

A+RD Network Newsletter 02/2012

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Dear readers

Please remember: A face-to-face meeting of the A+RD Network will be held from Sunday 29th of April to Thursday 3rd of May 2012 in Zollikofen, Switzerland. The core-group is busy with the preparation of the event and will keep the network community informed of the coming steps on our website.

[Provisional programme](#) >>

Focus Area: Rural Advisory Services



New RAS publications by A+RD Network

The A+RD Network has commissioned an overview study entitled "Capitalisation of experiences in Rural Innovation and Advisory Services". The Study shows what SDC and other Swiss actors (NGOs, universities and private sector) are doing in RAS projects. Altogether, 22 Swiss actors are engaged in RAS and in 2010 an estimated 83 million CHF was spent on extension related projects.

[Capitalisation of experiences in RAS](#) >>

The A+RD Network Brief No 1 is based on this study and it looks specifically at the 10 main challenges faced by Swiss actors engaged in RAS. At the heart of the A+RD Network Brief No 2 lays the question of how to better target women in RAS. It provides timely practical inputs on how to reach women in agriculture extension projects.

[A+RD Network Briefs No 1 and 2](#) >>



SFRAS - New Swiss Forum

In December 2011, the Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services (SFRAS) convened at Agridea to discuss impact measurement of RAS activities. Several in-depth case studies were presented (horticulture promotion in Kosovo, extension services in Kyrgyzstan). The next meeting of SFRAS will take place in November 2012 at the Syngenta Foundation in Basel. The tentative topic will be "pluralistic public-private RAS systems".

[Swiss Forum on Rural Advisory Services](#) >>

Focus Area: Land Governance



Land governance in SDC projects

With the support of CDE, the A+RD Network has been compiling information to get an overview of SDC interventions in land governance at country level. The results are presented online, through an interactive map which allows you to navigate through different countries where SDC is implementing projects related to land governance. In most cases, land governance is considered as a transversal topic (implicit element), meanwhile few countries like Laos, Mozambique and the Sahel region have more explicit land governance projects.

[Land Governance in SDC Projects](#) >>



Discussion on women's land rights

An online discussion leading up to an FAO-IFAD-ILC side event at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW, 27 February – 9 March 2012, New York) took place from 23 January to 5 February simultaneously in the FSN-Forum and on the Land Portal, a platform to share land-related information which we encourage you to visit.

The proceedings of the discussions are now available:

[Discussion: How can women's land rights be secured?](#) >>

[Land Portal](#) >>

Focus Area: Climate Change Resilient Agriculture



GDPRD Annual General Assembly

The mid-January Annual General Assembly of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) reiterated its willingness to focus on resilience in its ongoing knowledge exchange in 2012. SDC took an active part through the representation of the A+RD Network Focal point. To get a glimpse of the variety of topics that were discussed, we suggest Dr. Nabarro's wrapping up of the Annual General Assembly discussion on strengthening resilience in ARD. During the world café sessions, many issues of interest to the A+RD network were tackled (post-harvest losses, pastoralist,

result reporting). Regarding climate-smart agriculture, the first publication of the Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate was presented: "Achieving food security in the face of climate change". It includes an executive summary of 7 key recommendations to be considered for resilient agriculture under climate change.

[Dr. Nabarro wrapping up General Assembly Discussion on resilience](#) >>

[Publication: Achieving food security in the face of climate change](#) >>

Focus Area: **Impact Measurement**

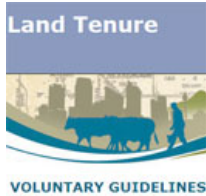


Impact of Agricultural Research

What is the impact of cutting-edge international agricultural research and how can you assess it? Affiliated to the CGIAR, the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA) manages a web site aiming to communicate evidence about the impact of agricultural research, providing easy access to impact studies and tools for strengthening impact assessment studies.

[CGIAR Impact Assessment >>](#)

Multilateral Issues

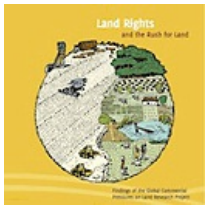


Voluntary Guidelines E-Learning

The Secretariat of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests is anticipating the adoption and implementation of the guidelines and plans to set up a series of e-learning sessions and courses on topics related to the governance of tenure. This e-learning series will start with a primer session to introduce the Voluntary Guidelines and will be followed by further sessions on more specific topics related to the guidelines. In preparation of these sessions, the secretariat is collecting contacts and emails of people who may want to

participate.

[Participation form for e-learning >>](#)



Land Rights and the Rush for Land

With the collaboration of civil society, research institutions and academics the International Land Coalition has published a report that constitutes the largest and most detailed body of evidence on international land deals to date. The report examines the characteristics, drivers, impacts and trends of rapidly increasing commercial pressures on land. Its conclusion is that the negatively connoted term 'Land Grabbing' well depicts this phenomenon as the rural poor tend to lose out systematically. The report partly builds on the evidence gathered from the ongoing

land matrix project which is jointly implemented by the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern (CDE) and supported by the SDC Global Program for Food Security.

[ILC Report: Land Rights and the Rush for Land >>](#)

Who is Who?

Some of the A+RD Network members are probably familiar to you, others are not.

In order to give a face to the names on the members list, every Newsletter shortly presents some of the A+RD Networkers:



Sam Kareithi

is trained as a development economist and worked in the SDC Pretoria office. He joined SDC in 2009 as Programme Manager (NPO) for Food Security. His expectations for the AR+D Network is that he can be able to pose challenges of his programmatic work and seek opinions of various kinds from peer members. More concretely, as he recently started conducting midterm evaluations, he would like to know about best practices and lessons learnt from other members especially on project impacts and gender mainstreaming as a transversal theme.



Isabelle Fragnière

is a Junior Programme Officer working for the Samridhi project in rural Bangladesh, implemented by HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and funded by SDC. She supports the project in market and rural development, results measurement and gender mainstreaming, among others. For her, the network is a great opportunity to exchange experiences, innovations and good practices from different countries and to bring together practitioners from different backgrounds and with different roles. In the future, she would like to see regional (face-to-face) events occurring as well.

[A+RD Network members list >>](#)

(regularly updated)

Further Reading

Commodities - Switzerland's most dangerous business

From time to time, the A+RD Network organizes a brown bag lunch at SDC HQ on a topic of interest to network members. This month, a commodities trader was invited to talk about its daily activities. To know more about international trading and the role played by Switzerland as a trading hub, a book has recently been released by the Swiss NGO Bern Declaration.

[Commodities - Switzerland's most dangerous business \(Sample of English version\) >>](#)

Video: From plot to World market...

Over the past decade, Western African (WA) countries' dependence on rice imports grew steadily, rising from 1.2

million ton in the 1990s to 5.2 million ton in 2012. In countries like Burkina-Faso, the domestic production does not even cover half of national consumption. This short film reflects on the success of farmers' organisations (FO) in influencing the national and regional agricultural agenda. The 2008 food crisis created a window of opportunity seized by FO to place smallholder agriculture and protectionist trade measures high on the agenda. SDC has long supported farmer's organisations throughout western Africa. With this film, the long standing partnership with ROPPA (the umbrella organisation of WAFO) demonstrates how effective FO have been in defending their rights and delaying the signature of the agricultural trade agreements with the EU that would have disastrous effects for domestic producers.

[Video: De la parcelle au marché mondial >>](#) (scroll down to see videos)

Documentary: Ricejacking

Rice feeds one person out of two on this planet. "Ricejacking" is a French documentary aiming at informing the public about the mechanisms behind rice trade. It's a must watch!

[More information about the documentary \(in french\) >>](#)

BMZ Position Paper on Land Grabbing

In January, the German ministry of economic development and cooperation (BMZ) organised a one day panel entitled "Investments in land and the phenomenon of 'land grabbing' – challenges for development politics". The event was an occasion for the BMZ to present its position paper on Large Scale Land Acquisitions.

[Investitionen in Land und das Phänomen des "Land Grabbing" >>](#)

Alert note from Senegal

Following the growing tensions and conflicts caused by the allocation of large tracts of land in northern Senegal for biofuel production, IPAR (a Senegalese think tank) has published an alert note on the potential of large scale land acquisitions to stir social unrests.

[Note d'alerte sur les transactions foncières à grand échelle au Senegal >>](#)

SDC Agriculture and Rural Development Network
