

## **Acknowledgements**

The Global Learning Opportunity (GLO) of the International Farming Systems Association (IFSA) set new standards for international symposia with its emphasis on interaction, creativity, exchange and alliance building. Departing from the usual academic formats of past symposia, the participants of GLO started the week with a World Café set the tone for a week of knowledge exchange and networking in discussion groups with the occasional key note or plenary discussion. It is no surprise that a wide range of stakeholders and individuals contributed to make GLO a success, much of it personal effort on a voluntary basis.

All this would not have been possible without the support of IFAD and FAO. In particular the former supported the participation of 30 rural development practitioners from 5 regions and a vignette of their rich contribution can be seen in the four sections documenting a variety of best practices. FAO provided the facilities for the GLO planning meetings, four of the five persons serving as Theme convenors were FAO staff and the process was generously encouraged by Geoffrey Mrema. Other organizations provided substantive support for participation including many Universities in the North and the South and also the CGIAR system, with no less than nine participants from CIMMYT alone. The Associazione Italiana Agricoltura Biologica (AIAB) Director, Andrea Ferrante, and key staff including Alessandre Covre handled the logistics for the conference which also meant no one got lost on their first visit to Rome, participants enjoyed a delicious organic food and wine reception, and with Cristina Grandi (AIAB and IFOAM) made excellent arrangements for the memorable field trip. With the legacy of Don Bosco and under the leadership of director, Father Zucchelli and conference coordinator, Adriana Montanari, the Salesianum venue was a truly memorable and fitting location for such a creative GLO.

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Clive Lightfoot  
President IFSA 2002-2005