

GCARD3 Organizing Committee

Meeting #1: 14 April 2015, Virtual (12.00-14.00 GMT)

Minutes

Participants:

Frank Rijsberman (co-Chair, CGIAR Consortium Office),
Mark Holderness (co-Chair, GFAR Secretariat),
Aggrey Agumya, for Irene Annor-Frempong (Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa)
Kwesi Atta-Krah (CGIAR Research Program – HumidTropics),
Sigismundo Bialoskorski Neto (International Cooperative Alliance), (private sector)
Esther Penunia (Asian Farmers Association) (farmers & civil society)
Tom Randolph (CGIAR Research Program – Livestock and Fish)
Fiona Chandler (GFAR Secretariat, *ex-officio*)
Alain Vidal (CGIAR Consortium Office, *ex-officio*)
Nadia Manning-Thomas (Consortium Office technical support)

1. Introduction of members, overview of GCARD3 and role and expectations of the OC (Decision)

After welcoming the Committee members and a general round of introductions, the summary of the responses received on the proposed operating procedures was discussed. Substantive discussion points raised in the survey were that (1) consensus should be the mode of decision making and (2) quorum could be either 6 out of 7 or alternatively 5 out of 7.

Decision 1: the Committee agreed that all possible efforts would be made to reach decisions by consensus. If consensus could not be reached after vigorous exploration (and so as to not unduly delay decision making), it was agreed that, where consensus is not possible, decisions can be reached through a 2/3 majority vote. It was also agreed that any objections would be noted for the public records.

Decision 2: It was agreed that quorum would be reached by 5 out of 7 Committee members being present for a meeting, (including their previously designated delegates if they could not be present themselves at the time).

Action: The Operating Procedures will be amended and added to the shared folder of Organizing Committee documents (GFAR Secretariat)

In regards to the role of Organizing Committee members, it was clarified that the representatives from the CRPs will consult and aggregate positions across the CRPs and bring these to the Committee. It may not always be a unanimous position but at the very least the different opinions will be presented.

Other clarifications noted were that the Organizing Committee's term ended at the end of 2016, to take into account consultations in 2015 and 2016 (with the GCARD event a 'milestone' in the process). Similarly it was noted that the day-to-day tasks in organizing GCARD3 would lie with the GCARD3 support team (Fiona Chandler from the GFAR Secretariat and Alain Vidal (supported by Nadia Manning-Thomas) from the CGIAR Consortium Office), with the Organizing Committee providing guidance and oversight of these actions.

Action: The Terms of Reference will be amended to clarify the timing and support of the Committee (Items 2 and 11 of the TORs) (GFAR Secretariat)

2. Update on GCARD3 process to date (Information)

The two main streams of consultation to date were introduced – the Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) consultation and the Investment Facility consultation.

Frank Rijsberman provided an overview of the consultation that was carried out on SRF, noting that this document had gone to the Consortium Board for approval in March. Feedback indicated that the document needed to include quantitative targets and be shorter and punchier. This has now been done and the latest version reviewed with the Consortium Board. In addition, the Consortium Office has developed an accountability matrix, showing how the comments and input from the SRF public consultation have been addressed. It is the opinion of the Consortium Office that the latest re-write is more responsive to the comments received in the consultation. This version of the SRF will be sent to Fund Council (including GFAR) for a final review, before approval at the Fund Council meeting in April. It is hoped that the SRF will be approved and thus kick off the second call for CGIAR Research Program (CRP) proposals.

Frank advised that recent developments on the original intention of a 2-stage CRP consultation process have led to some changes in how the process will unfold. The most current proposal is to include a center-led CRP portfolio development process. This will be discussed at the Fund Council Meeting (April), to be followed by a Portfolio Workshop being convened by the Centers and CRPs (11-13 May). The output of this should lead to a suggested set of CRP themes for a targeted call that will be responsive to the SRF (probably less than the current number of CRPs). The Fund Council will reserve the right to amend the portfolio if they feel additional proposals are required to cover the full SRF. It is the intent of the Consortium Office to finalize guidance on CRP consultations by end of May.

Mark Holderness outlined the GFAR/IFAD-led Agricultural Investment and Enterprise Facility, which aims to increase investment and capacities in national innovation systems, addressing the ‘missing middle’ between research and its impact in national development. This will build on national commitments and have a particular focus on enterprise opportunities for women and youth, addressing key blockages in agriculture & agri-food value chains. The Facility will be discussed and set out alongside the IFAD Board Meeting in September and will form the other focus of the GCARD3, exploring national commitments and needs. In addition to the CRP discussions, this will entail additional consultations with focus countries and development partners to determine specific needs and how the Facility could help meet these.

3. Planning of GCARD3 consultations (Decision)

Frank Rijsberman introduced the topic of this agenda and asked Kwesi Atta-Krah and Tom Randolph to expand on current thinking around the consultations from the perspective of the CRPs, who have been discussing this amongst their leadership. Kwesi indicated that the CRPs consider the GCARD3 process and its activities important and extremely valuable. They expressed concerns around being able to carry out the current proposal and its timeline given timing, budget constraints and other uncertainties.

The primary change being proposed to the original GCARD3 proposal in regards to national consultations is that the CRPs do not consider it possible to do national consultation in all 20 countries in 2015 in the time line indicated in the proposal. CRPs have indicated a couple of constraints, namely (1) the time to have meaningful consultations (with a wide cross-section of sectors represented, not just research partners) in that number of countries in the timeframe proposed (between early June and mid-August) and (2) the recent budget cuts experienced by CRPs in 2015 (between 20-50%). The CRPs would prefer to run consultations when there is more certainty on how the CRP proposal process will unfold.

It was proposed to choose 3-5 countries (decision by the CRPs at their meeting in June) as pilot national consultations in 2015, learn from those pilots, and depending on the GCARD3 event, the remainder of national consultations will be during the full CRP proposal development phase in the first quarter of 2016. As

was pointed out the purpose of meetings during the pilot phase will be different from the purpose in 2016, as the CRP proposals will be at different phases.

The suggestion for a small number of deep country consultations in 2015 exploring the implications and possible approaches to address the selected generic CRP themes was positively received. In addition there was positive endorsement that these country consultations be backed by regional consultations to validate the findings for other country contexts. This would then flow into specific country consultations to develop the Fund Council agreed detailed proposals in early 2016.

Other points raised were:

- There needs to be a significant participation of farmers and NGOs in the consultations.
- The duration of meetings should be linked to objectives. There was the opinion that national consultations could be convened over one-day as they would be focused on national level participation (e.g. with little or no external participation). Regional consultations would be very appropriate to the first phase and would, by their very nature bring in participants from across a region and require longer duration to have meaningful substance (perhaps 2-3 days).
- With funding very short for CRPs in 2015, the underlying principle would be to secure as much in-kind (national and regional) support and ownership in the consultations. This would reinforce the concept that these meetings are conducted in partnership between CRPs and national/regional systems.
- There is still some uncertainty on the future of some of the CRPs and the decisions on which consultations are held need to be taken into account.
- The possibility of including e-discussions as an additional consultation method was favourably received as a means of engaging a wider community, but needs to be complementary to face-to-face discussions (as not all constituencies have access to, or are comfortable with, e-discussions)
- As much as possible, other events should be used as leverage and cost-reduction for GCARD-themed sessions (e.g. International Cooperative Alliance Congress in Turkey in November, Africa regional dialogue and GFIA Durban)
- The timing for the consultations will need to be discussed among the CRPs and Centers involved.
- The detailed planning period will in any case need to be completed by in time for full CRP submissions to the Fund Council in April 2016

Decision 1: There will be 5 pilot countries (across focus regions) for national consultations in 2015, in addition to regional consultations, leveraging other events and an e-consultation. Consultation will adhere to principles of shared ownership, partnership, cost efficiency and multi-stakeholder participation.

Decision 2: It was agreed that a Task Group (to include Nadia Manning-Thomas, Alain Vidal, Fiona Chandler, Kwesi Atta-Krah, Tom Randolph and Aggrey Agumya) would revise the implementation document for GCARD3 to reflect the changes in timeline, the pilot national consultations, the regional consultations and indicative costs.

Action: The CRP representatives on the Organizing committee will discuss with the CRP leaders on the consultation process and feed these discussions into the revision of the implementation document (Kwesi Atta-Krah, Tom Randolph)

Action: A revised implementation document will be prepared in advance of the next Organizing Committee meeting (Task Group).

4. GCARD 3 event (Decision)

Advice on previous processes for location of the GCARD event was provided. It was noted that the more critical issue was in regards to the timing of the event. With the further consultation on the Investment Facility being quite flexible between October 2015 and February 2016, the timing of the GCARD3 event hinges more on what time would be most effective in the CRP cycle.

As pointed out, the timing of the GCARD event is dependent on its purpose. Although not fully discussed by the CRPs yet, the tentative preference noted was that the event should not be necessarily linked to the Fund Council November 2015 meeting. There will be a number of national and regional consultations towards the end of the year and so it was suggested that it might be better to have the event when there is more clarity on the state of proposals (probably early 2016). As an initial reaction Scenario 2 of those listed made most sense – an event that provides ideas, inputs and partnership possibilities for development of full proposals and can draw from a range of processes and events in 2015-16, including those organized for GCARD3, learning from other major events through the year and the outcomes of the SDG-setting process.

The Committee’s opinion was that the GCARD3 event outcomes should inform the decisions to be made in 2016 by the Fund Council and Consortium Board on the specific priorities for research for development and the nature and requirements of the CRPs and how these aligned with the wider commitments and required enabling environment. It was pointed out that it was unlikely that the GCARD 3 consultations and event could be usefully delivered in time to inform the Fund Council decisions in November 2015 and that if the global event was held in 2016 it could provide input to proposal development and eventual decision and approval by the Fund Council (in mid to late April 2016) on the final CRP proposals. However, it would be feasible to have results of the 2015e-consultations and some national/regional dialogues on the broad portfolio as input to Fund Council discussions and decisions in November 2015.

A tentative timeline suggested:

May to June 2015	Agreement on broad portfolio of CRPs
2015 third and fourth quarter	Pilot country and regional consultations alongside electronic dialogues on what stakeholders feel are key research themes and approaches, identifying national commitments and clear gaps in capacities required for effective national: international partnership
November 2015	Fund Council decision on specific CRP proposals to be taken forward
2016 early first quarter	GCARD event (objective of learning from processes and dialogues in 2015, including the SDGs and setting the frame for the detailed discussions that would feed into full proposals).
2016 early first quarter	National consultations on CRP proposals; proposals are to be submitted for Fund Council decision in mid to late April 2016
2016	Ongoing consultations

Decision 1: The Committee agreed to come up with a tender process for location of the GCARD event to be held in Africa in the first quarter of 2016 and circulate to the Organizing Committee for virtual approval.

Action: The CRP representatives on the Organizing committee will discuss with the CRP leaders on preferred timing for the GCARD event

Action: The Task Group assigned to revise the implementation document will take note of the tentative timeline proposed by the Organizing Committee

5. Moving forward – next steps (Decision)

With the establishment of a Task Group to work on the revision of the GCARD3 implementation document there are now six Task Groups proposed. It was highlighted that real partnership would be needed at national level for the next phase CRPs to be effective. This requires ensuring that the GCARD3 dialogues explore where CGIAR work adds best value at national level and understanding the real commitment of national systems to future programs. Clarification was sought on whether it would be necessary to establish another Task Group to be responsible for effective and transparent participation and representation in the consultations around program development. The Communication Task Group already informally exists through the support team from the GFAR Secretariat and the Consortium Office.

Decision 1: The responsibility of ensuring effective and transparent participation should be included as a stand-alone Group, though this could be folded into the terms of reference for the Program Development Task Group.

Decision 2: Convening other Task Groups will be addressed when there is more clarification from the consultation process, however it was agreed that the M&E Task Group needs to be convened soonest.

6. Next meeting

In line with the Operating Procedures, the next Organizing Committee meeting will be scheduled for the last week in May.

Action: The GCARD3 support team will set up a doodle calendar poll to identify the most mutually suitable date in the last week of May for the next meeting.

Meeting minutes approved on a no-objection basis on Friday 24 April 2015.