

# The Global Forum: Shaping Tomorrow's Agriculture Today

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# Why a Global Forum?

- Recognized in mid-1990s that many agricultural issues were of common global importance
- National agricultural systems desired the means to bring together their thinking and actions to address development needs
- Other partners sought a stronger voice in shaping agriculture
- Required a neutral forum through which different perspectives on key issues could be openly discussed, innovative partnerships developed and actions initiated

# GFAR Stakeholders



## Recent changes

- Ten years saw considerable influence in institutional thinking and structure
- But – was still striving for fulfilment of its potential
- Had taken on attributes of a research implementer rather than a forum

## 2007 – review and take stock

- Review of Global Partnership Programmes
- External Review of GFAR
- Stakeholder retreat, Alexandria
- New areas of focus
- Renewed emphasis on role as a true forum
- Roadmap for re-engineering and revitalizing GFAR to meet its original purpose in today's world...

# Business as usual is not an option...

- **Demographic pressures are growing fast**
- **Food demands are changing**
- **Climates are changing**
- **Land use is changing**
- **Agricultural water resources are decreasing**
- **Soil resources are eroding**
- **Urbanization is advancing**
- **Indigenous knowledge is disappearing**
  
- **The poor are increasingly marginalized**



# Challenges from the High Level Conference, International Assessment & World Development Reports 2008

How can we increase agricultural productivity and farmer incomes while:

- Ensuring food is affordable to the poor
- Ensuring wider societal needs are met
- Sustainably managing environmental resources
- And what kind of institutions do we need to meet these challenges?



# **Global thematic Issues**

## **FAO High Level Conference, June 2008**

- **Sustainably increasing farm productivity among small holder producers**
- **Impact of changing consumption demands: implications of grain fed animal production**
- **Empowering small farmers to access markets**
- **Managing climate change-associated risks to production systems through increased knowledge**
- **Promoting global, collaborative research on biofuels**

# The Challenges

The generation and application of knowledge is critical to meeting the huge global challenges facing agriculture



**But**

- Why isn't past research better benefiting the poor?
- Why have many apparently effective technologies not been adopted?
- Why has society been losing confidence in agricultural science?
- Why are research and extension institutions not effectively connected with those they are intended to benefit?

# Science in Society

- **Scientific knowledge is reductionist, trusted & validated by its method**
- **Local knowledge is holistic, trusted & validated by experience & culture**
- **Need to link & reconcile these knowledge & trust bases**
- **Sustainable development must value & capitalize on both**



# Why a Global Forum?

- **Neutral platform linking science and society, creating new partnerships to address critical issues determining our future ability to feed humanity**
- **Create and support effective, *demand-driven* institutions & innovation systems to meet the complex needs of sustainable agricultural development**



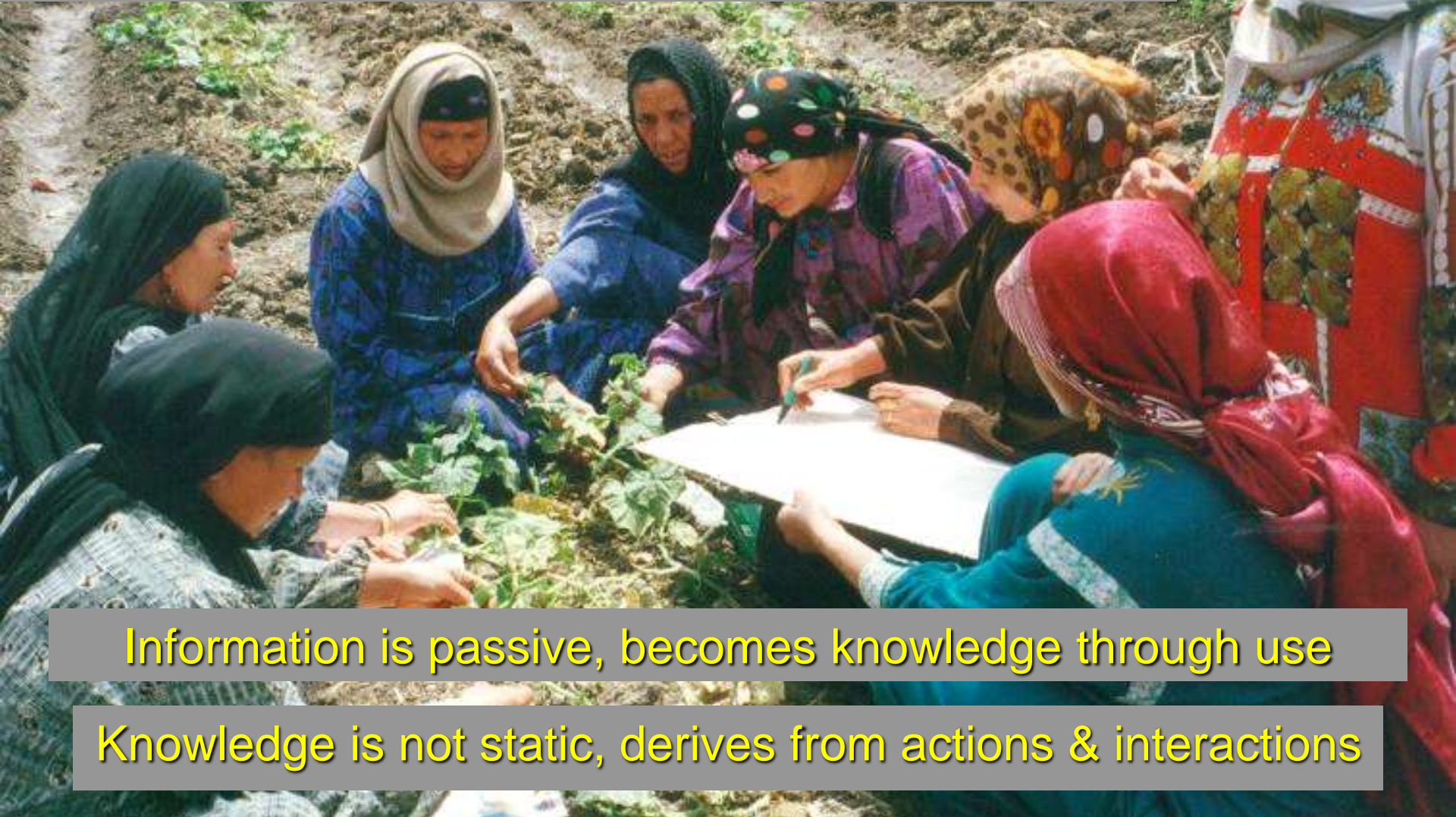


Society is full of natural innovators...

Constrained by resources & risk-aware

Empowered by Knowledge

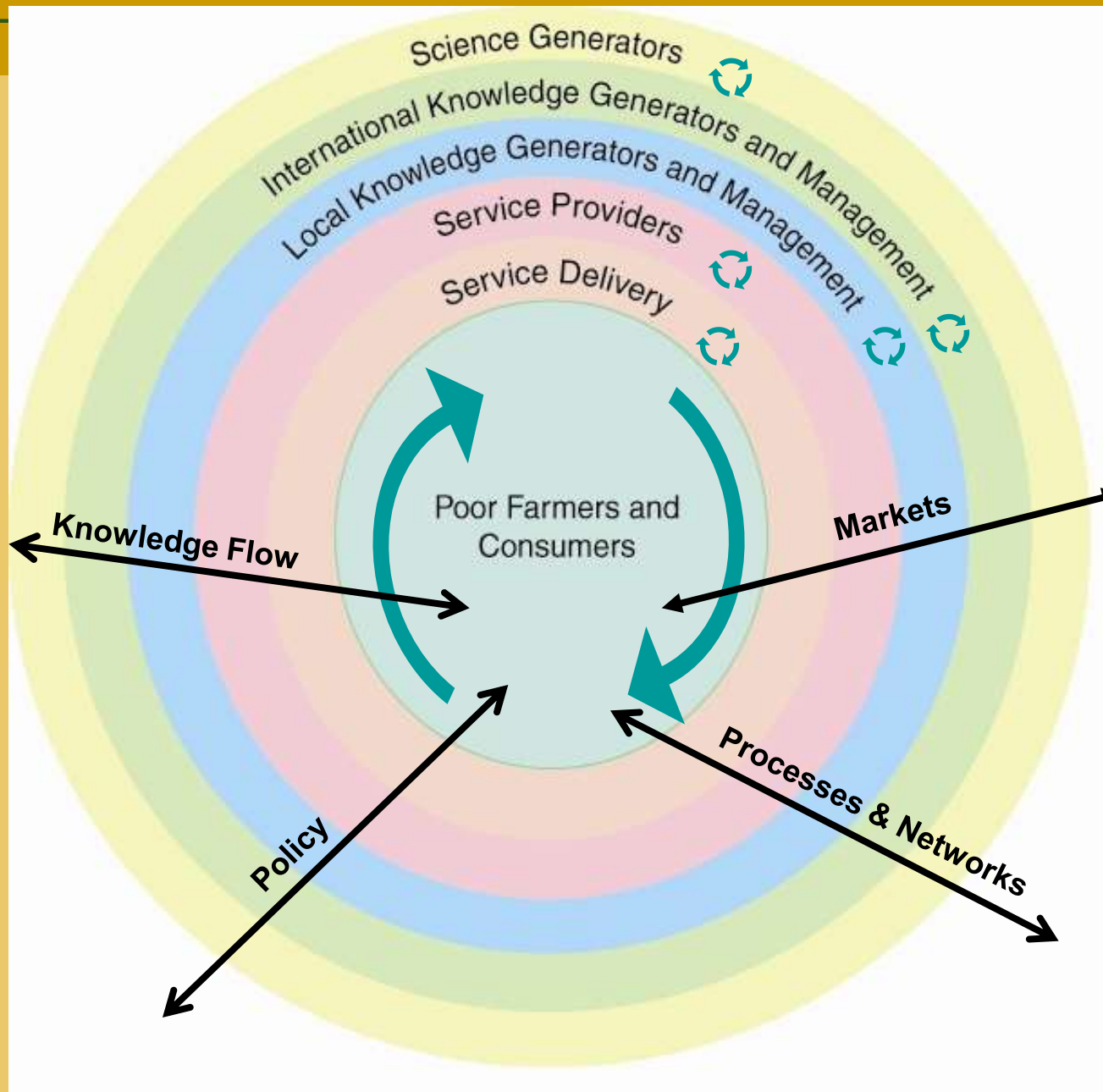
# The nature of innovation



Information is passive, becomes knowledge through use

Knowledge is not static, derives from actions & interactions

Innovation derives from the interaction and knowledge of multiple actors within a context



**The Global  
Agricultural  
Research for  
Development  
System,  
centred on the  
poor**

# What constrains these interactions?

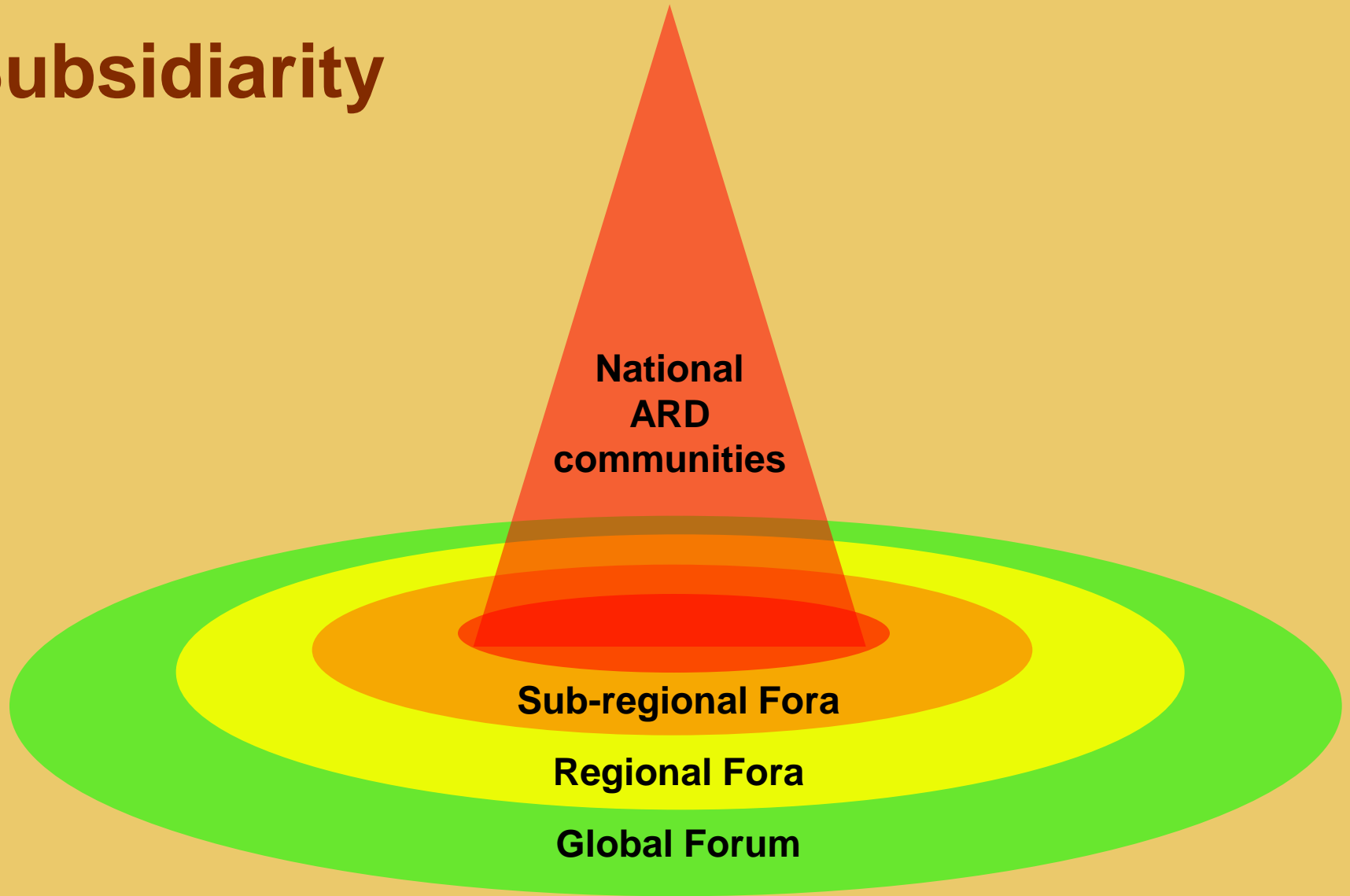


- Control
- Awareness
- Media
- Accessibility
- Reductionism/complexity
- Intelligibility & format
- Relevance
- Institutional barriers
- Belief systems
- Attitude to change

# We Are You

- **Farmers** – *putting communities at the **centre** of research*
- **Civil Society** – *a voice for the needs of the disadvantaged, bridging local and scientific innovation*
- **National Agricultural Research & Extension** – *capable, relevant and valued systems meeting the needs of the poor*
- **Private Sector** – *effective & responsible input delivery & output markets*
- **International Research Centers** – *dynamically connected to their intended beneficiaries*
- **Fundamental Research Institutions** – *basic research driven by real needs*
- **Donor organizations** – *fulfilling development aims through explicitly demand-driven policies and processes*

# Subsidiarity



# GFAR: a new partnership for change



- The meeting place for all concerned with agricultural research
- Valuing different perspectives and strengths, learning from each other
- Innovation deriving from the knowledge and interaction of different partners
- Empowering communities to generate their own solutions

# Global Forum: Strategic Objectives

1. **Advocacy for change**
2. **Institutions for the Future**
3. **Inter-regional learning for global impact**
4. **Putting knowledge to use**

# The Global Forum is:

- The basis for advocacy for agricultural research to meet the future needs of humanity
- A key link between agricultural science and society
- A Voice for the poor
- A Partnership for change
- A Catalyst for action
- A Platform for sharing and learning



# Over to You...

- **You** are the drivers at the centre of the research for development process
- **You** have the power to shape and determine the future of farming
- **Your** voices and your collective actions are crucial for delivering rapid change
- **Your** Global Forum provides the mechanism and the opportunity...

**Use it to achieve peace,  
prosperity and stability for all**



**Muchas Gracias**