

# 1997-1998 *Annual Report*



**RAFI**  
Rural Advancement Foundation International

# President's Message

**T**he design of this report depicts a children's game. In it, a square formed by nine points must be connected by four straight lines, without taking the pen off the paper. The only way to do this is to connect to a point outside the dots. No image better describes RAFI's work in 1997/98.

As the "outside connector", RAFI was the catalyst that brought about the first External Review of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in 17 years. When the Review Chair, Maurice Strong, asked RAFI to join the science sub-panel, RAFI agreed with some reluctance. Much of the year was then devoted to an intensive evaluation of all aspects of CGIAR science and governance. The results will only be known late in 1998. Throughout the process, however, RAFI has continued in its "outsider" role, as critic of both the Review process and the CGIAR.

As an outside connector, RAFI uncovered a series of Australian intellectual property abuses related to germplasm accessions that form part of an FAO-CGIAR Trust Agreement. Working closely with FAO and CGIAR, RAFI forced the abandonment of five claims. At RAFI's suggestion, both CGIAR and FAO called for a voluntary moratorium on intellectual property claims on "Trust" material, and several governments modified their germplasm exchange practices. As our year ended, RAFI released a report on 147 possibly-abusive intellectual property claims involving Farmers' Varieties from 43 countries. On the eve of the World Trade Organization's TRIPS (patent) review, RAFI's research has exposed one of the biggest scandals in the modern history of intellectual property — and shown that international conventions such as WIPO and UPOV are mechanisms for biopiracy.

It was also as an "outsider" that RAFI discovered and named the patented "Terminator Technology" — a genetic engineering technique that renders seed infertile if farmers attempt to save and replant it. Its inventors have openly stated that the Terminator is targeted at Third World farmers, to prevent them from saving seed and breeding their own varieties. Working with many civil society partners, RAFI called for the Terminator patent to be banned on the grounds that it is contrary to *ordre public* (public morality).

RAFI and allies took the Terminator issue to the Biodiversity Convention and to the CGIAR. Both bodies have expressed their alarm and are studying its implications with a view to formally opposing the patent.

As is often the case for RAFI, the year was dominated by the unexpected. RAFI's work on the CGIAR Review, Terminator, and patent scandals was not planned, causing enormous strain on our staff and budget. Nevertheless, the tiny RAFI secretariat managed to maintain a heavy schedule of travel, seminars and publications, in addition to moving RAFI's head office from Ottawa to Winnipeg. Hope Shand's *Human Nature* was published with FAO support, and the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation published a special issue of *Development Dialogue* titled "The Parts of Life", written by Pat Mooney. More Communiqués, Occasional Papers, guest articles, books, news releases, and other materials were written this year than in any other in RAFI's 21 year history. An average of 12,000 persons now download RAFI documents from the internet every month.

In the year ahead, RAFI, the "outsider" will continue to connect the points — and get its point across!



Sven Hamrell,  
President

## PROGRAMME REPORT

RAFI's activities are loosely divided into four programme areas. Readers will quickly realize, however, that the divisions are often arbitrary. Many activities straddle two or more categories. We hope the programme highlights that follow will illustrate how RAFI's action-oriented research, our indispensable collaboration with colleagues around the world, our timely response to unanticipated events, and our day-to-day contact with the international media and policy-makers, act in tandem to strengthen one another, enhancing the quality of all our efforts.

# Issue I: **Biodiversity & Food Security**

**I**n 1997/98, RAFI returned from the stratosphere of inter-governmental negotiations surrounding the November '96 World Food Summit, to the more exacting task of trying to turn good (or not-so-good) intentions into workable policy and action.

Much of the year's effort focused on issues of importance to agricultural biodiversity, and food security.

## **RESEARCH AND ACTION**

### Terminator Technologies:

In March 1998, the US Patent and Trademark Office granted patent no. 5,723,765 for a genetic engineering technology that RAFI soon dubbed the "Terminator". If commercialized, it will have a devastating effect on global agriculture and food security, and on farmers worldwide who save seed from one year's harvest for next year's planting. This product of clever, but misguided science genetically programs plants so their seeds mature, but are sterile. It was jointly developed and patented by the US Department of Agriculture and Delta and Pine Land, a US seed company that was later bought out by multinational giant Monsanto, which subsequently announced a merger with the mammoth American Home Products. The Terminator has no redeeming agronomic value. Its sole purpose is to force farmers to return to the commercial seed market every year. For the corporate patent-holders, it is a biological guarantee that farmers who use it will have to buy seed every season. It is explicitly aimed at the millions of farmers of the gene-rich South who still save seeds for planting. On learning of this insidious technology, RAFI immediately launched a campaign to ban its use, and have the patent rejected on the grounds of public morality in 87 patent jurisdictions where it will be claimed. We learned of other, similar techniques and patents, and issued a series of publications (see below). With each significant new revelation and corporate merger, RAFI conducted new research, contacted southern colleagues and the press. Reaction was swift. People's organizations from Brazil to Bangladesh denounced this anti-farmer "development".

Then governments and scientific institutions began to act. In May RAFI held a seminar for delegates to the Fourth Conference of the Parties to the Biodiversity Convention (COP IV) in Bratislava, Slovakia, which subsequently resolved that its scientific and technical body should study the impact of the Terminator on agricultural biodiversity. At meetings in April and May '98, the CGIAR Policy Committee considered the Terminator, expressed its concern and committed itself to monitor the technology. In June '98, the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture met in Rome, where RAFI squared off with the Delta and Pine Land Vice President for Technology Transfer, at a seminar for delegates on the Terminator. The Terminator is now firmly on the political agenda. In the year ahead, RAFI will keep the pressure on, trying to ensure that it never sees the commercial light of day.

**External Review of the CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research):**

For several years, RAFI and other civil society organizations (CSOs) pressed for a comprehensive, system-wide external review of the research priorities and governance of the CGIAR, whose impact on agricultural research and agriculture in the South can hardly be over-stated. In May 1997 plans were adopted for a system-wide assessment of the CG, which is the umbrella body for 16 international agricultural research centres. In October '97, RAFI's Pat Mooney became one of three civil society representatives to play a formal role in the External Review process, attending meetings in Washington, the Hague, Mexico City and Brasilia. RAFI grew critical of the Review, as it became clear that it would be an insiders' evaluation. We voiced our concerns within the CG Review process, in RAFI publications, and on a special website which RAFI created to solicit a wider cross section of civil society views for the Review process.

**FAO Commission, and Revision of its International Undertaking on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture:**

Since the Biodiversity Convention was adopted in 1992, the FAO Undertaking has needed revision, to bring it under the umbrella of the Convention as a legally binding FAO Protocol. For several years, the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture has been negotiating revisions to the Undertaking. RAFI has followed these negotiations closely, and has worked to influence their outcome. We have pressed for a broad interpretation of "Farmers' Rights" — including the right to save seeds, and a multilateral system of germplasm exchange rather than bilateral exchanges where countries can be played off one against another. During the year, RAFI attended two Commission meetings in Rome, in December '97 and June '98, where some progress


was made on these issues. At the December meeting, RAFI edited two issues of the CSO newsletter *BioTalk*, which was sought out by delegates for its analysis of current debates. At the June meeting, RAFI organized seminars on both the Terminator technology (see above) and Plant Breeders' Rights abuses (see below). When the dust had settled, RAFI issued a "report card", spot-lighting governments that had either helped or hindered the negotiations. RAFI also brought the issues of FAO/CG Trust abuses and Terminator technology to these meetings (see below).

## PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ December '97 — *Human Nature: Agricultural Biodiversity and Farm-Based Food Security*. This RAFI book, produced with support from FAO, is the culmination of two years work by RAFI's Research Director Hope Shand. In popular style, it documents the inseparable link between cultural and biological diversity, and argues that biological resources for food and agriculture cannot survive if the peoples who know about them, and the cultures that have created and used them are lost. Chapter by chapter, the study traces the loss of genetic diversity in crops, livestock, forests, fish and aquatic life, soil and microorganisms. It concludes with an assessment of the emerging policy agenda for agricultural biodiversity.
- ◆ November '97 — Occasional Paper 4/3: *CGIAR Governance in 1997—Governance and the CG's Third Review*
- ◆ March/April '97 — RAFI Communiqué: *The Terminator Technology—New Genetic Technology Aims to Prevent Farmers from Saving Seeds*
- ◆ June '98 — Occasional Paper 5/1: *Terminator Trends*
- ◆ July '98 — Occasional Paper 5/2: *Repeat the Term! Report on FAO's Gene Commission in Rome, June 8-12, 1998*
- ◆ August '98 — Occasional Paper 5/3: *RAFI Impacts—The Terminator File*



## Issue II: **Biopolicy**

 II RAFI activities address issues of public policy, but some focus specifically on policy formulation and the process of policy-making. Again in 1997/98, RAFI paid special attention to negotiations in the FAO (see above) and the Biodiversity Convention. We continued to organize for action at the World Court and World Trade Organization in 1999. RAFI also addressed the matter of “governance” itself, working for a more effective civil society role in inter-governmental bodies, and more publicly-accountable international institutions. In this light, RAFI’s entire programme can be read as a demonstration project, illustrating how the persistent, daily efforts of a CSO can influence the outcome of inter-governmental policy negotiations.

### **RESEARCH AND ACTION**

#### Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

RAFI was among a handful of CSOs to keep the spotlight on agricultural biodiversity at the CBD during the year. RAFI attended two meetings of the Convention — preparing for, tracking and participating in debates about “Farmers’ Rights”; the value of indigenous knowledge about biodiversity; and access to *ex situ* biological collections that pre-date the Convention. RAFI also worked to close a loophole that allows bioprospectors to circumvent the spirit of the Convention, by procuring biological resources from Northern botanical gardens, instead of negotiating with source governments in the South. In November ‘97, RAFI attended an “Inter-Sessional Meeting” in Madrid, which considered the implementation of CBD clause 8j, on indigenous knowledge. We also took part in a conference of indigenous peoples, in preparation for the official meeting. In May ‘98, two members of RAFI’s staff attended the Fourth Conference of the Parties to the Biodiversity Convention (COP IV) in Bratislava, Slovakia. There RAFI called for action against the Terminator technology (see above), kicked off a global campaign against a US patent on basmati rice (see below), and edited three issues of CSO newsletter, *BioTalk*.

**Crucible II:**

In 1992, RAFL first proposed the “Crucible Project”, and from 1993 to ’96 served as the secretariat for this innovative undertaking. It brought together 40 industry, government and civil society representatives from South and North, to consider the global impact and policy implications of intellectual property in agriculture. The result was *People, Plants and Patents*, a book published by IDRC in 1994 for policy-makers in the South. It spells out a range of viewpoints on matters which require policy decisions by governments worldwide. In early 1998, RAFL helped to plan and launch “Crucible II”, contributing papers and attending a preparatory meeting in April, in Uppsala, Sweden. Convened by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, the meeting laid out plans for the Crucible’s second phase. It roughed out an outline for a book, to be published in 1999, on the eve of the World Trade Organization’s review of its intellectual property agreement, “TRIPS”. The new book, now being drafted by RAFL, will examine how the issues identified in *People, Plants and Patents* have evolved in the intervening five years.

**Community Biodiversity Development and Conservation Programme (CBDC):**

Five years ago, RAFL was a founding member of the CBDC. The 14 country initiative links farmers and CSOs in the South with agricultural research institutions in the North, in cooperative efforts to conserve and enhance agricultural biodiversity in communities. While African, Asian and Latin American field programmes focused on devising and documenting new methods for community-based plant breeding, conservation, research and training, scientific institutes in the Netherlands and Norway provided technical backup. RAFL and Barcelona-based GRAIN provided support on related policy matters, trying to ensure that a solid, community-based perspective from the South was present in policy negotiations, and that relevant policy concerns were interpreted effectively for people working at the community level. In 1997/98, the CBDC established the parameters for a comprehensive programme evaluation, and began planning for a second phase of CBDC. The intent was to record and disseminate what was learned in phase one, and broaden its impact, by translating its successes into national and international policy. At a November 1997 meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, RAFL conducted policy seminars for CBDC partners from all regional programmes.



## PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ April '98 — *The Parts of Life*: This book-length special issue of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation's *Development Dialogue* was written by RAFI's Executive Director Pat Mooney in 1997, and published in early 1998. From the vantage point of a veteran insider, Mooney engagingly surveys a twenty year history of CSO activism on plant genetic resources, biotechnology and biopiracy. He critically assesses the successes and failures, and concludes with a preview of the policy debate that lies ahead, zeroing in on the role that civil society must play in it.
- ◆ December '97 — *BioTalk vol. 6, issues 1 and 2* (at FAO Commission Meeting in Rome, edited by RAFI)
- ◆ May '98 — *BioTalk vol. 7, issues 1, 2 and 3* (at Biodiversity Convention COP IV in Bratislava, edited by RAFI)



## Issue III: **Biopiracy & Intellectual Property**

**R**AFI coined the term “biopiracy” in 1991, during the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations, when Northern industries were accusing the South of rampant trademark “piracy”. “Biopiracy” is now commonly-used shorthand that describes intellectual property claims which appropriate the biological resources of the South, and knowledge about them.

### **RESEARCH AND ACTION**

#### Human Gene Hunting:

In 1993, RAFI began monitoring the Human Genome Diversity Project (HGDP), a Stanford University-based international scheme to collect tissue samples from over 700 isolated, mostly indigenous peoples around the world. When appeals for serious dialogue with targeted peoples failed, RAFI joined indigenous organizations worldwide in calling for a halt to this and similar projects, until unanswered questions — about the rights of research subjects, prior informed consent, and the commercialization and patenting of human tissues for example — could be properly addressed by a UN body. Then the HGDP requested a US government grant, and the US National Academy of Sciences (NAS) was asked to review the project, which they did in late '96. This provided critics with a formal opportunity to express their concerns. RAFI arranged for indigenous colleagues from Colombia and the Solomon Islands to travel to Washington, to appear with us before the NAS Panel. Their testimonies were the only accounts the Panel heard from peoples who had been targets of gene hunting and patenting. In the end, they won the day. In October '97, the NAS conclusions affirmed what RAFI had been saying for five years: that the HGDP was ethically and scientifically flawed, and should not be funded. But human tissue collection still goes on under other guises, patenting continues, and a policy vacuum remains. Focused work is still needed if human gene hunting is to be brought under effective regulatory control.



**“Human Patenting” Research and Kit:**

In 1997/98 RAFI deepened its research on the patenting of human genetic parts, and collaborated in early '98 with *Mother Jones* magazine in the publication of a substantial feature in their May/June issue. The article directed readers to RAFI's website, where we had placed additional new information on human patenting, in anticipation of new internet traffic. In just three months, this material had been accessed by 799 worldwide web users. This research also set the stage for a larger RAFI publication on human patenting, which is now in production. At the request of CSOs and policy-makers worldwide, we have secured seed funding, and begun research for a resource kit on human patenting, slated for publication in 1999.

**“Plant Breeders’ Wrongs”:**

In the closing days of 1997, RAFI unearthed two Plant Breeders' Rights claims by two public sector institutions in Australia, on chickpeas originally from India and Iran, which had reached Australia via two international agricultural research centres. These discoveries aroused RAFI suspicions, and led to a painstaking eight month investigation, conducted in collaboration with Heritage Seed Curators Australia (HSCA). It eventually turned up 147 suspect intellectual property claims. In August '98, HSCA and RAFI published the results of this study, entitled *Plant Breeders' Wrongs*, which was sent with an explanatory letter to each affected government. The study reveals a pattern of systematic abuse of Plant Breeders Rights, and of six hard-won 1993 Trust agreements between the CGIAR centres and the FAO, which were intended to keep seeds in the CG genebanks free from intellectual property monopoly. Although nearly 80% of the suspected abuses were in Australia, the list also includes claims lodged with six other national intellectual property offices, on plant material from at least 43 countries and seven research centres. In 21 recommendations aimed at inter-governmental bodies, governments, and research institutes, the study calls for sweeping reforms and policy guarantees, to ensure that all past abuses are identified around the world, rectified, and never repeated. While conducting this research, RAFI cooperated closely with all implicated research centres, the CGIAR itself, and the FAO — making new information available as it emerged. Action was encouragingly swift. The Australians were forced to drop five Plant Breeder's Rights claims. At RAFI's prompting, the CGIAR and FAO called for a voluntary moratorium on intellectual property claims involving any CG/FAO Trust material, until the situation could be properly addressed. Both inter-governmental bodies are assessing what actions to take. 1998/99 is likely to see significant progress to halt these abuses.

**Southeast Asia Biopiracy Collaboration:**

In 1996, RAFI's closest SE Asian partner, SEARICE, asked us to provide comprehensive research support for a regional programme to combat biopiracy. In December '97, RAFI took part in a planning meeting for this initiative in Chiang Mai, Thailand. By mid '98, SEARICE had secured funding from Germany, the Netherlands and Norway for this programme, and RAFI and SEARICE formally began a three year collaboration, to document and challenge biopiracy in SE Asia, and to conduct workshops with CSOs from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

**Quinoa Patent Dropped:**

On May 22<sup>nd</sup> , 1998, RAFI issued a press release, announcing that Colorado State University plant breeders had dropped US patent no. 5,304,718 on the Andean staple quinoa, after strong protest by Bolivian quinoa farmers and researchers. RAFI discovered the patent in October 1996, and immediately brought it to the attention of ANAPQUI, the national association of quinoa producers in Bolivia. Together RAFI and ANAPQUI opposed the patent, going first to the patent holders, and then to the United Nations and the press. Embarrassed by their tenacious opponents, the academic owners of the patent finally let it lapse on April 20<sup>th</sup>. ANAPQUI farmers were elated. As one said: "This proves that small farmers with good friends can even defeat powerful US universities."

**Campaigning with Partners:**

In 1997/98, RAFI monitored the status of biopiracy cases unearthed in previous years, supported partners from all continents with research, and followed up new biopiracy leads. For example, RAFI's 1994 legal challenge of an Agracetus (now Monsanto) patent on transgenic soybeans remains before the European Patent Office, awaiting an oral hearing. In the case of the African soapberry (endod), RAFI assisted a network of Ethiopian-born scientists in the USA developing plans to challenge the University of Toledo patent which RAFI first publicized in early 1993. With colleagues from Vanuatu and the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre in Fiji, RAFI conducted new research on US and European patents on the Pacific ceremonial plant, kava. At the invitation of COICA (Coordinating Body for Indigenous Peoples' Organizations of the Amazon Basin) RAFI took part in a conference in Peru, spoke about patents and indigenous knowledge to indigenous leaders from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela, and took on the US bioprospecting company, Shaman Pharmaceuticals in an impromptu debate. At the Conference of the Parties to the Biodiversity Convention in May '98, RAFI launched an international postcard campaign. The postcards (in English, German and Spanish) called on US RiceTec Inc, a US company with European parents, to drop its patent on Basmati rice.

World Court / Ordre Public:

Whenever possible during the year, RAFI urged governments and inter-governmental bodies to challenge especially-offensive "life patents" (like the Terminator, above) on the grounds *ordre public* or morality, and to question the "life patenting" requirements of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a whole, by asking the International Court of Justice (World Court) for "Advisory Opinions" on life patenting. In March 1998, government and CSO delegates at a Pacific-wide meeting on intellectual property affirmed support for RAFI's World Court strategy. In April, RAFI prepared a briefing for South Pacific delegates to COP IV. It layed out strategic opportunities to challenge biopiracy and the WTO's life patenting requirements, via the World Court. The idea, first floated three years ago, is gaining credibility and momentum. RAFI will make a concerted effort to bring it to fruition in the year ahead.

## PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ September/October '97 — RAFI Communiqué: *Biopiracy Update*
- ◆ January/February '98 — RAFI Communiqué: *Australian PBR Scandal — UPOV Meets a Scandal "Down Under" by Burying its Head in the Sand*
- ◆ May/June '98 — *Mother Jones* (USA): Special feature on human genetics includes *An Owners' Guide — Pharmaceutical companies are mining your DNA for scientific gold* and *Where New Genes Come From* by Hope Shand. 30,000 reprints made available by *Mother Jones* for educational purposes.
- ◆ May '98 — RAFI postcards printed for campaign against basmati rice patents
- ◆ August '98 — Occasional Paper 5/4: *Plant Breeders Wrongs*



## Issue IV:

# Biotechnology

## RESEARCH AND ACTION

All RAFI's analysis and activism is built on a foundation of accurate, up-to-the minute information. None of RAFI's other work would be possible without a solid understanding of biotechnology trends, and knowledge about how the life industries are structured, and changing. Keeping up-to-date demands detailed research; data must be revised almost daily. RAFI monitors changes in the biotech industries, and makes new information available to regular *Communiqué* subscribers, and to the media, through publications and on the internet.

### Life Industry Research and Monitoring:

In 1997/98 RAFI conducted an extensive review of the "life industries", following a run of unprecedented corporate mergers, buy-outs and re-alignments that dramatically blurred the boundaries between the once-distinct food and beverage, seed, agrochemical, pharmaceutical and veterinary medicine industries, for example. Two new *RAFI Communiqués* summarized the results of this research. The first, called *The Life Industry 1997*, analyses mega-mergers and industry trends, and lists the top ten companies in each of five "sectors". The second, *Seed Industry Consolidation* takes stock of mammoth mergers in the seed sector, and predicts further corporate concentration in the year ahead.

### Putting Corporate Monitoring to Work:

RAFI's corporate research is not an academic exercise, nor an end in itself. It is the springboard for timely action and campaigning. Thanks to solid baseline data and day-to-day tracking of the life industries, for example, RAFI was able to respond within hours when transnational giant Monsanto bought out Delta and Pine Land — owner of the Terminator technology (above). Likewise, we reacted to subsequent mergers and buy-outs involving Monsanto, Dekalb Plant Genetics, American Home Products, Cargill and Plant Breeding International, analysing how they would affect use of the seed-sterilizing Terminator in the burgeoning Monsanto empire. We quickly advised colleagues in the

South Asian Network for Food Ecology and Culture when Monsanto and the internationally acclaimed Grameen Bank of Bangladesh announced plans for a "Grameen-Monsanto Centre for Environment-Friendly Technologies". The centre was to promote Monsanto products to rural micro-credit loan recipients in Bangladesh, but the ensuing international protest forced the cancellation of the deal. Monitoring, in cooperation with South Asian partners, will continue in the coming year.

## PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ November/December '97 — RAFI Communiqué: *The Life Industry 1997 — The Global Enterprises that Dominate Commercial Agriculture, Food and Health*
- ◆ July/August '98 — RAFI Communiqué: *Seed Industry Consolidation — Who Owns Whom?*



# Information Services & Outreach

**R**AFI has a staff of just five full-time employees. With the skilled use of electronic communications, however, it has a surprisingly broad reach. Detailed records of all RAFI publications, articles by RAFI staff, media coverage, and speaking engagements for each calendar year are available as an appendix to RAFI's *Annual Report*, entitled *RAFI's Impact*. Highlights are summarized below.

#### Publications:

RAFI's principal research publication is the *RAFI Communiqué*, which is published six times annually, and sent in print to a mailing list of over 800. RAFI also publishes *Occasional Papers* to report on work in progress. In 1997/98, RAFI published two books. All 1997/98 publications are identified in the relevant programme sections above.

#### Electronic Outreach:

*RAFI Annual* and *Financial Reports*, and all research publications are available on RAFI's website, which was created in 1996, and is still managed in-house by Edward Hammond. It is updated whenever a new publication appears. By fiscal year-end over 250 RAFI text documents were available on the site, which was delivering the equivalent of about 135,000 Worldwide Web pages per year, to users in at least 101 countries or territories — up from 50,000 pages to people in 60 countries just one year earlier. Detailed statistics on the use of RAFI's website are available on the site.

#### Media Outreach:

RAFI staff are in almost daily contact with the media — responding to inquiries prompted by RAFI's press releases, and to journalists who contact us for information or opinions on events in the news. 1997/98 was a particularly newsworthy year, with two RAFI research initiatives — on Plant Breeder's Rights abuses, and the Terminator technology — attracting considerable media attention internationally. We issued 15 press releases in 1997/98, and recorded 148 contacts with print and electronic media houses, from 16 countries and numerous international wire services and regional news outlets. This almost certainly under-represents total media coverage, since journalists, especially in



the South, now use RAFI press releases and website without ever making personal contact with RAFI staff. We frequently learn of coverage that we were unaware of long after it appears. Press releases issued during the year were as follows:

- ◆ October 25, 1997: *Scientific Review Rejects the HGDP*
- ◆ November 14: *US Funding of Human Biodiversity Collections Carries on Despite Contrary Scientific Advice*
- ◆ January 6, 1998: *Recent Australian Claims to Indian and Iranian Chickpeas Countered by NGOs and ICRISAT*
- ◆ January 21: *Australians Abandon Two Plant "Patent" Claims*
- ◆ February 1: *Aussies "Pirate" Others Genius? International Confusion, Anger Greet Australian Kleptomania of Farmers' Plant Varieties from Other Countries*
- ◆ February 2: *International Research Centre (ICARDA) Breaks Trust*
- ◆ February 9: *Toward a Global Moratorium on Plant Monopolies*
- ◆ March 13: *Biotech Activists Oppose the Terminator Technology*
- ◆ March 20: *Terminating Food Security? The Terminator Technology threatens the food security of 1.4 billion*
- ◆ May 14 (Bratislava) : *Monsanto Takes Terminator — It's Now or Never for Agricultural Biodiversity in Bratislava*
- ◆ June 10 (Rome): *Australians Thwart Progress on Farmers' Rights*
- ◆ July 7: *Grameen Turns Mean? From Poverty-fighter to the Peasant's Pinkerton*
- ◆ August 5: *Grameen Bank and the Monster — Grameen Rejects Mean*
- ◆ August 13: *... and now the "Verminator"! Fat Cat Corp. with Fat Rat Gene can kill Crops*
- ◆ August 31: *Plant Breeder's Wrongs — More on the Australian Plant Piracy Scandal*



In March 1997, RAFI introduced an electronic service of news updates, analysis and opinion pieces, dubbed *GenoTypes*. These and press releases are now distributed almost instantly to more than 850 media, government and civil society recipients worldwide, and are then posted on RAFI's website. Seventeen *GenoType* titles in 1997/98 were as follows:

- ◆ September 17, 1997: *Supply Side Science?*
- ◆ September 28: *Biotech Industry Sweet on African Plant Proteins*
- ◆ November 12: *More Efforts to Sample Remote Peoples*
- ◆ November 28: *Life Industry Ranking*
- ◆ January 6, 1998: *Chickpeas Claims Cause Concern*
- ◆ January 22: *Australian PBR Claims*
- ◆ March 11: *Seed Savers Threatened — US Patent on New Genetic Technology Will Prevent Farmers from Saving Seed*
- ◆ March 11: *Ayahuasca Patent Row*
- ◆ April 1: *Basmati Rice Patent*
- ◆ April 30: *Canada Rejects Oncomouse Patent*
- ◆ May 22: *Quinoa Patent Dropped*
- ◆ May 22: *RAFI Launches Postcard Campaign to Oppose Basmati Rice Patent*
- ◆ June 2: *Terminator Technology at COP IV*
- ◆ June 11: *American Home "Monster"?*
- ◆ June 17: *Icelanders Put deCODE Genetics and LaRoche on Ice*
- ◆ June 30; *The "Monster" Strikes Again — Monsanto/American Home Products Buy Cargill's Overseas Seeds Operations*
- ◆ July 13; *Of "Luddites" and Eli-ites"*

Speaking Engagements:

RAFI staff are often asked to speak, or act as resource people at inter-governmental meetings, civil society or academic conferences, seminars and workshops. In 1997/98, RAFI played such a role at 36 events, in 10 countries.

RAFI's website address is

<http://www.rafi.org>

WWW.RAFI.ORG



# Governance & Administration

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Ann Danaiya Usher – Oslo,  
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## ADVISORY COUNCIL

Erna Bennett – Katoomba,  
Australia: retired plant geneticist  
and journalist; founder of FAO's  
Crop Ecology Unit in the 1960s

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Tessa Huxley – New York, USA:  
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Joseph Ki-Zerbo – Ouagadougou,  
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Daniel Pollitt – Chapel Hill, NC, USA:  
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retired senior FAO official and  
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From Hunger Campaign

## STAFF

Pat Mooney, Executive Director

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## RAFI SUPPORTERS

RAFI extends a warm thank you to the many organizations who generously provided financial support to RAFI's programmes in 1997/98. They are:

- ◆ Canadian International Development Agency — International NGO Division (Canada)
- ◆ Community Biodiversity Development and Conservation Programme — CBDC (Chile)
- ◆ CPRO-DLO Centre for Genetic Resources (Netherlands)
- ◆ C.S. Fund (USA)\*
- ◆ Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation (USA)\*
- ◆ Educational Foundation of America (USA)\*
- ◆ Foundation for Deep Ecology (USA)\*
- ◆ Sol Goldman Charitable Trust (USA)\*
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- ◆ HIVOS (Netherlands)\*\*
- ◆ HKH Foundation (USA)\*
- ◆ Inter-Church Action (Canada)
- ◆ International Development Research Centre (Canada)
- ◆ Inter Pares (Canada)
- ◆ International Plant Genetic Resources Institute — IPGRI (international)



\* support to RAFI-USA for joint RAFI/RAFI-USA programmes

\*\* in cooperation with SEARICE

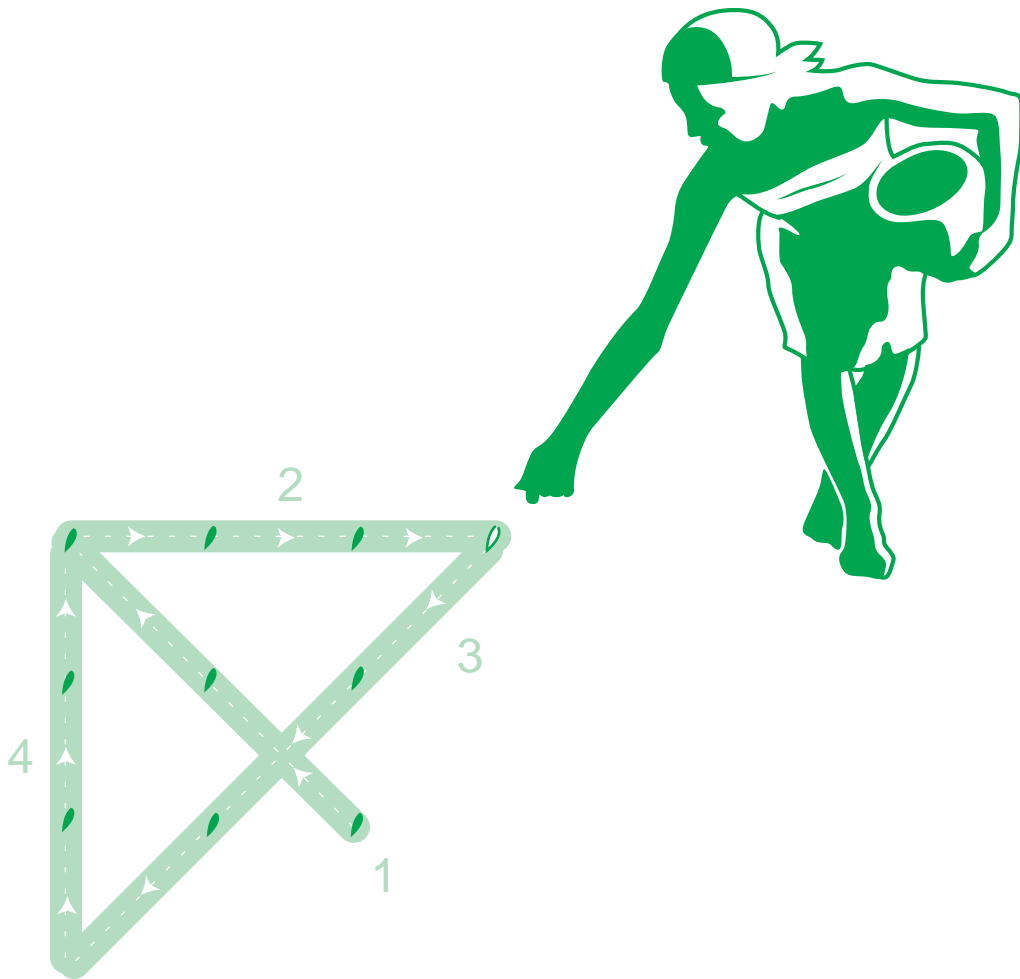
## RAFI SUPPORTERS (CONTINUED)

- ◆ Moriah Fund (USA)
- ◆ Netherlands Ministry for International Cooperation — DGIS (Netherlands)
- ◆ NORAGRIC (Norway)
- ◆ Percy Gardiner Foundation (Canada)
- ◆ Right Livelihood Award Foundation (Sweden)
- ◆ SEARICE (Philippines)
- ◆ Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sweden)
- ◆ Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature (Sweden) \*\*
- ◆ United Church of Canada (Canada)
- ◆ United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (international)
- ◆ World Council of Churches (international)

\*\* *in cooperation with SEARICE*



The design of this report depicts a children's game. In it, a square formed by nine points must be connected by four straight lines, without taking the pen off the paper. The only way to do this is to connect to a point outside the dots. No image better describes RAFI's work in 1997/98.



RAFI (The Rural Advancement Foundation International) is an international civil society organization head-quartered in Winnipeg, Canada, and governed by a Board of Trustees with members from six continents. RAFI is dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and to the socially responsible development of technologies useful to rural societies. RAFI is concerned about the loss of agricultural biodiversity, the impact of intellectual property on biotechnology and food security, and the governance of international institutions that affect rural communities.

RAFI has roster status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and consulting status with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). RAFI is a member of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation.

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## RELATED DOCUMENTS

There are two annexes to this *RAFI Annual Report*. One is a summary of *RAFI's Impact*. The other is *RAFI's Financial Report*, including audited financial statement. Both are available in print, on request. They are also available on RAFI's website ([www.rafi.org](http://www.rafi.org)).