

9th GFRAS Annual Meeting 2018

Addressing Challenges and Seizing Opportunities: Developing Effective Partnerships in RAS

22-25 October 2018 in Jeonju, Korea



1. Background and objectives of the 9th GFRAS Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting is the central instrument of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services. It seeks to foster exchange on rural advisory services (RAS) between stakeholders and across regions and to discuss the strategic directions and functioning of GFRAS and its regional and national fora. The GFRAS Annual Meeting provides a space for learnings and exchanges around topics relevant to RAS and contributes to providing a voice for RAS in global policy dialogues. The 9th edition of the meeting was co-organised with the Rural Development Administration (RDA), the Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Network Services (APIRAS), and the Rural Innovation Centre for Knowledge and Investment (RICKI).

Various actors from the public and private sector, NGOs, organisations and/or civil society are active in RAS and varying interactions occur between them, to support and finance RAS.

Public extension services remain very important in many regions and often provide an overall policy and regulatory framework within which RAS function. They may directly organise extension activities or, with a view to improving efficiency and effectiveness, contract or subsidise RAS provided by private sector operators or NGOs and producer organisations.

Private sector RAS have the advantage of being fast, flexible, and high quality. They benefit from the private sector's financial resources, and competitiveness. However, companies' interests lead to a neglect of public goods and marginalisation of producers' interests.

Producer organisations are crucial both on the demand and the supply side of RAS. On the demand side, they have the role of identifying and synthesising needs, demands, and solutions for farmers. Producer organisations should contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of RAS, and participate in policy formulation. On the supply side, producer organisations provide and co-finance RAS activities. Their strengths in RAS derive from producer organisations' knowledge about farmers' contexts and needs. Together with their capacity to provide unbiased advice, often linked to other services such as marketing, this leads to a high level of trust from their clients.

Market failures can work as disincentives for the private sector and producer organisations to engage in the small-scale farming sector. The importance of fostering public-private partnerships in RAS is critical to address these failures.

Partnerships between different types of RAS stakeholders play important roles in at least four areas: supporting learning and sharing between and across regions; influencing policy and decision makers; mobilising financial resources; and attracting more engagement from private sector stakeholders, in particular. Thus, the 9th Annual Meeting of GFRAS Addressing Challenges and Seizing Opportunities: Developing Effective Partnerships in RAS, included three interrelated objectives:

1. to identify and define good practices, best-fit approaches and strategies to develop, strengthen, and maintain effective partnerships in RAS, with a particular focus on smart technologies, financing, and collaboration across stakeholders;

2. to identify and define ways to build the capacities needed at different levels and by different stakeholders (policy, research, education, extension, farmers) to develop, strengthen, and maintain effective partnerships in RAS;
3. to identify and define the roles and capacities needed by GFRAS and its regional RAS networks to play an important and meaningful role in developing, strengthening and maintaining effective partnerships.

2. Structure of the meeting, participants and presentations

Four side events took place in the morning of 22 October 2018 before the participants were invited to take part in a cultural visit of a Hanok Village in Jeonju. The side events' organisers and their respective titles were as follows:

1. APIRAS: APIRAS Regional Capacity Development Plan and the Framework for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning.
2. FAO: Exploring the Complex Universe of Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services: Guidelines for Assessing Pluralistic Systems at the National Level.
3. CIRAD: Rural Advisory Services in West and Central Africa: Challenges, Policy Recommendations, and Agenda for the Future.
4. GFRAS Youth Working Group: Group Launch: Engaging Youth in and for Rural Advisory Services in Agricultural Innovations Systems.

The launch of the GFRAS Youth Working Group



Figure 1 The Youth Working Group in action

A handful of dynamic young participants gathered for this side event on Monday 22 October 2018. Jim Cano, focal person of the YWG explained the formation of this working group, its past achievements, as well as the way forward. The side event was organized around three main axes: the status of youth engagement in RAS; challenges and opportunities in engaging youth in RAS and the facilitating role the YWG could have; and identify success stories advocating the needs for stronger youth engagement in RAS.

It was agreed that the group's main purpose would be to become a knowledge and networking platform for youth-related engagements in the context of rural advisory services (RAS). The working group approved to strengthen communication between the YWG Core, GFRAS Secretariat, Regional and Sub-regional RAS point persons in order to fulfil its purpose.

The 9th GFRAS Annual Meeting officially opened on the Tuesday 23 October 2018 with a formal ceremony and a cultural exhibition organized by RDA. The agenda of the meeting then respected the following structure:

- Tuesday 23 October: Collaborative Keynote on the current context of partnerships in RAS; Policy Dialogue on the state of policy in supporting partnerships; Shift & Share; 3 Parallel Sessions
- Wednesday 24 October: Introduction to Korean RAS before heading to Field Trips
- Thursday 25 October: Role of RAS in strengthening partnerships; Regional network meetings; Reflective session and next steps; Closing and reading of the Jeonju Declaration.¹

Throughout the meeting, a variety of approaches towards exchanges and learnings were used, including plenary sessions, group work, panel discussions, shift and share sessions, parallel workshops and poster exhibitions.

Statistics on Participants

This year’s edition of the GFRAS Annual Meeting set a new record by hosting 152 participants coming from 56 countries, representing the 17 regional networks and sub-regional networks. More than a third of these participants were women (55) and 48 participants were younger than 40 years old. A variety of sectors, with the public sector being the major one, were also represented as shown by figure 2.

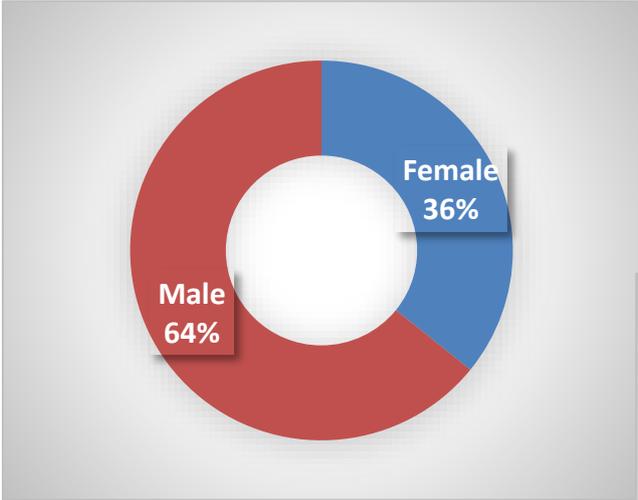


Figure 2: Gender representation

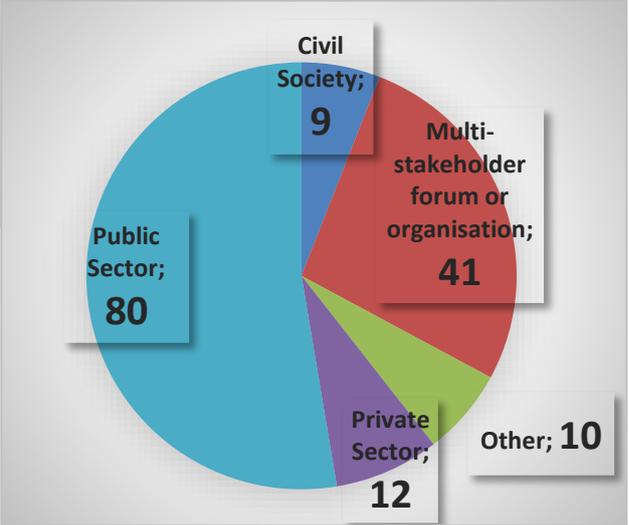


Figure 3: Represented sectors at the 9th GFRAS Annual Meeting

After compiling and analyzing notes and material produced during the meeting, it appears that numerous participants wished for a stronger presence of the civil society (i.e. local farmers and farmer’s groups) and the private sector in order to develop effective partnerships. While the latter was often recognized during the meeting as an important actor facilitating and/or driving funds for innovation, the former still needs to be given a more prominent voice when it comes to sharing experiences, and also bring both actors together.

¹ The full agenda of the 9th GFRAS Annual Meeting, as well as other related documents can be found [here](#)

The Ecocycle to expose the whole picture of RAS

Proposed by the moderators, the Ecocycle approach² was chosen to assess the current situation of partnerships in RAS and evolve from it. The Ecocycle was first placed at the front of the room (Figure 3) and the key ideas emerging were scribed in real time onto it (Figure 5). Both panel discussions started from the maturity quadrant and elaborated on the successful activities in RAS before tackling the challenges faced, whether on the field or in making policies. The purpose of the Ecocycle planning is to identify what practices and policies fall into the “poverty trap” as they do not get the required attention to become valuable, and those that are caught in the “rigidity trap”, costing us too much time and energy for the expected result. It allowed the participants to have a larger view of the stand of partnerships in RAS. This naturally led people to think about the necessary (creative) destruction allowing more efficient networking and new ideas in need of support, i.e., what are the good and best-fit practices, what must be stopped and let go of and what actions are to be taken.

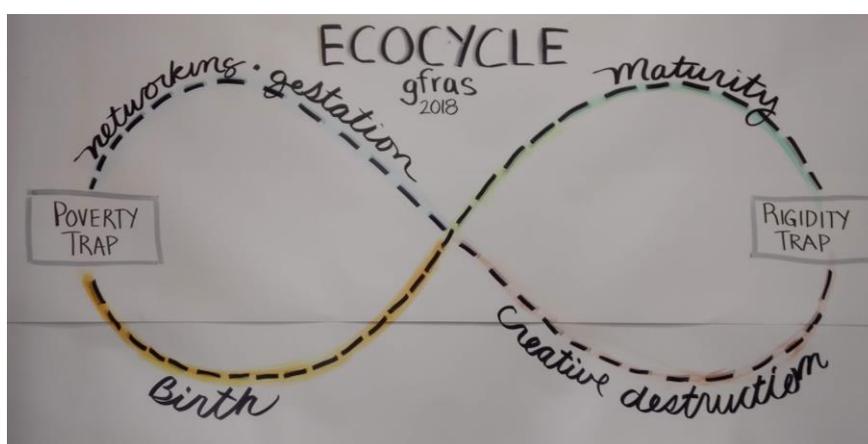


Figure 4: The Ecocycle before the panel discussions

This approach was used throughout the event and was met with enthusiasm by the participants, recognizing the benefits of this tool to interact and exchange ideas, experiences, and knowledge.

3. Opening Ceremony and panel discussions:

The welcome address was delivered by Dr Rasheed Sulaiman V, GFRAS Steering Committee Chair; Mr Ra Seungyo, The Administrator of Rural Development Administration, Republic of Korea and Mr Kim Songil, Vice Governor of Jeonbuk Province, Republic of Korea, and launched the Annual Meeting by stressing the importance of collaboration and partnerships in the sector. Additionally, Director of RDA Yoo Suengoh gave an overview of the history and current status of the Korean agricultural extension system. He recounted the inspirational journey that saw per capita income grow from \$57 in 1953 to \$30,000 in 2017 and shared the drivers of the Korean transformation.

In order to address challenges and opportunities in developing partnerships in RAS, a common definition has to be found. This task was filled by Kristin Davis, former GFRAS Executive Secretary, through video projection. She first proposed a definition from Van Huijstee et al. describing

² <http://www.liberatingstructures.com/31-ecocycle-planning/>

for everyone to work on sustainable activities, and thus, top-down approaches should be abandoned. The speakers also raised the importance for Farmers' organizations to be involved and integrated into the planning, implementation and Monitoring & Evaluation phases and asking for inclusiveness and mutuality in response to the accountability of RAS. Paying attention to the power relations also means to recognize the added-value each actor can bring with them, share ideas, talk and be open to learning from one another.

- In order to create effective partnerships, one must also consider the environment in which they are taking place, the local context very often playing a major role in the success or failure of projects. Context matters, as regions differ in the way societies function and thus affects the way people interact with each other. Hence attention needs to be paid when building spaces in which the stakeholders will interact.
- Finally, partners bring what they do best and thus create mutual value. The role of each party in every partnership should focus on what one does well instead of trying to do everything. Too much time and energy are wasted on trying to fulfil every task and willing to be too collaborative can become a constraint if activities are not focused.

It is important to note that much of what is said above is already taking place in RAS and has been recognized by the speakers as being successful. On the other hand, some of the activities undertaken by actors in RAS must be stopped for improvements to be made and for embracing new ideas or supporting existing projects. Emergent projects are also targeted and should receive greater support or attention in order to scale and adapt them in a given environment.

Among others, speakers reiterated that working with farmers' organizations is essential and should continue to receive support from RAS. Inclusiveness and cross-cutting issues tackling the challenges of climate change, gender, youth... are also recognized as a good practice and the way forward. Consulting farmers or hiring female employees only for appearances and pretending to be socially inclusive, i.e. tokenism, must stop.

An interesting comment was made on the relation between the type of network and the phase of an innovation process. If the network is key to support innovations, each of these phases requires different needs and thus a different network structure. Referring to the framework of the Ecocycle, the position of the project on the cycle (birth, maturity, creative destruction, networking gestation) will determine whether the partnership and networks should be institutionalized or would require instead more flexibility and be rather informal.

"Stop thinking about youth as beneficiaries, but key partners even at high-level policy dialogues".

The involvement of youth in agriculture is instrumental for its success. Recognized as the backbone of many economies in the Global South, the agricultural sector nonetheless experiences challenges such as migration movements from rural into urban areas, among which younger generations leaving the fields to older generations.

Yet, this does not necessarily imply a lack of interest in agriculture. Young people are active in the sector. Through their creativity, younger generations may represent a "disruptive threat" for the institutions in place, experiencing difficulties to accept changes put forward by young people. This creativity is an asset to tap into instead of fearing it. Very clear messages were addressed by the

young participants of the meeting: “stop talking about the lack of youth in agriculture” and “stop thinking about youth as beneficiaries”. Examples of young people getting involved in agriculture are manifold, leading to think that the reason for this apparent “lack” of youth in agriculture might be found on the policy level. A 2014 report from FAO⁴ identifies six challenges to increasing the participation of youth in agriculture. Among others, “limited involvement in policy dialogue” makes it difficult for young people to be heard. This issue was addressed again by Jim Cano, advocating for youth to be perceived and recognized as “[...] key partners even at high-level policy dialogues”. During the policy dialogue, Alpha Sennon, regretting the absence of an enabling environment, spoke about the form of tokenism on that subject while attending an event on agriculture: “Our task as young people, we were there to come up with ten policies that create an enabling environment for young people to flourish. I literally had to say to them that this feels like *déjà vu* [...]. The same policies that we came up with in 2018 were the same than in 2013, and nothing was done from that time until now”. The launch of the GFRAS Youth Working Group during the side event organized this year tries to overcome some of those challenges.

b. Policy Dialogue (state of policy in supporting partnerships)

The policy dialogue, moderated by Andrea Bohn, was composed of Yongsup Song (RDA), David Nielson (recently retired from the World Bank), Alpha Sennon (WHYFARM), Mary Kamau (formerly Ministry of Agriculture and Director Extension, Kenya), John Peters (USAID), and Sonny Lameta (University of the South Pacific).

Similar to the collaborative keynote, the policy dialogue was framed within the Ecocycle and discussed what policies are enabling strong collaborations and what could be learned from other domains, but also actions that should be taken to support effective partnerships in RAS (what should we focus on, what is not working and should be left behind).

- Various answers were given to the first question as each speaker represented a different institutional position within RAS. The examples of collaboration set by Dr. Song showcased the important role played by the governments (central and local) in establishing effective partnerships: a MoU was signed in 2017 with the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NH or NACF), in which RDA provides information to NH who further disseminates it through Social Media.
- One of the challenges exposed by the panellists is that the scaling-up of small programs on a national level did not meet expectations, with the exception maybe of Korea. The success and proliferation of small and dynamic programs intending to break the isolation of communities through the creation of partnerships and knowledge sharing is contrasted with the rather unsuccessful attempt to do the same on a national level. While isolation hinders collaboration, silo thinking and centralization do not promote partnerships and the challenge lies in finding the right size when we want small best practice programs to be scaled-up.
- It is now recognized that the pluralistic character of RAS is becoming the norm and emphasis on the notion is put by the GFRAS community, partnerships and development projects need

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3947e.pdf>

to be inclusive and work with the wide range of actors composing RAS. To give a voice to farmers and recognize them as partners instead of client/beneficiaries will empower them. Trainings were framed for too long within linear designed programs in which experts were telling the farmers what to do. This top-down approach of bringing knowledge must be stopped, shifting towards more inclusive and allow the different actors to work in an environment where all parties can learn from one another. Demand-driven extension services were not only advocated during these panels but also frequently mentioned by participants during the whole event.

- The challenge of integrating the plurality of actors lies in the coordination between them. As mentioned above, the power dynamics between stakeholders, within and surrounding RAS activities. Roles and responsibilities have to be attributed, reinforcing accountability and showing commitments towards end-users.

Who is in charge? How does such coordination take place? When trying to answer these questions, another challenge arises: the need to overcome the different perceptions towards governments. While the case of Korea indicates the success of the Korean public led RAS with strong State involvement, custom and institutions, political instability/volatility and modes of governance experienced in other countries can affect partnership, leading people to distrust or overlook their government.

- Already exposed in the collaborative keynote, the environment in which partnerships are created must be taken into account. Strengthening partnerships through policies requires the development and implementation of context-dependent plans as well as recognizing that cultural and institutional characteristics (institutional path dependency, customary laws...) can affect the success of a project.
- While a lot of attention is focused on the importance of technology transfer, one must not forget that the purpose of RAS is also the holistic development of human capital. Through the diversity of partners and actors bringing knowledge and experience to the table, the capacity development of farmers is the logical consequence of the creation of a demand-driven, top-down inclusive approach to RAS.
- One of the roles of policies in supporting and strengthening partnerships and collaboration is to set clear guidelines, listing the various expectations from the plurality of actors. This end-result requires first open debates and trying to find commonalities or common principles on which all parties can work. This environment is what the GFRAS community should continue to offer by discussing what kind of principles are most important in program design.

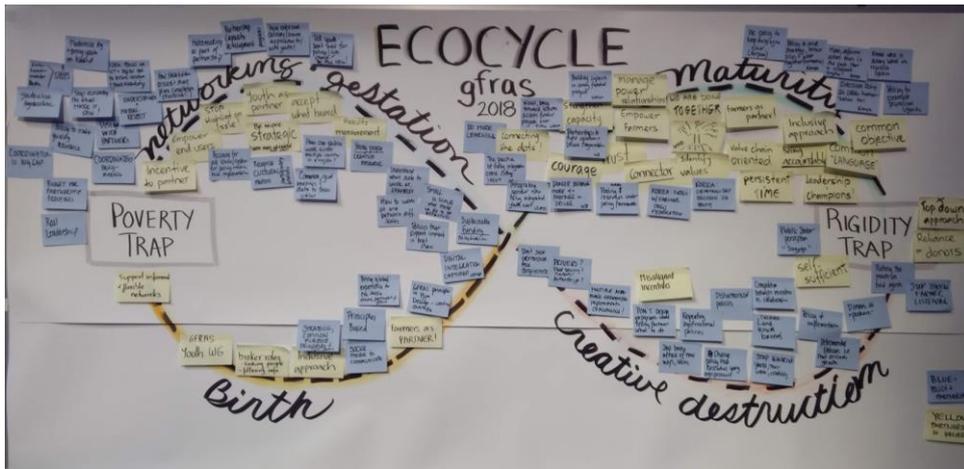
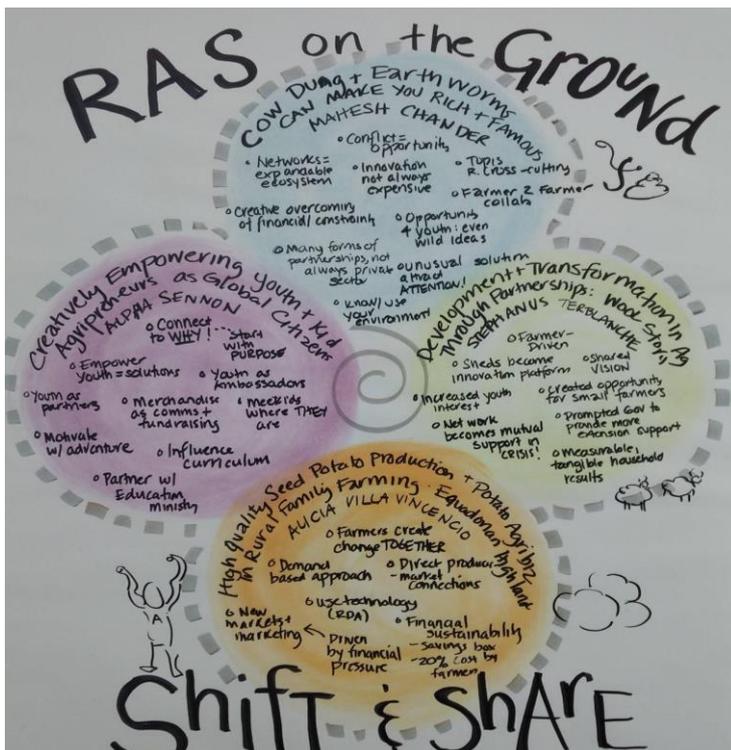


Figure 6 The Ecocycle after the panel discussions. The yellow stickers were brought out during the collaborative keynote while the blue ones result from the policy dialogue

4. Shift & Share and Parallel Sessions:

The afternoon of October 23rd hosted a shift & share session where four people offered short presentations on the following subjects:

1. Cow dung and earthworms can make you rich & famous, by Mahesh Chander.
2. Development and transformation in agriculture through partnerships; The wool story, by Stephanus Terblanche.
3. High-quality potato seed production and potato agribusiness in the rural family farming (AFC) Organizations in five provinces in the Ecuadorian Highland, by Alicia Villavicencio.
4. Creatively Empowering Youth and Kid Agripreneurs as global citizens to achieve food and nutrition security by 2050, by Alpha Sennon.



Shift & Share was chosen as a quick and effective method to share innovations and ideas because it replaces large-group presentations with several concise descriptions made simultaneously to small groups. Four stations were thus set-up in the room and presenters were asked to expose in seven minutes their ideas on the role of partnerships in RAS in front of a group of participants. Presenters then hosted questions from the participants for another seven minutes.

Figure 7 Summary of the various presentations during the Shift & Share session

As small groups moved from one innovator's station to another, their small size made it easy for people to connect with the innovator/presenter. It allowed them to quickly learn where and how new ideas are being used and how they might be adapted to their own situations.

Participants were later invited to join one of three parallel sessions. Each session included three parts: First, a panel discussion gave content/food for thought before small group discussions were encouraged to stimulate interaction, learning and generating ideas as well as potential next steps. Finally, each small group shared their conclusions with the whole group. Each of the three sessions ended up adapting this process on the spot based on their topic, number of participants and working with what emerged in the group.

Smart Technologies for effective Partnerships in RAS:

The session began with a panel discussion with Professor Elliot Zwane, Dr.Saravanan Raj and Fernando Barrera Arenas ([link to handouts](#)). They set the stage by sharing perspectives on what smart technologies meant to them and their experiences in applying them. Elliot Zwane came with a different view to Saravanan Raj and Fernando Barrera Arenas, that smart technologies are not

Recommendations & Ideas :

- *Increase capacity of RAS actors as well as farmers in using technology*
- *Getting the private sector involved in the provision of RAS*
- *Policy development*
- *Technologies for forecasting, market conditions as well as climate change*
- *Gathering data on preferences etc. in order to make better recommendations in the future*

just hardware (the tangible object) but the software, which in his perspective referred to the way of working with partners, i.e. the use of this tangible object. The speakers concluded the session with their 10times bolder idea. Then small groups discussed "if you were ten times bolder, what ideas and a first step would you recommend for incorporating Smart Technologies for effective partnerships in RAS?"

Innovative financing toward effective RAS:

This session explored how the shift from supply-driven to demand-driven financing, but also new challenges can positively affect RAS. The channeling of new technologies or the arrival of new players are disruptive forces that force traditional RAS to be transformed to better meet farmers' needs. Due to the complexity of the finance topic, more time was spent on the exposition of the issues versus the breakout groups. Magdalena Blum provided an overview of key changes in how extension is financed and briefly showcased several case studies conducted by the FAO. Mahesh Chander explained the opportunity that Corporate Social Responsibility funds (in India) may present for

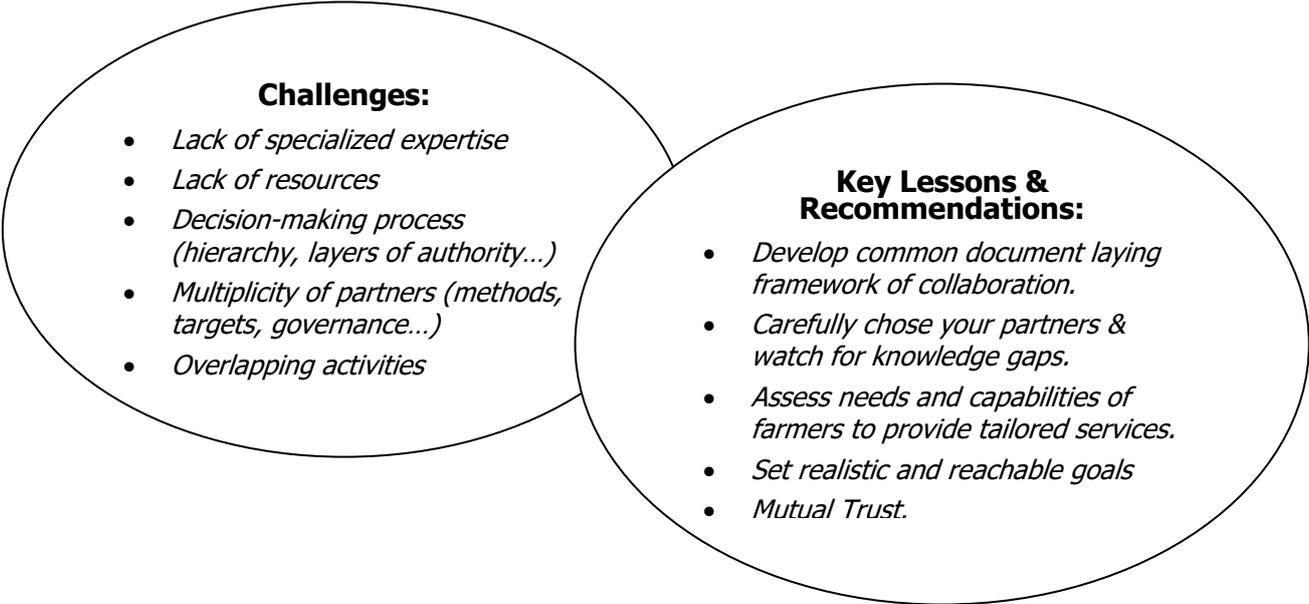
Next Steps:

- *Learn to speak the language of potential investors*
- *Don't ask for money – Tell investors how services provided by RAS will help achieve their goals*
- *Learn to present the value proposition of RAS*
- *Pursue opportunities to meet and speak face to face*
- *Together, identify the Win-Win of working together (RAS, investors, private sector, other stakeholders)*

extension and Jia Xiangping ([link to handouts](#)) talked about impact and blended investments. The participants elected which of these three topics they wanted to explore further by meeting with the respective presenter. Some of the challenges identified during this session relate to the difficulty to attribute outcomes to RAS, as success in RAS is not necessarily quantifiably measurable.

Convergence through collaboration and coordination in RAS:

Participants in this third session tried to identify the different actors in RAS, their interest, and where synergies and overlaps are? It wished to give practical examples of the key opportunities and challenges identified in the collaboration and coordination between different actors in RAS. Among other, key questions were also focused on the opportunities to be seized and scaled, and how can challenges be overcome; what capacities are needed on different levels to do so, and how can those capacities be built. While RAS actors can often be faced with limited resources (financial and human) to develop their activities, sharing those resources can prove itself cost and time effective. Elaborating on the definition of partnership offered by Kristin Davis in the panel discussion, participants agreed that partnership can be based on cooperation, in which each party brings something different to the table while acting towards a common goal. Another way to create partnerships is through collaboration, where actors bring forces and resources together to accomplish a shared outcome. Due to the small number of participants in that session, presentations from Norma Samuel, Amira Mahmoud, Margaret Mangheni and Brian Tairea ([link to handouts](#)) were first debated within a Fish Bowl process before breaking into smaller groups and considering the key elements of cooperation, collaboration and partnerships previously mentioned.



5. Achievements, Goals and Recommendations within networks and fora

Network	Goals to be achieved until GFRAS Annual Meeting 2019
AESA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing collaborative programs at the country/sub-regional levels with other organizations and other stakeholders • promoting more cross learning with regional networks
AFAAS :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussing and agreed to establish systems and mechanism for sustainability and legitimacy including sustainable financing • strengthening strategic communication knowledge management and visibility among network members • rolling out activities in detail in generating packaging and disseminating contents on cross-cutting and emerging issues (youth, climate change) • strengthening issues of professionalization of AEAS-NELK, through strategic partnerships
APIRAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthening of APIRAS, sub-regional networks, and country fora • capacity development • strengthening participation of youth, women, and farmers • IFAD phase II (five more countries to be covered) • building strategic partnerships with various partners at different network levels
CAC-FRAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthening CAC-FRAS as a sub-regional organization • strengthening youth participation in the network • strengthening country fora and involve Ministry of Agriculture to the network
CAEPNET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • launching CAEPNET Youth team • establishing three more Country Fora • creating more strategic partnerships, i.e., in higher education
EUFRAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working on network-identity strategy • promoting and be open to new cooperation between networks • fully exploiting the network's potential
MELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revising MELA Chapter • developing proposals to attract funds in supporting activities and 1 full-time staff for MELA • organizing the 5th Annual Meeting in Vietnam, 2019 • updating activities on Facebook page
MENA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collaborating with North-Africa offices • building Country Fora's capacity
PIRAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • socializing and implementing NELK with Universities • establishing one additional country forum • developing national extension policy
RELASER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working on a knowledge management platform • strengthening of the Country Fora • professionalization of RAS • evaluation of capacities and competencies • establishing a partnership with CAEPNET and other thematic partnerships • creating operating guidelines for Country Fora
RESCAR-AOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hosting 4th Africa Agricultural Extension Week and sub-regional meeting • holding General Assembly • translating NELK Module • facilitating synergies among different RAS initiatives • establishing additional sub-regional Technical working group • online debate on youth and RAS issues • developing partnership with private sector and resource mobilization strategies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finalizing network’s strategic plan • building capacity of extension worker at each country level
RICKI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-orienting strategy to focus on “Social Entrepreneurship” development • following-up on Entrepreneurship & Transformation (E&T) 2018 in Beijing • collaborating with regional network in Asia and increase workshop participation in China • strengthening relations and cooperation with innovative private sectors
SARFAAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resource mobilization and advocacy to put systems in place • using professionalization to strengthen country fora • developing knowledge management system

6. Field trips

On Wednesday 24 October, participants had the opportunity to go on field trips. Five full-day visits were organized by RDA. A presentation by the head of Korea’s Rural Development Administration (RDA) helped to understand the Korean success story before going to the field trips.

Korea’s Extension System



Figure 8 A presentation on the extension services in Korea.

The Rural Development Administration (RDA) at the national level, Agricultural Research and Extension Services at the provincial level, and Agricultural Extension Center at the city/county level were visited to learn about how the government leads the research-extension system for dissemination of advanced technology. Participants visited the National Institute of horticulture and Herbal Science, responsible for developing new technologies in horticulture crops & herbal crops. At the Jeollabuk-do Agricultural Research & Extension Services, participants were exposed to

the planning, discovering and disseminating of rural development projects according to different regional characteristics. Finally, at the Gimje-Si Agricultural Technology Center, participants discussed the dissemination of R&D achievements by the RDA and the Agricultural Technology Institute.

Value chain

This field trip provided a learning experience on the value chain approach. Places visited included an agricultural product processing center, a local food store, a small scaled start-up farm, and an

educational farm. At The Gunsan-Si Agricultural Technology Center, participants were exposed to the control towers of local agriculture, such as technical support for strengthening the competitiveness of local agriculture and farmers. Moving to the Processing Center, participants witnessed how products headed towards the commercialization of agricultural processed foods, supply for school meals and a local food store. After visiting an educational farm and a local food store where it is the farmers who determine the prices, the visit was concluded at a small-scale start-up farm, which was awarded the best prize in an idea contest for agro-food processing in 2015. This family business showed that small scale agro-industries that use materials produced locally stimulate development in the community. A key learning from here was the importance of supporting farmers and other value chain actors to patent their innovations.



Figure 9: Field trip (Value chain)

Smart-Farming

This field trip included a visit to a smart-farming research and test-bed using ICT in RDA and outstanding smart-farm. Also, the fourth industrial revolution, such as ICT application case in farming and development plan of smart-farming, was showcased.



Figure 10 Exhibition of ICT tools

Participants were exposed to the status of Korean Smart Farm R&D, and were able to grasp the quick measurement technology of crop growing information, artificial intelligence engines, and ICT-based customized cloud big-data systems. The visit continued with a visit to the Buyeo-gun Agricultural Technology Center, where the RDA works on the dissemination of agricultural technologies that it researches and develops. Two farms were visited: a rural education farm (roof tile village), and a smart-farming center (Udeumji), with major facilities for an environmental control system, a hydroponic cultivation facility, air heat pump, amongst many others.

Rural youth



Figure 11 Engaging youth in RAS

The training program for fostering rural youth and encouraging them to engage in agriculture was introduced through this field visit to the Korea National College of Agriculture and Fisheries, and a visit to a successful rural youth's farm producing traditional snacks and breeding livestock.

At the National College, participants saw the program and facilities where professional farmers and fishermen are trained with knowledge, skills, and international awareness for the development of rural areas, and continued with a visit to the Namwon-Si Agricultural Technology Center, an institute that provides technology guidance for farmers through new technology and empirical research projects. In the area of landscaping, participants went to Gwanhanlu (Namwon-Si), a representative garden often considered the mother of Korea's unique landscaping style. The visit was concluded at a Young Farmers Farm, where they had the opportunity to understand the history and tradition of Korean traditional snacks.

Farmers' groups

A visit to the farmer's study group and Korea Extension Specialist's group that are operating self-learning activities for farmer and extension agents. The various studies on income generating model of farmer's group and organizational characteristics were discussed. Also, the activity of Korean Rural Leaders Central Association, Rural Women Leader's Federation and 4-H.

At the Rural Human Resources Development Center, participants discussed how to foster expertise in the fields of agricultural research, extensionist and administrative civil servants for preventive response to agricultural environment changes and future industrialization. The day also included discussions on a group study for apples, especially focused on pest control and increasing productivity, a distribution center, and, finally, a model local community (Sol-ti rice-cake village), an awarded facility where the RDA cooperates in the promotion of public relations through the support of agriculture-related rice cake industry development project.



Figure 12: Field trip (Farmers' groups)

7. Market Place

During the whole event, a market place was set up for participants willing to expose various information on their activities. A list of the different presenters can be found on the [meeting website](#).

8. Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, participants were satisfied with the Annual Meeting as a space to exchange, share ideas and experiences, learn from each other and strengthen partnerships. According to the participants, the three objectives of identifying good practices, defining ways to build necessary capacities and outlining the roles and capacities needed by GFRAS and its regional networks were generally fulfilled⁵. The inclusion of smart technologies and ICTs in the Korean agriculture system were often noticed and the key role played by the public sector was identified as a (context-dependent) good practice by participants.

They have also recognized the positive role of knowledge sharing, the empowerment of local farmers, efficient communication and bottom-up approaches in building the necessary capacities to strengthen partnerships. Finally, through the evaluation form and during the crowdsourcing session a final call was made, to improve transparency within GFRAS, attract and invite more farmers and young people to attend the Annual Meeting.

The 9th GFRAS Annual Meeting closed with concluding thoughts from Xiangping Ji and David Nielson, who then read the Jeonju Declaration:

“We, more than 152 participants, comprising extension practitioners from public, private and civil society organizations, farmers’ organizations, policymakers and representatives of the agricultural research and development community, academia, the private sector, donor agencies, and financial institutions from 56 countries; congregated at the Rural Development Administration in Jeonju, Korea, from 22 to 25 October 2018 for the 9th GFRAS Annual Meeting under the theme *“Addressing Challenges and Seizing Opportunities: Developing Effective Partnerships in Rural Advisory Services (RAS)”*. Concerned on the role and importance of RAS globally:

We hereby call upon all key stakeholders - including governments, extension professionals, farmers’ organizations, regional and global bodies, the private sector, civil society, development partners and donors - to work together to:

- Invest innovatively and continuously in RAS as an effective means to eliminate poverty and hunger,
- Strengthen the role of the public sector in providing RAS effectively and efficiently (as has been demonstrated in countries such as Korea and Vietnam), and create enabling

⁵ From the Evaluation form, participants assessed on average 4/5, 3.8/5 and 3.9/5 the achievements of the respective objectives.

environments for leveraging partnerships among and between RAS actors for sustainable rural livelihoods.

- Reinforce partnerships among RAS actors nationally, regionally, and globally, taking advantage of information and communication technologies, and
- Enable the young generation to contribute to the future development of sustainable agriculture and rural society.”

Dated this 25th of October, 2018

Jeonju, Korea

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