

# Annual Report 2011



GFRAS is the *Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services*. Its **mission** is to provide advocacy and leadership on pluralistic, demand-driven rural advisory services. GFRAS does this in the context of the global development agenda, with a goal of promoting sustainable growth and reducing poverty.

## Impressum

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**“The biggest gap in extension and advisory services is knowledge sharing.”**

## Foreword



Agriculture continues to play a crucial role in sustaining the livelihoods of rural farmers. However many challenges exist in agriculture and rural development today, including climate change, uncertain markets and volatile food price, natural resource depletion, and environmental degradation. Rural advisory services (RAS) are pivotal in supporting communities to deal with challenges and seize opportunities to improve their livelihoods. While there is renewed interest in agriculture and rural development globally, there is still limited attention to and understanding of rural advisory services and their contribution to poverty reduction and growth.

In a bid to highlight the critical role of the RAS in agricultural development, the RAS community resolved to form a platform, following several years of demand from stakeholders in RAS worldwide, including the Neuchâtel Initiative. The platform was designed to give the RAS community the space to have a voice, advocate, provide leadership, serve as a knowledge management hub, and assure the RAS integration in agricultural innovation systems. The Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), which was started in January 2010, has therefore been formed to fulfil this demand.

GFRAS has already provided the space for advisory services worldwide, acting as a filter through which critical voice moves from the RAS community to international development institutions. GFRAS continues to provide leadership in innovative approaches and advocacy on pluralistic, demand-driven rural advisory services that promote rural growth and help the poor within the global development agenda. In line with the subsidiarity principle, GFRAS supports the institutional development of the RAS regional networks to meet regional needs, enabling them elaborate their own strategies and work plans in line with the GFRAS long-term strategic framework. The major networks in existence include: African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (APIRAS), and the Latin America Network for Rural Extension Services (RELASER), along with several sub-regional fora. Each network has its own demand-driven structure and operations.

This annual report marks another milestone in GFRAS life, against its well-articulated vision of seeing rural advisory services effectively contributing to the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty worldwide. While recognising that there are many challenges to this course, its quick

successes should be recognised right from Assisi (Italy), Chile, and recent RAS gathering in Nairobi–Kenya, and many of its other outputs. I wish to reaffirm the commitment of my steering committee in ensuring strong institutional development and the success of this important organisation to enable it to achieve its objectives. I likewise call upon all stakeholders and development partners to sustain their commitment and support to this endeavour.

**Dr. Silim M. Nahdy**

Chair, Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services

March, 2012

## Introducing GFRAS



I would like to tell you about GFRAS from the secretariat's perspective. In a nutshell, GFRAS is all about strengthening extension and rural advisory services (RAS) around the globe. We do this in three ways. Firstly, we communicate how critical RAS is to rural development and poverty reduction. Secondly, we produce and share evidence and information about how to improve advisory services. Thirdly, we strengthen extension services by helping people and organisations in RAS develop their capacities to do their jobs and run their organisations better.

In 2011 we have seen GFRAS consolidate and grow into a strong network. When we started in 2010, the global rural advisory services community was a smattering of disconnected people, organisations, and networks. In 2011 we have seen the consolidation of regional and sub-regional networks and the sharing of experiences at regional and global meetings.

In order to provide advocacy and leadership on rural advisory services around the globe, it is critical that GFRAS has strong networks and partners. The GFRAS approach to implementing our vision and mission can be summed up in the African proverb that says

**"If you want to go quickly, go alone.  
If you want to go far, go with others."**

**Kristin Davis**

Executive Secretary GFRAS

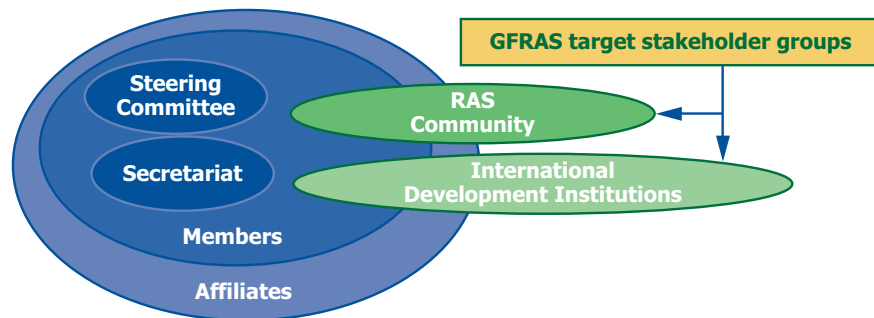
## How to Get Involved

The GFRAS community is made up of affiliates and members. Affiliates are individuals or organizations from all regions and sectors that are interested in RAS. Affiliation with GFRAS is open, informal, free of cost, and on an individual basis. Affiliates receive information and regular communication from the GFRAS secretariat and can attend the annual meeting. Affiliates should register on the GFRAS website at [www.g-fras.org](http://www.g-fras.org).

Members are organisations or institutions drawn from the affiliates at the invitation of GFRAS steering committee. Members commit to actively promoting GFRAS and its principles. They support monitoring and evaluating the forum in their region, and participate in working groups.

Another way to get involved with GFRAS is by joining a working group. Working groups are composed of a group of GFRAS affiliates or members actively working around a thematic topic, usually across regions and organisations. Working groups are formed on a demand-driven basis with the direction of the GFRAS steering committee. Working group members show a keen interest to regularly participate in the implementation and development of the GFRAS strategy and organisational development around their topic.

GFRAS working groups have a small core of people (5–10) who exchange over email and face-to-face on a topic to gain a common understanding, develop a concept note, prioritise an issue, engage with regions on that topic, and/or develop a product. Working groups often function as an advisory group to a consultant who is paid by GFRAS or by a collaborating organisation to develop a product. Results of the working groups are often shared at the GFRAS Annual Meeting and other relevant events in order to validate and promote the results.



## Duties of the Working Groups Include

- Making time available to respond to requests and provide inputs on specific content issues from the secretariat, consultants, or regional networks;
- Developing strategies, outreach, and deliverables on thematic issues;
- Providing inputs into discussions and strategy development at global, regional and national level;
- Making links to the regions or to specific interest groups and working closely with regional affiliates and members; and
- Implementing time-bound activities.

## In 2011 the Following Working Groups were Operational

- Capacity Strengthening
- Evaluation

You can find more information on the working groups and the contacts of the lead persons on the GFRAS website at [www.g-fras.org](http://www.g-fras.org). To become part of a GFRAS working group, please contact GFRAS with information about why you want to join and what you and your organisation can contribute to the group.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting

From 13–14 November 2011, the 2<sup>nd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting took place in Nairobi, Kenya, co-hosted by the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS). Nearly 140 stakeholders from more than 50 countries attended the event. The meeting focused on the functioning of GFRAS, especially in regards to networking, evaluation, advocacy, and capacity strengthening. More content-focused discussions took place at the subsequent international conference “Innovations in Extension and Advisory Services” that was co-organised by GFRAS in collaboration with a range of partner organisations.

Since the 1<sup>st</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting in Chile in 2010, GFRAS has been consolidated: Structures and a long-term strategic framework are in place, working groups are developing products, and a range of regional, sub-regional, and national networks have begun operating. The 2<sup>nd</sup> GFRAS annual meeting gave space to reflect on this process and to plan next steps.

### Networking

A major topic of the meeting was networking. Being a networking event itself, the 2<sup>nd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting it allowed participants to associate more closely both with GFRAS and the regional networks. The intense peer exchange facilitated the consolidation of existing networks and the creation of new rural advisory services (RAS) fora at sub-regional and national levels. The participants emphasised the importance of GFRAS in connecting the regional and sub-regional networks. They also called for sustainable and participatory structures in the networks that recognise diversity as an opportunity.

### Advocacy

The RAS networks not only want to facilitate exchange among RAS stakeholders, but to advocate for RAS among decision makers in all sectors and levels. The participants acknowledged the importance of advocacy and the need for a stronger commitment to it. They underlined the significance of representation of stakeholders from different sectors in RAS fora, and the creation and dissemination of evidence-based information on RAS. One example is the “Guide to Extension Evaluation” that GFRAS produced in 2011 (see page 26).

The attendees appreciated the high level of participation, the momentum they gained for their own commitments for RAS, and the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences with peers and potential partners. The event help to raise awareness on a variety of RAS subjects (e.g. demand-driven RAS, pluralism in RAS, monitoring and evaluation), and thus encouraged the participants to improve their own RAS activities at local or national level. As a network of RAS stakeholders, GFRAS requires the commitment of its members and affiliates to provide a voice for effective RAS in various regions, sectors, and geographic areas. The momentum created at the 2<sup>nd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting provides great potential for the implementation of the principles and approaches promoted by GFRAS.



## Achieving the GFRAS Mission and Vision

The GFRAS long-term strategic framework, outlines the GFRAS vision, mission, functions, and structure.

The **vision** of GFRAS is to see rural advisory services effectively contributing to the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty world-wide.

The **mission** of GFRAS is to provide advocacy and leadership on pluralistic, demand-driven rural advisory services within the global development agenda.

### GFRAS has Three Functions to Achieve its Vision and Mission

1. Providing a voice within global policy dialogues and promoting improved investment in RAS;
2. Supporting the development and synthesis of evidence-based approaches and policies for improving the effectiveness of RAS; and
3. Strengthening actors and fora in RAS through facilitating interaction and networking.

GFRAS cannot reach its vision and mission without partners, called target stakeholder groups. These are the institutions that GFRAS must collaborate with to bring about our vision and mission. There are two types of target stakeholder groups (see table).

Target stakeholder group:	RAS Community
Definition	Institutions working directly in RAS from the public, private, and civil society sectors
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS)</li><li>• Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (APIRAS)</li><li>• Latin America Rural Extension Network (RELASER)</li></ul>

Target stakeholder group:	International Development Institutions
Definition	Institutions that need to work more effectively with RAS to achieve overall rural development goals
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR), including CGIAR</li><li>• International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)</li><li>• Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</li><li>• The World Bank</li></ul>

The GFRAS mission can only be achieved if its target stakeholder groups develop and use more appropriate, sustainable, and effective policies, practices, and approaches through collaboration with GFRAS. This constitutes a change in behaviour, which GFRAS calls an “outcome”. The work of GFRAS is expected to lead to an overall outcome for each target stakeholder group (see Boxes 1 and 2).

1

#### Overall Outcome in Target Stakeholder Group A:

Within the **RAS community**, the expected overall outcome is that:

The **RAS community** is mobilised to proactively and effectively advocate and provide leadership among their stakeholders for a coherent, contextually relevant, and visionary RAS agenda within agricultural innovation systems at the national and regional levels; with access to support, knowledge, and interaction platforms for their advocacy and leadership efforts.

2

#### Overall Outcome in Target Stakeholder Group B:

Within the **international development institutions**, the expected overall outcome is that:

Actors and fora within **international development institutions** recognise the importance and role of RAS in contributing to their goals and are taking steps to integrate and support a coherent, contextually relevant, and visionary RAS agenda within their policies and programmes.

GFRAS achieves these outcomes using the three functions. Within each of the three functions, specific entry points are leveraged to fulfil the functions. Elements within the functions are cross-cutting and support each other (notably, functions 2 and 3 contribute to function 1).



### Function 1. Provide a Voice within Global Policy Dialogues and Promote Investment in RAS

GFRAS provides space for stakeholders in RAS to come together to discuss and promote the role of advisory services in agricultural development. The selected entry points for function 1 are:

- Spearhead efforts to increase clarity on the role of RAS for a coherent, contextually relevant, and visionary RAS agenda at various levels
- Achieve representation and participation of RAS stakeholders in important national, regional, and global fora and high-level meetings within agricultural development
- Convene and foster experience sharing, peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, and other learning events

### Function 2. Support the Development and Synthesis of Evidence-Based Approaches and Policies

GFRAS supports evidence-based approaches and policies in rural advisory services. These policies and approaches must address areas of core concern for improved RAS that work to achieve development goals such as food security, environmental and natural resource management, climate change adaptation and mitigation, agricultural research for development, education, and pro-poor growth. GFRAS will collect and disseminate existing evidence-based data but also provide means for generating new data where needed.

This leads to the following entry points:

- Enhance access to information on RAS data, principles, approaches, results, good practices, and policies
- Create evidence through fostering coordination and producing guides, reports, tools, and briefs on relevant RAS approaches and policies

### Function 3. Strengthen Actors and Fora in RAS through Networking and Interaction

It is important that RAS stakeholders meet and exchange ideas and experiences of the results they have achieved in serving smallholder clients, to strengthen capacity at the individual, organisational, institutional, and network levels. The entry points for function 3 are:

- Support and energise capacity strengthening programmes and activities in RAS
- Guide actors and fora to develop more appropriate approaches and policies informed by results, and to advocate on behalf of RAS (in part through elaborating good principles and guidance for approaches and policies and spearheading policy and position statements)
- Support the creation, improvement, and consolidation of regional networks and fora on RAS and integrate regional actors and fora into GFRAS (as affiliates, members, or steering committee members), including support for exchange

Each function and the related entry points will lead to specific outcomes in the target stakeholder groups, and the specific outcomes will in turn contribute to the overall general outcome for each of the stakeholder groups. The full GFRAS long-term strategic framework can be downloaded from the website at [www.g-fras.org](http://www.g-fras.org).

## Country Fora in Africa

At the base of the structure and operations of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) lies a network of "Country Fora". A Country Forum (CF) brings together a wide range of actors involved in or benefitting from extension and agricultural advisory services (AAS) in a specific AFAAS member country. The forum serves as a sharing platform for knowledge, ideas, and experiences. It is a space to discuss and promote new approaches, innovations, and best practices in agricultural production and advisory services. It also provides a mechanism to connect to the regional and global level, which opens even more opportunities and access routes to additional information.

The role of AFAAS is to facilitate the formation of Country Fora and align their strategies and programmes with the AFAAS strategic objectives and the principles of the Framework for African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP).

The gathering of many different stakeholders (see box) also allows a better coordination of existing and development of new extension activities. As the country fora evolve they will provide leadership for the overall development of effective AAS in the countries. For example they will provide a voice for AAS in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) processes. It is therefore crucial that the Country Fora participants represent the stakeholders in a fair and transparent way.

### Key Elements in Establishing a Country Forum Include but are not Limited to

- Alignment to FAAP principles
- Facilitation and capacity building
- Supporting processes for strengthening existing interests and initiatives in terms of creating networks and links among AAS partners
- Anchoring in the particularity of the country and its institutions
- Changing processes for future development and learning in the networks and among the partners through use of appropriate frameworks and methodologies such as outcome mapping.

Each Country Forum has a focal point person, who is a volunteer professional in key AAS institutions of a country. A focal person has founded competencies in AAS, expresses a strong interest in attaching the country forum to AFAAS, and is selected and appointed by the other stakeholders in the countries.

The role of the country focal points many include, among others: leading the establishment of AFAAS CF in the country and acting as the contact point for AFAAS and the AFAAS secretariat. The focal points are the contacts for AFAAS and the secretariat and will lead the process of establishment of the CF in the country. When the process has been initiated and more focal points are present in a country, it could be relevant for the interested stakeholders to appoint an interim steering committee that will lead the process further towards a full establishment in the country. The interim steering committee would then take over the roles of the focal points.



## Who are the Stakeholders in Agricultural Advisory Services (AAS)?

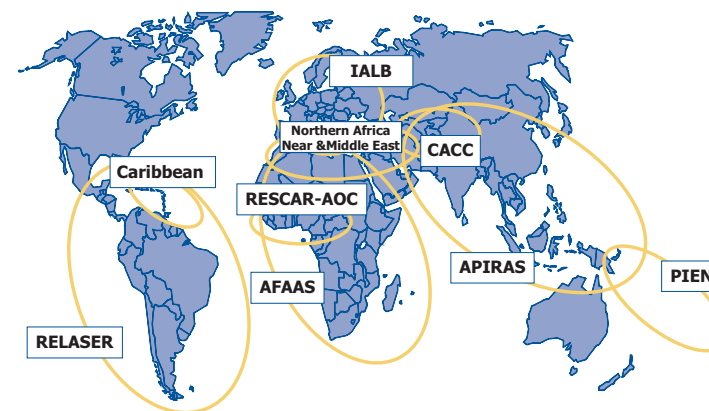
- AAS providers and agencies
- Ministries of agriculture (and related ministries)
- Farmer organizations and commodity associations
- Civil society groups
- Private agribusiness firms providing AAS
- Agricultural research institutions
- Agricultural extension education institutions
- End users (farmers, pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, and agribusinesses)
- Professional associations
- Mass media organizations involved in dissemination of agricultural information
- Microfinance institutions and banks
- Development partners
- Policy makers

Based on the principle of subsidiarity, the Country Fora are autonomous bodies for the countries AAS stakeholders and led by them. Therefore there is no common recipe for how they can be composed, hosted, funded, or managed. However, as they are linked to AFAAS as network partners, they need to align to AFAAS objectives and FAAP principles.

In conjunction with the international conference on extension and advisory services and the 2<sup>nd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting, the AFAAS secretariat in collaboration with GFRAS held a Country Fora workshop and showcasing event on 11–12 November 2011. This event was attended by 31 participants from 13 countries including those that have initiated the process of establishing Country Fora (Benin, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana) and those that have expressed interest in establishing a country forum (Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zimbabwe). The objective of the workshop was to strengthen the capacities of the participating countries so that they can develop their strategic plans and formulate work plans.

## The Regional RAS Networks

The regional RAS networks are the major GFRAS “clienteles”. They promote the ideas and principles of GFRAS on the regional level and use the inputs from GFRAS for their own initiatives. The activities and experiences of the regional networks are fed back into GFRAS and therefore the other regional networks benefit from a south-south exchange which contributes to the further development of RAS principles and approaches. Many of the GFRAS activities in 2011 were aimed at consolidating and strengthening the regional networks to contribute to rural development.



### AFAAS, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services

Founding year	2004
Member countries	36
AFAAS Secretariat	Plot 22A, Nakasero Road PO Box 34624 Kampala, Uganda Telephone +256-31-2-313400 info@afaas-africa.org www.afaas-africa.org



AFAAS' mission is to promote lesson learning and add value to initiatives in agricultural advisory services through sharing of information and increased professional interaction. AFAAS has the mandate to implement the agricultural advisory services aspects of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). CAADP is an Africa-owned and Africa-led initiative through which interventions to transform agriculture are coordinated.

In 2011 AFAAS established 7 new Country Fora in Africa (see page 12).

AFAAS publications in 2011:

- Van Weperen, W. 2011. Market-oriented agricultural advisory services (MOAAS): Guidelines for setting MOAAS pilots. Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.
- Mangheni, M. N. 2011. A review of case studies on targeting women advisory service providers in capacity development programmes. Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.
- Lamboll R., Nelson V. and Nathaniels N. 2011. Emerging approaches for responding to climate change in African agricultural advisory services: Challenges, opportunities and recommendations for an AFAAS climate change response strategy. Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.
- AFAAS. 2011a. Establishing and strengthening of AFAAS Country Forums: Guidelines. Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.
- AFAAS. 2011b. Concept and learning framework for the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS). Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.

AFAAS events in 2011:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> AFAAS-Symposium, 12–14 April 2011, Accra, Ghana. “Going beyond Production: Agriculture for Smallholders”. The event focused on market oriented agricultural advisory services (MOAAS), value chain approaches, gender mainstreaming, climate change, and the use of information technologies in advisory services. 150 participants
- AFAAS Country Fora Workshop and Showcase Day, 11–12 November 2011, Nairobi, Kenya: The event presented the recent developments and successes of the different AFAAS Country Fora. 31 participants
- Country Fora Stakeholders Meetings in Nigeria, Malawi, Uganda, and Sierra Leone

### APIRAS, Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network

Founding year	2011
Members/participant:	27 institutions, 35 individual members
Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas	GFRAS Coordinator for Asia-Pacific Islands Institute of Governance and Rural Development College of Public Affairs University of the Philippines Los Baños College 4031 Laguna, Philippines apirasnetwork@hotmail.com www.apirasnetwork.org



APIRAS' mission is to offer the most extensive and updated knowledge and learning systems (K&LS) for agricultural extension/rural advisory services

in the region. It envisions to become the recognized leader in promoting improved and expanded agriculture support services and contributes to the reduction of poverty and hunger in Asia and the Pacific Islands for ecologically sustainable rural livelihoods using its strong network of rural advisory services. It and is an influential advocate for continuous progressive policy reform.

Significant Event/s in 2011:

- Regional Forum on Strengthening Rural Advisory Services in Asia Pacific Islands, 14–15 September 2011, SEARCA, Manila, Philippines. The regional forum enabled participants to draft the vision, mission, goals and strategy of APIRAS for further validation by the network. The meeting also identified sub-regional nodes for West Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific Islands.

### RELASER, Latin America Network for Rural Extension Services

Founding year	2010
Member/participants	35
RELASER	c/o Rimisp – Centro Latinoamericano para el Desarrollo Rural Oficina Central Huelén 10, Piso 6 Providencia, Santiago – Chile. Telephone 56-22-364557 Rimisp@rimisp.org www.relaser.org



RELASER develops mechanisms of collaboration and opportunities for dialogue and learning to strengthen extension systems in Latin America through cooperation, exchange of information, and knowledge. RELASER wants to contribute to improved competitiveness and sustainability of the agricultural and agri-food sector as well as of the rural areas by strengthening rural extension as part of an innovation system.

RELASER publications in 2011:

- Alarcón, E. 2011. Institutionalised rural extension and private-public partnerships in Latin America. Policy Brief. Santiago, Chile: RELASER.
- Báez, L. 2011. Rural extension as an inclusive approach for rural development. Policy Brief. Santiago, Chile: RELASER.
- Romero, L. 2011. Rural extension as part of an innovation system. Policy Brief. Santiago, Chile: RELASER.

RELASER events in 2011:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Latin America and Caribbean Meeting on Rural Extension Services, 26–28 September 2011, Managua, Nicaragua. The meeting was a space for sharing a common vision about rural extension and to identify priority themes to be worked in the medium term. 83 participants

### CACC, Central Asia and Caucasus Countries Network for RAS

CACC is an informal network of extension professionals in central Asia and the Caucasus countries that meet once a year to exchange experiences and share knowledge. In 2011 over 40 people from seven countries gathered on 4–6 October 2011 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> CACC meeting. It was focused on the topic of “Monitoring and Evaluation of AAS Activities, for Learning and Impact”. The group welcomed the GFRAS Guide to evaluating rural extension and discussed its application in their local contexts.

### PIEN, Pacific Islands Extension Network

Founding year	2005
Members/participants	all 22 Pacific island member countries of SPC
Emil Adams	Coordinator, Information, Communication, and Extension Land Resources Division Secretariat of the Pacific Community SPC Private Mail Bag Phone +679 3370 733 Fax +679 3370 021 emila@spc.int www.spc.int



SPC Land Resources Division

PIEN was established in 2005 at the meeting of heads of extension and information held in Tonga. Also attending this inaugural meeting of extension officials were representatives from academia, research, NGOs, farmer associations, and youth. As the name suggests, PIEN is the platform for stakeholders to network to share knowledge, information, and experiences where government extension links to alternative extension providers to reach rural communities. The PIEN Secretariat is based at Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Suva with donor partners CTA, IFAD, and FAO. PIEN is the platform to link to APIRAS and GFRAS for capacity development. PIEN members need funding in capacity strengthening in RAS delivery. In December 2011 PIEN held a training workshop on the use of web 2.0 tools (partnering with FAO and CTA).

## Emerging networks

### Caribbean

The Caribbean is closely linked to the Latin American Network for Rural Extension Services (RELASER). In 2011, representation from the Caribbean attended two meetings initiated by RELASER in Panama and Nicaragua to discuss collaborations.

The Caribbean extension network will have to walk a different road to the Latin American partners while maintaining close collaboration. This is due to the language barrier and the culture and farming systems in the Caribbean, which are quite different from most of Latin America.

Three coordinators of the Caribbean activities attended the GFRAS Annual Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in November 2011, and actively contributed to discussions. In 2012, the plan is to make all extension directors in the Caribbean aware of GFRAS, its activities and benefits of collaboration with other networks. At present the focal points for the Caribbean are Wayne Ganpat [wayne.ganpat@sta.uwi.edu](mailto:wayne.ganpat@sta.uwi.edu) and David Dolly [farmdavid42@hotmail.com](mailto:farmdavid42@hotmail.com)

### Réseau des Services de Conseil Agricole et Rural des Pays Francophones d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre (RESCAR-AOC)

The francophone Western and Central African RAS-Network (RECAR-AOC) aims to improve the efficiency and sustainability of RAS and to ensure a better participation of French speaking countries in meetings, development and implementation of RAS related initiatives. It works closely in synergy with other RAS forums mainly AFAAS and GFRAS respectively at continental and global levels. RESCAR-AOC is an emerging network and invites all interested RAS professionals to join. Its concept note developed in 2011 was validated in February 2012. A meeting to harmonize strategies with AFAAS, CORAF and other stakeholders is scheduled in June in Burkina Faso. The official inaugural meeting of the network is planned for the third quarter of 2012. The contact person for RESCAR-AOC is Patrice Djamen, Burkina Faso, [djamenana@yahoo.fr](mailto:djamenana@yahoo.fr)

Further, there were several additional sub-regional networks in the process of forming in 2011:

- Near/Middle East and North Africa
- South Asia
- Europe: Erich Waldmeier, Switzerland, [ewaldmeier@bluewin.ch](mailto:ewaldmeier@bluewin.ch)

## Guide to Extension Evaluation

RAS are critical to improving rural livelihoods. However, they do not always operate as well as they should and can be improved in many ways. Therefore we need to monitor and evaluate these services in all of their complexity. Monitoring and evaluating will both provide evidence and provide lessons on how to improve the services. The importance of good evaluations of RAS is well-recognised, but stakeholders have little guidance on how to go about doing a good evaluation.

Based on demand and the large gap in this knowledge on how to do good evaluations of extension and advisory services, GFRAS has developed a Guide to Extension Evaluation. This contributes to the GFRAS function of providing evidence-based approaches and policies to improve the effectiveness of RAS.

The purpose of the Guide is to support those involved in extension evaluation to choose how to conduct more comprehensive, rigorous, credible, and useful evaluations. The Guide supports readers to understand different types of evaluation, to make decisions on what is most appropriate for their circumstances, and to access further sources of theoretical and practical information.

### The Guide is Intended to Primarily be Used by Four Sets of Evaluation Stakeholders

- Those commissioning and managing evaluations
- Professional evaluators and staff responsible for monitoring systems
- Professionals involved in training and educating evaluators
- Researchers looking for ways to synergise their efforts with evaluation initiatives

The process of preparing the Guide began in 2010 with the production of a Review of Literature on Evaluation Methods Relevant to Extension and a Meta-evaluation of Extension Case Studies. These materials, combined with extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders, were then used to as background for the development of a draft version. During 2011 the draft version was downloaded over 1000 times, 250 number of copies were distributed, and feedback was collected in face-to-face meetings and interviews selected professionals from all over the world. Their feedback helped to finalise the Guide to Extension Evaluation. The publication can be downloaded from the GFRAS website [www.g-fras.org](http://www.g-fras.org).



## Financial Report

GFRAS was supported in 2011 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the European Commission (EC), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Table 1 shows the income in 2011 by donor.

**Table 1. Financial contributions realised in 2011**

Contributor	Amount in USD
BMGF	302 699
EC	133 737
IFAD	185 788
SDC	532 100
USAID	209 010
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 363 334</b>

Because the contributions by donors are not necessarily in sync with the calendar year, the financial contributions in Table 1 do not necessarily reflect the total contracts with the donors. Rather, the table shows the actual income in 2011. Also, some 2011 expenses will be accounted for in 2012 due to the funding cycles.

**Table 2. Expenditures in 2011**

Line Item	Amount in USD
Staff time	427 027
Meetings, conferences, and events	150 765
Consultants and special projects	372 442
Travel	36 846
Support to regional networks	63 619
Publications, web site, and communications	39 981
Other costs	6 930
Management fees and overhead	158 104
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 255 714</b>
Net profit/loss	+107 620

Unspent contributions were returned or rolled over into 2012.

### Audit

The GFRAS accounting is integrated in the accounting of its host AGRIDEA and as such is submitted to a yearly audit. Further contributions are audited as requested by some donors. The audit in 2011 was done by the Financial Administration of the Canton of Thurgau, Switzerland. The auditors found that the GFRAS bookkeeping was consistent with the AGRIDEA accounting and the expenditures were within the budgets established.

## Where is GFRAS heading in 2012 and beyond?

In 2012, GFRAS will build on the work of 2011. In 2011 GFRAS engaged with various target stakeholder groups and participated in events that allowed GFRAS to increase clarity on the role of rural advisory services. GFRAS co-organised and co-funded the large international conference on innovations in extension and advisory services in Nairobi (November 2011) with key global and regional partners. In 2012 GFRAS will work to promote the conference proceedings and Nairobi Declaration that resulted from the conference.

In 2012 the GFRAS community will continue to provide a voice for rural advisory services at key regional and global events. The GFRAS Annual Meeting will move to Asia in 2012, co-hosted by the Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services (APIRAS) Network in Manila, 26–28 September.

GFRAS will focus on enhancing access to information on evidence-based approaches and policies while continuing to create new evidence. And GFRAS will continue to promote the strengthening of capacities of individuals, organisations, and systems of agricultural extension.

### GFRAS will focus on the following priority areas in 2012:

1. Bringing coherent and credible RAS voice to the Second Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) and accompanying consultation process, especially with regards to partnerships with other actors in the agricultural innovation system, and in “foresighting” the capacities needed by the “new” extension agents, organisations, and systems.
2. Providing frameworks for the collection of global good practices in RAS and for the in-depth evaluations of extension programmes and systems.
3. Developing regional strategies and work plans that are integrated into regional processes.

In addition to these areas, GFRAS is starting to engage in global fora discussing climate change, food and nutrition security, and the use of ICTs for rural development. In these and other emerging areas GFRAS will elucidate the role of RAS, collect and share evidence on good practices of RAS actors working on these issues, and strengthen the capacities of RAS actors to engage in these arenas.

## GFRAS Publications in 2011

AFAAS, 2011a. Establishing and strengthening of AFAAS Country Forums: Guidelines. Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.

AFAAS, 2011b. Concept and learning framework for the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS). Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.

Alarcón, E. 2011. Nota de Política - Institucionalidad de la Extensión Rural y las Relaciones Público Privadas, Santiago, Chile: RELASER.

Báez Lacayo Linda 2011. Nota de Política - Extensión Rural con Enfoque Inclusivo. Santiago, Chile: RELASER.

Escobar, G. 2011. Rural extension with a focus on participation and market: Towards a conceptual frame. Santiago, Chile: RELASER.

GFRAS 2011. Guide to evaluating rural extension. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

GFRAS 2011. Rural advisory services worldwide: A synthesis of actors and issues. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

GFRAS 2011. Cinco áreas esenciales para movilizar el potencial de los servicios de asesoría rural. Resumen Informativo # 1. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

GFRAS 2011. Cinq domaines clés pour mobiliser le potentiel des services de conseil rural. Note de Synthèse #1. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

Lamboll R., Nelson V. and Nathaniels N. 2011. Emerging approaches for responding to climate change in African agricultural advisory services: Challenges, opportunities and recommendations for an AFAAS climate change response strategy. Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.

Mangheni, M. N. 2011. A review of case studies on targeting women advisory service providers in capacity development programmes. Kampala: AFAAS and Accra: FARA.

Martin, A., Günde, S., Apenteng, E., and Pound, B. 2011. Review of literature on evaluation methods relevant to extension. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

Pound, B., Günde, S., Martin, A., and Apenteng, E. 2011. Meta-evaluation of extension evaluation: Case studies. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

Lamboll R., Nelson V. and Nathaniels N. 2011. Emerging approaches for responding to climate change in African agricultural advisory services: Challenges, opportunities and recommendations for an AFAAS climate change response strategy. AFAAS. Kampala, Uganda

Romero, L. 2011. Nota de Política – Extensión Rural como parte de un Sistema de Innovación, Santiago, Chile: RELASER.

## Conferences

**Going beyond Production: Agriculture for Smallholders – 3<sup>rd</sup> AFAAS Symposium**

**12–14 April 2011, Accra, Ghana**

**Regional Forum on Strengthening Rural Advisory Services in Asia and the Pacific Islands**

**14–15 September 2011, Los Baños, Philippines**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Latin America and Caribbean Meeting on Rural Extension Services**

**26–28 September 2011, Managua, Nicaragua**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Extension Network Meeting in Central Asia and the Caucasus Countries CACC**

**4–8 October 2011, Khujand, Tajikistan**

**AFAAS Showcasing Event: Country Fora**

**11–12 November 2011, Nairobi, Kenya**

**2<sup>nd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting**

**13–14 November 2011, Nairobi, Kenya**

**Innovations in Extension and Advisory Services**

**15–18 November 2011, Nairobi, Kenya**

## People

### Steering Committee

<b>Silim M. Nahdy, Chair</b>	AFAAS, Uganda
<b>Magdalena Blum, Co-chair</b>	FAO, Italy
<b>Francisco Aguirre</b>	RELASER, Chile
<b>Virginia Cardenas</b>	APIRAS, Philippines
<b>Sanne Chipeta</b>	Knowledge Center for Agriculture, Denmark
<b>Ian Christoplos</b>	Glemminge Development Consulting, Sweden
<b>Pierre-André Cordey</b>	SDC, Switzerland
<b>Raj Paroda</b>	GFAR, India
<b>Riikka Rajalahti</b>	World Bank, United States
<b>Peter Reinhard</b>	Agridea, Switzerland

### Regional Focal Points

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#### **RELASER – Latin America Network for Rural Extension Services**

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#### **RESCAR-AOC – Réseau des services de conseil agricole et rural d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre**

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