



Enabling Successful Enterprise from Innovation

A Collective Action within Key Focus Area (KFA) 2: *Turning Knowledge and Innovation into Enterprise*



Poverty, hunger and malnutrition, environmental degradation, climate change, gender insensitivity in agriculture, youth unemployment, political instability, extreme violent actions and mass irregular migration are some of the major development challenges faced today by the global community. The scale and complexity of these challenges are unprecedented and vary from region to region. Overcoming these challenges would not only require a scaling up of investment in agricultural R&D but would also require a change of R&D approach. We need a more effective R&D approach to rapidly transform our food and agriculture systems to be more productive, sustainable, resilient, nutrition-sensitive, gender sensitive, youth-friendly, pro-poor and climate-smart.

GFAR is adopting an approach based on Collective Action in solving these seemingly intractable self-reinforcing challenges.

Using the Innovation Platform at higher Levels: a new agenda

Problems that are captured globally or regionally express themselves at the grassroots level in various countries. It follows therefore that the scope of coverage of the prescribed solution is directly proportional to the scope of impact made from such efforts.

GFAR proposes to use Innovation Platforms at the Mega level to address seemingly recalcitrant problems of food and nutrition insecurity, poverty, environmental degradation and climate change, youth unemployment and irregular migration at the National or District level for the attainment of higher and quicker impacts which are more tangible and quantifiable, and which host countries buy into readily.

What we will do together

The objective of GFAR is to catalyze agricultural development through the development of Collective Actions which will address constraints and explore opportunities of the sector. Specifically, GFAR wants to catalyze actions towards:

1. Self-assessment for the determination of needs
2. Prioritizing the needs and turning knowledge and innovation into enterprises for people with specific emphasis on women and the youths
3. Strengthening of organizational and individual capacities
4. Demonstrating impact leading to improvement of investments

Unlike other programs, the plan of work is tied to the attainment of higher goals like the achievement of quanta leaps in production, or the attainment of self-sufficiency in the prioritized commodity(ies). This readily secures the buy-in of stakeholders including policy makers in the countries. This approach is in line with the objectives of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program of the New Partnership for Africa's Development; and the Strategic Development Goals related to food, hunger, job creation, economic growth and partnerships.

Process

Stage 1: Country Studies

GFAR will initiate work in target countries by triggering the coming together of multistakeholders to conduct country studies which would typically indicate the agricultural direction of the country at the District, Regional and or National levels, important crops, constraints and opportunities, etc. These will be

prioritized and translated into themes for foresight studies. With a foresight study conducted on the identified and selected theme or commodity, there will be a report that shows the desired point, the direction, and how to get to the desired point over a specified length of time. In addition to this, there will also be concept notes for self-contained projects detailing technical and managerial requirements as well as institutional and human capacity needs for the identified project(s) or program(s).

Programs that are developed through this process will harmonize all efforts at the country level and make partners mutually accountable. They will enable the Government to align its development agenda for maximum impact. Programs must not just increase productivity and market access, they must also be gender-sensitive, youth-friendly and climate-smart.

Stage 2: Marketplace

Reports that have been developed have to be fielded with financing partners in a marketplace where individual financing partner would have a chance to select projects or cocktail of projects they feel comfortable to support. This stage is followed by the establishment of Innovation Platforms to tackle the meso- or mega-level problems that have been identified and described in the report that emerged from the Foresight Study. Harmonization of programs and alignment both ensure that money is more readily accessible for developed programs.

Stage 3: Implementation

Implementation of set activities follows the establishment of Innovation Platforms. Inclusive stakeholders interact over set activities targeting agreed goals and objectives. Partners learn and innovate collectively, leading to attainment of social economic benefits at both the micro and macro levels. At this stage also, all institutional and human capacity needs that have been identified and budgeted for in the program will be undertaken. Activities of the Innovation Platform go through planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating, and lessons learning in an iterative manner to continually improve accomplishments and impacts.

Emphasis on catalyzing

A core group of GFAR Steering Committee members and other committed partners, supported by the GFAR Secretariat, will perform the role of a catalyst, triggering off the process, developing and improving the capacity of Partners from all sectors to themselves be the implementing agencies, in setting up innovation platforms, conducting underlying analysis and facilitate platforms to transform innovation into useful enterprises which come with socio economic benefits at scale. Partners can make use of the extensive GFAR global network of organizations, and their reach, in linking up appropriate stakeholders from different parts of the world, including those responsible for financing, sharing information and promoting exchange of ideas among partners.

The core group driving the initiative will use follow-through approaches to strengthen implementation, lessons learning, and analysis for the purpose of improving performance both at the process and the output levels. In addition, this GFAR Collective Action will couple monitoring and evaluation for mutual accountability among stakeholders by envisioning both the process and terminal evaluation. Outcomes will be managed via the GFAR knowledge hub for global access, shared to improve practices among stakeholders and to propel advocacy at different levels.

Stage 4:

Implementation goes along with monitoring and evaluation for mutual accountability. GFAR proposes both the process and the terminal evaluation which will tease out lessons to improve praxis not only as the program is implemented but also at the end of the cycle.

You are invited to join Partners in GFAR including World Rural Forum, Ghana Private Enterprise Federation, FARA, APAARI, AARINENA, EFARD, FORAGRO, ANGOC, GFRAS, FAO, IFAD and Barli Development Institute for Rural Women in GFAR's Collective Action *Enabling Successful Enterprise from Innovation*. For more information, contact GFAR-Secretariat@fao.org