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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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EDITORIAL

AARINENA efforts in the first half of 2009 have a greater voice in the agricultural research agenda of the region. The Association effectively participated in the preparation of the Southern Advisory Group (SAG) initiated study on Evidence Generation and Policy, and Institutional Mapping on Food and Bio-energy for the Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Near East and North Africa regions that took a turn to a higher level with the approval of ERA-ARD Meeting, held in Lithuania for funding this initiative. Moreover, AARINENA starts conducting the Food and Bio-energy Study in its five sub-regions in May 2009.

The Association participated in Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) and the Mega Program Development Workshop organized by CGIAR Alliance at Bioversity International (BI), held in Rome, February 2009. Along with delegations from ICARDA, ICRISAT, and CIAT, AARINENA participated in the scientific visit to Montpellier, France from 29 March - 3 April 2009. The mission concluded that there are a number of research questions in common to the CG centers, the biotechnology network of AARINENA and the whole of INRA-CIRAD extended to its close partners; promoting short and medium-term student and researcher exchanges between the two groups; topics of common interest that have been underlined by the two groups seem to concern all the potential stakeholders and go beyond regional or thematic missions of any group.

The last AARINENA Executive Committee Meeting held in May 2009 at ICARDA, Aleppo-Syria, emphasized the importance of commodity and technical networks and interregional partnership for ARD, and recommended an important actions including: cosponsoring the International Conference on Food Security and Climate Change which will be held in Amman, October 2009; the NASRO meeting held in Cairo last April 2009 elected AARINENA Vice President as the NASRO chairman and Libya as a venue for NASRO Secretariat; Steps for implementation the GCARD Conference adopted; and the PGRN Network reactivated.

An important thematic activities organized by AARINENA in the last six months in collaboration with its partners, such as Bioinformatics training course, and regional training workshop on Building National Capacities in Information and Knowledge. Moreover, the Association participated in the GFAR Statuary meeting in Maputo, and FARA Board Meetings, as well as prepared a proposal on Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) initiative.

The new AARINENA Website is officially online (<http://www.aarinena.org>) with the high content management capacity. The website features the new look of AARINENA while building on its role as a regional platform for all those who involve in ARD, knowledge, mutual learning and innovation. AARINENA members can add and update information to the databases directly through the "Member Area" section.

As a Regional Platform, AARINENA will continue fostering agricultural research and development, strengthening regional partnerships, further contributes to sharing and exchanging of knowledge and technology. The Association will also continue contributing in the collective actions regionally to meet emerging challenges to agricultural development such as biotechnology, climate change, and bio-fuels.

Editors

