

# Delivering the Change Together – Reflections on GCARD2

*Mark Holderness, GFAR Executive Secretary*



As we all return of home from Uruguay, I would like to thank you very much for the very dynamic and rich discussions in Punta del Este and your tremendously valuable inputs to the success of this groundbreaking Conference. I want also to share with you some reflections on what we have all achieved together, through the GCARD2012 process (GCARD 2):

## How we came to GCARD 2

The Global Forum on Agricultural Research provides the open forum for all sectors involved in agricultural research for development. Through the cycle of GCARD processes initiated in 2010, GFAR works as a catalyst for action and a catalyst for change.

GCARD1 combined the former GFAR Triennial Conference and CGIAR Annual General Meeting and produced, with the GCARD Roadmap, a set of key principles for transforming and strengthening agricultural research for development systems at national, regional, and international level, so that they become more effective forces for development change.

GCARD2, organized by GFAR in partnership with the CGIAR and our wonderful hosts the Government of Uruguay, then set out to move the process forward from WHAT transformation of agricultural research for development (AR4D) is required, to HOW to implement the GCARD RoadMap in practice and the difference it makes. In Punta del Este, we took stock of progress in moving forward:

- We have already shown real actions and change are now underway across all the constituencies brought together through the Global Forum on Agricultural Research, from farmers to upstream research.progress in moving forward:
- We have explored how the CGIAR reform is now demonstrating rapid and practical change to a more open system, aiming at achieving specific outcomes that lead towards defined development objectives.
- We have connected these actions to policy processes of national Ministries of Agriculture, particularly those of the Latin America region, of UN agencies and of the G8 and G20.

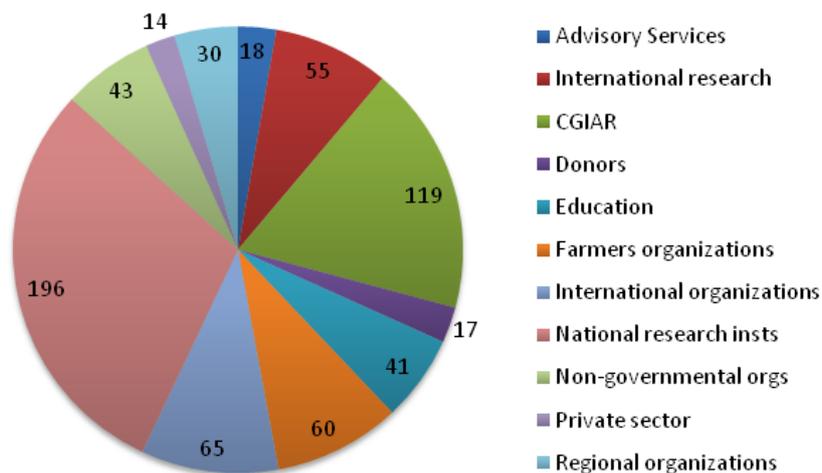
The Conference provided an excellent platform to build cooperation around key forward-looking agendas and plan joint actions among all stakeholders. The open environment created in GCARD2 enabled us all to draw lessons from experiences in developing and strengthening collaborative actions, to transform innovation processes towards achieving large scale development impacts.



## Who took part?

GCARD2 was truly a global event: with **658 participants in Uruguay (32% of whom were women)**, from **101 countries**, and **over 1,000 people joining us on-line**, all working to promote the agricultural research for development changes we all wish to see.

We came together as representatives of a wide range of organizations, across the spectrum from farmers to upstream research and selected by the constituencies concerned or through Regional Fora:



## What we discussed

The GCARD 2 focused on implementing the principles for action identified in the GCARD RoadMap, with special attention to “Foresight and partnership for innovation and impact on small-holder livelihoods”. GCARD 2 has brought an incredible richness of ideas, of interactions, of new agendas and new practical partnerships being formed that will enable us to work **together** towards our shared development objectives.

The discussions built from your own actions and commitments: **Over 220 speakers were able to present their work and its implications**, covering diverse perspectives and realities on each issue. In addition, GFAR supported **20 pre-conference sessions**, enabling organizations to discuss their programmes in more detail with others involved in the area of work concerned and shape their inputs to the conference itself.

We worked together across **20 sub-themes**, each attracting great inputs and lively discussion. We have established or strengthened many partnerships through convening these linkages and sown the seeds for broader and more inclusive actions through the GCARD process, driven by our need to work together towards shared goals, because we **must** do so if we are to achieve our global development aims.

The GCARD2 provided an unparalleled opportunity for such interactions: **79% of you found that the GCARD provided useful or very useful opportunities to interact with others to help further understanding of AR4D.**

You have told us how valuable the GCARD2 discussions have been to you: from the survey conducted at the conference end **80% of you found the sessions to have been either Useful (50% of you) or Very Useful (30% of you) to your work.**

**The full outcomes and videos of the presentations by Session Chairs are available on:**

<http://www.egfar.org/gcard-2012> .

**Below is a brief summary of some key outputs from the GCARD2:**

## **Foresight**

The GCARD2 has strongly emphasized the need for better foresight in guiding AR4D investments and processes and to achieve this, the need to bring together diverse approaches to understanding our future needs. The GCARD foresight sessions followed a sequence of work leading to readily implementable commitments, with clear targets desired for GCARD 3. This requires actions at several levels:

Across all GFAR constituencies: to increase the diversity of stakeholders contributing to foresight: involving different regions, young people, small farmers and progressively develop foresight capacities as users (awareness) and doers (practical know-how and knowledge), for which the Global Foresight Hub provides a common frame.

Regional Fora highlighted their strong desire to learn, exchange lessons and methods for foresight across regions and globally through GFAR, to promote and facilitate foresight initiatives in each region to guide research and to work with national AR4D systems to build networks of organizations to ensure foresight better guides research prioritization.

Through the GCARD2, the CGIAR has now committed (see <http://www.cgiar.org/consortium-news/our-punta-del-este-commitments>) to continue development of a foresight capacity in the CGIAR, building on the diversity of analysis debated in the context of the GFAR Foresight Hub, the foresight studies of the CGIAR Independent Science & Partnership Council (ISPC) and the CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Markets and Institutions, to bring a dynamic foresight element into the 2013 Management Update of the CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework that will focus on three key trends

- Farm size dynamics;
- From sustainable production to sustainable consumption; and
- Urbanization

**Civil society organizations present in the sessions now aim to** facilitate and build grassroots foresight and empower their leaders with the capacities to conduct this process at local level. They will directly interact in foresight studies and integrate the implications into the build up to and program of the International Year of Family Farming in 2014.

Delivering these changes will require commitment by AR4D leaders to ensure coordination between national processes and global foresight exercises, launching pilot foresight analyses and creating ways to ensure ownership by stakeholders. The Global Foresight Hub will provide the space where most of these commitments can be linked, through its platforms on Forward thinking and Policy dialogue and the regional foresight academies now being developed.

81% of participants found the foresight sessions gave them new knowledge and understanding

## **Partnership**

Partnership and collective focus between institutions of all forms are essential to ensuring effective pathways to impact. The GCARD 2 process has set out an exciting agenda for change and begun to mobilize the partnerships and commitments required to deliver this around some of the biggest challenges of today and tomorrow, including a number of key agendas such as gender, nutrition and protracted crises that have received far too little attention in the past.



These have included:

- Setting AR4D in the context of global development and actions such as those of the **G8 and G20** and the processes defining new international development goals.
- Strengthening and learning from effective networks for inter-regional action such as PAEPARD and the Brazil-Africa Innovation marketplace and expanding these to now include mobilization of the advanced research capabilities of G20 nations.
- Re-emphasizing the need to **focus on smallholders** and for knowledge and innovations to help lift smallholder farmers out of poverty.
- Putting **women farmers and rural householders** at the centre of the AR4D agenda and recognizing that they have specific needs and priorities that need to be addressed, as well as ensuring they are able to access the inputs and benefits from agriculture.
- Ensuring food security **towards zero hunger**, through AR4D for sustainably increased productivity.
- Ensuring that research policies and strategies do not consider food security only but integrate **household nutrition** to meet the vital nutritional needs of all and specifically children in their formative years, recognizing the strong gender dimensions of this global objective.
- Addressing major environmental issues: **climate change, maintaining and using agrobiodiversity and establishing resilient landscapes** and use of land, water and other natural resources through collective actions, working across many agencies at national, regional and international levels.
- Exploring the implications of AR4D processes that are centered, not on individual technologies, but on meeting the **livelihood needs of resource-poor farmers** and their equitable access to **opportunities from markets**.

83% of you found the GCARD2 partnership sessions either useful, or very useful, to your work

Across all of these, some key principles emerged that we need to:

- Better track investments in AR4D
- Generate funding mechanisms that promote and reward, rather than constrain, partnerships, across institutions and large-scale research for development programmes
- Collect evidence to pinpoint the most effective partnership and research initiatives and
- Use international and national partnerships to scale up innovation processes.

### Partnership and the CGIAR Research Programmes

The CGIAR Research Programmes (CRPs) have formed the core framework for our discussion on partnership, setting the CRPs, as requested by the CGIAR Fund Council and the Consortium Strategy and Results Framework in the wider context of the development changes to which they are seeking to contribute and the complex 'jigsaw puzzle' of actions and interactions required among multiple partners for development impacts to be achieved at scale. Common purpose and effective partnership with non CGIAR actors are essential to their success.



The CRPs are at a very early stage of implementation and are exploring their own partnerships in practice. The open discussion, in the pre-event meetings organized with NGOs, CSOs and farmers organizations and in the GCARD2 itself on how these large investments can be linked with the work of others and embedded in support of national commitments has been the right agenda at the right time:

In the survey of their views, 2/3 of CGIAR participants stated i) that the knowledge they acquired through GCARD 2 would be likely to change the design or implementation of their activities and that ii) their participation in GCARD2 is likely to change their approach to existing, or new, partnerships in AR4D programmes and activities.

The importance of partnership to the success of the CRPs has been highlighted by CRP Directors in the CGIAR Funders Forum assembled in Punta del Este the day after GCARD2 and since reinforced also in CGIAR Consortium CEO [Frank Rijsberman's statement](#) of CGIAR commitments resulting from the GCARD process and Fund Council meetings, where the CGIAR has now committed to:

- Engaging through a participatory approach key stakeholders in the development of the 2013 Management Update of the CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework,
- Aligning CGIAR research priorities with national and regional priorities and investment plans.
- Carrying out a Stakeholder Perception Survey of more than 3 thousand partners of the CGIAR Consortium and the CRPs to serve as a baseline against which to measure and improve the CGIAR's partnership performance.

### Capacities

Effective partnership requires capacities, knowledge sharing and collective actions at all levels and the GCARD process and its multipartner processes has also enabled exciting new initiatives to be catalysed addressing key barriers to the generation, uptake and scaling out of agricultural innovation:

- **Advocating and tracking** increased AR4D investments and determining their development returns.
- Examining new models of **public-private partnership** and their implications as well as new AR4D investments based on **farmer-driven processes**.
- Scaling out the value of **inter-regional partnerships and learning** and exploring what is required to better **mobilize advanced science** capabilities towards development aims.
- Launching new collective actions to share learning and rapidly advance skills in innovation systems as championed by FAO and its national and international partners in the **Tropical Agriculture Platform**.
- GCARD2 strongly recognized that our systems have to change drastically to meet the needs of women farmers and householders and to attract a new generation of **young professionals** into agriculture. Processes such as **AWARD and YPARD** are doing a great deal to address this and these successes now need to be scaled out.
- The **Gender in Agriculture Partnership** fostered through GFAR now provides an open and inclusive partnership for change that is taking the outcomes of the Global Conference on Women in Agriculture forward as collective actions at national, regional and international scales.
- **The launch of the Global Confederation of Higher Education and Research Associations for the Agricultural and Life Sciences (GCHERA)**, through GCARD 2, represents a key milestone that has brought together over 500 universities, representing more than 1.5 million students, now geared to changing and strengthening the way they work.

- New systems set out through the CIARD collective partnership for opening access to agricultural information have moved forward greatly since GCARD 1. Examples of open access to agricultural information such as in China and Ghana were presented. Recognizing this collective movement for change, **the CGIAR has now committed to making itself an Open Access organization**, with policies and standards put in place in 2013.
- The GCARD2 discussions endorsed the need for a fresh approach to extension, based on the realities of modern advisory services, (the ‘New Extensionist’ concept), **the need for collective advocacy through GFRAS** for strengthening of advisory services and relevant education and policy activities.

76% of you felt that the GCARD2 gave you new knowledge and understanding of capacity development needs and opportunities

### Moving forward

GCARD 2 has taken a real step forward in these processes - a few years ago none of us could have perhaps conceived that we could cross our institutional divides to begin to work together in such deeply practical ways, to deliver the changes that we all are now striving for. Now even our language is changing through the processes of reform being catalysed and reflected through the GCARD process and Roadmap: within the last 2 years we have moved from *“There is a need for...” or “Someone needs to...”* to **“We are going to...”**

Perhaps most significantly for the future, 79% of you felt that the knowledge you have acquired is likely to change the design or implementation of your AR4D programmes and activities, while the same percentage also felt that the GCARD would be likely to change your approach to existing or new partnerships in AR4D programmes and activities.

**GCARD2 has pioneered a new approach to partnership.** Each session was based on commitments and aims that were identified by the speakers themselves and by others active in the area. These are captured in the Briefing Papers produced for each session, that are publicly available on the GCARD website. Session **Briefing Papers** set out the aims of current work and the immediate actions planned with the existing resources available to those concerned. Moreover, each institution has also set out:

1. Immediate actions they can achieve with existing resources
2. Key gaps identified where complementary partners/further resources are required
3. Solid steps required towards larger scale impacts or scaling out elsewhere

Through the Briefing Papers and now the rich inputs to these from our discussions in Punta del Este, we have set out our practical commitments to collective actions **to achieve the changes we have all said we want to see.** These combined summaries will now form the basis for moving forward together. They may require some further work, updating and refinement, but we now have emerging programmes for collective action in each area, who will be able to lead the further development of ideas and actions in each area, growing through the synergies created by bringing our minds, skills and cultures together and working through relevant mechanisms at national, regional and/or international level.



**These actions form the base for our efforts together to transform and strengthen AR4D systems in practice.**

Looking forwards over the period to GCARD 3, GFAR, as the global mechanism bringing together these diverse stakeholders, and the GFAR Secretariat as its executive body, are **committed to helping you to build these collective movements into practical actions, enabling you to work together to deliver the essential changes which you have identified.**

The **Global Forum on Agricultural Research is committed to** catalysing, convening and helping to mobilize collective AR4D actions, to advocate for change, to share knowledge and to help you mobilize the resources and learning required to transform your institutions.

Change does not happen overnight and change is not easy. The GCARD is a collective process for change and it is your energy and thirst for change that drives the process. We will meet again in two years time and be able to determine how we are all progressing and all hold ourselves to account for how well we have worked together towards the aims and practical actions we have now set out. **Where we go from here and how much, and how quickly, we can all deliver on these changes is down to all of us – our actions and our commitments, on which so much of the future for smallholder farmers depends.**

GCARD-2 was invigorating. But it made clear that much hard work lies ahead. GFAR Chair Dr. Monty Jones exhorted us all to see it as a process, not just a biennial event. He urged us to unite around the six-point plan of the GCARD Road Map: inclusive priority-setting, equal partnerships, increased investment, improved capacities, improved development impacts, and better communication of achievements. It was agreed that we all share responsibility and accountability for executing towards those targets.

We embrace that challenge, because we believe that GCARD has got it right. Inclusive and innovative partnerships, guided by well-informed foresight, will illuminate the road ahead. Let's strengthen our partnerships to accelerate the engine of development for smallholders.

*William Dar, ICRISAT Director General*  
<http://www.egfar.org/news/innovations-partnership>

On behalf of the World Farmers' Organisation, and myself, I would like to express to you my highest satisfaction and gratitude for having invited WFO to the GCARD 2012. The level of discussions and results achieved over the entire event were remarkable.

I am also particularly glad to notice that GCARD's conclusive remarks focused on farmers, women, youth and extensions as main partners to work with for the future challenges and activities of GCARD. Please be assured that WFO will be always at the side of these international players who have farmers amongst their priorities.

Looking forward to working with you in the near future.

Sincerely yours,  
Robert L. Carlson  
President, World Farmers' Organization

## GCARD Media and Communications – the world has been watching!

GFAR worked in direct partnership with the Communications team of the CGIAR Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers, commissioning their expertise to ensure that the GCARD2 was accessible to all, including those who could not be present in Uruguay. The media team worked particularly closely with the GFAR-supported Young Professionals in Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD) platform in engaging young professionals, who participated in the social media team as either sponsored trainees, onsite/offsite social reporters or as part of the support team. Through YPARD's full engagement, the social support group grew to **136 social reporters from 44 countries**:

- 35 onsite social reporters
- 12 international trainees (sponsored by YPARD)
- 7 Uruguayan trainees
- 16 other social reporters (of which 7 also followed the training)
- 101 offsite social reporters and supporters

During the preparation of the conference, the team worked together on a number of learning initiatives to get to know each other, the social media toolset to know the tools and working environment, the content of the conference and start with the tasks and responsibilities, and prepare for them, including initiating the actual social media outreach well in advance, by generating blogposts as well as Facebook and Twitter traffic.

The team communicated via the online discussion forum:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/?pli=1#!forum/gcard-smt>

and their collaborative repository on Google Sites:

<https://sites.google.com/a/cgxchange.org/gcard-smt/>

Through the “eager” spirit of these young professionals, together with an active moderation of our internal discussions, and the feeling of “participation” in the conference content and process, the social reporting team more than achieved its objectives.

## GCARD Generated content, and its reach:

1. **GCARD Blog:** <http://gcardblog.wordpress.com/>

Well before the conference, the 2010 GCARD blog was revamped with a new layout and navigation. All social reporters received a “contributors” profile so they could upload their own posts. The blogs were proofread and edited before release.

**The team published 152 blogposts**, almost all of it was original content, written by the social reporters. From Sept 1 to Nov 11, **the blog was visited 16,026 times from 149 countries**.

During this period, **the blog received 99 comments**, showing a very active engagement from the community. The blog started now has **71 subscribers to the Email updates**.



## 2. The GCARD website: <http://www.egfar.org>

From Sept 1 to Nov 11 the GCARD website **was visited by 14,719 different people from 181 different countries, who read 104,212 pages.**

Top pages:

GCARD2 home page: 13,215 visits

GCARD programme: 5,529 visits

GCARD pre-conference page: 1,542 visits

GCARD webcast: 1,494 visits (1,046 unique visits)

## 3. Twitter: <https://twitter.com/gfarforum>

As of Oct 1, we actively tweeted all blogposts, videos, podcasts, press clips and input documents.

During GCARD, we also live-tweeted all sessions. During the conference, **we sent out more than 1,500 Twitter updates PER DAY, reaching an average of 100,000 individual people each day.** About half of the #GCARD2 tweets were re-tweets by others, showing an active engagement by the Twitter community.

**On the peak day, Oct 29th, we reached 353,623 individual people through Twitter** (see also the detailed stats)

We also actively increased the amount of people who followed the GFARforum twitter account, **from 278 (Sept 1) to 720 (Nov 11).** This will give GFAR a larger audience in the future.

## 4. Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/GlobalForumonAgriculturalResearch>

We posted over 300 updates on Facebook: blogposts, videos, podcasts, press clips and input documents etc.

**The Facebook updates were read 20,127 times and shared 127 times.**

We also actively increased the amount of people who “like” the GFAR Facebook page, **increasing the “Facebook Likes” from 248 (Sept 1) to 444 (Nov 11).**

## 5. Webcast: (online via the EGFAR website)

**The webcast was viewed 1,494 times by a total of 1,046 individual people.**

So it is safe to say GCARD2 had *“over 1,000 online participants”*, **more than doubling** the numbers present in Uruguay.

During the interactive sessions, questions from the audience, watching the webcast were forwarded to the panels, actively engaging the online audience into the onsite discussions.

## 6. Videos: <http://www.youtube.com/user/gfarforum>

All webcast sessions were uploaded onto Youtube. **We also posted 16 video interviews made by the social reporters.**

**The GCARD videos have been viewed 1,471 times to date.**

We also promoted the GCARD2010 farmer videos. After promotion, the **farmers’ videos were viewed 2,017 times.**

## 7. GCARD presentations: <http://www.slideshare.net/gcard/>

**137 input documents and presentations were uploaded to Slideshare.**

**To date, the presentations were viewed 4,551 times. The input documents were viewed 3,561 times.** These figures are in addition to the downloads and reads of the same documents, via the EGFAR website/repository.

8. **Pictures:** <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gcard-conferences/>

**820 pictures were uploaded during the conference**, another 90 GCARD pictures were uploaded from other accounts. They were viewed **200 times**.

9. **Podcasts:** <http://gcard.podomatic.com/>

**15 podcast interviews were uploaded. These were visited 167 times.**

10. **Linkedin:** <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/GCARD-4681640>

A LinkedIn group was created, on which we posted **84 updates** (blogposts and other social media updates). The group now has **41 members**.

### **Social media and online media uptake:**

One of the goals was to encourage people to write about GCARD2 on their own blogs and online media. We kept track of these via Storify and Delicious.

**In total 188 GCARD2 articles were published and crossposted** on other blogs and online media. This, by itself, is a significant indicator of the “uptake” of GCARD2.

### **Mainstream media articles:**

The social media team also kept track of the mainstream media articles via Storify and Delicious.

Up to date, **63 mainstream articles** (from VOA, Financial Times, BBC, to Onda Rural - a network of rural radios in South America) were collected, though many articles published in the Uruguayan press are still to be stored in our repository.

### **Other activities from the social media team:**

- Each day, a daily (or nightly) digest of previous day’s social media updates was made, and distributed by email to all participants.
- On Storify, an online daily digest (including the Tweets, blogposts and videos) was published online
- The social media team also put up an online discussion group for the communications’ coordinators of all participating organisations, NGOs, etc..

This group now has over 60 members. This provides a good starting ground for the next GCARD’s communications efforts.

### **Scientific and development media**

The respected journal Food Security is planning to publish a special edition based on the GCARD 2 and authors will be contacted shortly.

The online journal New Agriculturist will also be producing a special edition on the GCARD 2 and the GCARD themes will then be followed further in subsequent editions.

The social media outreach was innovative and challenging, but the enthusiastic social reporters’ group, which was well supported by the Communications team and YPARD and backed by the GFAR Secretariat and GCARD Organizing Committee has shown that it is possible for many more people to take part in GCARD events than can be sponsored to attend in person in these hard economic times. Through such measures, the GCARD 2 direct cost of the meeting have been kept well within a lower budget and yet has reached more participants than GCARD1. GCARD is showing innovative ways forward, ensuring that the global AR4D community all have opportunity to take part in the GCARD in a cost-effective manner and to now work together to address the pressing needs identified.