



**Highlighted Key Issues in Agricultural Research for Development from
the
European Regional Review**

August 28, 2009

1.1 Overall approach

For each key challenge, examples of questions are proposed (see section 1.2). It is not expected that all questions will be used in the e-consultation. Our intention is to provide a list reflecting the main issues raised in this review. A selection of the most relevant questions will be made for the e-consultation and complemented by more generic queries emanating from the GCARD secretariat.

For the face-to-face meeting, the meeting could be structured according to the 4 main topics:

1. Research priorities and programming
2. Knowledge creation
3. Knowledge transfer
4. Addressing the needs of the poor

The discussion within each topic could be divided according to the challenges. As an introduction to each challenge, a summary of the review's main findings and an overview of the e-consultation results would help to start discussion. We feel that if some challenges are left out as a consequence of the e-consultation, they will not be addressed during the face-to-face meeting. Similarly, if there are major inaccuracies or omissions in this review document, we trust that they will be teased out by the e-consultation and the face to face meeting such that the final GCARD-Europe document will have wide stakeholder approval.

Regarding invited participants to the e-consultation and the face-to-face meeting: we will develop and agree with EFARD a set of criteria to identify representative stakeholders (in terms of geographic location – different parts of Europe plus overseas organizations and types – research, extension and other users of research products) and pay particular attention to ensure a meaningful and legitimate representation of farmer organizations, other civil society organizations including consumer groups, providers of goods and services particularly represented by the private sector, and representatives from the media. Using these criteria, we will collaborate with EFARD in identifying a wider group of European ARD stakeholders to participate in the e-consultations scheduled for early September 2009 and a core group to participate in the face-to-face meeting scheduled on 29 September 2009.

1.2 Examples of questions

The following questions are given as examples for use in the e-consultation: only the most relevant questions will be selected.

1.2.1 “Researchable issues”

▪ *Do you agree with the major drivers of research as identified from global and regional reviews at:*

- *Global level*
- *European level*
- *East and south East Europe*

- *Should further drivers be added?. Should some of these be removed?*

Table 3: Common drivers and challenges for ARD & agricultural research at global & European levels

Driver	Challenge	Global level*	European level **	E/SE Europe ***
Climate change	Adaptation to and mitigation of climate change	✓	✓	✓
Growing population + change in food consumption pattern	Food security	✓	✓	✓
Scarcity of fossil fuel and bio-energy development	Energy security	✓	✓	✓
Globalisation	Improved trade	✓	✓	✓
Degradation of the environment	Biodiversity and natural resource management (including soil and water)	✓	✓	✓
Plant and animal diseases, pandemics	Food safety including animal/human health and animal welfare	✓	✓	✓
Change in dietary patterns	Nutrition: obesity and malnutrition	✓	✓	✓
Scarcity of phosphorous/other inputs	Agricultural fertiliser security			✓

Sources: * IAASTD reports, World Development report (2008)

** EC Communications + SCAR foresight

*** EIARD strategy, ERA-ARD reports

1.2.2 Mechanisms and Processes in prioritising research and its programming

=> *Key challenge 1: to improve coordination in research programming & funding*

- In your opinion, which mechanisms would improve the coordination of research programming and funding between:

- Agricultural research in general and ARD?
- ARD and other development initiatives?
- ARD and other scientific areas?

=> *Key challenge 2: to prioritise and update drivers & research agendas*

- In your opinion, what mechanisms would ensure regular updating of the drivers that influence future agricultural research agendas?

=> *Key challenge 3: to improve civil society participation in research agenda setting*

- In your experience, which mechanisms are best fitted to increase the participation of civil society (NGOs, farmers' organisations) in setting-up of research agendas?

- Can you give successful examples of civil society participation in research agenda setting?

- => *Key challenge 4: to identify areas relevant to Europe in ARD research priorities*
- Do you think that poverty issues in Europe are sufficiently addressed by the European research community?
 - Considering poverty issues in rural areas, what are the peculiarities in Europe compared with other regions in the world?
 - In your opinion, what researchable issues require urgent attention to tackle poverty in Europe?
 - What institutional arrangement would help to address the specific needs of the rural poor in Europe?

1.2.3 Mechanisms for knowledge creation

- => *Key challenge 5: to improve the efficiency of financial support for research*
- In your opinion, what kind of financial instruments would effectively support research organisations in Eastern and South East Europe (eg, support calls for research projects, co-financing to pay salaries, purchase of equipment, training etc.)?
 - Do you think that supporting research organisations on a contract basis (following a competitive call for proposals) is the best way to support agricultural research? Does it have adverse effects?
 - Do you think that there is a need to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the financial support allocated by the EU to agricultural research organisations? Cost effectiveness refers to the extent to which support has been successful in strengthening research activity.
 - Do you think the EU is providing adequate and sufficient financial support to research organisations in the New Member States? If not, what is needed?

- => *Key challenge 6: to improve research capacity through non-financial mechanisms*
- In your opinion, which non-financial mechanisms could improve the effectiveness of research organisations in East and South East Europe?

- => *Key challenge 7: to prioritise areas of investment in a context of limited financial resources*

- In a context of limited resources for research, which scientific areas should be prioritised?
- In a context of limited resources for research, would you recommend that more be invested in applied research than basic research? Why?

- => *Key challenge 8: to stimulate interaction between public research and other stakeholders (including civil society and private sector).*

- In your opinion, what mechanisms might increase the participation of civil society (NGOs, farmer's organisations, consumers) in the implementation of agricultural research?
- How can farmers be more involved in research activities implemented by public research organisations?
- Do you think there is a need to increase collaboration between public and private research organisations? If yes, can you suggest how it could be done?

1.2.4 Mechanisms for knowledge transfer

- => *Key challenge 9: to increase financial support for knowledge transfer*
- In your experience, what is the best way to raise additional funds for knowledge transfer?

=> *Key challenge 10: to enhance the attraction of agricultural education in East Europe*
- In your experience, what are the main difficulties faced by agricultural education institutions in East and South East Europe?

- What can be done to make agricultural education more attractive to students?
- How can Western European academic institutions do to improve agricultural education in East and South East Europe?

=> *Key challenge 11: to help farmers be better represented*

- In your experience, what difficulties are encountered by farmer organisations in East and South East Europe?

- What kind of support do farmers' organisations need in East and South East Europe?

=> *Key challenge 12: to provide incentives for innovation in rural areas (including vocational training)*

- In your opinion, what is the best way to incentivise farmers to innovate?

=> *Key challenge 13: to support professionals involved in knowledge transfer*

- In your opinion, in what areas do knowledge management professionals need training? Are there sufficient numbers of trained professionals to undertake knowledge transfer?

=> *Key challenge 14: to fully exploit existing knowledge*

- In your opinion, what could be done to better utilise existing agricultural knowledge?

1.2.5 Mechanisms: focus on the needs of the poor

=> *Key Challenge 15: to promote people centred research*

- In your view, what new research areas would have a significant impact on the rural poor?

=> *Key Challenge 16: to empower the voice "of poor farmers"*

- In your experience, what mechanisms help to promote the views of poor farmers

=> *Key Challenge 20: to collect contemporary data on poverty and agriculture*

- In your opinion, what would be the most effective way of quickly collecting contemporary data (2007-9) on poverty and agriculture in your country?

=> *Key Challenge 21: to ensure good monitoring and evaluation practice*

- In your experience, have M+E practices been routinely used to improve agricultural research and policy effectiveness? If not, why not?