26th GFAR Steering Committee Meeting

FARA Secretariat, Accra, Ghana

28-29 May 2012

Draft Minutes of the 25th GFAR Steering Committee
Beijing, China
2o October 2011
Draft Minutes of the 25th GFAR Steering Committee
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Beijing, China
20 October 2011

Present:
Dr Claudio Barriga – Vice Chair, and FORAGRO Vice Chair & private sector alternate
(Chair of the meeting)
Dr Rodney Cooke, IFAD
Dr Ganesan Balachander, CGIAR Consortium Board, alternate for Dr Anne-Marie Izac
Dr Ibrahim Hamdan, for AARINENA
Dr Alisher Tashmatov, CACAARI Executive Secretary
Dr Catherine Guichard, EFARD Chair
Dr David Radcliffe, EFARD Executive Secretary
Ms Lucy Muchoki, Private sector and FARA
Dr Mario Allegri, FORAGRO Chair
Dr Emilio Ruz, FORAGRO alternate
Dr Ali Darwish, NGO Sector
Dr Xiangjun Yao, FAO OEK
Dr Nikita Eriksen-Hamel - Donors
Dr Dzhamin Akimaliev – CACAARI Chair

Apologies due to competing commitments:
Prof Monty Jones, GFAR Chair
Dr Raj Paroda, GFAR Programme Committee Chair and GCARD Organizing Committee Chair, APAARI Executive Secretary
Dr S Ayyappan APAARI Chair
Dr Tiemoko Yo, FARA Chair
Dr Ahmed Al-Bakri, AARINENA Chair

Observers:
Dr Xong Gifeng, International Relations Dept, CAAS
Dr Philippe Choquet, Global Confederation of Higher Education and Agricultural Research Associations (GCHERA)
Dr Kristin Davis, Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services

From GFAR Secretariat:
Dr Ajit Maru, Senior Officer, Knowledge
Dr Robin Bourgeois (new staff member) Senior officer Foresight
Mr Pier-Luigi Masciotta, Finance Officer
Ms Gianna De Cesare, Senior Secretary
Chair’s introduction

GFAR Chair Prof. Monty Jones was unfortunately unable to attend as he had been unable to change the dates of an independent external evaluation of FARA. As per the Charter, Dr Barriga, GFAR Vice-Chair Chair ed the meeting.

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, including new members:
Dr Xiangjun Yao, FAO, Director, OEK in FAO, replacing Dr Anton Mangstl.
Dr Dzhamin Akimaliev, CACAARI Chair, replacing Dr Hukmatullo Ahmadov.
Dr Nikita Eriksen-Hamel (CIDA) as donor representative. Dr Eriksen-Hamel was nominated by the Global Donor Platform on Rural Development and heads the Research working group of GDPRD. Dr Carmen Thoennissen of SDC (EIARD Chair) was nominated by GFAR donors as alternate for this position. This was noted as a very constructive development, with the 2 main networks concerned with AR4D funding policy and integration coming together and agreeing these nominations and involvement in GFAR.

The Chair explained that on this occasion there were unfortunately no farmer representatives present. Since the last SC meeting, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) had gone into liquidation due to financial problems. The Secretariat had been tracking events since and many national farmers unions have now decided to rebuild a global network as the World Farmers Organization, which came into being in September 2011. Mr Robert Carlson is newly appointed as WFO President and had been invited as an observer, but was unable to attend on this occasion.

It was also recognized that WFO’s coverage is not as yet as wide as that of IFAP. The MT meeting in July expressed the strong desire to strengthen representation of smallholder farmers/producers within GFAR’s governance. Possible mechanisms for further strengthening farmer representation will be addressed in the GFAR governance review, discussed later during this meeting.

Dr Ganesan Balachander (CGIAR Consortium Board) was welcomed as alternate to Dr Anne-Marie Izac for the CGIAR.
Dr Kristin Davis (GFRAS) and Dr Philippe Choquet (GCHERA) were welcomed as observers.
Dr Xong Gifeng welcomed all participants on behalf of CAAS as host institution, describing CAAS’s involvement with regional meetings of APAARI, the close relationship between CAAS and GFAR, as well as the CGIAR and FAO and the close working relationship between CAAS and the GFAR Secretariat. CAAS stated its hope as a stakeholder national agricultural research organization, that GFAR i) gives particular attention to data and information sharing ii) used new mechanisms to foster collaboration among different stakeholders, iii) gives new focus to GFAR’s impact, iv) provides a means for CAAS to discuss future policy formulation and v) GFAR considers a new representative constituency of the BRICS nations.

Draft Agenda
The proposed agenda was approved unanimously, without additions.

1. Minutes of 24th Steering Committee
Minutes of 24th Steering Committee were reviewed by the Committee. A few spelling mistakes in individual’s names were noted and will be corrected, but the Minutes were otherwise accepted as written.

Adoption of Minutes, Moved; David Radcliffe, Seconded; Mario Allegri

2. a) Report of the GFAR Chair

On behalf of Prof. Monty Jones, the Chair reported that following the last GFAR Steering Committee meeting in Brussels:

- The GFAR Programme Committee met in Rome on 10-11 November 2011, provided their inputs towards finalizing the GCARD Roadmap and developed a proposed a draft plan of work for GFAR in 2011.

- The GFAR Management Team met in Rome on 12 November 2011 and agreed the GFAR 2011 Programme of Work on behalf of the Steering Committee.

- The GFAR Management Team met in Rome on March 28th 2011 and advanced a range of issues in delivering the GFAR Programme.

- The GCARD Organizing Committee met face-to-face on July 21-22 in Rome.

- The Management Team met in Rome on July 23rd 2011 and reviewed progress, including outcomes of the GCARD Organizing Committee.

GFAR Management Team has monitored, mentored and maintained oversight of GFAR actions and GFAR Secretariat’s execution of the Programme of Work through regular meetings over the year and communication around GFAR actions. The Management Team were very satisfied with the progress and actions undertaken through the year in finalization of the GCARD Roadmap and development and delivery of GFAR’s Programme of Work and planning for GCARD 2012.

The Management Team had agreed that the Science Forum would provide a very good opportunity for the Steering Committee to meet, combined with the opportunity to attend the Science Forum. The Science Forum had been a very interesting meeting in which GFAR had directly mobilized sessions on foresight and agrobiodiversity.

The Chair thanked the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences for providing facilities and local organization for the SC meeting and the ISPC for the opportunity provided by the CGIAR Science Forum event.

The Chair informed the meeting that the Management Team had decided in their last meeting to postpone the Programme Committee until the initial Medium Term Plan outline framework was reviewed by the Steering Committee, to ensure its thematic coverage was in line with expectations of all stakeholders. Specific proposed activities would then be developed up by the Secretariat and Programme Committee members with inputs from GFAR stakeholders and in line with funding expectations for 2012. The proposed MTP actions would be refined through a meeting of the Program Committee, linked to the Global Conference on Women in Agriculture to be organized between GFAR, APAARI and ICAR in New Delhi in March 2012. The GFAR workplan and MTP would then be put forward for approval by the Steering Committee meeting one month later. The next Steering Committee meeting is proposed to take place alongside a face-to-face meeting of the GCARD Organizing Committee.
b) Actions Taken report
Dr Holderness reported on the actions taken by the Secretariat as identified in the Minutes of the 24th Steering Committee.

Issues raised by the Committee were:
Dr Barriga hopes to meet with the new Director General of FAO in November on behalf of GFAR.
Members commented that while the timeliness of preparation of papers for the Steering Committee had improved, 5 working days in advance was still the minimum for proper review and this still did not allow circulation to constituencies. They requested that in future papers be available 2 weeks in advance of the meeting and these could be submitted individually as prepared.
Action: Future papers to be made available 2 weeks in advance of the SC meetings
The report was approved with these notes.

3. Executive Secretary’s report on implementation of the GFAR Programme of Work:

It was noted that the report on G20-related activities should include mention of the contributions of IFAD, OECD and others to the process.

Dr Yao reported on the concept for a Tropical Agricultural Capacity Development Platform, proposed by FAO and Brazil within the G20 process. The draft concept had been circulated to G20 countries before the September meeting in Montpellier but was still being worked on. Proposed components include a common platform for exchange of information on capacity development, sharing of best practices, ongoing initiatives, learning materials etc. The platform would be offered for use of GFAR, the CGIAR and others for sharing of activities in capacity development. GFAR’s participation would be welcomed and the concept note will be circulated to the Steering Committee, with all sectors invited to be involved to input to its further development. FAO will invite GFAR to co-organize a consultation meeting on its development in December.
Action: FAO to liaise with GFAR in developing the Platform

The Global Foresight Hub proposed by GFAR had been widely welcomed by the G20-ARD meeting. This concept had been further elaborated and discussed extensively in the pre-meeting for the Science Forum and in plenary during the Science Forum itself. Dr Bourgeois described the concept to the SC and its value in helping to inform choices in policy and research prioritization. The next steps involved, included a proposed side event at Rio+20 and a strong focus on foresight in the GCARD 2012.

The Chair emphasized that Foresight was a key issue in the Science Forum and that this was a high priority activity that all stakeholders were keen to progress, with direct involvement from communities upwards. This was reinforced by others in the SC, including Dr Balachander for the CGIAR, who welcomed both the mobilization of expertise in the Hub initiative and the consideration of issues raised in the CRPs within this process.

The Chair concluded that Foresight was definitely an activity to which GFAR should be dedicating necessary support. It was also noted that stakeholder expectations from GFAR had
increased greatly following the successful GCARD 2010 and that there was a need for responsibility from all stakeholders to realistically manage expectations from GFAR at all levels.

**Action:** SC to be kept informed on development of Global Foresight Hub and linkages arising

**CGIAR CRPs**

The Executive Secretary described the development process of the CRPs. The GFAR Chair and Executive Secretary had taken part in each Fund Council meeting and commented on the proposals in light of inputs on their evaluation solicited from GFAR’s diverse constituencies. The proposals represented a step-change in the working of the CGIAR, with a clear new focus towards development impact at scale.

There are many challenges in the new programme structure. The Centres had engaged directly with many research partners that they considered most relevant to their development. However there had been significant concerns raised from some Regional Fora that programme development consultations had not made good use of the Regional Fora mechanisms. The Executive Secretary reported that he had met with Anne-Marie Izac of the CGIAR Consortium Office at the end of September. Dr Izac felt that the Regional Fora could have particular value as the CRPs were brought into implementation over the year ahead, in enabling and convening equitable discussions with stakeholders all along potential innovation pathways, both to align proposed work with national systems and to mobilize those beyond the direct partnerships of the CGIAR. To do so she encouraged the Regional Fora to take the lead in linking directly with the leaders of each relevant CP and helping to create strong national partnerships for the CRPs. This view was strongly endorsed by Mr Balachander for the CGIAR.

**Action:** Regional Fora Secretariats to directly contact and develop linkages with CRPs relevant to their region.

GFAR has also helped support, and participated in, the Dublin meeting in June 2011, linking the CGIAR reform and FARA/CAADP actors. This meeting had significantly increased understanding and cross-commitment between the two processes and opened some funding opportunities to promote these links.

**Regional Fora Letters of Agreement**

The nature of these agreements and their focus was described to the SC and illustrated by Dr Hamdan in regard to AARINENA’s work through GFAR support. The SC welcomed the innovative approach of using composite agreements, working to a common framework that is regionally tailored. This showed significant efficiency gain in moving from a potential 40 separate agreements to 6.

AARINENA and FORAGRO highlighted that the LOAs had enabled greater stakeholder participation in setting of priorities, but also that impacts of the Regional Fora were proving difficult to demonstrate beyond immediate outputs. Questions were raised over the extent to which Regional Fora were representative of all sectors and how effective they were in achieving impacts. FORAGRO and AARINENA responded describing their increasingly broad stakeholder composition, going beyond their original research institution composition, and how that had evolved rapidly over recent years through support from GFAR funding and processes. Impacts were described by the RF in terms of advocacy, facilitation, promotion of strategic alliances of partners and their synergies and reducing duplication.
The SC recognized the challenge of reporting outputs from GFAR actions when delivered through many partners, but emphasized that delivery through the Regional Agreements needed to clearly demonstrate measurable outputs and outcomes. It was recommended that these indicators should not be set too ambitiously, but show resultant changes and progress with mechanisms in place by which to measure progress, for example through survey based analysis of what is delivered in each region. The SC also recognized the complexities involved where the programme is not undertaken directly by the GFAR Secretariat or by Regional Secretariats and these measures need to be differentiated. 

**Action:** Regional Fora are requested to determine impact measuring plans for their GFAR-linked work and how it leads towards desired outcomes. (This issue was revisited in the MTP discussion below).

Discussion of CIARD actions highlighted that Thailand is now making use of the CIARD RING to link databases and develop information products directly for farmers.

### 4. Review of draft 2010 Annual Report

The draft was well received with some amendments requested:

It was suggested that the GCARD section comprised around half the report and could be more tightly edited to emphasize outputs and influence. However, this also reflected that the GCARD was an innovative process, not just a conference and involved around half the budget of GFAR. It was agreed to revisit this section and edit more tightly to reduce this by 1-2 pages. The Annex will also be reduced.

Titles in the text should be more directly matched with the financial expenditure pie chart, with total figures given for both contributions and expenditure. The report now needs to be illustrated with text boxes with pictures and short captions to be requested from GFAR stakeholders, illustrating some of their specific actions in relation to the areas reported. Hyperlinks will also be inserted to the websites of GFAR stakeholders, to link more detail on specific activities.

**Action:** Secretariat to commission scientific editor for completion of the report. All GFAR SC members are kindly requested to provide captioned photos of their key activities in practice.  

*With the above amendments, the 2010 Annual Report was approved for publication. Moved; Ibrahim Hamdan, Seconded; Rodney Cooke*

### 5. Endorsement of GCARD Organizing Committee’s plans for GCARD 2012

The Chair explained the process of selecting the GCARD 2012. Formal Government offers had been received from Egypt and Uruguay, together with a university offer from Jordan, all of which were greatly appreciated.

The Management Team had carefully reviewed these offers and found that the high level of support from the President and Cabinet in Uruguay provided clear opportunity for a very successful meeting in Uruguay. The political situation in Egypt at the time was also a factor weighing in favour of Uruguay, as was the fact that there had not been a comparable international research meeting in Latin America for many years. The Jordan offer was greatly
appreciated but was not established at the Ministerial level requested in the TORs. The Secretariat will make sure that Jordan is notified of the country decision, which had not yet apparently reached the proposing institution. The Committee agreed that Uruguay was an excellent choice.

**GCARD arrangements in Uruguay**
The meeting will be held in Punta del Este, a major coastal resort town with many hotels and amenities and will take place in an international hotel complex that is used to holding large international meetings.

Subsequent to the decision, the Government of Uruguay has taken several steps to mobilize regional support for the meeting. Dr Allegri has now been confirmed as leader of the local organizing committee and he and Dr Holderness met with the Minister of Agriculture in Rome in July. The Minister had taken part in the 2010 consultation process and has said he learnt much that he is now putting into practice as Minister. Uruguay’s Ministry of Tourism is now moving to make 2012 the “Year of International Agricultural Research” in Uruguay, which will give high profile to the event.

The Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas are meeting in Costa Rica (IICA) in the near future and this will include discussion of the GCARD 2012 in Uruguay. The Chair assured the SC that the Conference is on very solid ground with plans moving ahead within the region. The Secretariat has been planning a visit to discuss local arrangements, but this has unfortunately been delayed as the Minister had been taken ill.

**GCARD flyer**
The GCARD 2012 proposed flyer was discussed. It was requested that to clarify the unique role of the Conference theme the OC may consider amending it to read: “Foresight and partnerships for research, innovation and impact on small-holder livelihoods”. The GCARD logo was endorsed, but requires adjustment to better reflect the Uruguayan Flag.

**Discussion of GCARD 2012 agenda proposed by GCARD Organizing Committee:**

1. Partnerships and capacity development elements were considered of equal importance to foresight and of more immediate relevance to transforming systems. The SC proposes to the OC that it reviews the sequence of main sessions to begin with partnership, as an immediate need, rather than foresight which entails a longer term vision and is more about what we can say about future challenges.

2. Despite the relevance of the university sector to capacity building, at present there is no direct member from the university sector in the organizing committee. Particular attention should be paid to ensure the inclusion of perspectives from universities and education institutions in the GCARD 2 processes.

3. Holding partnerships and capacity building sessions in parallel would mean delegates could not attend both of these important areas. The SC requests OC that separate time is allocated for each theme. To accommodate this, it was proposed that the Marketplace session could instead start at 4pm and run through into early evening, while the proposed Policy Forum session on linking smallholder farmers and markets could rather be brought out directly within the other sessions, bringing more direct focus on women in agriculture as the policy forum theme.
4. The GCARD OC are also requested to further emphasize the expected specific outcomes and outputs from the Conference - i.e. what it is expected to achieve and who will be the end product?

5. The need for strong farmer representation was shared by all and a link was proposed with the IFAD Farmers Forum in mobilizing farmer perspectives. The SC recommended further strengthening the direct inclusion of farmers’ perspectives. Ideas proposed for this were: i) explicitly including farmers in each session’s panels, ii) one rapporteur for each theme being directly drawn from the farmers associations, to convey the voice of farmers in the messages coming out from the sessions iii) a farmers panel organized at lunch time during the field day to obtain direct reflections from farmers on the issues raised.

6. It was also proposed that the need for impacts on lives of poor consumers and households should also be directly considered and represented, as issues involved go well beyond production practices alone. These dimensions will be incorporated in the foresight process, which aims to give voices to all in examining future implications of agricultural choices and recognizes the interaction of different development themes.

7. It was also requested that communication for development dimensions be made explicit in each session.

The Chair concluded that the overall framework, process and priority areas were generally endorsed by the Steering Committee, but the GCARD Organizing Committee be now requested to reconsider the existing proposed sequence of the programme and the above views expressed by the SC.

**Action: GCARD OC are asked to deliberate and address the above issues and proposed revisions**

**6. Draft Framework for GFAR Medium Term Plan**

GFAR’s challenge in establishing accountability of a mechanism, rather than an institution, was recognized. This also raised questions of who is accountable for delivery at what levels and how devolved outcomes should be measured. It was considered that the framework required further refinement to distinguish Secretariat responsibilities from those of GFAR constituencies and those influenced beyond the AR4D community, with the indicators made more ‘SMART’. The Executive Secretary showed the indicators that had been required by DFID as illustration.

Given that programmatic funding will be limited in 2012, it is also important that priority areas are identified from each Forum and stakeholder group, where greatest outcome returns on GFAR investment will be seen. For the process going forward, it was agreed that it was important that Steering Committee members each solicit, from their constituencies, the areas in which they wish to be involved through their own work and where GFAR actions or additional financial support could best add specific value.

The structure of the framework was not familiar to several members and may require further rationalization into a more familiar style. Specific actions should be shown with the responsible institution wherever possible, in particular to distinguish actions of the Secretariat.
from those of GFAR Stakeholders. It was also important that activities be prioritized for greatest impacts and returns, among the many demands received by GFAR.

Good potential was identified for directly linking GFAR’s scaling up work with that of IFAD and this was reported to be under active discussion.

Activities better linking farmers into enterprise and markets were particularly sought, it was emphasized that agricultural research is not just about production research.

**Actions:** The Chair summarized that the MTP framework was approved in principle and that organizations represented in GFAR should kindly provide input to the Secretariat on their interests in specific areas within 2 weeks (by November 7th), for incorporation and revision of the framework, taking account of the comments made by the SC. The revised framework will be further developed electronically with Programme Committee members before its finalization in draft through the PC meeting in March 2012, and then for approval by the SC meeting proposed for April.

The SC called for further Secretariat staff recruitment in communications to meet the growing need for communication with all. It was also requested that region-by-region contact lists be made available of stakeholders and who is doing what and where, as a neutral database in which programmes can be readily linked. This is a regional responsibility, but to aid this, GFAR Secretariat informed the meeting that they are discussing commissioning the Vivo system, which profiles and networks medical and university personnel, into an AR4D version. The emphasis in the Vivo system is on self-updating of the database on a voluntary basis and it allows much cross-searching for individuals and institutions addressing specific themes.

**Action:** Secretariat to commission a pilot of Agri-Vivo.

**Discussion on strengthening GFAR’s inclusivity of major stakeholder representation**

**Advisory services**

Kristin Davis outlined GFRAS’ role in mobilizing actions and building evidence of best practices and sharing these among advisory service providers. GFAR has supported the development of concerted actions on advisory services since the outset and the need to bring advisory services into the frame of consideration of GFAR was widely welcomed.

**Education**

Philippe Choquet described GCHERA and its work to develop a global network of university associations, also fitting with the GCARD Roadmap objectives and relevant to wider linkage of the education sector into GFAR. The next GCHERA conference will be in Moscow in 2013. GCHERA has a light governance, building from existing regional associations and is in process of building its role at the global level.

**Youth**

Youth are also a key constituency and GFAR’s support to YPARD in mobilizing young professionals was also noted.

**NGOs**

Ali Darwish outlined that each sector of civil society wants autonomy of decisions and the right for all perspectives to be expressed, rather than the voices of a few. This requires
coordination through the common frame of GFAR, perhaps by a working group made up of representatives from different regions and from different areas of thematic focus. Financial support is requested for this to be mobilized effectively.

This meeting had earlier also noted the need for attention to farmer and particularly smallholder farmer representation and the request for mobilization of the BRICS and G20 nations.

The SC recognized that it was time for GFAR’s governance to now be revisited to ensure it was as inclusive as possible of all sectors now involved in agricultural research and innovation systems, help to bring policy coherence and help to clarify the crowded institutional architecture. Representation mechanisms to include advisory services, education institutions and young professionals should all be addressed in the proposed GFAR governance review, as well as relationships between regional and international representation. GFAR provides an umbrella for concerted actions and active representation across all sectors in agricultural research and innovation and the Roadmap brings together all those addressing each sector. These cross-linkages are also recognized in the IFAD rural poverty report.

**Action:** The need for a governance review of GFAR to bring greater coherence via GFAR of all sectors involved in agricultural research, advisory and education systems was strongly advocated by the SC. The extent of representation of each stakeholder sector at regional and global levels was considered an important part of the required review. The review should recommend required changes to GFAR’s Charter where required.

7. **GFAR Financial Report**

It was commented that a new phase of funding from the EC anticipated towards the end of 2012 will be cast against a new set of activities as reflected in the MTP.

The possible addition of ILAC staff and associated financing in support of GFAR’s Foresight work was noted.

An error was detected in moving one of the sub-total figures between the two tables presented. The financial statement was accepted and this discussed adjustment has been rectified.

Moved: Mario Allegri, Seconded: Ibrahim Hamdan

**Closing**

The Chair thanked the members for their rich discussions and inputs. The meeting had made valuable decisions on GFAR and its programmes, which also gave much food for thought on the future role, direction and impact of GFAR.