

PROPOSAL FOR GFAR-2000 DRESDEN

New innovative research partnership proposal

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1. Title

Improved participation of Farmers' Organizations in the development policy dialogue in West-Africa

2. Tender information

A group of farmers organizations (FO) from 10 countries of West Africa have held several meetings since 1999. They are now planning to set up a multi-donor regional fund to assist the development of farmers organization's capacities and autonomy, in particular in the field of national and regional development policy dialogues. All FO share the conviction that family farms are and will remain in the coming decade the center of rural economic and social development and must therefore be in the center of the development dialogue (rather than technical subsector approaches)

3. Brief description of the proposal

The fund, planned for a three years period, would be used to :

- Organize periodic regional meetings among FO to exchange experience
- Assist in the development of national FO in the various countries
- Improve the information base practically needed by FO to efficiently participate in policy negotiations (Rural Identity Card)
- Mobilize autonomously ad hoc technical expertise to assist them in national/regional negotiations
- Create a network of researchers and experts who know FO and their needs and can provide them with adapted, high-quality technical and scientific information.

At this stage of the proposal the framework is :

Research priorities

- rural/agricultural status and transformation trends
- policy issues relevant at the national/subregional/global levels
- Improved knowledge of the policy formulation, negotiation and implementation processes

Capacity building

Agricultural transformation analysis
 Policy management analysis
 Advocacy and lobbying techniques

4. Thematic area

Policy management and institutional development

5. Project design information

5.1 - Partners involved / Respective expected contributions / Innovative character

Farmers organizations of Senegal (CNCR), Benin (FUPRO), Burkina Faso (CCOF) and other West Africa Countries which do not yet have national farmers organizations (Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger, Mali, The Gambia, Cape-Verde, Guinea Bissau

National officials involved in rural development will be regularly invited to improve mutual understanding

BOAD will be the financial manager of the regional fund. **UEMOA and CILSS** will be the main regional partners, with **ECOWAS** as a medium-term goal.

Bi- and multilateral Donors have agreed to finance and would like to be kept informed. **OECD-Club du Sahel** is providing technical advice and drawing lessons from the process in terms of improved aid practices.

Several NGO and committed individual in the North have agreed to participate in a consultative committee who will give comments and advice on the FO decisions.

5.2 - Expected results in the short-, medium-, and long-term

The expected results are :

- Improved information on agricultural/rural development issues
- Improved understanding of family farms potential and needs with regards to development policies
- Research results are better used for policy formulations. Identification of areas of interest for policy purpose which are not sufficiently covered
- A growing number of national FO able to assist each other in their technical and political challenges
- improved capacity of FO to influence national and regional policies to improve their impact on family farms

5.3 - Beneficiaries

West African farmers leaders and organizations.

5.4 - Dissemination of results

This approach could be transferred to other regions or used in other contexts

5.5 - Impact assessment

5.6 - Sharing costs / benefits of the initiative between co-operating partners and beneficiaries

In-kind contribution could be envisaged from NARS as far as they admit that command will have to come from FOs.

6. Stage of development

6.1 - Identification of project partners

Several FOs have recently met to start drafting the documents for the FOs network and the regional fund.

6.2 - Project formulation

It is planned that project proposal might be completed by end of June for a discussion to be held among FOs from 4 to 6 July to formally create the network and the fund.

6.3 - Discussion with potential donors

Several donors have already agreed to contribute to the regional fund.

7. Constituency approval

planned for a meeting to be held in Cotonou (Benin), July 4-6
