# CONCEPT NOTE
## LARGE GRANTS

### Summary Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Title</th>
<th>Learning about partnership experiences to enhance their contribution to pro-poor impact of agricultural research for development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>Global Forum on Agricultural Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IFAD Originator/Sponsor</strong></td>
<td>Alessandro Meschinelli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Grant Objectives and links to the Strategic Objectives/SF and Grant policy** | i) To contribute to a better understanding of partnerships in the context of research and development initiatives and activities.  
    ii) To document impact of partnerships on pro-poor research and development activities  
    iii) To develop capacities for implementing, monitoring and evaluating partnership based pro-poor projects and programmes |
| **Beneficiary Countries**                                                 | Selected countries in Sub Saharan Africa and SE Asia, such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Ethiopia, Uganda, Cambodia, Nepal, and other countries where selected case study projects have been undertaken. |
| **Proposed IFAD Grant Amount**                                           | US$ 1,200,000                                                                                                      |
| **Co-financing**                                                         |                                                                                                                   |
| **Total Programme Cost**                                                 | US$ 1,200,000                                                                                                      |
| **Projected Executive Board Date**                                       | September 2006                                                                                                     |
| **Programme Duration**                                                   | 2 years                                                                                                            |
| **Target Group and Benefits**                                            | Rural communities, R&D institutions and investors in rural and agricultural development that believe in and use multi-stakeholder partnerships to improve the livelihoods of the poor. |
| **IFAD Projects Likely To Benefit**                                      | Candidate projects include:                                                                                         |
| **Supervision Arrangements**                                             |                                                                                                                   |
LEARNING ABOUT PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENCES TO ENHANCE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO PRO-POOR IMPACT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

I. Background
The past three decades have witnessed a remarkable paradigm shift as agricultural researchers and development workers struggled to improve the impact of agricultural research for the poor. There has been a shift from a direct technology transfer approach, through the use of various forms of farming systems and farmer participatory techniques, to progressive forms of partnership-based approach based on innovation systems thinking, which seek to blend different knowledge sources and processes of co-innovation among multiple stakeholders to enable learning, faster uptake and wider impact.

While there is a growing sense that the formation of relationships among the actors associated with innovation is essential in making effective use of agricultural science and technology, and a number of challenges facing multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary initiatives have been identified, no systematic assessment has been made of the partnering process and ways of making the most effective use of this mechanism.

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) is a multi-stakeholder initiative which espouses and promotes an agricultural research for development (ARD) paradigm built on partnerships and innovation systems. GFAR provides a platform for building the partnerships and other institutional arrangements necessary to stimulate innovation. The mission of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is to reduce poverty. IFAD believes that poverty reduction is not something that governments, development institutions or any other groups can do for the poor. The poor have to work their way out of poverty, using their own skills and talents. What others can do is to forge partnerships and promote enabling conditions for the poor to help themselves.

This proposal will establish a partnership between GFAR and IFAD with the purpose of learning from their own projects and those of others about the contributions of strategic partnerships to the process, outputs and outcomes of such projects, so that factors responsible for positive impacts can be identified and used in future R&D investments.

II. Rationale for Grant
GFAR promotes and catalyses alliances among different stakeholders groups through its Global Partnership Programmes (GPP) as a means of learning about partnership processes. A recent external evaluation of the GPP mechanism revealed that monitoring and evaluation of partnerships, both within and across GPP are not well established. This has meant that it has not been possible to learn from the experiences of different GPP or assess the quality of the partnerships that have been formed with respect to their effectiveness in accelerating innovation processes or in enhancing pro-poor development impact.

---

The IFAD Action Plan features the development and implementation of a knowledge management strategy based on partnership related activities including: scaling up innovations with partners, forging strategic knowledge management and innovation partnerships, and strengthening the learning functions of existing partnerships and establishing new ones. At the Roundtable Discussion on Adaptive Research in Support of Innovation and Rural Development organized during the 2006 IFAD Board meetings, various forms of successful partnerships at all stages of the project conception to results utilization continuum were described, and a recommendation was made to unravel factors associated with the quality of such partnerships and their effect on pro-poor impact.

III. Target Groups
The target groups of this proposal are:
- Rural communities, which increasingly participate at all stages of ARD and rural development projects, through a better understanding about how to forge and sustain partnerships that bind them together for a common goal.
- Research and development institutions and their respective Regional Forums that carry out pro-poor ARD activities, through the adoption of good practices for strengthening alliances with other stakeholders, and especially the rural poor with whom they work.
- Investors in rural research and development activities, who will use project outputs to inform on certain aspects of their grant conditions, ex-ante evaluation criteria/screening process, and project monitoring and evaluation activities.

IV. Goal and Purpose
Goal: To improve the livelihoods of the rural poor by enhancing the effectiveness of agricultural research for development investments.

Purpose: To better understand how effective multi-stakeholder agricultural research and development partnerships are established, consolidated and sustained, by widening the knowledge base on partnerships for agricultural innovation, and using the knowledge generated to improve partnership building processes.

V. Outputs

Output 1. Documented impact of partnerships on:
- The way in which the research and innovation process is carried out or achieved
- The effectiveness in generating outputs and outcomes that are explicitly pro-poor
- The ability to widen socio-economic and institutional impact of ARD interventions

Output 2. Capacity built within the project’s proponent institutions and their partners to implement, monitor and evaluate partnership-based pro-poor projects and programmes, by:
- Drawing lessons from their own programmes/projects specifically related to partnership aspects and acquire new competencies to better initiate, manage, sustain, monitor and evaluate partnerships;
- Sharing the insights gained on the most effective ways to develop partnerships, together with factors hindering them and operational criteria that can be derived from the analysis for assessing – both ex-ante and ex-post - the quality of partnership building processes.
Output 3. A systematic and rigorous assessment of the partnership approach through case studies, underpinned by a sound conceptual framework from which a set of related research hypotheses and questions will be developed and investigated. Potentially relevant research questions include: i) do partnerships act as a way of connecting agricultural science and technology with agricultural innovation processes? If so, what type of partnerships work best and how can these be stimulated? ii) what types of partnership arrangement are likely to be more pro-poor and which are ones are less so? iii) what are the constraints and difficulties faced by those involved in partnership arrangements and how are they being dealt with?

VI. Key project activities

1. Development of a conceptual framework for the study, related hypotheses and research questions, research tools and select case studies.
   a) Establishment of core team. The projects activities will be overseen technically by a core team made of persons from institutions with a track record of innovative thinking about innovation systems and hands-on experience of interdisciplinary partnerships, such as:

   The United Nations University, Maastricht, the Netherlands
   The University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom
   The International Food Policy Research Institute, USA
   The Institutional Learning and Change Initiative of the CGIAR, Italy
   Swiss Commission for Research Partnership with Developing Countries (KFPE), Switzerland

   b) Development of the conceptual framework. The core team will develop the conceptual framework for the partnership approach, and will establish the hypotheses and research questions on which the project will be based.

   c) Literature review. This work will be supported by a ‘state of the art’ review of the literature to distinguish, among other aspects, between various types of partnership relationship, how knowledge is handled within such arrangements, how they are governed, and which relationships are likely to contribute to processes of innovation rather than just building up new stocks of knowledge and technology.

   d) Selection of case studies. Case studies will be selected that typify the range of new types of partnership that are emerging and correspond to projects and programmes where the multi-stakeholders partnership dimension are playing or have played a particularly prominent role. Up to 10 cases will be selected from a list projects, promoted by GFAR, IFAD, the CGIAR and other agencies such as DFID and SDC, against a set of criteria established by the core team. Examples of potential candidate projects are (see Annex 1):

   - Promoting Local Innovation in Ecologically-oriented Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (PROLINNOVA)
   - Empowering Sahelian Farmers to leverage their crop diversity assets for improved livelihoods (TAG 696 IPGRI)
   - Initiatives for the Development of Aguié (PPILDA) project in Niger.
   - The Water and Food Challenge Programme (CPWF)
- Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture Partnership (NARMSAP) of the Cornell International Institute for Food, Agriculture, and Development (CIIFAD)
- Pan African Bean Research Alliance, PABRA

2. Establish the developmental contribution and usefulness of partnerships and their support to national level innovation

A critical analyses and examination of the 10 selected projects and programmes will be undertaken. The key questions to be addressed will be established during the development of the conceptual framework, typical among them will be:

- How were partnerships initiated (by whom and based on what motivating forces)
- How have they been managed and sustained (roles, responsibilities, power relations, etc.)
- Have there been any specific attempts to monitor and evaluate such partnerships, if not what type of monitoring process would be appropriate
- What factors made the partnership work or fail, what have been the costs and benefits
- Can any direct cause–effect relationships be observed between the successful partnerships and outputs, outcomes and impact of the project and pro-poor poverty reduction goals, etc.

3. Learn and synthesize lessons for use in future investments, and develop capacity to internalize the lessons learned

The focus will be on how to bring about institutional changes – through new project designs or other forms of intervention - required for motivating organizations to develop habits and practices that promote good partnership approaches and add value to existing investments in agricultural research.

4. Production and sharing of outputs

A strategy for sharing the principal outputs among project participants and the wider community will be developed by the core team. Among the outputs to be shared will be:

- Reports that will provide feedback to participants in the projects/programmes selected for case study analysis
- Guidelines, methods and tools for monitoring and evaluation of partnership processes for R&D institutions and donors
- Policy briefs for decision makers

VII. Implementation and methodology

The above activities will be undertaken by the core team convened by the GFAR Secretariat and established to provide technical oversight to the project. GFAR and IFAD will also participate in the core team. The roles and responsibilities of each member of the core team will be established once the proposal concept note has been approved for development into a full proposal. The methodology to be employed in the project will combine both systematic and rigorous assessment of partnership approach using recognised social science techniques and action-research-training approaches such as those developed and used by the Institutional Learning and Change Initiative3.

---

VIII. Monitoring and Evaluation
The GFAR Secretariat will assume administrative oversight of the project and put in place a liaison officer who will assume the convening role for the core team. The mid-term workshop will be used to evaluate progress and make appropriate modifications to the implementation process. Contracts for the core project team will be prepared following FAO procedures. Financial reports will be prepared by the Finance Division of FAO. Intellectual property and publishing rights will be governed by FAO procedures and based on the sharing of rights among the participating institutions. The Logical Framework for the project is shown in Annex 2. This will be further developed with the core team of experts once this concept note has been approved for full proposal development.

IX. Budget

Table 1. Budget breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost category</th>
<th>Year, US$</th>
<th>Total IFAD</th>
<th>Co-financing US$</th>
<th>Grand Total, US$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>US$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and review workshops</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual framework and literature review</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact case studies on partnerships</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation methods and tools</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation, dissemination and communication</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project coordination</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>580,000</td>
<td>1,080,000</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect costs (10%)</td>
<td>55,556</td>
<td>64,444</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>555,556</td>
<td>644,444</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Budget notes.

i) Planning and review workshops: 3 planning and review workshops (initial to develop the conceptual framework, mid to review progress and final to develop key project outputs). The final meeting will also include a space for disseminating the results of the project to a wider audience.

ii) The core team of experts will help develop the conceptual framework that will guide and be guided by the literature review (iterative process).

iii) Impact case studies: fees for research team, focus groups, participatory diagnosis, travel costs, etc. for up to 10 projects or programmes that demonstrate different types of partnership relationship.

iv) Development of a monitoring and evaluation methods and tools for partnership processes.

v) Reports, policy notes, feedback to participating partners and communities.

vi) Project coordination and management: dedication of GFAR Secretariat staff responsible for liaison with IFAD and core team, and project management.

vii) Indirect costs (10%) to cover GFAR logistic and administrative costs.
Annex 1. Examples of possible projects that could be considered for case study analysis.

**Promoting Local Innovation in Ecologically-oriented Agriculture and Natural Resource Management.** Prolinnova is an NGO-initiated programme to build a global learning and advocacy network on promoting local innovation in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management (NRM). The focus is on recognising the dynamics of indigenous knowledge (IK) and learning how to strengthen the capacities of farmers to adjust to changing conditions. PROLINNOVA is implemented in nine countries: Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nepal, Niger, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

**Empowering Sahelian Farmers to leverage their crop diversity assets for improved livelihoods (TAG 696 IPGRI).** This 1.3 USD million research and capacity building programme was built by an alliance of research centers, both national and international, NGOs and universities to help several IFAD-financed loans better understand and support farmers’ management and use of plant genetic resources in targeted vulnerable rural communities of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. A specific monitoring and evaluation system has been designed to assess at the grass-root level the multiple impacts of the programme, together with the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships, the Syngenta Foundation, Farmers’ Organisations and NARS.

**Initiatives for the Development of Aguié (PPILDA) project in Niger.** This 17 USD million investment is the outcome of an action-research-training process that brought together since 1998 a variety of actors including NGOs, government technical services, universities, experts, national and international researchers and IFAD staff, around the identification and support of farmers’ own innovations.

**The CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF) has taken on the challenge of increasing the productivity of water used for agriculture, leaving more water for other users and the environment from a research perspective. It is an international, multi-institutional research initiative with a strong emphasis on north-south and south-south partnerships.**

**Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture Partnership (NARMSAP).** The program was initiated by World Vision/Ghana, CIIFAD, the University of Ghana at Legon, and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology at Kumasi in 1994. Since then it has expanded to include the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and District Assemblies and local communities of the Greater Afram Plains (GAP) region. The partnership works towards improving rural water supplies and environmental management in central Ghana through participatory knowledge generation in rural communities.

**The Pan-Africa Bean Research Alliance (PABRA) is a consortium of African-owned regional bean networks, consisting of National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) in a total of 18 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, an international agricultural research center and a number of donor organisations. PABRA's R&D programme is implemented by PABRA partners, NARS, Non-Governmental Organisations, Community-based Organisations, selected rural communities, farmers (seed producers and on-farm researchers), traders and in a few situations the commercial private sector.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project goal</th>
<th>Narrative summary</th>
<th>Verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To improve the livelihoods of the rural poor by enhancing the effectiveness of agricultural research for development investments</strong></td>
<td>By the end of the project, GFAR stakeholders are preparing project proposals that incorporate good practices for multi-stakeholder partnerships. IFAD has introduced modifications to its project design approval and monitoring process policies and practices that favor the development of multi-stakeholder partnerships.</td>
<td>Case studies placed on EGFAR website</td>
<td>Project partners institutionalize good partnership building practices and advocate their use across the whole spectrum of ARD stakeholders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To better understand how effective multi-stakeholder ARD partnerships are established, consolidated and sustained, by widening the knowledge base on partnerships for agricultural innovation, and using the knowledge generated to improve partnership building processes.</strong></td>
<td>Set of lessons learned from up to 10 case studies of multi-stakeholder projects/programmes produced by month 16 of the project. Impact established a) the way in which the research and innovation process is carried out, b) the effectiveness in generating outputs and outcomes that are explicitly pro-poor, c) the ability to widen socio-economic and institutional impact of ARD interventions. 1 cross case synthesis documentation of lessons learned elaborated by month 18 of the project.</td>
<td>Synthesis document published in hard copy and placed on EGFAR.</td>
<td>Appropriate cases are identified and the respective project personnel are willing to collaborate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documented impact of partnerships on pro-poor development outcomes</strong></td>
<td>1 guidelines for monitoring and evaluation of partnership projects/programmes by month 20 of the project. Cadres of partners have gained skills to better prepare and monitor multi-stakeholder ARD projects/programmes.</td>
<td>Guideline document placed on EGFAR and IFAD website. Reports of sensitization and learning workshops held to share results of the project.</td>
<td>GFAR Secretariat, Regional Forum and IFAD personnel are convinced of the usefulness of partnerships.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity built to implement, monitor and evaluate partnership based pro-poor projects and programmes</strong></td>
<td>1 conceptual framework within which the cases studies (Output 2) will be developed and 1 literature review on the state of the art prepared within four months of project start up.</td>
<td>Conceptual framework and literature review placed on EGFAR and IFAD websites.</td>
<td>There is agreement among core team of experts on the basic elements of a conceptual framework.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>