

# Annual Report 2012



**GFRAS is the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services. Our vision is to see rural advisory services effectively contributing to the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty worldwide. Our mission is to provide advocacy and leadership on rural advisory services within the global development agenda.**



## **Impressum**

Impressum

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## Foreword



The global agriculture and extension community has witnessed another stimulating year. Extension and advisory services are increasingly recognised as critical to rural development, which is exacerbated by the global productivity gap, continuing volatility of food prices, global weather events, and the challenge of climate change. Since 2010 GFRAS has been a part of international discussions on how to strengthen rural development, and its ability to cope with the increasing demands and changing context.



2012 was a year of building on preceding GFRAS work. Forum members participated in several major international events to advocate for the importance of rural advisory services for global development. GFRAS also continued to strengthen its evidence and capacity strengthening functions.

Taking forward the international conference on extension and resulting Nairobi Declaration in 2011, GFRAS led a process to promote the capacity needs within rural advisory services through a document and global electronic survey and discussion on the “New Extensionist”. Given the imminent demands and changes agriculture faces, extension has a crucial role to play in serving the diverse needs of producers, entrepreneurs, and society – this requires new roles, strategies, and capacities at individual, organisational, and institutional levels to meet the current and future needs and roles. Collective action is needed at all levels – from local to global – to install this capacity in a meaningful manner. This topic was presented at a session led by GFRAS at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) in Uruguay.

At the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, extension was included in the final text and mentioned in the communique of the Agriculture and Rural Development Day (ARDD). GFRAS promoted advisory services at Rio+20 through various side events, producing materials with partners stating that knowledge sharing is critical to supporting sustainability and extension and advisory services are a vital knowledge-sharing institution. Extension was identified by the G20 countries as one of the key practical actions that could be undertaken to sustainably improve agricultural productivity growth, in particular on small family farms. As G20 President in 2012, Mexico invited GFRAS to help strengthen the links between research and advisory services and to ensure consideration of advisory services in policy processes at the G20 Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists (MACS) in Guadalajara.

In parallel with global advocacy for extension and advisory services, GFRAS pushed forward with evidence and capacity strengthening efforts as well. Globally, diverse extension approaches have been explored but there is relatively little consensus as to what works and what doesn't. The GFRAS evaluation initiative set out a framework to assess the effects of extension reform outcomes globally, starting with Brazil. GFRAS and partners also set up the "global good practices" initiative to identify and analyse good practices across the RAS dimensions of governance structures, policy, capacity and management, advisory methods, and cross-cutting issues. Finally, the gender working group met to exchange experiences and ideas on how to increase gender equality in rural advisory services. Regional collaboration is gradually consolidating.

For example, APIRAS and RELASER developed long-term strategies and held meetings in 2012 to exchange on how to strengthen extension in the region. AFAAS strengthened country forums in Benin, Botswana, Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, and Uganda; collaborated with the World Farmers' Organisation, and produced a communication strategy and virtual networking platform. The West African regional network RESCAR-AOC met to discuss the needs of extension in the region. A portal on Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESA) was started by the GFRAS South Asia network containing resources, blogs, good practices, useful links, and country information.

In short, GFRAS is advancing well on its mission to provide advocacy and leadership on rural advisory services within the global development agenda and vision of seeing rural advisory services effectively contributing to the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty world. In 2013 we hope that our mid-term review will give us critical feedback and course corrections on how we are doing and how we can do it better.

**Dr. Riikka Rajalahti**

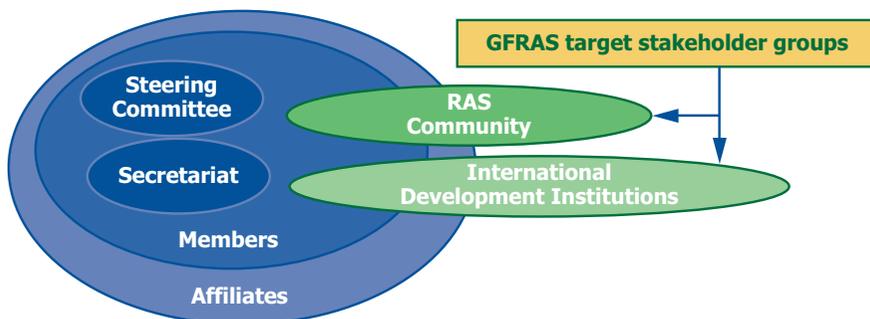
Chair  
GFRAS

**Dr. Kristin Davis**

Executive Secretary  
GFRAS

## GFRAS – Making a difference by improving rural advisory services

International development institutions and investors increasingly recognise the essential role played by rural advisory services (RAS) in reducing hunger and poverty. Yet, until recently, RAS have failed to present a coherent and credible voice, with little representation in global or regional rural development forums. RAS providers are highly diverse and have limited access to information and advice regarding funding options and means to influence policymaking.



They would therefore benefit greatly from more interaction, particularly through sharing their knowledge and experiences. The Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services GFRAS meets the need for a formal structure to promote RAS development in a proactive way.

GFRAS' mission is to provide advocacy and leadership on pluralistic, demand-driven rural and agricultural advisory services within the global development agenda and to lead the way in promoting better rural and agricultural advisory services for the poor. GFRAS' vision is to see rural advisory services effectively contributing to the sustainable reduction of hunger and poverty worldwide.

By working at different levels, GFRAS helps regional actors to present their perspectives in the global development arena, as well as providing a mechanism for global perspectives to reach the regional levels. This two-way flow strengthens the role of advisory services in agricultural development with the goal of reducing hunger and poverty. GFRAS allows RAS providers and other organisations with an interest in RAS to have a voice, engage in dialogue, and promote a supportive environment for investment in RAS. GFRAS supports studies and evidence on effective RAS approaches and policies. It also strengthens the capacity of RAS practitioners through networking.

## How to Get Involved

The GFRAS community is made up of affiliates and members. Affiliates are people 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 the 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.



## The “New Extensionist” – Roles, Strategies, and Capacities to Strengthen Extension and Advisory Services

Extension and advisory services (EAS) play an important role in agricultural development. However, these services need new capacities to address the current challenges in agriculture, and to contribute better to agricultural innovation – a process that requires interactions and knowledge flows among a wide range of actors in the agricultural innovation system (AIS). GFRAS has itemised these roles, strategies, and capacities needed on different levels.

EAS have to deal with a wider set of challenges currently and these include addressing food security and nutrition, climate change, sustainability, linking farmers to markets, and also dealing with evolving standards and regulations. Over the past two decades, the extension landscape has become more pluralistic with increasing participation of several actors: the private sector (agro-inputs, agri-business, financial services), non-governmental organisations (international and local), producer groups, cooperatives and associations, consultants (independent and those associated with agri-business/producer associations), and ICT-based services. To better contribute to innovations in agriculture, EAS is expected to collectively perform a wide range of roles. These include developing networks, organising producers, facilitating access to credit, inputs and output services, convening innovation platforms, promoting gender equality, and disseminating new knowledge through training and demonstrations. To perform these roles, EAS need new capacities at the individual, organisational, and enabling environment (system) levels.



At the individual level, EAS need staff with good understanding of technical knowledge plus skills to manage social processes. At the organisational level, EAS should have capacities to put in place systems and procedures to manage human and financial resources, institutions to facilitate partnerships and learning, and frameworks to deal with institutional, legal, and regulatory issues. At the enabling environment level, capacities for interaction, learning, and adaptation are important. Similarly, reform strategies should explicitly address institutional and policy changes that enhance the ability of the different actors in the AIS to work as a system.

At all levels there should be mechanisms to look at gender representation and equal access to services by both men and women; mechanisms to promote the involvement of youth in agriculture; and opportunities to apply ICTs to enhance the performance of EAS. To develop new capacities in EAS, different actors must initiate actions at the national, regional, and global levels.

GFRAS prepared a draft position paper on this issue and collected inputs on it from a wide range of stakeholders. The process included an e-discussion in the mid-2012 the results of which were discussed first at the GFRAS Annual Meeting 2012 in the Philippines and refined thereafter. The publication was again presented and discussed at the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development GCARD2 in October in Uruguay. The comments and suggestions from these consultations were integrated in this publication. In 2013 the different actions will be further concretized and prioritized especially on the regional level.

The final version is available at  
[www.g-fras.org/new-extensionist](http://www.g-fras.org/new-extensionist)





“A position paper like this is important to clearly articulate and reinvent the role of extension and advisory services (EAS) in the rapidly changing rural context. EAS clearly need new capacities at all levels and training staff though necessary in some cases is not is not enough to bring about capacity development. Institutional and policy changes within EAS and in the enabling environment are also critical to fully realize the potential of EAS. The major challenge at this stage is to further engage the different actors at the national, regional and global levels in contextualizing the recommendations in this document and engage with the process of institutional change, learning and capacity development.”

*Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman V., Director, CRISP*



# GFRAS Regional Networks

## ■ AFAAS, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services

Founding year	2004
Member countries	37
Focal Point	Dr. Silim M. Nahdy AFAAS Secretariat Plot 22A, Nakasero Road P. O. Box 34624, Kampala, Uganda Telephone +256-31-2-313400 secretariat@afaas-africa.org www.afaas-africa.org



“In 2012, the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services shifted its focus from intuitional building to programmatic activities. For this AFAAS received a two-year grant from IFAD to support strengthening of Country-Level agricultural advisory services in the target countries of: Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Uganda.

The launch of the Ghana Country Forum, coordinated by the Engineers Without Borders and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Ghana, was a land mark, as it has shown the effort from partners in the agricultural advisory system and Ministries of Agriculture in putting in place country fora as mechanisms for information and knowledge exchange among AAS actors. AFAAS has established working relations with West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WE CARD) and held a joint meeting between the two and RESCAR-AOC in Burkina Faso.”

*Max Olupot, AFAAS Technical Assistant, Uganda*

AFAAS publications in 2012:

- AFAAS. 2011/12. Création et renforcement des Forums nationaux de l’AFAAS: Directives. AFAAS, Kampala, Ouganda et FARA, Accra, Ghana.

## AFAAS events in 2012:

### May – July

- Conducted country fora stakeholder sensitization meetings in six countries with support from GFRAS. This created awareness and aroused stimulated the formation of country fora.
  - Botswana, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda, Malawi
  - Over 300 participants in the six countries

### 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July

- AFAAS Virtual Platform Training in Malawi and Uganda under GFRAS Support.
  - Uganda, Malawi
  - 15 participants in Uganda and 70 participants in Malawi

### September

- AFAAS participated in the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Partnership meeting and Dublin meeting that was geared towards alignment and collaboration between CAADP and Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) institutions in enhancing the African Agriculture.
  - Nairobi and Dublin
  - Over 400 participants from different institutions

### September

- AFAAS had a board meeting and a participated in the GFRAS Annual meeting.
  - Manila, Philippines
  - 16 participants (board and resource persons)

### October

- AFAAS had supervision visits to Mozambique and Sierra Leone climate learning project.
  - Mozambique, Sierra Leone

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

Founding year	2011
Members/participant	27 institutions, 35 individual members
Focal Point	Dr. Virginia R. Cardenas 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



“One of the highlights of 2012 was hosting the 3rd GFRAS Annual Meeting by the APIRAS Network in Manila, Philippines from 26 – 28 September. Another important event was the APIRAS 2012 Regional Forum. It elaborated a series of recommendations for APIRAS including strengthening network ownership by interacting through social media (such as the APIRAS website, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to encourage closer relationship within the network and lay the foundation for a truly owned network project. From there, drafting an investment prospectus and formulating project proposals are the next steps. The year was also marked with several undertakings, most of which concerned networking and linkages with other organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Association of Educators in Agriculture and Environment (APAEAN) and the locally-based Philippine Extension Network (PEN). APIRAS, APAEAN, and PEN were established along a shared vision to advance the profession and practice of education and extension and rural advisory services. Possible grounds for collaboration were explored among these three networks.”

*Virginia Cardenas, APIRAS Coordinator, Philippines*

APIRAS publications in 2012:

- APIRAS 2012 Regional Forum Proceedings

APIRAS events in 2012:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting
  - Manila, Philippines
  - Over 200 participants from 16 countries
- APIRAS FORUM
  - Manila, Philippines
  - 60 participants from 16 countries

## **Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESA)**

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Founding year	2011
Member countries	8
Members	255 individual members as part of the AESA virtual network
	aesa_gfras2011@yahoo.com
	www.aesa-gfras.net



### Focal Points:

- Dr. R. Saravanan, Associate Professor (Communication)  
College of Post Graduate Studies, Central Agricultural University (CAU)  
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Telephone +919436054939  
saravananraj@hotmail.com, saravanancau@gmail.com
- Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman V., Director, Centre for Research on Innovation and Science Policy (CRISP)  
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Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, A.P. 500034, India  
Telephone +919849331610  
rasheed.sulaiman@gmail.com, crispindia@gmail.com

### **AESA Country Representative for Pakistan**

- Dr. Muhammad Ali, Lecturer Department of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development, Faculty of Crop & Food Sciences, Pir Mehr Ali Shah University of Arid Agriculture, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, muhammadali@uaar.edu.pk
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“Since mid-2012, considerable numbers of extension professionals have been joining the AESA Facebook group and more people are contributing blogs and good practices in extension to the AESA web portal. Within the network, there has been a greater realization on the need to address the weakness in extension research, develop new capacities among extension professionals and strengthen extension in livestock and fisheries sector which haven’t received adequate attention in the past. Exploring the potential of social media (Facebook) for sharing and networking among the extension professionals in South Asia has been an interesting learning experience and response of extension professionals AESA Facebook group is very encouraging.”

*Dr. R. Saravanan AESA Secretariat, India*

AESA activities in 2012:

- Web portal for AESA hosted [www.aesa-gfras.net](http://www.aesa-gfras.net)
- Seven blogs on contemporary challenges in extension published on the AESA web portal.
- Two Good Practice Notes have been digitally documented from the Farm Science Centres (Krishi Vigyan Kendras).
- Several links on useful publications, trainings and workshops were shared among the members through facebook group and webportal.

AESA event in 2012:

- Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman V made presentations on GFRAS/AESA to the SAARC Agricultural Centre, Dhaka, Bangladesh and the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), Hyderabad, India.

## **Australasia-Pacific Extension Network APEN**

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Founding year	1993, Incorporated 1994
Members	360, including 31 overseas affiliates
Focal Point	Dr. Rosemary Currie APEN Secretariat, P.O. Box 1239 Wodonga Vic 3689 Australia Telephone (02) 6024 5349 Fax (02) 6056 1967 <a href="mailto:info@apen.org.au">info@apen.org.au</a>

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“In 2012 APEN invested in a strategic planning meeting for the APEN Management Committee. Management Committee members represent the 7 Australian states/territories and New Zealand. This meeting culminated in the development and release of a new strategic plan to guide APEN into the future.”

*Rosemary Currie, APEN secretariat, Australia*

APEN publications in 2012:

- APEN newsletter ExtensionNet Vol 19 No 3 (June 2012), Vol. 20 No. 1 (October 2012), Vol. 20 No. 2 (December 2012)
- Extension Farming Systems Journal 2012 Vol. 8 No. 1

APEN events in 2012:

- APEN holds a major international conference or forum event every two years. The next major event will be our international conference in 2013 to be held in New Zealand, the first time it will have been hosted outside Australia.
- Saw APEN collaborating with the Queensland Government and Citrix to deliver a series of webinars under the theme of “Enabling Change and Innovation” (see [www.enablingchangeandinnovation.com.au](http://www.enablingchangeandinnovation.com.au)). Each of the 6 webinars had 100+ participants. On several occasions, local APEN clusters used these webinars as a basis for smaller regional workshops (e.g. see Tasmanian Cluster event below).
- On May 8 APEN Victoria also hosted a regional workshop on farm characterisation and segmentation research by the Victorian Department of Primary. The 20 participants showed lots of interest in the work presented by Roger Wilkinson and APEN members David Campbell and Carole Hollier.
- On August 14 APEN Tasmanian Cluster held a “Project Evaluation: Tips and Tools Workshop” which attracted 13 participants and included presentations from Don Thompson (DAFF), Donna Lucas (RM Consulting Group), Jeff Coutts (Coutts J&R and QualDATA) via webinar and Sophie Folder (Pear Consulting).
- On December 6 a Northern Territory (NT) regional event was held in conjunction with the AGM Webinar: Where “Best Practice” meets the “Unknown Unknowns” – Changing Behaviour When You Don’t Know What You Don’t Know, presented by Heather Watson – Executive Director of Farm Management Canada. The local speakers at the NT event were Heidi Wright and Warren Hunt (DPIF), 8 attended. The Webinar and AGM had a total of 31 participants from across Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

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

Focal Point

Ainagul Nasyrova  
TES-Centre  
33E, Petrova str.  
Osh, KYRGYZSTAN  
Telephone 996 3222 54226  
anasyrova@tes-centre.org

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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.

“The need for rural advisory services is very high - it’s a partial solution for food security, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable management of water resources in Central Asia. As a director, I’m very interested in sustainable development of RAS. At this time, we plan business-oriented activities for our clients. We promote the idea of a single coordinating Chamber of RAS. Today’s customer demands of RAS become more rigid, and economically justified. The transition from quantity to quality and use of innovation are important issues. Therefore, the Chamber will monitor certification and qualification compliance and quality of service.”

*Joomartbek Jumabekov,  
Director of the Federation of Organic Development  
BIO-KG, Kyrgyzstan*

## ■ Caribbean

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Founding year	2012
Focal Points	Wayne Ganpat, University of the West Indies Saint Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago wayne.ganpat@sta.uwi.edu and David Dolly, University of the West Indies, Saint Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago farmdavid42@gmail.com

- Wayne Ganpat attended meetings of RELASER and GFRAS annual meeting in 2011 and David Dolly attended the MEAS (Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services) workshop on extension in Washington, D.C. Both meetings facilitated interaction with GFRAS personnel and current activities which were of relevance to forming a Caribbean extension network.
  - David Dolly used the GFRAS evaluation publication as a recommended text for a university extension course.
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“The network is in its early stages of development. As such the 2012 highlight moment was the decision to hold a meeting of heads of extension (in the state system and otherwise) as soon as possible. This decision was followed by a successful request for support from GFRAS Secretariat and interactive discussions with Guyana representative Kuldip Ragnath and Saint Lucia’s Kemuel Jn Baptiste. The planned meeting will now take place in February of 2013. In attendance will be representatives from 11 countries in the English speaking Caribbean and GFRAS.”

*David Dolly, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago*

### Caribbean Publications in 2012:

- Dolly D. I. (2012) Advanced Methods in Agricultural and Rural Extension, CACHE, Santo Domingo, April 2012. 110pp
- Ganpat W. and Isaac W. (2012) (ed.). Sustainable Food production Practices in the Caribbean. Randle, New York. (Sent to GFRAS for advertisement on networks)

Founded	1961
Member countries	Members from 17 countries
Members	705 individual members and 17 institutions are part of the IALB network ialb@fueak.bayern.de www.ialb.org
<b>IALB</b>	
Focal Point	Edda Albers, President "Landwirtschaftskammer Niedersachsen Fachbereich 3.3, Aus- und Fortbildung, Landjugend" Mars la Tour Str. 1 – 13 26121 Oldenburg, Germany Telephone 0441 801 800 Mobile 0152 54 78 20 26, Fax 0441 801 204 edda.albers@lwk-niedersachsen.de

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### IALB publications in 2012:

- Position paper IALB to the draft of European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) – Implementation in 2014 – 2020 (contribution to the policy dialogue about the role and support of rural advisory services in EU-Countries)

### IALB events in 2012:

- June, Annual 3 day-seminar with IALB –conference organized by the Chambers of agriculture of Steiermark, Kärnten and Slovenia on "Agriculture 2020 – Income, market requirements and quality of life in rural areas"; Leibnitz (Seggau), Austria in cooperation with Slovenia; over 300 participants from EU- and non EU-Countries
- June, Seminar Rauschholzhausen: Yearly one week-seminar on experience exchange in foreign advisory services with restitution workshop and education about project planning and implementation; Advisory services visit and restitution workshop in Rauschholzhausen (Hes-sia); 20 participants from from EU- and non EU-Countries
- Participation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFRAS Meeting in Manila:
  - Presentation "Certifying European consultants in rural areas – an IALB-lead initiative" in the RAS- Forum about strengthening result-oriented networking.
  - Presentation of "the European Innovation partnership"
  - Poster-presentation in the share fair about capacity building, qualification and certificate "CECRA" for advisors

- Participation in meeting on advisory in agriculture and rural development 11 – 12 September, Gradacac, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Advisory development in European Union
- Policy dialogue-participation in March on the European innovation partnership in Brussels
- Workshop with members about an IALB- initiative to found a “greater” European Forum for Rural Advisory Services and a focal point at the annual conference in Leibnitz (Seggau) Austria: This strategy was adopted by the members.

## Middle East and North Africa Extension Network (MENA)

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MENA is an emerging network and currently in the process of forming.

Focal Points

Prof. Yousry Hala, Desert Research Center 23 Z  
25<sup>th</sup> January, St., Megawra 16, Egypt  
halayousry@hotmail.com  
and  
Mohammend Abdel Aal  
Head of Agricultural Extension Division  
ACSAD Arab Center for Studies for Arid Zones  
and Dry lands  
P. O. Box 2440, Damascus, Syria  
mohaalon@gmail.com

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## PIEN, Pacific Islands Extension Network

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Founding year

2005

Members/participants

All 22 Pacific island member countries of SPC

Focal Point

Siosiu Halavatau



Land Resources Division, Secretariat of the Pacific Community SPC

Private Mail Bag

Telephone +679 3370 733

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siosiuah@spc.int

www.spc.int



**SPC Land Resources Division**

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

Founding year	2010
Member Countries	17
Individual Members	150
Focal Point	Francisco Aguirre 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



“The network’s meeting in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, was very motivating. We wanted to make a meeting with 70 or 80 participants but later, with the interest shown we had to adjust and received more than 100 people. The engagement of the participants during the meeting and for following the agreements is helping us to build a solid strategy and work plan for the next three years.”

*Ma. Isabel Paredes, deputy coordinator of RELASER, Ecuador*

RELASER publications in 2012:

- English Version of 3 Policy Briefs: Rural Extension with an Inclusive Rural Development Approach, Rural Extension as part of an Innovation System, The Institutional Structure of Rural Extension and Public-Private Relation in Latin America.
- Re-edition of the previous Policy Briefs with additional inputs from Central American experiences.

RELASER events in 2012:

- Annual Meeting in Santa Cruz, Bolivia (More than 100 participants)
- 2 Steering Committee Meetings, Buenos Aires and Santa Cruz (12 participants in each)

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

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Founding year	2010
Members	124
Focal Point	Patrice Nana Djamen ACT African Conservation Tillage Network 01 BP 1607, Ouagadougou 01, Burkina Faso Telephone 00226 50 31 05 10 p.djamen@gmail.com djamenana@yahoo.fr

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“An important inter-institutional workshop was held in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) from 26 to 28 July 2012 with the objective to define an appropriate framework for the effective and sustainable implementation of RESCAR-AOC. The workshop was organized with the support of CORAF/WECARD in partnership with AFAAS and the Government of Burkina Faso. The visions and strategies of AFAAS, RESCAR-AOC and other stakeholders for the creation of a network of RAS in West and Central Africa (WCA) were harmonized. A road map for the official launching and establishment of RESCAR-AOC structure was elaborated. Potential contributions of CORAF, AFAAS, GFRAS and other technical, scientific and technical partners in the implementation of RESCAR-AOC were identified. 58 participants from 17 WCA countries attended the meeting; they took the commitment to contribute to the establishment of RESCAR-AOC.”

*Patrice Djamen, Coordinator RESCAR-AOC, Burkina Faso*

RESCAR-AOC publications in 2012:

- Compte-rendu de l'Atelier d'harmonisation des stratégies pour la mise en place du Réseau des Services de Conseil Agricole et Rural des pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre (RESCAR-AOC). 26 au 28 juillet 2012, Ouagadougou, Burkina-Faso. 18p+ annexes
- Synthèse des échanges sur la version provisoire de la note conceptuelle du RESCAR-AOC. 3p.

RESCAR-AOC events in 2012:

- Workshop for the harmonization of strategies for the implementation of RESCAR-AOC, Ouagadougou, 58 participants.
- Electronic conference for the validation of RESCAR-AOC concept note. 64 participants.

## Building Knowledge Systems in Agriculture

At the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, June 2012, GFRAS, together with the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Farming First, International Food Policy Research Institute IFPRI, and the World Farmers Organisation (WFO) presented a position paper entitled “Building Knowledge Systems in Agriculture”.

At the Rio+20 Conference, world leaders, along with participants from governments, the private sector, NGOs, and other groups, came together to shape how poverty can be reduced, social equity advanced, and environmental protection ensured on an ever more crowded planet.

The conference marked the 20th anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in Rio de Janeiro, and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg.

The event focused on two themes:

- A green economy in the context of sustainable development poverty eradication and
- The institutional framework for sustainable development.

Extension and rural advisory services (RAS) are crucial to putting farmers’ needs at the centre of rural development to reach sustainable development goals. Therefore, RAS and the importance of building knowledge systems in agriculture have gained renewed attention in recent years. Knowledge-sharing mechanisms must focus on critical areas including protecting natural resources, productive farming processes, product development, marketing skills, nutritional needs, and household health. GFRAS identified five opportunities to mobilise the potential of extension and advisory services for social, economic, and environmental sustainable development.



The five areas are:

### **1. Focusing on best-fit approaches**

Best-fit solutions are based on local conditions, including governance structures, capacity, organisation and management, and methods. They value local and traditional knowledge, as well as research and good practices. Such approaches should also fit the overall agricultural innovation system.

### **2. Embracing pluralism**

Extension and advisory services are delivered by different providers (public sector, farmer-based organisations, non-governmental organisations, private sector) and through different approaches. Such pluralism is appropriate, given the diversity of rural life and needs.

### **3. Using participatory approaches**

To meet the calls for “demand-driven” and “farmer-led” rural advisory services the use of participatory approaches is inevitable. They can also promote downward accountability if they are anchored in bottom-up planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

### **4. Developing capacity**

Human resources are a fundamental bottleneck to effective RAS given the new challenges facing rural development. Capacity is needed not only at the individual level but also at organisational and system level among public, private, and civil society stakeholders.

### **5. Ensuring long-term institutional support**

RAS activities have shown that the injection of project resources can mobilise service provision for a short period of time, but to guarantee sustainability, they need longer-term government support and effective forms of financing.



By ensuring that farmers have information, skills, markets, technologies, and other services, extension and advisory services can improve the quality, diversity, volume, and accessibility of food to tackle hunger and malnutrition and thus help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and any future Sustainable Development Goals.

The full paper can be found on the GFRAS website

[www.g-fras.org/en/building](http://www.g-fras.org/en/building)



“Smallholder farmers today face many challenges among which are rights and ownership to land, access to reliable input and output markets, access to good quality seed, demanding quality standards, volatility of produce prices and, climate change. Rural Advisory Services (RAS) are crucial to assist farmers with these challenges.

In many countries smallholder farmers are not consulted regarding policies and issues that affect them. Governments, NGOs, donor agencies and private sector view smallholders as beneficiaries who are only approached at the end of processes and not seen as crucial value chain partners. Many farmers are operating as individuals using traditional farming methods such that they are not able to meet their own food and nutrition security, let alone meet ever rising consumer demands. The vagaries of changing weather patterns due to climate change are compromising the abilities of farmers to feed themselves and the world such that 50% of the hungry today are smallholder farmers.

Smallholder farmers are a productive force ready to be unleashed. With the right kind of support smallholders can help to meet the food nutrition and food security demands of the rising world population. Among the farmer's first priorities regarding RAS are capacity building in farming as business, institutional training, and support to work in collective groups such as co-operatives and associations, response to climate change, quality farm management services, input and output market intelligence, and policy and advocacy for their rights.”

*Dyborn Chibonga, CEO  
National Smallholder Farmers' Association Malawi*

# Where is GFRAS Heading in 2013 and Beyond?

## Overview of the GFRAS Work Plan 2013 – 2014

To reinforce and amplify its work, GFRAS will give emphasis in 2013-2014 to its objective 2: Supporting the development and synthesis of evidence-based approaches and policies for improving the effectiveness of RAS. The aim is to fill the gap that exists between knowing about potentially effective advisory services approaches and identifying the “best-fit” practices that should be deployed under specific circumstances.

### The “New Extensionist”

This advocacy activity of GFRAS will help clarify the roles, strategies, and capacities to strengthen extension and advisory services. The “New Extensionist” document examines capacities at the individual, organisational, and system level, focusing on those needed to play an effective role in agricultural innovation systems (see page 6). Activities in 2013 include a prioritisation exercise at regional and global level to focus on critical actions and how to measure them over the next few years.

### Evaluation Initiative and International Reference Group

This initiative will assess the effects of reform efforts in agricultural extension over the past 15 – 20 years to understand and explain whether and how these efforts have succeeded in promoting the intended improvements. The findings will inform and advance extension practice worldwide and help to guide future investments. An international reference group will be formed to advise regions and countries on evaluation. Outputs will include country-level reports and policy briefs.

### Global Good Practices Initiative, including Nutrition

This initiative will identify and analyse good practices across 5 RAS dimensions (governance structures, policy, capacity and management, advisory methods, and cross-cutting issues). Using a typology based on RAS themes in different country contexts (socio-economic, political, organisational, and ecological), the initiative will systematically document cases of RAS provision to see what approaches worked where and why. It will provide decision support tools to RAS managers, RAS practitioners, educators and trainers, policy makers, and international development institutions. Activities in 2013 include a mapping of home economics and nutrition efforts in extension and advisory services.

## Working Group – Gender Equality in Rural Advisory Services

The purpose of the working group is to create an effective global voice for commitment to increased gender equality and women's empowerment through increased access to and participation in RAS. Activities in 2013 include the creation of a knowledge sharing platform, developing a conceptual paper on gender equality in RAS, and discussing ways to stimulate women's participation in extension as a profession.



“In this world today women farmers present a huge yet unleashed potential for improving agricultural productivity, food security, and nutrition of rural families. Only by ensuring that women farmers have access to good agricultural advice, it is estimated that malnutrition can be reduced by 12 to 17 %.

I have experienced this throughout my work in developing countries since I was first engaged to start an Agricultural School and advisory centre for young women in Zambia in 1985. I here had the strong lesson that the backbone of food production in Africa are women, but they are rarely benefitting from agricultural development. I am therefore extremely happy that GFRAS decided to establish the Working Group for Gender Equality in RAS. The first face to face meeting of gender and agricultural advisory experts in Copenhagen in August confirmed that there is great interest as well as a wealth of knowledge and experiences to draw on. The working group is now well established and ready to forward the work in the coming years. In 2013 the group plans to assist GFRAS in mainstreaming gender equality into all GFRAS's work of advocacy. A particular area of focus will be developing and promoting ideas for increasing education of women agricultural advisers eventually through a mentoring programme.”

*Sanne Chipeta, Knowledge Center for Agriculture, Denmark*

## 3<sup>rd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting

From 26 – 28 September 2011, the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting took place in Manila, The Philippines, hosted by the Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (APIRAS). 141 stakeholders from more than 50 countries attended the event. The meeting focused on the role of rural advisory services in agricultural innovation systems, and aimed at the same time at strengthening RAS networks for results oriented activities. The event served also for updating the participants on the progress GFRAS made since the last annual meeting.

### The role of rural advisory services in agricultural innovation systems

In reaction to a changing political, social, and economic environment, RAS increasingly play a role in agricultural innovation systems (AIS). The aim is to help actors such as farmer organisations, market players, research, and education to improve their activities and linkages. To do this RAS has to assume different roles as service provider, broker and knowledge manager.

Several presenters at the meeting looked at how RAS can contribute to successful activities and projects in the AIS. (See for example The “New Extensionist” on page 6). The participants discussed the topics and concluded that RAS is all about facilitation and fostering joint learning. It need to help build alliances, and to empower and strengthen capacities of farmers, thereby not neglecting technical tasks.

In order to fulfil this role, RAS need the ability to deal with change, to develop entrepreneurship and business skills, and to be able to listen and respond to demands. Other AIS actors should create an enabling environment: Farmer’s



leaders need to collate and express their demands, the extension education sector should revise curricula and develop module based courses and distance learning options, policy maker are required to coordinate and integrate actors in AIS on different geographic levels and introduce incentives, and investors should use mechanisms that reflect sustainability.

### **RAS fora: Strengthening results-oriented networking**

GFRAS and the regional RAS networks are engaged in an exchange of experiences, the creation of partnerships with AIS actors, and in joint effort to raise awareness on the importance of RAS. Especially the exchange of experiences and lessons learned between regions can support the RAS fora.

In this section of the meeting GFRAS and its main member organisations gave an overview of their activities in 2011-2012. These findings were discussed in different groups to see how the collaboration can be improved.

The findings include:

- Support the consolidation of regional RAS network with a focus on how farmer can better participate in RAS policy development
- Continued global lobbying at policy decision maker level to create awareness and funding options for RAS
- Provide space and (financial) support for a one day continental meeting at the GFRAS Annual Meeting
- Initiate inter-regional exchange visits
- Integration of agriculture in elementary and secondary schools
- Thematic and technical collaboration



These points were followed by specific set of recommendations for each major RAS network. The detailed minutes as well as other information about the event can be found on the GFRAS website [www.g-fras.org](http://www.g-fras.org)



“Being a researcher and lecturer in the field of agricultural extension at a University, I am very much interested in the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFRAS meeting. I gained a lot of valuable information and experiences from many countries that are useful for my country. I’ve been inspired to establish and strengthen the extension network in my home country since participated the GFRAS meeting. A network of 4 Agriculture Universities and different extension departments from different parts of the country were initiated to discuss about research ideas and exchange information regarding extension services and promoting development of farmer organisations. However, it needs time to consolidate and activate the network. In addition, I myself updated lecture notes on agri.extension subject for students at my university and introduced to them the information about GFRAS, APIRAS, other forums as well as websites for more information. These activities directly or indirectly promote the development of rural advisory services in my home country, I hope!”

*Sen Le Ti Hoa, Hue University, Viet Nam*





"Firstly I must say that as a late applicant I considered it an honour to be invited to the meeting and am truly grateful to GFRAS for facilitating me. The meeting was definitely an eye opener for me for as a first time participant I was able to better understand and appreciate the role of RAS in agricultural development in general. I gained valuable knowledge and insights on the schematics and nature of innovation systems, especially the need for strong linkages among the various actors. I am a firm believer in agricultural policies and the presentations confirmed my view that extension policies and strategies are critical and essential elements for successful agricultural development.

I was quite impressed with the visit to the Philippines Agricultural Training Institute and to observe how ICT is becoming a major player in supporting farmer's education. The spirit of camaraderie and togetherness at the meeting was overwhelming for I never felt alone although I was the only participant from the Caribbean. I left the meeting with a great sense of optimism for the future of RAS, knowing that it is in capable hands. In closing I wish to commend the Principals of GFRAS for a meeting well done and wish them the very best as they seek to ensure that RAS gets its rightful place in the agricultural development agenda."

*Kuldip Ragnauth, Extension Manager,  
Guyana Rice Development Board*



## World Wide Extension Study

GFRAS has contributed to a large database of information on extension systems worldwide in partnership with FAO, IFPRI, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), and USAID. There has been much demand for information and data on extension at national, regional, and global level. It has been 20 years since the last worldwide extension study conducted by FAO.

The database, with information human and financial resources of agricultural extension and advisory systems worldwide, also has regional, sub-regional, and country profiles of extension and advisory services.

Points of interest are:

- the primary extension service providers in each country (e. g. public, private and/or non-governmental);
- which types and groups of farmers are the primary target groups (e.g. large, medium, and/or small-scale farmers, including rural women) for each extension organisation;
- how each organisation's resources are allocated to key extension and advisory service functions;
- each organisation's information and communication technology resources and capacity; and
- what role, if any, different categories of farmers play in setting extension's priorities and/or assessing performance.

Currently the database is housed at [www.worldwide-extension.org](http://www.worldwide-extension.org)

However, by mid-2013 the entire database will be moved to the GFRAS website.

A directory of extension providers will be part of the database, as a searchable and interactive database providing names of organisations providing extension service providers, contact information, and a short description of the organisation. Interested people can now access the profiles for single organisations and use the collection of information in a country or sub-region profile.

## Call to participate

The WWES is an on-going process. If you are working in agricultural extension and advisory services you can fill out the online questionnaire for your organisation and thus help to complete the global overview. You can also update existing organisation profiles.

Find a detailed description of how to do it at

[www.g-fras.org/wwes](http://www.g-fras.org/wwes)



“This is the fourth Worldwide Extension Study (WWES) that has been completed. The last worldwide extension study was carried out by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 1988-89. Therefore, the purpose of this WWES will be to help bridge this important knowledge gap about the status of agricultural extension systems worldwide, with the goal of improving extension services to help small-scale men and women farmers.”

*Burt Swanson, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois*

# Financial Report

GFRAS was supported in 2012 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the International Fund for Agri-cultural 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 2012 by contributor.

**Table 1. Financial contributions realised in 2012**

<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Amount in USD</b>
BMGF	604 173
IFAD	85 362
SDC	478 142
USAID	349 966
Rollover from 2011	172 703
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 690 346</b>

Because the contributions are not necessarily in sync with the calendar year, the financial contributions in Table 1 do not always reflect the total contracts with funders. Rather, the table shows the actual income in 2012. Also, some 2012 expenses will be accounted for in 2013 due to the funding cycle.

**Table 2. Expenditures in 2012**

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Amount in USD</b>
Staff time	359 979
Meetings, conferences, and events	380 811
Support to regional networks	128 791
Consultants and special projects	728 849
Travel	45 222
Publications, web site, and communications	36 616
Other costs	1 824
Management fees and overhead	152 724
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 834 816</b>
Net profit/loss	-144 700

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 on request by some donors. The audit in 2012 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.

## GFRAS Publications in 2012

AFAAS, 2011. Création et renforcement des Forums nationaux de l'AFAAS: Directives. Kampala, Ouganda et FARA, Accra, Ghana: AFAAS.

Sulaiman V., R. and Davis, K. 2012. The "New Extensionist": Roles, Strategies, and Capacities to Strengthen Extension and Advisory Services. GFRAS Position Paper. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

GFRAS, 2012. Building Knowledge Systems in Agriculture. GFRAS Position Paper. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

GFRAS, 2012. Factsheet on Extension Services. GFRAS Position Paper. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

GFRAS, 2012. Extension Services: Case Studies. GFRAS Position Paper. Lindau, Switzerland: GFRAS.

In 2012 the GFRAS Secretariat distributed 6200 printed documents (publication and promotional material). 62 new documents were added to the website and were downloaded 3600 times. Overall 24500 documents were downloaded since the launch of the GFRAS website in 2010.

The website had 64300 visitors in 2012 who viewed 515800 pages.

## Online Products

### GFRAS Roster of Extension Experts

The roster is a searchable database where experts can present their areas of expertise and offer their services to those seeking expert assistance.

[www.g-fras.org/roster-of-experts](http://www.g-fras.org/roster-of-experts)

### GFRAS Directory of Extension Providers

The directory contains a list of organisations and institutions active in RAS for each country with basic contact details.

[www.g-fras.org/extension-directory](http://www.g-fras.org/extension-directory)

### Worldwide Extension Study

The Worldwide Extension Study provides empirical data on the human and financial resources of agricultural extension and advisory systems worldwide. It was started in 2010 through a partnership by FAO, GFRAS, IFPRI, and IICA, supported by USAID.

[www.g-fras.org/worldwide\\_extension\\_study](http://www.g-fras.org/worldwide_extension_study)

## Conferences and Meetings

Pluralism and Brokering as the Defining Factors for Rural Advisory Services in an AIS Context: International Workshop on Investing in and Strengthening Agricultural Innovation Systems, 30 May – 1 June, Washington, DC

Global Learning Exchange on Best Fit Practices in Extension and Advisory Services, 6 – 8 June, Washington, DC

Mobilizing Knowledge for Agriculture: Rio+20 Conference 15 June, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Agriculture Knowledge Systems – five key areas for mobilising the potential of rural advisory services: Agriculture and Rural Development Day, 18 June, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Atelier d'harmonisation des stratégies pour la mise en place de RESCAR-AOC, 26 – 28 July, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

The New Extensionist: Going beyond Technology Transfer: International Conference on Research for Development, 20 – 22 August, Bern, Switzerland

G20 Meeting of Agricultural Chief Scientists (MACS), 24 – 26 September, Guadalajara and Tequila, Jalisco State, Mexico

The Role of Rural Advisory Services in Agricultural Innovation Systems: 3<sup>rd</sup> GFRAS Annual Meeting, 26 – 28 September, Manila, Philippines

Rural Advisory Services: Global Status and 5 Key Areas for Mobilisation: Symposium on Rural Advisory Services – Modes of sustainable delivery, 7 September, Bonn

3<sup>rd</sup> RELASER Annual Meeting, 10 – 12 October, Santa Cruz, Bolivia

Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD)-II, 29 October – 1 November, Punta del Este, Uruguay

Atelier de réflexion pour l'amélioration de la durabilité des démarches de conseil aux exploitations familiales en Afrique, 11–15 November, Bohicon, Benin

Capacities for enhancing roles of research and extension within the innovation system: Southern and Eastern African Association for Farming Systems Research-Extension, 19 – 21 November, Pretoria

## Linkages and Representation

African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services, AFAAS

[www.afaas-africa.org](http://www.afaas-africa.org)

Association for International Agriculture and Extension Education, AIAEE

[www.aiaee.org](http://www.aiaee.org)

Global Forum on Agricultural Research, GFAR

[www.egfar.org](http://www.egfar.org)

Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, GDPRD

[www.donorplatform.org](http://www.donorplatform.org)

Regional Universities' Forum (Africa), RUFORUM

[www.ruforum.org](http://www.ruforum.org)

Joint Learning in Innovation Systems in African Agriculture, JOLISSA

[www.jolisaa.net](http://www.jolisaa.net)

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# People

## Steering Committee

<b>Riikka Rajalahti, Chair</b>	World Bank, United States
<b>Francisco Aguirre, Co-chair</b>	RELASER, Chile
<b>Magdalena Blum</b>	FAO, Italy
<b>Ernst Bolliger</b>	Agridea, Switzerland
<b>Virginia Cardenas</b>	APIRAS, Philippines
<b>Pierre-André Cordey</b>	SDC, Switzerland
<b>Silim M. Nahdy</b>	AFAAS, Uganda
<b>Harry Palmier</b>	GFAR
<b>Rasheed Sulaiman V.</b>	AESA, India

## Regional Focal Points

### **AESA – Agricultural Extension in South Asia**

Saravanan R. India [saravananraj@hotmail.com](mailto:saravananraj@hotmail.com)

### **AFAAS - African Forum for Agricultural Advisory services**

Silim M. Nahdy, Uganda [molupot@afaas-africa.org](mailto:molupot@afaas-africa.org)

### **APEN – Australasia-Pacific Extension Network**

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### **APIRAS – Asia Pacific Islands Network for RAS**

Virginia Cardenas, Philippines [vrc@agri.searca.org](mailto:vrc@agri.searca.org)

### **CACC – Central Asia and Caucuses Countries Network for RAS**

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### **IALB**

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### **PIEN – Pacific Islands Extension Network**

Siosiu Halavatau [siosiuah@spc.int](mailto:siosiuah@spc.int)

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

Francisco Aguirre, Chile [faguirre@rimisp.org](mailto:faguirre@rimisp.org)

## GFRAS Working Groups

### Capacity Strengthening

Lead: Francisco Aguirre (RELASER)

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Members: Cardenas, Virginia (APIRAS), Christoplos, Ian (Glemminge Development Research), Blum, Magdalena (FAO)

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### Evaluation

Members: Sanne Chipeta (Knowledge Centre for Agriculture), Riikka Rajalahti (World Bank), Magdalena Blum (FAO), Pierre Labarthe (INRA), Brent Simpson (MEAS), Ian Christoplos (Glemminge Development Research)

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### Gender Equality in Rural Advisory Services

Lead: Sanne Chipeta, Danish Knowledge Centre for Agriculture sac@vfl.dk

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### Policy for Extension and Advisory Services

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Members: Tunji Arokoyo (AFAAS country forum: Nigeria), Mary Kamau (AFAAS country forum: Kenya), Andrea Bohn (MEAS)

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