



Call for GCARD Regional Review Consultants

Terms of Reference

GCARD Task Force

May 2009



Terms of Reference for Consultants to undertake Regional Reviews, towards the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development

1. Background & Context

The world faces unprecedented development challenges, rocked by recent crises in both food supply and global recession, while needing to address significant long term challenges such as climate change. Millennium Development Goals of eradicating extreme hunger and poverty, of environmental sustainability, the advancement of women and of meeting basic education, child nutrition and health needs are all strongly linked with rural development. Yet developing countries are struggling to meet all these goals. Projections of food demand, changing food consumption patterns and the increased conversion of food into bio-energy mean that production must be increased in sustainable ways and without continuing to increase the consumption of natural resources such as land and water.

The global aid architecture is changing rapidly, with more concerted development funding following the food price crisis and, through the Paris and Accra Declarations, international partnership developing between funders and beneficiaries, with mutual accountability for delivery against agreed development targets. In line with such changes and to meet the many new challenges, change is also needed in the global architecture of AR4D (agriculture here includes crops, fish, livestock and forestry).

Effective agricultural research for development systems linking international institutions with national needs and capabilities and with projected future concerns, are essential to meeting global development commitments. So, also are systems of innovation (and its scale-out) that link science and society through public, private and civil partners working together in more coherent ways. The world's AR4D systems are not only under resourced, they are also disconnected from processes supporting wider development, face numerous bottlenecks and barriers between, and sometimes inside, their constituent institutions and crucially may often lack substantial connection with, input by and accountability to their intended beneficiaries. Significant change is required in the institutions and mechanisms involved in both generating new knowledge and the empowerment of users of this knowledge (mostly rural communities) so they can effectively put it into use to improve their own circumstances. The required changes are recognized in the current processes of change in the CGIAR, which is itself a major catalyst of the need for reform in the global agricultural research for development system, to ensure an effective and integrated system can deliver the development impacts required.

2. List of Important Acronyms

Agricultural research for development (AR4D)
Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)
Global Conferences on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD)
Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR)
International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science & Technology for Development (IAASTD)
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP)
Strategic Results Framework (SRF)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
World Development Report (WDR)

Regional Research Fora:

Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA)
Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)
Central Asia and the Caucasus Agricultural Research Institutes (CACAARI)
European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD)
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO)

3. Overall Purpose of the GCARD

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) is organizing a series of GCARDs, working through its constituent agencies and networks, which include the CGIAR, the FAO and IFAD, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), the Regional Research Fora (FARA, EFARD, AARINENA, APAARI, CACAARI and FORAGRO) and representatives from civil society, the private sector and donor agencies.

The processes of consultation leading to each GCARD Conference will bring together diverse partners to develop agendas, capabilities and ways of working in agricultural research for development, that address the challenges of the future, are centred on the needs of the resource poor, in particular for poor farmers and agricultural producers and demonstrate a robust and investable international partnerships able to deliver development impact.

The Global Conference aims to ensure that:

- Research is focusing on the right approaches and questions to meet the needs of resource-poor farmers **and** the needs of poor consumers for sufficient, affordable, healthy food, to increase global food supplies, and sustainably harness agriculture as an engine of economic growth.
- Research is embedded into development processes, with outputs accessible and relevant to the poor
- Scientific knowledge and advances impact development thinking and practices
- Funding systems are aligned between research and development funding, to ensure effective investment in the new forms of institutions and partnerships required for delivery of development impacts drawing from the generation and use of knowledge.
- The international research system is effectively integrated with national partners (public, private and civil) and responds to national and sub-regional (or trans-national) demands to help ensure development impact

The GCARD seeks to lay the ground for change in the basic architecture of, and investment in, agricultural research for development. It will provide opportunity for all those concerned about the future of agriculture and its role in development to contribute towards building more coherent and effective research systems that can be valued for their development impact.

It also provides the key mechanism for consultation and ground-truthing of the new strategy and results framework-setting process of the CGIAR (and its component “mega-programmes”) and ensuring these reflect the needs and aspirations of partners in developing countries. Development of mutual accountability in such processes is essential to realizing the value of the international system in support of national development needs.

Over the period 2009-2015, this will involve a rolling process of analysis, e-consultations and face-to-face discussions to develop and refine a new global system for agricultural research for development. A series of GCARDs every two years will discuss and seek to continuously improve agricultural research resourcing, impacts, delivery and accountability to its intended beneficiaries, the poor of this world. These Global Conferences replace both the GFAR Triennial Conference and the Annual General Meeting of the CGIAR.

The process is being organized through a multi-sectoral Task Force, chaired by Dr. Monty Jones (FARA Executive Secretary) and tasked with ensuring a successful and dynamic process that is open and inclusive of all those who care about the future of agriculture and the role of agricultural research in development.

The GCARD effort for 2009-2010 consists of several key elements, connected by open and inclusive consultation (see appended flow chart summary). The Regional Reviews, for which consultants are now sought, forms the first part of these elements which include:

1. Regional review through synthesis and analysis of existing national and regional documents to produce a high-level regional development context and refreshed, high-level set of regional agricultural research priorities
2. Electronic consultations and face-to-face dialogue to provide perspective on the priorities and on how research may be able to create more development impact
3. Development of thinking within the international research community around the specific role and purpose of international research (consultation around the CGIAR SRF and large-scale programmes) and discussion of the role of advanced science in international development (Science Forum, June 2009)
4. The conference to be held from 28 March to 1 April, 2010 to align disparate stakeholders in agricultural research around a common agenda

4. Purpose of the GCARD Regional Review Consultancy

The process of consultation towards the March 2010 Conference will begin with a synthesis of existing documents, including development reports, regional research priorities, national and regional agricultural frameworks, etc. with the purpose of producing:

- A high-level regional development context and refreshed, high-level set of regional agricultural research priorities
- Evaluation of current regional implementation mechanisms
- Identification of areas of specific need for the poorest in each region
- A set of key issues requiring wide public consultation to improve the value of agricultural research in achieving development goals

This synthesis will be conducted on a region-by-region basis, and is intended as a broad-based analysis for each developing region, identifying and framing key issues for subsequent global and regional e-consultation to improve research-development linkages. Consultants with expert knowledge of each region are presently being recruited for this study.

A parallel and related effort, being driven by the Alliance of CGIAR Centers, is focusing on conducting a higher-order synthesis and review of global development reports and global priorities. This team is conducting an initial analysis of global policy issues and analyses, such as the 2008 WDR and the 2008 IAASTD to find areas where the CGIAR's efforts are likely to bring best rewards in development terms in the context of developing a draft Strategic Results Framework for the CGIAR.

These frameworks will themselves be laid open to public consultation and feedback through the GCARD process. The outcome of this work will be a key input toward the development of a draft overarching agricultural research framework.

Expert consultants are therefore now sought to undertake initial regional reviews in each developing region as a broad-based analysis, identifying and framing key issues for subsequent global and regional e-consultation to improve research-development linkages. **These reviews are not intended to provide a detailed analysis of each country's needs, detailed data should be presented as consolidated data tables to set the regional context.**

Developing regions to be addressed in this way are:

- Africa
- Near East
- Central Asia & Caucasus
- Asia & Pacific
- Latin America & Caribbean
- Europe

Specific Deliverables from each Regional Review

Final report (see Section 5) that articulates the following:

- High-level regional development context and refreshed, high-level set of regional agricultural research priorities
- Current AR4D implementation mechanisms
- Fit between recommendations and implementation
- Areas of specific need for the poorest in each region
- Set an initial frame for further exploration of key issues requiring wide public consultation to improve the value of agricultural research in achieving development goals

5. Next steps resulting from the study: electronic consultations and face-to-face dialogue

Upon completion of the Regional Reviews, an initial round of facilitated, open e-consultations, with open questions derived from the findings of the regional studies will be conducted to provide deeper understanding of the needs, perspectives, and expectations of different sectors on the issues across different regions. The synthesis of these e-consultations will be brought together via face-to-face meetings in each region, involving the consultants, which will allow integrated debate of the specific issues arising.

The process of consultation establishing the CGIAR SRF is directly integrated with the GCARD process. The GCARD e-consultation and face-to-face dialogues will thus include specific consideration of the issues raised in the establishment of the SRF and 'mega-programmes' of the CGIAR.

An additional round of e-consultations would allow further elaboration of specific themes and their inter-regional significance before the GCARD Conference in Montpellier, France (28 March to 1 April, 2010).

6. Methodology

The Regional Reviews will incorporate (and not re-invent) previous studies of development challenges and agricultural research priorities for natural resource management. As agriculture is very context-specific, needs will vary between localities and regions, while common global needs may be met in different ways in different regions. Most Regional Agricultural Research Fora have already developed guidance on regional research priorities. The extent to which these have been elaborated in relation to development mechanisms, different groups of beneficiaries and recently emerging challenges varies between regions and updates are needed in some cases.

At national scale, medium term development frameworks, agricultural plans and poverty reduction strategies provide current sets of priorities for both agricultural and wider development processes. Beyond these documents, it is expected that the consultants should communicate closely with Regional Fora and bodies, and national entities representing the public, private and civil sectors in their respective regions to shape and cross-check their reports, and understand the basis by which these priorities, wherever available, were derived.

The 2009 regional review sets an initial frame for the further exploration of ways by which these different needs and priorities can be reconciled and met. The Global Conference seeks to establish research into agricultural/rural development processes, working back from desired development outcomes, based on the needs of different groups of intended beneficiaries and involving their active participation via the subsequent e-consultation and face-to-face discussion. The consultants' role in crystallizing these issues for their wider consideration requires analysis of their multi-faceted interaction, at various stages of innovation and development processes.

The consultants, whether recruited as an existing team or as individuals, will work as a team addressing each region separately, with the lead consultant drawing lessons across the regions. They will crystallize regional development needs and research priorities, by synthesizing existing documents and bringing specific consideration in their analysis of the needs of resource-poor farmers and consumers.

Documents to be considered should include:

- Regional and sub regional agricultural research and development priorities (research priority documents from Regional Research Fora and GFAR Triennial Conferences),
- Regional, sub regional and national agricultural frameworks,
- National poverty reduction plans and institutional strategies and capacities,
- Regional assessments of the agricultural sector 2008 WDR and IAASTD
- Proceedings of general assemblies of regional forums
- Regional background papers to the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis, Sub-regional documents will also be important as well as regional reviews of ARD e.g. the 2004 Inter-Academy Council report on Realizing the Promise and Potential of African Agriculture.

These should be reconciled with the current and projected global context over the next decade, through a multi-sectoral vision.

The team will be expected to play a role in subsequent e-consultations and face-to-face meetings. They will also liaise closely with the team currently developing the outline SRF and mega-programmes for the CGIAR.

7. Detailed Report content and the Consultant's deliverables

By July 15 the team is asked to produce a draft strategic review document of around 30 pages for each region, and also a consolidated perspective synthesizing the regional review reports, each of which should summarize:

I. Existing Needs and recommendations

- a) Review and synthesize the range of development priorities in which agriculture and food play a role, as expressed by governments of the region and regional political bodies and from existing global and eco-regional analyses. Give quantitative targets where available.
- b) Review and synthesize existing research priorities in agriculture and food as expressed via regional fora and national processes and associated expressions of human and institutional capacity need
- c) Draw on summaries of recent global agricultural development/agricultural research reviews and in particular outcomes from the preliminary analysis by the team developing the CGIAR SRF, to identify issues of global concern.
- d) Cross-analyse a) and b) with c), to identify coherence and gaps in current and projected research priorities against development aspirations over the next fifteen years
- e) Identify new needs that are recognized but not yet addressed in these strategies and insert in context as appropriate

II. Current implementation mechanisms

- a) Extracting from recent studies, give a broad overview indicating current institutional and infrastructural arrangements and trends in arrangements that support rural (and urban agricultural) development in the countries of each region (policies, programmes, general scale of institutional resources and policies/mechanisms linking research to development investments)
- b) Give a broad overview of the main research uptake and innovation pathways operating in the countries of each region and their human and institutional capacity needs (policies, programmes, known scale of institutional resources and principal mechanisms linking research to communities, by country)
- c) Examine the relationship between a) and b) to identify their extent of coherence and key gaps

III. Fit between recommendations and implementation

- a) Outline gaps and scale issues creating key challenges for the current institutional capacities and mechanisms in research and extension systems in delivering against known development aspirations
- b) From these preliminary analyses, frame key questions to be addressed through e-consultation that address the development challenges involved.

IV. Ensuring the needs of the poor are met:

Identify specific issues relating to the role of agriculture for the poorest rural sectors in each region and the extent to which national and regional priorities address these.

- a) Review and synthesize the extent to which the needs of the poorest are addressed within regional and national policies and priorities
- b) Identify key areas where agricultural research is being proposed to explicitly improve the livelihoods of these people.
- c) What are seen as the main development barriers constraining the escape from poverty of these people and what forms of new knowledge, capacities and skills could best help overcome these?

V. Framing the e-consultation

From the above analyses, the consultants will extract and formulate key issues that they feel require public consultation regarding whether support to research is focused on the right questions, or is divorced from the reality of resource-poor farmers and consumers. These will help identify apparent challenges and current omissions in embedding research actions into demand-driven development processes.

The subsequent e-consultations, face-to-face meetings and the dialogues they spark will examine the issues raised by this review from a wide variety of perspectives and situations, including those of civil society and specific interest groups and put forward constructive arguments for ways to improve these capabilities, outcomes and inter-linkages.

Examples of the sorts of issues that could require specific further exploration might be:

- Implications of specific new or anticipated research challenges?
- Critical regional trade-offs between agriculture and the environment
- The desired balance in focus on knowledge for production vs value addition and market needs?
- How is research meeting the specific needs of women?
- Where in the research to impact process is the greatest barrier to knowledge flow and use, or to technology development?
- What do we need to know about the balance of rural and urban income and food needs?

8. Timeline and Process

The deadline to submit CVs or to nominate a consultant is **Friday, 22 May**. We anticipate selecting and contracting the consultants before the end of May, 2009 and require the consolidated reports by 15 July, 2009.

The lead consultant will present this composite report to the GCARD Task Force, which is leading the regional review and consultation effort and the planning and organizing of the GCARD in Montpellier, France from 28 March to 1 April 2010.

9. Financial aspects:

The analysis will be funded at a rate of USD 20,000 per region, with a further 25,000 for a central coordinating consultant. The team can be pre-proposed by the consultants or developed from among those applying.

10. Specific Skills required

- Experience and expertise in rural and agricultural development issues and ability to take a bigger picture view of regional issues.
- Familiarity with research and innovation systems and their management
- Ability to write well in English
- Familiarity with the agricultural production systems and needs of the regions concerned
- Familiarity with the innovation systems of the region concerned
- Ability to take a bigger picture perspective on issues that cut across institutions and disciplines
- Ability to work effectively as part of a larger team, with complementary skill sets among those selected (e.g. expertise in development mechanisms as well as research)

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Summary Flowchart

