Minutes of the 6th meeting of the Global Forum Steering Committee (GFAR-SC)

Washington, 24 October 1999

The GFAR Steering Committee met for the 6th time in Washington on October 24, 1999 in a closed session only contrary to previous meetings. Indeed, it had been decided that the GFAR open session that usually precedes the closed session, should this time be part of the NARS Steering Committee meeting agenda in order to get an opportunity to regional fora to present their on-going activities as well as the contribution they were preparing for GFAR-2000. This open session held in the context of the NARS SC was very well attended and provided an opportunity to have a very rich discussion among regional and sub-regional NARS representatives as well as between NARS and other GFAR stakeholders. Details of the meeting can be found in the minutes of the 6th NARS SC meeting.

The GFAR SC meeting was then entirely devoted to decision-making process. Most of the agenda items related to the preparation for GFAR-2000.

WELCOME ADDRESS and PROGRESS REPORTS

1. CHAIRMAN OPENING ADDRESS.

GFAR Chairman Dr. Paroda opened the meeting by welcoming all the participants, and specially those who were participating for the first time; they were:
- Dr. Lukas Gakale who has been appointed as FARA Chairman in Gaborone in February 1999, but was not able to attend the previous GFAR SC meeting in Beijing,
- Dr. Adama Traore, newly elected as chairman of CORAF/WECARD, and
- Dr. Harold Kauffman, deputy dean of Agriculture Faculty, University of Illinois, who was representing Dr. Ronnie Coffman.

The Chairman highlighted some of the main GFAR events and achievements that took place since the previous meeting in Beijing. They covered the following areas:

Preparation of GFAR 2000

The Chairman warmly thanked Dr. Jochen de Haas, Mrs. Dr. Reinhild Ernst and Dr. Jurgen Richter representing the German Preparatory Committee, for quality of the cooperation between GFAR and the GPC. He made a specific reference to the very productive meeting held in Bonn on 8 October 1999.
Then, he reviewed progress made in the preparation for GFAR-2000:

* A second draft of the shared vision available;

* A very interesting “issues paper” drafted; and

* A discussion paper drafted by Henri Rouille d’Orfeuil that provides challenging ideas on how to implement the global shared vision.

The Chairman recalled that also a lot of work has been done by the stakeholders themselves with the support of the two secretariats. As a result, 54 case studies and 21 new innovative partnerships have been submitted. This shows a strong involvement of GFAR stakeholders in GFAR 2000.

He warmly commended the Working Group GFAR-2000 members who worked on the evaluation of case studies and new partnerships and who have help to elaborate a meeting scenario for the GFAR-2000. He stressed that the propositions of the WG –2000 cover a large part of the today agenda.

**Information and Communication.**

* A document for the implementation of the Rome meeting recommendation has been circulated by mid-July.

* The NARS Secretariat has initiated a very intensive consultation with each regional fora. A workshop has been held in sub-Saharan Africa in July and workshops for other regions are already scheduled or under discussion.

* EGFAR has achieved serious progress with respect to the development of the website function. Pilot main pages have been developed for each stakeholder group in close consultation with the stakeholders themselves.

**Important events**

* A second GFAR management meeting was held in Delhi on August 25, 1999 along with the APAARI Executive Committee. The GFAR management reviewed the status of preparation for GFAR-2000 and had a brainstorming exercise on the long term trends and perspectives for GFAR (refer to the minutes of the management meeting for detail information).

* GFAR was co-sponsoring the Biotech Conference held in Washington on October 21-22, 1999.

* Mrs. Consuelo Madere, Private Sector representative in GFAR, organized in Bangkok on September 15, 1999 a GFAR workshop along with the annual meeting of the Asian Crop Protection Association. It provided a good opportunity to develop awareness of GFAR to a large range of PS companies. A rich discussion on private-public partnership modalities took place as key NARS leaders of the region were participating in the workshop.

The Chairman underlined that he felt it a very innovative example of how GFAR stakeholders can be active in implementing the GFAR Plan of Action.
* The NGO group organized in Washington on October 22-23, 1999 a NRM consultation supported by GFAR to discuss a scaling-up methodology to broaden the impact of local successful case studies, partly sponsored by the NARS Secretariat. Such a meeting gives another example of active stakeholder involvement to develop the GFAR Work Program.

2. **GFAR SECRETARIAT PROGRESS REPORT.**

Alain Derevier presented a GFAR Secretariat progress report that was addressing four main areas:

- **Development of EGFAR**

He informed the GFAR SC members of the last achievements that concern the completion of the new design of the home page, the development by the NARS Secretariat of a very comprehensive NARS master page and the creation of pilot master pages for each GFAR stakeholders with hyperlinks to the main homepages of GFAR members.

He mentioned that the development of the “stakeholder master pages” was realized in close consultation with stakeholder representatives in the GFAR SC.

Regarding further development of EGFAR, the Executive Secretary recalled that this constitutes a point of the agenda and that a document was circulated as part of the meeting documentation.

- **GFAR-2000**

The Executive Secretary mentioned the main activities carried out, mostly in close collaboration with the NARS Secretariat. As most of the progress made were already mentioned by the Chairman in his welcome address, Alain Derevier only detailed the outcomes of the meeting held in Bonn on October 8, 1999 and the status of case studies and new innovative research partnerships.

- **GFAR management meeting in Delhi**

The Executive Secretary presented the main outcomes of the second management meeting. He indicated that it was decided to hold such management team meetings on a regular basis in between two GFAR SC meetings, as the are felt critical to review the implementation of decisions taken in the previous GFAR SC and to better prepare the next meeting. It is proposed that the venue of the management meeting rotates to facilitate the interaction with facilitating agencies and regional fora. It was indicated that the next management meeting will be held in Rome by the end of January 2000.

The GFAR SC members approved the approach and requested to be informed of the topics to be discussed prior to the meeting in order to allow input from them. They also asked for a circulation of the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.

- **Bilateral Interaction with GFAR stakeholders**

Most of the bilateral activities with stakeholder representatives were relating to GFAR-2000 and/or to developing greater awareness of GFAR among stakeholders constituencies. They were as follows:
* Participation in the meeting organized by Stein Bie as Chair of IT committee of CDC in Rome on July 15, 1999 to coordinate with FAO and GFAR on follow-up to the March ICT consultation organized by GFAR.
* Support to the preparation of the GFAR workshop organized in Bangkok along with the annual ACAPA meeting by Mrs. Madere.
* Meeting with the GFAR contact person in the Canadian Agricultural Research Council (CARC) to discuss how to better involve Canada in GFAR activities.
* Contact with the President of the Global Consortium of Agricultural Universities to see how to establish partnership relations between these two complementary initiatives.

Th GFAR SC approved the report made by the Executive Secretary.

**PREPARATION FOR GFAR-2000**


The Working Group GFAR-2000 (WG-2000 in short) was commissioned by the GFAR SC in Beijing to help the two secretariats to evaluate, and deal with, the case studies and new innovative proposals and to elaborate a detailed GFAR-2000 meeting agenda.

WG-2000 met on October 24, 1999 after an active electronic interaction between June and September. It nominated Rashid Pertev as rapporteurs to the GFAR SC.

Rashid made a clear summary of the working group discussion and propositions, highlighted four main topics:

- **The meeting scenario:** The WG-2000 judged the draft jointly elaborated by GFAR and GPC in Bonn the meeting of 8 October 1999 as a very good basis for a final scenario. It then proposed to the GFAR SC to approve the current scenario. Rashid stressed that WG-2000 appreciated very much the concept of “marketplace” and the round table discussion groups. However, it was recommended to develop precise terms of reference and “rules of the game” for the discussion groups.

- **GSV and the “issues paper”:** The WG-2000 did not comment neither the draft GSV-rev2 nor the draft issues paper. However, based on the discussion on the two document that took place during the NARS SC meeting, it recommended that the “issues paper” be not considered as a document to be amended, but as a background to foster the discussion. It then suggested that a few complementary issues papers could be developed by specific stakeholders.

- **Case studies and new proposals:** The WG-2000 approved the criteria suggested for the selection of case studies in sub-plenary. It also recommended that all other case studies submitted be selected as posters, and suggested that further poster proposals, particularly in areas where the current list is not quite satisfying, be considered.

Regarding the new partnership proposals, the WG-2000 recommended not to close the list before Dresden and not to do any choice, leaving this responsibility to the relevant working groups in Dresden according to the “marketplace” concept.

- **Policy management:** a discussion on the relevance of this theme took place. The WG-2000 did not reach a final consensus. Thus, it asked the GFAR SC to take the final decision. However, the WG-2000 recommended that the GFAR SC decides to keep the theme, but that it renamed it as “Policy Management and Institutions”.
4. **GSV and ISSUES PAPER.**

Fernando Chaparro, NARS Executive Secretary, introduced the three documents that were circulated, i.e. the draft Global Shared Vision (GSV-rev2), the first draft of the “issues paper” and the document prepared by GFAR vice-Chair Henri Rouille d’Orfeuil. The latter entitled “The next steps: an implementation strategy” was drafted after the Delhi management meeting and reflects the ideas that were discussed there, on how to operationalize the vision and translate it into action.

Fernando summarized the discussions that took place in the NARS SC meeting and in the WG-2000. Then, he recalled the main suggestions of the WG-2000 that the GFAR SC should approve or amend.

A rich discussion took place, particularly on the implementation strategy document. Finally, the following decisions were taken:

- The draft GSV shall be revised by the end of January and will integrate the suggestions received by Fernando Chaparro at that time. The revised draft will be part of the background documentation sent to the participants in GFAR-2000. It was agreed, as stressed by the WG-2000, that the round table discussion groups are not supposed to do any “drafting work” but will have to verify if issues and trends that they consider critical for the international cooperation in ARD, are reflected in the document and, if not, to propose to add the missing ones.

- It was stated that the “issues paper” function is to provide a forward looking input for the discussion groups on issues, trends and challenges and then should not be considered as a paper to be discussed and amended by the round table discussion groups. The GFAR SC approved this approach and welcomed the proposition that a few stakeholders could prepare additional “sectoral” issues paper highlighting issues of a particular importance for them. The NGO, private sector and farmers’ Organization representatives have agreed to prepare a contribution.

- Regarding the document for the implementation strategy, it was decided that it shall be widely circulated for discussion and comments, and will serve in the thematic discussion groups as a basis to examine how GFAR should promote the emergence of new research partnerships, what operational mechanisms could be needed for, and what would be the next steps.

5. **EGFAR IN THE CONTEXT OF GKSARD.**

Alain Derevier briefly introduced the situation of EGFAR. He explained the current status of development, indicated what are the main functions that EGFAR is expected to perform in the context of an emerging global knowledge system on agricultural research for development (GKSARD). They are three, i.e. a multistakholders website function, an electronic forum discussion tool for global issues, and a service function for GFAR members, one of these services being the kiosk function.

Alain Derevier also informed the members that the Bank has confirmed that it will not continue to host the EGFAR application in the long run. He then referred to the two offers that were made by ISNAR and FAO, and explained why he suggested to chose the FAO one.
The GFAR SC commended for current EGFAR achievements jointly done by the two Secretariats and approved the functions that are proposed to be developed. Regarding the permanent location of EGFAR, it approved the proposition to explore the FAO option. It stressed that “editorial” autonomy and GFAR ownership should be clearly recognized. On this basis, the Executive Secretary was given a mandate to initiate consultation with FAO on the appropriate modalities and was asked to report to the GFAR SC before a final decision is implemented.

6. **THEMATIC AREAS IN GFAR-2000.**

**Case studies and new partnership proposals.**

Fernando Chaparro introduced the subject by summarizing what had been done in between June and October in the regions and commented the matrixes that present case studies and new innovative partnerships received, classified by themes.

He suggested what could be the further steps according to the WG-2000 suggestions, that are:

- completion of the sub-plenary case study table before within a week.
- to keep the poster list open to further proposals until the end of the year.
- to ask for more new partnership proposals and to interact with the current proponents to help them further develop their project and consult with potential interested partners.

The GFAR SC approved the approach but asked the two Secretariats to organize an electronic consultation before the decision id finalized.

**Commodity Chains.**

Dr. Emile Frison, IPGRI, made a presentation of work that was commissioned in Beijing. He briefly summarized the two papers that were tabled. The first one was relating to the establishment of global programs for world-market crops. This paper proposes a framework to review crop by crop the current status of international cooperation, based on the concept document approved in Beijing, and provides a pilot example for citrus.

The second paper is a concept note on orphan and neglected crops that provides suggestions to evaluate the needs to develop an international cooperation in this domain, and suggests criteria for prioritization when the need is assessed.

The GFAR SC welcomed the two papers and commended IPGRI for this work. With respect to world commodity chains, it recommended that IPGRI further developed operational mechanisms to be used to develop a few pilot global programs before Dresden.

Regarding respectively orphan/neglected crops, IPGRI has been asked to develop an operational proposal based on the concept note.

7. **APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT AGENDA MEETING.**

Alain Derevier briefly introduced the draft agenda developed in the October 8 meeting in Bonn. Due to time constraints, there was no wide discussion. However, all the members approved the sketch proposed and asked the Secretariat to develop a detailed agenda that takes into account the
various points discussed above. It was agreed that a revised agenda with proposed names for the various chair, rapporteur and keynotes speaker position should be circulated for comments and approval by the end of November 1999.

OTHER GFAR BUSINESS

8. GFAR EXTERNAL REVIEW.

In Beijing, the GFAR Support Group recommended that an external review of GFAR be organized to evaluate existing achievements and to propose future orientation. As agreed, the GFAR Secretariat had circulated a document that was reviewing the different issues that such a review was raising. Based on the analysis of these issues, the paper suggested to have a “stripe” review at the time of GFAR-2000 and provided a draft terms of reference and budget.

An interesting discussion took place that questioned the relevance of such an early review, arguing that at the time of Dresden, a few achievements would be reached and that, regarding decision for the future, it was quite the responsibility of the GFAR SC based on inputs from the Dresden meeting. Therefore, the GFAR SC decided to postpone the review well after Dresden, to ask the Chairman jointly with the Support Group Chair to explain the GFAR decision to the donors. It was also agreed that the GFAR SC should identify and prepare well in advance the decisions to be taken at the time of the Dresden meeting. It was also stressed that the questions relating to the evolution of the GFAR organizational structure, are already well identified.

9. GFAR BUDGET SITUATION.

Fernando Chaparro for the NARS Secretariat and Alain Derevier for the GFAR Secretariat briefly presented the financial situation. They both highlighted the budget estimates that have been developed for the post-Dresden period as requested in Beijing.

Due to the time constraint, there was no discussion. The GFAR SC members approved the presentations and stressed the urgency to have pledge made for the period of mid-2000 to the end of 2001. It was agreed that the management meeting of January in Rome would review the situation.

10. AGREEMENT BETWEEN ISNAR AND GFAR.

Alain Derevier recalled that ISNAR has been providing from the GFAR inception a kind support to manage part of the resources of both Secretariats’ activities. Due to the increasing amount of money transiting through ISNAR account, both parties agreed that a formal agreement would be necessary. A draft agreement was approved at the GFAR management meeting in Delhi. Then, the GFAR Chairman requested the GFGAR SC to endorse the agreement, what was done unanimously. The GFAR SC also commended ISNAR for its very helpful support.