutional configurations have arisen. There is a move to facilitate the direct voice from civil society and to realign agricultural research and knowledge-sharing processes towards more integrated innovation systems and new development outcomes. GFAR’s evolution into a true global multi-stakeholder platform reflects these changes.

This has been evident in the Central Asia and the Caucasus region where two networks that are partners in GFAR – CACAARI (the Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutes) and GFRAS (the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services) – have joined forces in the reform of regional extension and rural advisory services (RAS). This is a key component of the GFAR Medium Term Plan as rural advisory services provide the essential link in the agricultural innovation chain, connecting farmers with research, and helping them put new knowledge into practice on their farms.

In Central Asia and the Caucasus agriculture is vital to the prosperity of the region. “Agriculture in the CAC region faces big challenges,” Dr Botir Dosov, Technical Advisor to CACAARI, explains. “Some of them are the legacy of past decades, as agricultural systems in the region’s eight countries have had to transition from the Soviet Union’s ‘centrally planned’ economic systems to the ‘market economies’. Other challenges are to do with population growth, increased food consumption and use of natural resources. Climate change used to be considered ‘noise’ by the scientific community, but is now acknowledged as a real threat to agriculture and food security.”

In November 2014, the Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutes (CACAARI), with the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) organized the first-ever regional conference on RAS in the region, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The event was a major milestone for agricultural development in the region, says Dr Dosov, and brought together more than 100 representatives from across the region.
representing rural advisory services, research institutions, universities, farmers associations, the public and private sectors, development agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Getting to grips with the issues facing national agricultural research systems and coming up with constructive solutions requires a fully participatory approach. National Agricultural Research and Innovation Systems in the region need to be overhauled, starting with rural advisory services, Dr Dosov says. “There are different policy options to address the systemic issues, but some would require significant institutional transformation. A more flexible way to increase efficiency and effectiveness of systems is to enhance linkages between research, education, and extension and with agricultural producers, and thus, making it more result-oriented.”

Conference participants worked to establish a common understanding on the current status of rural advisory services systems, by discussing the results of mapping systems in the different countries, and to prepare the ground for a more comprehensive assessment of the rural advisory service systems in the CAC region. Case studies were presented as evidence of the effectiveness and importance of rural advisory services. Participants discussed models of government policies and support for RAS, and their advantages and disadvantages. Also up for discussion was the impact of climate change on agro-ecosystems, and the need to establish and improve institutional ways of exchanging experience and knowledge.

“For CACAARI, These events provide intermediate platforms for engaging in constructive dialogue with different stakeholders for discussing and agreeing how to address common goals. The role of CACAARI and GFAR is to facilitate these kinds of opportunities,” Dr Dosov explains.

Much more has to be done towards enhancing extension and advisory services and agricultural innovation systems in the region, he adds. “Essentially, it comes to the actions of policymakers. They need tangible arguments why the agriculture and food system needs the support of formal, systematic extension and rural advisory services.”

“Steve Jobs once said: ‘People don’t know what they want until you show it to them’. Rather than producing well written policy recommendations, CACAARI believes that demonstration of outputs is more efficient for outcomes and impacts. As Dr. Dosov concludes “step-by-step through participatory consultations we are moving towards our targets.”

The Central Asia and Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (CACAARI) is one of GFAR’s six Regional Fora. For more information on the Conference: http://www.cac-program.org/news/detail/452

A selection of 2014 media stories under the theme “Accountability for Action”:

Collaboration for innovation: Rural Advisory Services in Central Asia and Southern Caucasus

GFAR Steering Committee meets in Montpellier: agrees dynamic new ways forward

Valuable contributions made to shaping CGIAR’s Strategy and Results Framework
Financial statement for 2014

Total income received in 2014 for GFAR actions (contributions in 2014 plus 2013 carry forward) was USD 5,402,955. A total of USD 3,093,670 was spent or committed in the year 2014.

France continued to contribute in kind, providing a senior professional expert seconded to the GFAR Secretariat. IFAD provided resources for staff consultancies.

We are very grateful to all those who have provided financial support to activities of the Global Forum. In 2014 these were:

- European Commission (EC)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)
- France (secondment)
- International Fund for Agricultural (staff consultancies)
- Netherlands (DGIS)
- Switzerland – SDC (for YPARD)

### 2014 GFAR Activities Expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships for Impact</td>
<td>603,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ForeSight for Better Future</td>
<td>513,549</td>
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<tr>
<td>GFAR Governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountability for Actions</td>
<td>346,491</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research in Development</td>
<td>331,023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacities for Change</td>
<td>324,835</td>
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<td>Transformative Investments</td>
<td>312,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFAR Administration and Support Services</td>
<td>300,086</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* N.B. Includes USD 50,000 spent against FAO contribution of USD 50,000

### 2014 GFAR Assessed and Indirect Contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Commission (EC)</td>
<td>4,095,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGIS (Dutch)</td>
<td>712,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance of France Externally Provided Resources (Staff Contribution)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFAD Externally Provided Resources (Consultancies)</td>
<td>68,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall 2013 Carry Forward</td>
<td>62,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO 2014</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Balance: 2,309,285 as of 31/12/2014 (carry forward to 2015)
GFAR leadership in 2014

GFAR Steering Committee
Juan Lucas Restrepo Ibiza (Chair)
Ruth Oniang’o (Vice Chair)
Mark Holderness (GFAR Executive Secretary)

The Forum’s Steering Committee involves all relevant categories of stakeholders. These were represented in 2014 through:

- **Advisory Services**
  - Kristin Davis (GFRAS)

- **Donor Support Group**
  - David Radcliffe (EC)

- **Facilitating Agencies**
  - Shantanu Mathur (IFAD)
  - Xiangjun Yao (FAO)

- **Farmers’ Organizations**
  - Esther Penunia (AFA)
  - Evelyn Nguleka (WFO)

- **Higher Education**
  - John Kennelly (GCHERA)

- **International Agricultural Research**
  - Frank Rijsberman (CGIAR Consortium)

- **NGOs**
  - Sonali Bisht (INHERE)

- **Private Sector**
  - Lucy Muchoki (PANAAC)
  - Ernesto Brovelli (SAI Platform)

- **Regional Fora**
  - Aziz Dargouth
  - Mohammad M. Ajlouni (alternate)

- **APAARI**
  - Simon Hearn
  - Raj Paroda (alternate)

- **CACAARI**
  - Guram Aleksidze
  - Alisher Tashmatov (alternate)

- **EFARD**
  - Martin Kropff
  - Judith Ann Francis

- **FARA**
  - (alternate)
  - Charity Kruger

- **FORAGRO**
  - Yemi Akinbami (alternate)
  - Mauricio Antonio Lopes
  - FORAGRO Technical Secretary (IICA) (alternate)

- **Youth Organizations**
  - Courtney Paisley (YPARD)

**Executive Committee**
The Global Forum’s Executive Committee consists of the Chair and Vice-Chair of GFAR, the two members of the GFAR facilitating agencies (FAO and IFAD) who are members of the GFAR Steering Committee, the Chair of the Forum’s Donor Support Group, and the Executive Secretary of the Global Forum who acts as the Member Secretary of Committee.

**Support to the Leadership from the GFAR Secretariat**
The Global Forum’s Secretariat provides support to GFAR Steering Committee and to all stakeholders as they work together in global, inter-regional and regional partnerships, helping them undertake joint actions through the Forum’s functions. The GFAR Secretariat, located within the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy, is maintained as a small unit and comprises an Executive Secretary, assisted by Senior Officers, consultants and administrative staff some of whom are seconded to the Secretariat from different institutions.

**GFAR Executive Secretary**
Mark Holderness

**GFAR Secretariat**
- Robin Bourgeois (Senior Foresight and Development Policies Expert)
- Fiona Chandler (Programme Delivery Manager)
- Juanita Chaves Posada (Farmers Rights Expert)
- Gianna de Cesare Metcalfe (Senior Secretary)
- Jennie Dey De Pryck (Gender Expert)
- Erna Klupacs (Communications Consultant)
- Ajit Maru (Agricultural Research Officer)
- Piero Masciotta (Finance Officer)
- Harry Palmier (Senior Partnerships Expert)
- Valeria Pesce (Information Management Specialist)
- Charles Plummer (Administrative Officer)
- Thomas Price (Senior Officer)