

The GCARD 2010, looking forward to 2012
Participants Review and Report to the CGIAR Fund Council on behalf of GFAR
Chair, Dr Monty Jones

GFAR and the CGIAR

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research brings together all stakeholders in agricultural research for development and the CGIAR is an important constituent of the Forum. GFAR's extensive regional and global stakeholder networks and partnerships provide the CGIAR with a cross-institutional and cross-sectoral mechanism by which to build links and develop common agendas, actions and commitments beyond the specific research partnerships of each Center.

The GCARD Conference addresses the transformation of agricultural research for development (AR4D) systems worldwide and within this frame, the reform of the CGIAR. This paper describes how the second GCARD, as a process organized by GFAR in collaboration with the CGIAR Consortium and with the ISPC, can best build on the success of GCARD 2010, foster demand-driven and outcome-oriented research processes involving international research and ensure that the CGIAR's research can play the most effective role possible towards the large-scale development impacts desired by countries.

Embedding research processes in development commitments, with required ownership, partnerships, capacities and investments, is key to the impact of the CGIAR reform and that of wider national and regional agricultural research for development systems. GFAR provides the open, inclusive platform and the GCARD processes establish the essential vehicle for these actions and interactions. Over the next two years, the GCARD will mobilize both CGIAR and wider AR4D stakeholder capabilities in collective dialogue, action and advocacy and support strengthening and reform of AR4D systems in key areas, reporting back in the GCARD 2012.

The GCARD and the CGIAR reform

The GCARD 1 set out a new common agenda for agricultural research for development systems. It put the needs of the poor and in particular poor smallholders at the centre of the research agenda, with research driven by its potential impact for the poor. It recognized the need for national responsibilities to be clearly expressed in increased research investments and capacities and in the enabling environment required for these to achieve development impact.

Following this, GFAR aims to support development of collective actions in the wider context and frameworks required for research to play an optimal role in development. As recognized in the 'Transforming Agricultural Research for Development' report to GCARD 2010¹, the CGIAR represents less than 5% of global investment in AR4D. It is

¹ http://www.fao.org/docs/eims/upload//282426/GAT_Report_GCARD_2010_complete.pdf

essential that national AR4D systems and investments are supported and that the work of the CGIAR is effectively resourced in support of national objectives, if together these investments are to have their desired impact for millions of poor farmers.

In the lead-up to GCARD 2010, the CGIAR Alliance was directly involved throughout, represented continually by a series of Center DGs in the GCARD Task Force planning the event and with a number of Science Council members involved in developing specific sessions. A number of CGIAR units were also commissioned to prepare specific background papers and events for the GCARD (e.g. on gender, investments and partnerships). Due to the challenges of its preparation, the SRF was not fully resolved in advance of the regional consultation meetings, but its aims and intentions were expressed into those meetings. The broad consensus from analyses of regional and CGIAR priorities was that the themes being addressed as the CGIAR's new focal areas were compatible with the needs being expressed from the regions, although the latter obviously went wider than the core scope of the CGIAR Centers.

Participant evaluation of GCARD 2010

The Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) set out to establish what was required to make agricultural research and innovation more effective instruments of development.

Following the GCARD conference, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) sent a survey to all participants in order to learn what they felt about the conference, what worked well and what might be improved upon in future GCARDs². A secondary aim of the survey was to learn how individuals wished to be subsequently involved in taking forward the themes of the Conference, in their region, country and organization.

After sending out the survey in 6 languages, 181 responses were received, which represent about 20% of the 800 delegates who participated in the GCARD. The data from the survey responses was sent to the University of Reading for a thorough independent statistical analysis. An executive summary is provided below and the full survey results is shortly to be made available on www.egfar.org

Post-conference feedback, collected two months after the GCARD 2010 event in order to let participants reflect upon their experience away from its immediate impacts, has shown that the event and the consultative processes which led up to the Conference were judged to be extremely successful, with 90% of attendees scoring the GCARD as equal to or better than other recently attended conferences (scoring 5 or more out of 10) and an overall median approval rating of 8.0 out of 10 for the value of the content and discussion in the GCARD.

The GCARD received a median rating of 8.0 out of 10 for its value in providing opportunity for connection with others, 8.0 out of 10 for its relevance and 7.0 for its

² The Fund Council requested an external consultancy evaluation on the value of the GCARD 2010. However, discussion with the Fund Office, CGIAR Centers and donor representatives concluded that no consultant could reflect the spread of perspectives among the stakeholders present and that participants own responses would be more revealing.

energy and excitement. It was also recognized as having directly increased the individual commitment of participants to reforming and strengthening agricultural research for development, with a median score for this of 7.0 for the GCARD Conference and its preceding processes. This was reflected in increased commitment to people's own actions to pursue change in their organizations and particularly in an increased desire to see change in the wider AR4D system.

The Conference organization was regarded as extremely good, with 75% of respondents giving the conference logistics a rating of 8 or more. The multi-stakeholder mix was strongly welcomed and 96% wanted to see as many or more civil society participants in the next Conference. It was also strongly felt that this meeting should be of a similar size to GCARD 2010.

Overall, participants felt the focus on the CGIAR SRF and Megaprograms was valuable and at an appropriate level in the context of overall AR4D system reform; 66% of participants felt the time devoted to the CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) and large scale programmes was 'about right', while others felt this received either too much or too little attention. The GCARD directly impacted on stakeholder awareness and engagement with these collective research agendas and mechanisms, with an increase in mean awareness score around the CGIAR reforms from 6.4 up to 7.2 as a direct result of the GCARD. These values and benefits of the GCARD discussion to reforming the CGIAR were also reflected in post-conference statements from, among others, the World Bank and CGIAR Consortium.

The consensus obtained around the GCARD was remarkable, particularly given the wide selection of participants invited. Of course, not everything was to everyone's liking and issues which seemed most consistently requested for attention in the next GCARD were: more discussion around the particular scientific programmes proposed by the CGIAR as these become implemented; a desire for more civil society involvement; more audience participation in plenary sessions and for more breakout groups allowing direct discussion of key issues. The balance of the meeting seemed about right - many felt that there should be more focus on development perspectives, while a similar number wanted more focus on the science involved.

There is a huge appetite for further active discussion to move forward the issues around the reform and collective focusing of AR4D systems worldwide, both in technical and in development terms. Subsequent GCARD processes need to accommodate this: 42% of participants would like more time in detailed parallel session discussion of thematic research programs, while 63% would like more time on the discussion of cross-cutting development and strategic issues in AR4D. 91% would like as much or more discussion of science, while 97% wanted as much or more focus on agricultural development issues, illustrating the complex balancing required in addressing AR4D agendas and the need for the GCARD processes to go well beyond the confines of the conference.

3. 2009-2010: GCARD2010 costs

The GCARD 2009-2010 process (consultations and global conference) had a cost of USD 4.71 million, of which the CGIAR CIF contributed around two-thirds (USD 3.18 million). USD 370,000 of these funds were used to directly commission actions from the CGIAR, addressing communication, partnership, gender and other essential dimensions of AR4D reform. Further support was generously received from a number of other donors to GFAR and to pre-events (EC, DFID, IFAD, EIARD-GTZ, Italy, Netherlands, Ireland, FAO and CTA), who wanted their support to be used for specific conference elements beyond the role of the CGIAR.

The total cost cited includes all staff costs entailed in the GFAR Secretariat and of professional conference facilitators. This figure also includes the full costs of the region-by-region evaluations of research needs within a development framework, through active participation of thousands of stakeholders in electronic and face-to-face dialogues and of a wide range of thematic preparatory workshops, videos and key issues papers.

The actual Montpellier conference event itself cost USD 2,459,091 and catered for over 800 individuals from all regions and all sectors. Of this, USD 861,465 was used for full sponsorship of travel, accommodation and per diems for over 200 participants from developing countries and key resource people to ensure their effective participation. Of those provided with sponsorship to attend, 75% regarded the financial and logistic support provided as having been highly essential³ in enabling their attendance. The local hosts, the Government organizations of France, kindly contributed USD 600,000 of the total to cover conference venue costs and enabling all meals to be provided free of charge to participants. Conference event organizers were selected by competitive process under FAO procurement procedures. The costs also featured strong attention to communication to a wider audience, with an extensive investment in communications and outreach, the conference exhibition and multilingual translation of the Conference events.

2010-2012

The GCARD process going forwards must actively consider the linkages between investments and policies for research and those for wider development. **Our collective failure to embed research in development and with the required investments in each is a key agenda to be addressed by all involved.** GFAR provides the inclusive platform and the GCARD processes the vehicle for these actions. This linkage is absolutely essential to achieving large scale impact through the CGIAR Research Programmes and to stimulating the required parallel commitments and investments required in national systems and among all actors.

This linkage is the key role of GFAR and the GCARD in ensuring the success of the reformed CGIAR. The GCARD has shown that mobilizing true partnerships between diverse national and regional partners is essential and that these processes require

³ scoring 8 out of 10 or more

ownership of the process from all sides. The evolution of the CRPs will not be an overnight process and it is anticipated that they will take time to develop and build wider ownership. The GCARD process builds this ownership, in formulating wider research and development themes and partnerships.

The GCARD process has many unique and key roles directly relevant to the CGIAR reform and the evolving needs of the CGIAR reform are integral parts of the GCARD planning process:

- Building the 'jigsaw' of wider awareness, partnerships, concerted actions and investments needed for the products of large scale research actions to lead through to development impact.
- Enabling open expression of the perspectives of the end users and intended beneficiaries in framing research and bringing improved monitoring and incentives systems for increasing the relevance and accountability of research to its end users.
- Integrating research funding more directly and effectively with the essential wider investments in national development capacities and actions.
- Bringing changes in institutional behaviour and individual incentives in research and innovation systems that favour true partnership and advancing impacts from new knowledge.
- Holding agricultural research for development systems at all levels to public account through constructive debate and action-learning to learn through progressive experience.
- Raising the profile of agricultural research for development systems through collective concerted advocacy and stimulating investment in the sector and its required capacities.

GFAR's role here remains one of fostering the strengthening and reform of AR4D systems around the world, facilitating partnerships, policies and programs to achieve the institutional changes desired by GCARD participants and in regard to the CGIAR, to ensure the best impact of international research, based throughout on principles of equality, transparency, subsidiarity and value addition. The CGIAR Centers are integral partners in all of these actions.

During the September 2010 GFAR Steering Committee meeting, Dr Solh, as CGIAR Consortium representative, expressed a strong desire for deeper involvement of the CGIAR in the planning of the next GCARD process and that the next GCARD Conference should include specific focus on the CGIAR CRPs as they develop into implementation. The role of the GCARD as a public accountability mechanism for the CGIAR was fully recognized by the Steering Committee, as was the view of a 6-year cycle for CGIAR accountability, developed through successive GCARDs. To ensure that the dual needs of both the CGIAR reform and of the wider transformation of national and regional AR4D systems are met in planning for GCARD 2012, it was agreed that the GCARD 2012 Organizing Committee established by GFAR should include 3 representatives from the CGIAR (Consortium Board, Centers and ISPC), 3 from the Regional Fora and 1 each from the other constituencies concerned (host country, farmers, NGOs, private sector, donors, FAO & IFAD). Constituency nominations are to be invited for this organizing Committee, which will be Chaired by Dr Rajendra Paroda.

Invitations for expressions of interest in hosting the GCARD 2012 have been sent to heads of all national research systems of developing countries and responses are expected by December. A number of countries have already provided indications that they will be expressing their interest.

GFAR played an active part in the organization of the ISPC Science Forum 2009 and GCARD participants have expressed a desire for consideration of the ways in which scientific advances can help address development objectives in the GCARD 2012. Holding the next Science Forum back-to-back with the GCARD 2012 would enable Science Forum processes to be more joined up to the CGIAR reform, increase GCARD process value and minimize costs and 'conference fatigue'. This would make a more significant and unified milestone event. The downsides are that this would not allow summation of the Science Forum prior to the GCARD and increase the logistics around the GCARD meeting, but on balance a directly-linked event would be preferred by GFAR as bringing the best value.

The cycles of learning ahead

The GCARD process follows successive two-year cycles of learning and feedback, synchronized with the implementation of the CGIAR SRF. As such, the focus of the GCARD in regard to the CGIAR will progressively change over each cycle. GCARD 1 has established the common understanding among all stakeholders that collective action is urgently required for AR4D to deliver on its required role.

Over the next two years, the CRPs will become established and initiated, but by 2012 will have only begun to address the actual research issues entailed. The immediate focus proposed for consideration of the CGIAR's activities in the GCARD process is thus to address the development of wider partnerships, policies, capacities and knowledge sharing required for agricultural research of all forms to achieve better development impact, together with mobilization of collective advocacy for agricultural research and innovation systems, culminating in the GCARD 2012.

The challenge now is to move from global needs identified in the GCARD into national and regional actions and piloting partnership programmes in and between each region, so that these lessons may in turn inform the global picture in GCARD 2012. This includes the examination of national and regional policy frameworks so that agricultural research, including the elements addressed by the CGIAR, can become better embedded in development processes. This wider frame forms the agenda of GFAR and the GCARD pre-processes leading up to the 2012 Conference.

It is also important that the cross-institutional GFAR mechanism and GCARD process are used to facilitate direct collaboration and equitable partnership with related initiatives of others in regard to cross-cutting actions of the CGIAR in areas such as capacity building, gender, information sharing and foresight.

The GCARD process develops the essential wider enabling environment that embeds the investment in the CGIAR CRPs in real national and regional commitments among diverse and equal partners; the absolute change from business as usual required among all

parties if international research is to deliver the impact we all need and require from this valuable investment.

2010-2012 preliminary identification of costs relevant to the CGIAR Fund

Going forwards, we anticipate similar levels of GCARD activity as in the 2009-2010 period. In all cases, the Global Forum on Agricultural Research is the open and inclusive facilitator of collective actions and change, with subsequent programs delivered through the CGIAR and many other implementing agencies in each region.

This funding is used in association with and is co-financed through, other funding. In a number of cases, the same multilateral funding avenues are used by donor agencies to support GFAR as are used to support the CGIAR and the GCARD. However, it is not intended that the CGIAR Fund should be the sole funding source for GCARD 2012. If the pattern and scale of GCARD 2010 is followed, the likely cost of the GCARD 2012 event will be around **USD 2.5 million** (though this event may yet be on a smaller scale than in 2010), so assuming a 2/3 CGIAR-funded element again would mean a funding implication of **USD 1.7 million from the CGIAR Fund**. This is provided as an indicative figure only at this stage.

In terms of the processes leading up to GCARD 2012, through discussion with the CGIAR Consortium Chair, it is understood that commissioning of CGIAR units to directly support GCARD processes cannot yet be resolved until the future of system units and others are resolved. For this reason, we cannot yet budget for these inputs to the GCARD process from the CGIAR itself (e.g. gender, capacity building, partnership strengthening, information, knowledge and communications). The intention to continue these very productive relationships remains and through discussions with the groups concerned, potential additional CGIAR and CGIAR partner input to a value of around **USD 1.4mn over 2 years** has been identified. These inputs would best be supported through the CGIAR Fund. Costs are projected to cover a process of active engagement and action facilitation, based on the GCARD 2010 outcomes but addressing the next phase of actions and leading up to the next conference in 2012. Such actions would all have direct relevance to the CGIAR and draw on CGIAR capabilities as they may be resolved in due course.