



Highlights from GCARD



"Millions of people around the world are enduring lives of hardship and misery today. We are collectively and personally responsible for this tragedy. I am personally ashamed...However, I believe that here at the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD), we have begun the process to put the structures, activities, and programs in place that will enable us to end poverty in this world." These were the words of Dr. Monty Jones, 2004 World Food Prize Laureate and new Chair of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), during an emotional

closing address of the first GCARD conference held in the last week of March 2010 in Montpellier, France.

GCARD is a biennial conference organized by GFAR in collaboration with the CGIAR to create a framework for global agricultural research to make development impact. In support of the on-going process of CGIAR reform, the recent GCARD meeting was also aimed at developing a new architecture for CGIAR centers to work interactively and integratively in partnerships with stakeholders in agricultural research. Participants included researchers, policymakers, farmers, donors, and members of civil society from every region of the world.

Under the CGIAR reform process, the 'Strategic Results Framework' (SRF) defines the CGIAR research outcomes and objectives, from which the Mega Programs are being developed. The Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) was enriched with ideas from GCARD participants on how best to undertake results-oriented research that will address major global challenges. These ideas will be used to inform the final version of the strategy and to shape the Mega Programs. Also discussed were themes which GFAR had earlier identified as crucial in the formation of architecture for agricultural research for development (AR4D). The need to revitalize and reform the way partnerships are managed at all levels was strongly emphasized. The inclusion of gender in all programmes was stressed as "non-negotiable." There was also a strong call to strengthen the capacity for national agricultural research and AR4D. A bottom up approach to research that puts farmers and food providers at the center of agricultural research at the international, regional and national levels was also stressed.

There is urgency to act soon and to demonstrate CGIAR reforms are actually happening. A tight program was drafted to develop the Mega Programs rapidly for funding, with three Mega Programs selected for fast tracking.

GCARD concluded with a call for results-oriented research that delivers real development impact albeit the realization that international research alone cannot guarantee agricultural development. This can only be best summarized by the words of Uma Lele (former Senior Adviser to the World Bank and lead author of *Transforming Agricultural Research for Development*). "I feel that GCARD was successful in creating new ideas for how to move forward....But the proof will be in what we do between now and the next GCARD".

Further information on GCARD is available at: <http://bit.ly/a4exnl>

See previous issues of CAN on GCARD consultations: <http://bit.ly/cKOG620>

For more information on the Mega Programs visit <http://bit.ly/aEQpJl>

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Newsbytes

Consortium formally established

On Thursday the 29th of April, the Consortium of the CGIAR centers was formally established with the agreement by the centers to sign the consortium constitution

N2Africa: Putting Nitrogen Fixation to work for smallholder farmers of Africa.

N2Africa is funded by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through a grant to Plant Production Systems, Wageningen University who lead the project together with CIAT-TSBF, IITA and partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda and Zimbabwe.

The vision of the project is to raise average grain legumes yields by 954 kg/ha for four legumes (groundnut, cowpea, soybean, and common bean), increase average biological nitrogen fixation (BNF) by 46 kg/ha, and increase average household income by \$465, directly benefiting 225,000 households (1,800,000 individuals) in eight countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The project links the protein and nitrogen needs of poor African farmers directly to previously inaccessible, massive atmospheric reserves, provides them with new income-generating crop production enterprises, presents a mechanism of renewable soil fertility management and opens the door to the adoption of numerous, profitable accompanying farm technologies and value-adding enterprises. For more about N2Africa, visit: www.n2africa.org

Launch of the Challenge Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security

To facilitate new research on the interactions between climate change, agriculture, natural resource management and food security, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP) have initiated a Challenge Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS). The Challenge Program will be launched during the CCAFS Conference scheduled to take place at World Agroforestry Centre on the 4th May 2010. For more information visit: www.ccafs.cgiar.org

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