

## **GCARD3 OPENING CEREMONY**

### **INTRODUCTION: DR. SHADRACK MOEPHULI**

The Agricultural Research Council (ARC) is a public entity established in terms of the Agriculture Research Act of 1990 of South Africa. It's science institution that conducts research with partners, develops human capital and fosters innovation in support of the agricultural sector.

The Board of the ARC is the Accounting Authority in terms of the Public Finance Management Act. The Board provides leadership and oversees strategic direction, so as to enhance shareholder value and ensure the ARC's long – term sustainable development and growth. To fulfil its responsibilities, the Board is supported by ARC Management in implementing the approved strategic plan as well as organisational policies.

We believe that through this research, the ARC impacts on agriculture and related sectors significantly, particularly through the effective dissemination of scientific knowledge. It's our hope and expectation, that by so doing, our scientific endeavours as a research organization influence people's thinking, the economic performance and sustainability of agriculture.

The ARC ensures that its research outcomes, results and publications are translated into technologies and products that have practical value (commercial and non – commercial) to the users. Thereby contribute towards sustainable development of South Africa.

However, we're keenly aware that the impact of the ARC's research and development extends beyond national borders. This means that partnerships, engagements, exchange of information and technology, capacity building throughout the world become critical. It is for this reason the ARC has engaged with many partners within the SADC region, through our sub – regional organization, CCARDESA, the continent as represented by FARA and globally through the Global Forum for Agriculture Research.

Agriculture research is critical towards ensuring food and nutrition security for all. As a primary industry, it often has an economic multiplier effect with significant impact on job creation, improved livelihoods, competitiveness of enterprises, sustainable growth, rural development and social stability.

According to the UN Millenium Development Goals report, in the last 30 years' investments in agriculture research and development have contributed to reductions in the number of people living in extreme poverty. This was achieved despite increased global population by more than 1 billion.

However, we know that 800 million people are estimated to be suffering from chronic hunger. In our own country, South Africa, it's estimated 10 to 15 million people are suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition. Many of these people live in rural areas and depend on food from small – scale farming and marketing systems. The global

population is projected to increase to 9 billion; which means demand for food will increase by more than 50 percent over the next 15 years.

We therefore cannot afford to waste time. Each and every one of us must contribute towards the sustainable production and productivity of food for all. It's against this backdrop that we hold this conversation of the Global Conference for Agriculture Research for Development –

No One must be left Behind,

Let's explore how the Agri – Food Innovations can be used to contribute towards sustainable food systems

We hope the discussions will provide insights toward:

- a) Keeping science relevant, responsive and future focused;
- b) Showcasing results of research and development and demonstrating impact;
- c) Scaling up from research to impact;
- d) Sustaining the business of farming; and,
- e) Ensuring better rural futures.