



GFAR

GLOBAL FORUM ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
FORUM MONDIAL DE LA RECHERCHE AGRICOLE
FORO GLOBAL DE INVESTIGACION AGROPECUARIA

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15TH NARS PROGRAMME COMMITTEE MEETING

MARRAKECH, MOROCCO

1ST – 2ND DECEMBER 2005

AARINENA Progress Report



Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA)

Progress Report* (2004/2005)

Introduction

The Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA), was established in 1985 as an instrument of change for strengthening national and regional agricultural research capacities in order to reverse the downward trends in agricultural productivity and the deterioration of the natural resources. AARINENA's Mission is to contribute to the enhancement of agricultural and rural development in member countries through fostering agricultural research and technology development and by strengthening collaboration among them and with the outside world. AARINENA endeavors to assist member countries in creating effective national agricultural research systems that serve the goals of sustainable agricultural development, as well as strengthening regional and sub-regional scientific collaboration.

In this report the major activities of the Association for 2004/2005 will be presented. These activities include the Executive Committee meetings (following the 9th General Conference), Regional Agricultural Information System (RAIS), Regional Networks, Global Post-Harvest Initiative (GPhI), Constitutional Amendments, Publications and workshops and training courses.

For presentation by Ibrahim Hamdan, AARINENA Executive Secretary, at the GFAR – 15th NARS Sub-Committee meeting, Marrakech-Morocco 1-4 December, 2005.

Highlights of the Progress

1. AARINENA EXCO Meetings

AARINENA Executive Committee held two meetings after the 9th General Conference one in Marrakech-Morocco, December 2004 and the other in Sana'a-Yemen, September 2005. These meetings reviewed the progress on the work plan and budget that was adopted by the 9th General Conference of AARINENA that was held in Muscat-Oman in April 2004. The Committee recommended the implementation of the following:

A) Strengthening Regional Agricultural Information System (RAIS) through:

- Enhancing AARINENA Web Site
- Publication of AARINENA Newsletter
- Implementation of RAIS Priority Projects:

B) Networks

- Support commodity networks (Date-Palm, Cotton, Olive and Medicinal & Aromatic Plants)
- Establishing Biotechnology Network & Water Use Efficiency Network

C) Publication of Success Stories

D) Implementation of the Global Post Harvest Initiative

E) Constitutional Amendments .

2. AARINENA Regional Agricultural Information System (RAIS)

2.1 AARINENA Web Site:

- AARINENA RAIS-Web Site operating from AREO Iran in collaboration with GFAR.
- The Arabic Version of AARINENA RAIS-Web Site has been completed and the English Version was enhanced in collaboration with FAO/RNE.

2.2 ICT Steering Committee was established to strengthen RAIS:

The Committee includes representatives from AARINENA five sub regions and representatives from AOAD, FAO, GFAR and ICARDA. The Committee held two meetings to prepare RAIS strategy and to review the progress achieved.

2.3 Strengthening of WANA- RAIS:

AARINENA facilitated and supported the second meeting of the AARINENA ICT Committee that was held in September 2004 in Iran, during which the

committee reviewed & approved AARINENA ICT strategy which consists of the following:

- Framework of Action to develop the WANA-RAIS
- Implementation Plan
- Collaborative Programs

2.4 Inter-Regional Information and Communication Technology Consultation Meeting:

The 2nd Inter-Regional Consultation Meeting on ICT was sponsored by GFAR held in Cairo, Egypt during the period from the 10th to the 11th of May 2005, to enable RAIS stakeholders of Regional Fora to achieve: a) to present and discuss their respective regional Plan of Work and Budget for 2005 in the area of ICM for ARD and the development of their RAIS ;b) to take stock of existing initiatives and discuss fresh initiatives from the Regional Fora in the area of ICM for ARD in order to launch collaborative platforms between and amongst RAIS ;c) to define priorities for GFAR financial support for (i) regional activities and (ii) inter-regional activities within collaborative platforms; d) to define a consistent output oriented list of activities and related budget for each of these collaborative platforms that either GFAR Secretariat can support within its own 2005 POW&B or define complementary proposals, consistent with the ICM4ARD proposals leading to fund raising activities where GFAR Secretariat could play a leading role.

The Workshop, as a part of the consultation process, considered the issues that arose from the various presentations made during the meeting and consolidated them as being around the following topics:

2.4.1 Development of NAIS

2.4.2 Sensitization and Awareness of NARS Leaders, as a specific component of Advocacy for ICT Enabled agricultural information systems

2.4.3 Capacity Development for ICM from the Regional Fora point of view

2.4.4 Governance of the activities under ICM4ARD framework.

Group discussions during the meeting discussed the activities for Inter-Regional collaboration and made recommendations that emerged during the concluding plenary session that include the following:

- A. Strengthening Agro Web CAC as basis for the CACAARI-RAIS, based on the proposal presented during the Consultation;
- B. A Regional Workshop for National Information Nodal Points (NINPs) in APAARI Region;
- C. Publication of regional ICM success stories by APAARI;
- D. Supporting sensitization and awareness building of NARS leaders on ICT/ICM issues in Sub-Saharan Africa, with possible use of the
- E. NARS discussion platform;

- F. Assessment of Information management policies and systems in each country and sub-region of Latin America and the Caribbean;
- G. Support to AARINENA-RAIS for the renewal of its Steering Committee.

- The Inter-Regional or global activities for further consolidation and possible GFAR support was as follows:

2.4.5 Inter-regional Proposal based on AARINENA-RAIS and InfoSys+ pre-proposal for Initiating Inter-Regional sharing and exchange of experiences, skills and tools between AARINENA-RAIS and InfoSys+, leading to development of NAIS. A complementary WISARD proposal is expected to strengthen this collaborative platform.

The first phase of this proposal has two objectives: a) develop an electronic community at the regional level and b) develop a set of tools that facilitate the development of NARIS. The second phase has also two objectives: a) implementing NARIS in all research institutions members and b) building a Gateway function that has multi-host data base search engine.

The three main outputs of the first objective of the first phase are:

- 1- Establishing a methodology for developing the information management modules,
- 2- Developing software tools to be used by different NARS's to build the NARIS's, and
- 3- Training participants from the three regions on using methodology and tools.

3. Networks

Technical cooperation networks have become an increasingly important means of action and are initiated and supported by AARINENA in collaboration with GFAR. These networks have become a generic model for the establishment of functional mechanisms for collaboration and enhancement of communication and exchange of experiences among different countries in one region and/or different regions of the world.

Networks are found to reduce duplicative efforts among national institutions in several countries and may provide a cost-effective instrument for information exchange and institution building (including training). When the resources are limited, networks become a more effective means for the optimal utilization of indigenous expertise and available resources among the countries themselves.

Given the current status of some important commodity crops growing countries, and in the absence of a coordinating body for the promotion of cooperation among these countries for the optimal utilization of the limited resources available for the development of the commodity crops agro-industry, the establishment of a Technical Cooperation Network on these crops is a matter of urgency.

AARINENA established four commodity crops of particular importance to this region: Date Palm, Cotton, and Olive and Medicinal & Aromatic plants. The highlights of the progress on these Networks as follows:

3.1 Date Palm Global Network (DPGN):

The Date Palm Global Network (DPGN) organized an international workshop on True-To-Type-ness of Date Palm Tissue Culture-Derived Plants in Morocco during 23-25 May 2005. Scientists were coming from 14 countries (Austria, Canada, Egypt, France, Iraq, Israel, Italy, KSA, Morocco, Namibia, Spain, UAE, UK, and USA) attended the workshop.

The workshop aimed at updating the magnitude of tissue culture abnormalities and development of a program of future activities. Presentations from various date growing countries illustrated these variations which were focused on: dwarfism, pollination failure and abnormal fruiting, abnormal morphology of the tree and the leaves, twisted inflorescences and offshoots, leaf whitening and delayed flowering time. Both commercial laboratories and the research units dealing with date palm *in vitro* propagation were addressed. However, the workshop provided an opportunity to present and compare the date producing countries experiences and to foster international technical cooperation on date palm.

The participants recommended the following:

- Most of the abnormalities of tissue culture-derived date palms are of a small incidence (less than 5 %). These abnormalities were classified into three categories: i) Dwarfism, ii) Parthenocarpic fruits and iii) Morphological problems
- Tissue culture is certainly the most appropriate tool to provide the needs of date palm plants.
- Create a web site which will be linked to the DPGN web site.
- Strengthening collaboration between commercial laboratories and research units and ensuring the continuous exchange of information.
- With regard the future activities, the following initiatives were adopted:
 - a. Develop a reliable marker to identify the dwarfism and the parthenocarpy phenomenon.
 - b. Develop a data base of the date palm cultivars and abnormalities.
 - c. Collaborative approach to provide solutions to clonally fidelity issues.
 - d. Refine micro propagation protocols to eliminate factors inducing variations.

3.2 Inter-Regional Cotton Network in Asia and North Africa (INCANA):

The Second Meeting of Inter-regional Cotton Network for Central Asia and North Africa (INCANA) was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from 6-8 September 2004. The meeting was organized by PFU and ICARDA-CAC Regional Office under the umbrella of Central Asian and Caucasian Association of Agricultural Research Institutes (CACAARI). The meeting was co-sponsored by the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR), Association of Agricultural Research Institutes for Near East and North Africa (AARINENA), Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutes (APAARI) and CACAARI. In all, about 35 scientists participated in the meeting, including representatives from Iran, India Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Greece, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. The meeting was inaugurated by H.E. Mr. Ikramkhon Najmitdinov, Minister of Agriculture and Water Management of Uzbekistan.

The meeting included three technical sessions on country presentations, new developments in cotton research and strengthening research collaboration as well as round table discussions. During the technical sessions, representatives from Egypt, Iran, India, Greece, Syria, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan presented their country reports, highlighting the problems and promising results in cotton research and development.

Traveling Workshop on Hybrid and Bt :

Cotton

One of the activities in INCANA work plan for 2005-2006 was to organize a "traveling workshop on hybrid and Bt cotton in India". With the following objectives:

- Increasing the knowledge of the cotton experts
- Increasing collaborations between the member countries

India has been selected because hybrid cotton technology is well established in India and 50% of area under cotton cultivation is covered by hybrids and Bt cotton, India is one of the pioneers in the world. MAHYCO, a leading private company in India agreed to provide internal financial support to the participants attending the workshop. The Workshop was also supported by APAARI, AARINENA and GFAR. The representatives from India, Iran, Syria, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan attended this traveling workshop which was held from 20 to 26 November in India.

The expected outputs of the workshop are:

- Evaluation and qualifying the technology used for Hybrid and Bt cotton in India and compare it to what the other members have in their own.
- Finding the strengths and weaknesses of this technology
- Finding the ways for increasing the collaborations among the member countries on hybrid and Bt Cotton.

3.3 Olive Oil Network:

AARINENA First Olive Network meeting was held in Marrakech, Morocco during the period 20 to 22 December 2004 in order to discuss and identify collaborative joint activities related to olive development in the Near East Region. This activity was supported by GFAR and FAO/RNE.

AARINENA played an active role in establishing this regional olive network to be linked with ESCORENA olive network to promote interregional cooperation within the olive producing countries in the North and South of Mediterranean basin.

The meeting was attended by 22 participants representing FAO, AARINENA, ESCORENA, IPGRI, GFAR, in addition to AARINENA Olive Network Coordinator, working group coordinators and focal points from Turkey, Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Iran, Morocco, and Cyprus.

Based on the round table discussions the participants reached to the following conclusions and recommendations:

Strengthening Inter-regional collaboration between Southern and Northern Mediterranean olive producing countries:

Participants of the AARINENA olive network reviewed minutes of the meeting held in Izmir, Turkey during 29th of September 2004 which was attended by ESCORENA and AARINENA olive network coordinators, and agreed to consider these minutes as a

memorandum of understanding between Southern and Northern Mediterranean olive producing countries:

. Based on this it has been agreed that one of the best ways to strengthen collaboration between South and North is to conduct joint activities which can reflect common interests and therefore the AARINENA Olive Network has proposed the following topics as potential activities:

- Disseminate the results and/or findings of the on-going research and development projects in the EU to the AARINENA region to narrow the gap between North and South in R&D. The participants recognize that one of the major problems that face the implementation of these projects is that their findings can not be developed further due to lack of funds. Therefore it is very important for the inter-regional collaboration that both ESCORENA and AARINENA Olive Networks endeavour their maximum efforts in securing additional funds from interested donors to support these projects:
 - Improving the quality of the final products (table olives and olive oil).
 - Investigating and reinforcing labeling requirements.
 - Exchanging experts, experiences and knowledge in organic olive growing, biological control of pests and post harvest technologies.
 - Launch joint projects to emphasize the importance of traceability systems in the chain of olive production.
 - Develop manuals/guidelines for good agriculture practices (GAP).
 - Methods and means of minimizing and/or eradicating the negative impacts of the olive industry on environment.
 - Potentials of expanding, developing and improving olive cultivation on marginal lands.
 - Zone mapping of existing and potential areas of olive growing regions using GIS or other methods.
 - Develop the organizational structure of the olive industry in AARINENA sub-regional states using successful models applied in EU olive growing countries.
 - Establish common methodology for analyzing problems and initiating solutions.
 - Organize common seminars, workshops and training courses with emphases on farmers' capacity building.
 - ESCORENA should continue strengthening the efforts of other institutions (FAO – IOOC – EU - IPGRI) to establish national, regional and global collection of germoplasm.
 - Study the agronomic and oleotechnic behaviour of the new varieties derived by crossings from previous genetic breeding projects, particularly under drought and salinity conditions and to assess their resistance to pests and diseases.
 - ESCORENA and AARINENA will join efforts to re-publish in 2005 the OLEA News Letter in a new form. During the general round table discussions Dr. Rallo stated that the Spanish Government is willing to support the cost of re-publishing OLEA newsletter in 2005.
 - ESCORENA and AARINENA should strengthen contacts with other institutions and organizations such as CIHEAM, IOOC, EU, ISHS, COST, etc in order to organize common activities.

The Coordinators of both AARINENA and ESCORENA Olive networks will seek interested donors to sponsor any of the above mentioned projects. Priority for executing any of these projects will depend on the initial budget, the available funds and the degree of common interest between the two regions.

3.4 Medicinal & Aromatic Network (MAP):

Following the establishment of the MAP Network in September 2004, the first annual meeting for the Network was held in Malta during 7-9 November 2005 in collaboration with the University of Malta and the support of GFAR.

This meeting was divided into two sessions: the MAP Network annual meeting and the MAP link to the Industry session.

The MAP Network annual meeting was aimed at the re-organisation of the working groups and functions of focal points. This was an attempt to reorganize the network and hence making it more vital and efficient.

The link to the industry session was organised with the aim of familiarising the participants with the European Union rules and conditions of agricultural practices, manufacturing and marketing leading to better quality assurance to the European consumer.

The participants included scientists from agricultural institutions in nine AARINENA member states: Egypt, Malta, Jordan, Sudan, Oman, Morocco, Iran, Syria and Yemen. The meeting was also attended by participants from the private sector dealing with the commercial potential of MAP within the European Union.

Concluding Remarks and Recommendations:

3.4.1 Election of the Network Chairman of the Board and Secretariat.

The participants elected Dr. Mohamed Safwat the focal point of Egypt as Chairman of the Board for one year and Dr. Musa Fayyad the focal point of Jordan as MAP Network Secretary.

The Participants reorganized the technical working groups of the Network as follows:

1. Post Harvesting Working Group to be with Jordan
2. Socio-economic aspects and Commercialisation to be with Malta
3. Conservation and Use to be with Morocco
4. Agricultural Practices to be with Sudan

3.4.2 The MAP Network Members discussed the working plan and agreed to the following activities to be carried in 2006:

- Formulation of a questionnaire (Dr. E. Attard-Malta) that covers the current projects and tools present in member countries, including information related to the four working groups (key points – strengths

and weaknesses). This will lead to the drafting of concept notes, at least one per working group, before February 2006.

- Building the capacity of NARS in the area of MAPs through provision of technical advice and training on MAP operations [Dr. F. Alali/ Dr. M.Fayyad-Jordan].
- Increased support to conservation, use of MAPs through public awareness strategy; [Website web-site for MAPs and publishing it at AARINENA website info to be concluded by end of Dec 2005 Dr. F. Sefidkon-Iran]
- Brochure and poster [Dr. M. Fayyad-Jordan targeted at policy makers in order to attract new members to AARINENA.
- Empowering/Strengthening of local communities to better use of MAPs so as to improve the livelihoods, through provision of MAP information systems that document, analyse and share traditional knowledge and socio-economic studies on MAPs. IPGRI-GRIS can be used as modelling tool to establish this system [All focal points - Dr. K. Durah-IPGRI]
- Establishing contact lists for MAPs [All focal points - Dr. M. Fayyad-Jordan]

In conclusion, the MAP meeting and the subsequent workshop, have been instructive to the participants, hence giving at least a direction to the functioning of the network. Before the next meeting, in Nov 2006 in Cairo, there are several tasks to be fulfilled by the individual participants, but unless this is done in a group spirit (network), no new discussions and results would be achieved.

3.5 Water Use Efficiency Network:

The Executive Committee Recommended to Establish Water Use Efficiency Network to contribute to water saving, improvement and sustained productivity and quality through mobilization of existing knowledge and production of adapted technology packages.

CWANA region suffers from water scarcity, quality decline and inefficient use. This situation is worsened by frequent drought events.

While the Near East covers 14% of the total area of the world and home to 10% of its population, its water resources represent only 2% of the total renewable water resources of the world.

A workshop on the assessment of plant genetic diversity for water use efficiency was held in Marrakech, Morocco during the period 10-12 October 2005, and organized by IPGRI in collaboration with International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and AARINENA. The Workshop was aimed to facilitate the exchange of experiences on the management of water under scarcity conditions through the use of "less-thirsty" genotypes.

Presentation and discussions underlined topics on the effect of irrigation deficit on olive trees, future vision of olive plantation and water use efficiency, genetic variation of water use efficiency within crops, increasing olive water-productivity, and water saving in orchards.

The participants recommended developing a regional research proposal by participation of Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and Syria to study the genetic variation of olive trees and assess their water use efficiency particularity in rain fed areas.

An Expert Consultation meeting for the establishment of the Water Use Efficiency Network is planned in 2006.

3.6 Biotechnology Network:

The Agricultural and Genetic Engineering Research Institute (AGERI) at ARC Egypt submitted a proposal to host the Regional Biotechnology Network. An Expert Meeting on “ Harnessing Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering for Agricultural Development in the Near East and North Africa “ will be held on 12-14 February 2006 in Cairo Egypt. Follow up discussions will be held on the proposal during this meeting. The meeting will be cosponsored by ICARDA, FAO and ESCWA.

4. Implementation of the Global Post Harvest Initiative

AARINENA Planning Meeting on Global Post-Harvest Initiative Meeting was held in Antalya-Turkey March 2005 to inform and sensitize participants to the scope and desired outputs of the Global Post Harvest Initiative, to share information on the objectives, strategies and activities of each of AARINENA’s commodity networks. It was attended by participants representing commodity network coordinators, post harvest working group leaders, GFAR, NGOs, farmers, FAO/ RNE, and the Executive Secretary of AARINENA. During the meeting four networks presentations on date palm, cotton, medicinal, and olive were made.

This meeting was under the auspices of Antalya University President and was organized by FAO and AARINENA with the support of GFAR at the University of Akdeniz, Antalya-Turkey.

The meeting was attended by 14 participants representing, the national agricultural research institutions in Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Sudan, Azerbaijan, Oman, Palestine, Turkey, UAE and Yemen and attended also by AARINENA Network coordinators and post harvest working groups, NGOs, and farmers representatives. The speakers highlighted the topics on marketing and trade of horticultural crops, packing and packaging, quality management, modified and controlled atmospheres, post harvest handling of cut flowers and apples. Fruitful tours to the laboratories of Akdeniz University, packing and packaging houses in Antalya were organized.

Discussions on current identification of common needs across networks were organized. An introduction to sub-sector and market chain analysis approaches was addressed for identifying actors and Research and Development (R & D) service providers, prioritizing value chains and the constraints that they face in improving competitiveness. Three working groups were met and highlighted the present status and perspective for the development of the commodities covered by AARINENA networks (date palm, cotton, olive, and medicinal and herbal plants), and the strategic

framework of the Global Post harvest initiative, to define specific intra- and cross-commodity opportunities and actors that could be the focus of a regional project within the framework of the GPh1 that builds on and improves the performance of the commodity networks.

The major outcome of the meeting was the prioritization of three project ideas (out of a total of 9 ideas generated) with the designation of a person responsible for coordinating the completion of a concept note of 3 to 5 pages for each idea. Brief profiles of each idea were prepared as the basis for the development of the concept notes. The three project ideas that were identified are:

1. Market-orientation for the AARINENA networks and their members.
2. Innovative and effective market-oriented and demand-driven extension services.
3. Organic production of olive, cotton, dates and medicinal and herbal plants

5. Constitutional Amendments

5.1 EXCO recent meeting in Sana'a-Yemen, on 18th September 2005 recommended constitutional amendment regarding the Executive Secretary appointment for a period of four years renewable only once.

5.2 EXCO recommended that ICARDA host the permanent seat of AARINENA Secretariat in order to provide long term stability for the operation of AARINENA .

5.2 The Committee also recommended inviting Farmers and NGO representatives as an associate members participating in its statutory meetings.

6. Publications

6.1 Newsletter:

Four issues of AARINENA Newsletter (February-2004, September-2004, May-2005 and November-2005) were published and distributed to all members, research institutions, and faculties of Agriculture at universities in the region. The Newsletters are posted on AARINENA website.

6.2 Success Stories:

A success story from Oman on “can we produce seed of indigenous pasture species in hot humid Gulf climate to re-vegetate degraded lands” was published under AARINENA Publications: 2005/1.

6.3 Proceedings of Meetings:

- Proceedings of AARINENA General Conference, Executive Committee meetings, workshops and training courses were distributed and posted on AARINENA Home page.
- Setting Agricultural Research Priorities for CWANA Region

- AARINENA General Rules of procedure were published and circulated.
- Directories of agricultural Research Institutions in the WANA Region

7. Workshops, Training Courses & Expert Consultation Meetings:

7.1 AARINENA co sponsored and participated in the following meetings:

- AARINENA Executive Committee and Cosponsors Meeting, Amman-Jordan 4-5 January 2004
- Advanced post-Harvest Training course, NCARTT, Jordan 6-8 April `2004
- Regional workshop on Transfer of Technology, Muscat Oman 14-15 April, 2004
- 2nd Regional Fora Executive Secretaries Meeting, 17-18 May 2004, Rome, Italy
- 36th World Farmers' Congress 29 May – 4 June 2004 Washington D.C., USA
- The ISNAR-IFPRI Program Advisory Committee Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, July 7-9, 2004
- ICT Steering Committee Meeting, AREO, Tehran-Iran, 6-7 September, 2004
- Second annual Meeting of Inter-regional Network on Cotton (INCANA), 6-8 September, 2004 Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- Executive Committee & Cosponsors Meeting, Marrakech- Morocco, December 2004
- 1st Olive Network Meeting ,Marrakech-Morocco, 20-23 December 2004 .
- FAO/ICARDA workshop on Technical Support to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture – Creating an “Inter-sectoral” Amman, Jordan February 2005
- 3rd Post Harvest Training Course & Planning meeting for Global Post-harvest initiative, Antalya-Turkey, 22-25 March 2005
- 4th International Meeting of FORAGRO, Panama city ,13-15 April 2005
- EFARD International Conference on Agricultural development, Zurich-Switzerland, 27-29 April 2005
- Inter-regional ICT workshop, Cairo-Egypt 10-11 May 2005
- 3rd FARA General Assembly Entebbe-Uganda, 6-11 June 2005.
- Workshop on “High Value Products for Smallholder Markets in the WANA region” Cali-Columbia 5-7 October, 2005
- A workshop on the Assessment of plant Genetic Diversity for Water-Use Efficiency, INRA-Marrakech, Morocco, 10-12 Oct. 2005.
- INCANA Hybrid & BT Cotton Workshop in India, 20-26 Nov. 2005.
- Executive Committee Meeting, Sana'a Yemen, 18-19 Sept. 2005.
- Workshop on Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Industry: The Link between Producer and European Consumer; Malta ,7-9 Nov.2005

7.2 Future Meetings

- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Guidelines for Olive, Cyprus, 19-21 December 2005

- Harnessing Biotechnology and genetic Engineering for Agricultural Development in the Near East & North Africa, Cairo -Egypt 12-14 February , 2006
- The Third International Conference on Date-Palm , Abu-Dhabi-UAE, 19-21 February 2006
- GPhI and Network Coordinators follow up meeting to finalize the 3 project ideas, Abu-Dhabi, UAE 22 February 2006
- Tenth AARINENA General Conference, Sana'a-Yemen,7-8 May 2006.
- ICT-RAIS Steering Committee Meeting May 2006
- Advocacy for ICT –RAIS Directors of Research Meeting May 9-10 ,2006
- Water Use Efficiency Network Establishment, June 2006

Conclusion

Over the years, AARINENA has supported national agricultural research systems (NARS) in the region in capacity building through training programs, organizing technical and scientific workshops and conferences, and establishing regional information and communication system through active support and active participation of GFAR, ICARDA and FAO. In this regard, a web site (www.aarinena.org) to disseminate information to member countries was operating since July 2002. AARINENA has also contributed in establishing four networks for essential crops in the region such as date palm, cotton, olive and medicinal & herbal plants and supported their activities. Plans in 2006 to establish two new networks on water use efficiency and Biotechnology are in progress. Follow up on Global Post Harvest Initiative project ideas for submission to donors will be done.

AARINENA acted as a facilitator in bringing the views, aspirations and research priorities of the WANA region to the attention of the relevant international organizations with the aim of promotion of sustainable agricultural development through attraction of global agricultural and developmental communities as well as donors to support the regional and sub-regional research projects and related activities.

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