

# SKIM Project Community of Practices Terms of Reference for Knowledge Management Platform



Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (IFAD SKIM Project)



# SKiM Project Community of Practice

Terms of Reference for Knowledge Management Platform

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## Project

Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (SKiM)

## Funded by

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## Prepared by

International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)

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## **About SKIM**

The **Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe** project is a grant project, hereafter the project, led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The project also works with international partners Virginia Tech, CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR as well as National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), governments, and agricultural extension services in Moldova, Morocco and Sudan.

Initiated in June 2018, the project facilitates and supports knowledge management (KM) and capacity development activities in the three selected countries (with the possibility of extending to a further two) and will provide practical examples of KM best practices that will be considered and adopted by participating institutions. Increasing the capacities of participating public institutions in this work, by providing necessary structures and enhancing systems at the country and regional levels, will contribute to development and effective management of knowledge catalyzing long-term growth and development.

Details of the project can be accessed via <https://mel.cgiar.org/projects/SKIM>. This website provides background information, describes project team configuration and members, partners and engaged stakeholders, key documents and the proposal of the project as well as further details of the project such as the goals and objectives, impact pathway, focus countries. It also lists the resources uploaded on the project website, project news and events calendar.

## **About IFAD**

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a specialized agency of the United Nations, was one of the major outcomes of the 1974 World Food Conference. IFAD was set up as an international financial institution in 1977. Since then, IFAD-supported projects have reached millions of people. [IFAD's Strategic Framework 2016-2025](#) sets out how IFAD works over the decade in order to play a crucial role in the inclusive and sustainable transformation of rural areas. It articulates our contribution to the 2030 Agenda, including the larger role IFAD will play in supporting countries to fulfil their priorities relative to the Agenda. For more details: [www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org)

## **About ICARDA**

Established in 1977, the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) is a non-profit, CGIAR Research Center that focusses on delivering innovative solutions for sustainable agricultural development in the nontropical dry areas of the developing world.

We provide innovative, science-based solutions to improve the livelihoods and resilience of resource-poor smallholder farmers. We do this through strategic partnerships, linking research to development, and capacity development, and by considering gender equality and the role of youth in transforming the non-tropical dry areas.

Address: Dalia Building, Second Floor, Bashir El Kasser St, Verdun, Beirut, Lebanon 1108-2010.

[www.icarda.org](http://www.icarda.org)

## Acronyms

CDO	Capacity Development Officer
CIHEAM Bari	Centre International de Hautes Études Agronomiques Méditerranéennes – Bari
CoP	Community of Practice
CPIU - IFAD	Consolidated Programs Implementation Unit - IFAD
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INRA	National Institute of Agricultural Research (Institut national de la recherche agronomique)
KM	Knowledge Management
KMO	Knowledge Management Officer
KMRF	Knowledge Management Research Fellow
KMP	Knowledge Management Platform
KP	Knowledge Portal
KS	Knowledge Sharing
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEO	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
NARS	National Agricultural Research System
NFP	National Focal Point
NTC	National Technical Committee
PMU	Project Management Unit
PROCASUR	Procasur Corporation
SKIM	Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe
VT	Virginia Tech

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## 1. Introduction

SKIM project has committed to establish or support community of practices for enhancing the national knowledge management systems. These community of practices, hereafter knowledge management platforms (KMPs), will focus on a single sector and will be a bridge between national technical committees of the SKIM and multi-stakeholders innovation networks for the selected sectors.

This document is the first document for supporting implementation of KMPs. It describes the objectives of the KMPs, the composition of KMPs and describes the roles and responsibilities of different individuals and entities involved in the implementation of KMPs. It will be followed up by an action plan guiding the specific implementation of KMPs in each SKIM country.

## 2. Objectives of Knowledge Management Platforms

Knowledge management platforms are a type of multi-stakeholder platform, decision making bodies where a formal or informal group of diverse stakeholders decide about organizing and implementing coordinated events<sup>1</sup>. In the context of SKIM, they are anticipated to enhance the coordination of multiple efforts for improving the knowledge management systems in SKIM countries.

SKIM KMPs will serve one or a few of the objectives below:

- Characterization of knowledge management systems within the sectors prioritized by national technical committees (Characterize)
- Diagnose the bottlenecks that keep the knowledge management systems (Diagnose)
- Develop coordinated multi-actor strategies to address the bottlenecks (Strategize)
- Facilitate agreement and build coalitions on the implementation of the strategies (Agree)
- Coordinate implementation of the agreed strategies, adapt them as necessary, generate and document learning (Navigate)

Each KMP will discuss, select and agree on the objectives to be pursued in the short-term based on existing situation of knowledge management systems and demands of national technical committees within each SKIM country.

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<sup>1</sup> For details Sartas, M. (2018). *Do multi-stakeholder platforms work?: contributions of multi-stakeholder platforms to the performance of research for development interventions* (Doctoral dissertation, Wageningen University).

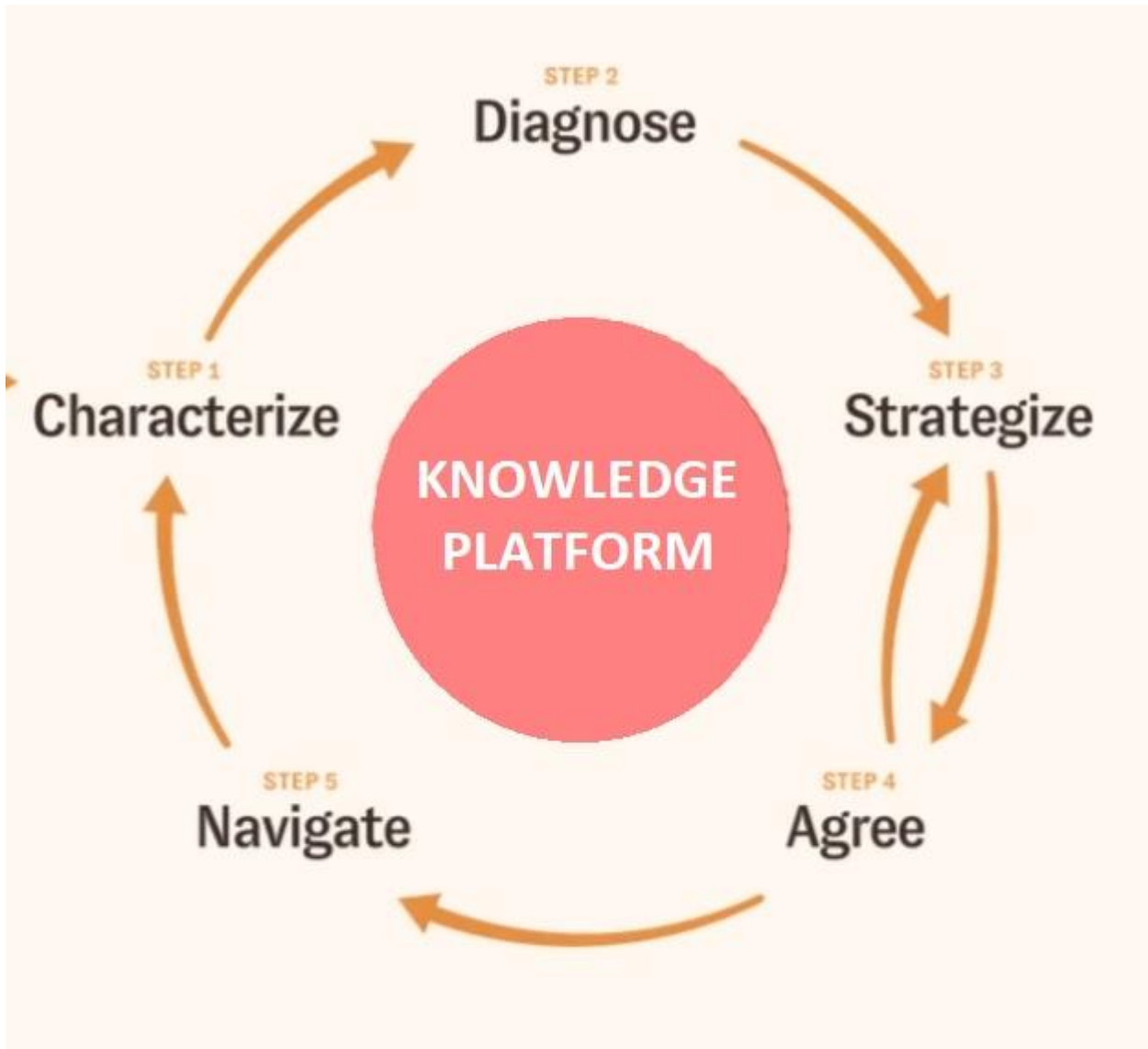


Figure 1: Objective of the knowledge management platforms

### 3. The Composition of Knowledge Management Platforms

KMPs can have diverse compositions based on their specific objectives. However, effective functioning of KMPs necessitates filling the roles below

- Facilitator
- Organizer
- Monitor
- Platform members

**Facilitators** are people who connect different stakeholders and empower the stakeholders who are disadvantaged in participation but can make an important contribution to the KMP. Connecting and empowering stakeholders might require various skills at various intensity such as effective communication, conflict resolution, mediation, brokering etc.

**Organizers** are people who manage the invitations to KMP events, organize the logistics, deal with payments and other administrative and financial tasks. Effective implementation of KMP requires a lot of “follow-up” activities that require significant time investment.

**Monitors** are people who adapt, implement monitoring tools, analyze the data and report about the progress of the platform, highlight existing issues, identify and monitor assumptions and risks, and provide other information that can improve the performance of the platform. Since knowledge management systems are dynamic and performance of the platform hugely depends on it being “up-to-date” and its adaptive management capability, the monitor’s presence is critical.

**Platform members** are people who are content experts and representatives of stakeholders relevant for the sectors of the KMP focus. Since KMPs require creation and exchange of knowledge, participation of diverse members who transfer the knowledge and who translate the knowledge into action together is critical.

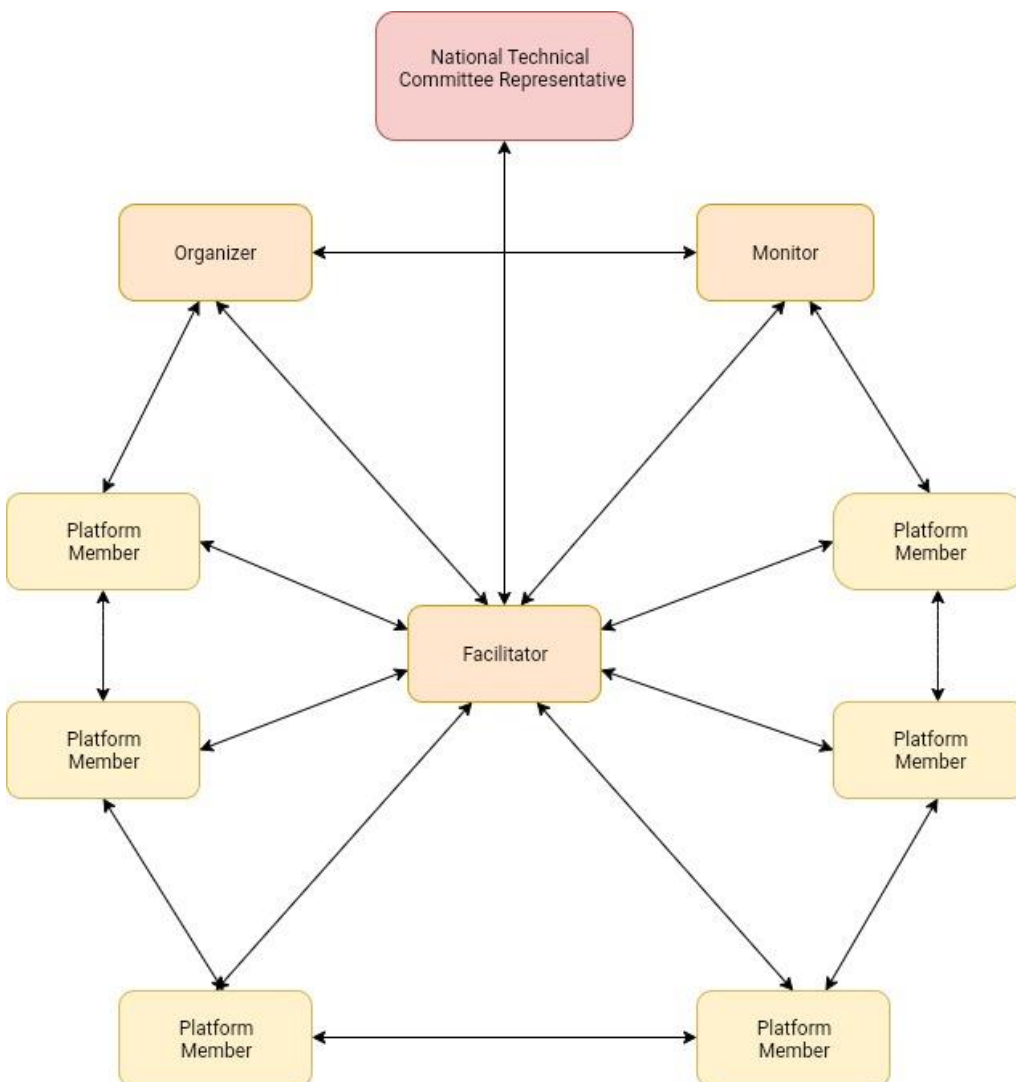


Figure 2: Composition of Knowledge Management Platforms



## 4. Terms of Reference for KMP Roles

### 4.1 Facilitator

#### 4.1.1 Purpose



Knowledge management platforms connect multiple actors in the agri-food system to promote joint knowledge creation, sharing and learning. Knowledge creation and learning are however not confined to technical up-take but also include understanding processes and stimulating organizational, institutional and even policy change. All too often, however, technological aspects of knowledge prevail in platforms and within the organizations that members represent. For knowledge management systems to be advanced, technical knowledge need to combined with non-technical knowledge processes. The facilitator is the person who ensures that both technical and non-technical knowledge is created, shared and learned within the KMP and beyond.

#### 4.1.2 Main Responsibilities

Within the KMP, the facilitator ensures

- Active participation of representatives of the key stakeholder groups in the KMP
- Shared understanding and agreement among the participants about the objectives, strategies and prioritized activities of the KMP
- High engagement of the participants in agreed activities of the KMP
- Learning about how to organize and manage multi-stakeholder planning and implementation of KMPs strategies and activities

The facilitator also contributes to

- Improving participation of stakeholders in the events organized by the SKIM project in terms of number and type of participants
- Preparation of communication products for improving visibility of the knowledge management platform
- Improving engagement of stakeholders who are not member of the KMP in SKIM project activities and knowledge management innovations developed, disseminated by the SKIM project
- Designing learning events of the SKIM project

### 4.1.3 Key Qualifications

Two types of qualifications are necessary for the KMP facilitators; i.e. generic process management and specific complementary competences. Generic process management competences are the competences necessary for delivering the responsibilities above independent of the specifics of the KMP. They include

- communication skills (verbal communication, body language, presentation skills etc.),
- leadership (team building, coaching etc.),
- influencing (negotiation, persuasion etc.),
- interpersonal skills (networking, conflict resolution etc.),
- personal skills (stress management, taking criticism etc.),
- creativity (problem solving, troubleshooting etc.) and
- professional skills (meeting management, writing reports etc.)

Specific complementary competences depend on the specifics of the KMP. They depend on;

- Focus sector in which the KMP operates
- The level at which the KMP operates
- Objectives of the KMP
- Competence gaps among KMP members

Selection of the short-list of competences that fits best to the needs of the KMP will be made by the recruitment committee created by the SKIM project PMU following a Stakeholder profile survey.

### 4.1.4 Estimated Budget

Facilitation of the KMP is estimated to require 25% to 35% fte of an experienced facilitator a year. Operational budget might range from 1000 USD to 5000 USD a year depending on the location and the needs of the platform.

## 4.2 Platform Organizer

### 4.2.1 Purpose

Knowledge management platforms organize or co-organize a large variety of events to improve knowledge management events such as meetings, study or field visits, trainings, fund-raising campaigns etc. Moreover, each event requires different KMP members and collaborating stakeholders to play active roles. Such diversity in the type and participants of the events lead to a need for rigorous planning and follow-up in addition to logistical challenges. The Organizer is the person who ensures that events organized or co-organized by the KMP are coordinated, logistically smooth and facilitate attendance of the members or collaborators of the KMPs.



### 4.2.2 Main Responsibilities

Within the KMP, the organizer ensures

- All the events organized or co-organized by the KMP documented and reported to management and members of the KMP
- Sufficient facilities, room, equipment, internet access etc., for all KMP events
- All KMP participants are well informed about the details of the KMP events before, during and after each event

- Financial and other provisions provided to the participants of the KMP events sufficiently prepared and timely handed out

The organizer also contributes to

- Cost management of the knowledge management platform
- Improving participation of stakeholders in the events organized by the SKIM project
- Informing stakeholders who are not member of the KMP in SKIM project activities and knowledge management innovations developed, disseminated by the SKIM project

#### 4.2.3 Key Qualifications

The following qualifications are necessary for the KMP monitors

- professional skills (meeting management, writing reports etc.)
- time management skills (scheduling, time accounting etc.)
- procurement management (procurement logistics, supplier management etc.)
- cost management skills (budget development, budget administration etc.)

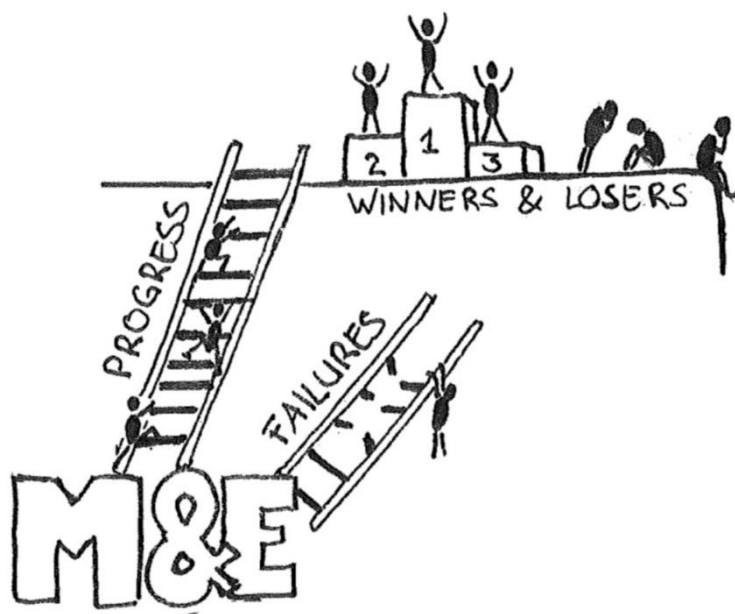
#### 4.2.4 Estimated Budget

Organization of the KMP is estimated to require 50% fte of an experienced organizer a year. Operational budget might range from 3000 USD to 5000 USD a year depending on the location and the needs of the platform. Budget for additional activities that will be identified and organized by the platform are not included.

### 4.3 Platform Monitor

#### 4.3.1 Purpose

KMPs operate in dynamic knowledge systems. Moreover, the configuration of the knowledge system heavily depends on the characteristics that vary across SKIM countries. Therefore, predicting the best course of actions for the KMPs for each country in advance is not possible. To achieve their objectives, the KMPs need to follow principles and practices of adaptive management in which generation and effective communication of evidence occupy a big role. The KMP monitor is the person who ensures that knowledge management platform uses tools and practices to generate evidence on the performance and influence of KMPs on knowledge systems and communicates the evidence to knowledge management platform management.



#### 4.3.2 Main Responsibilities

Within the KMP the monitor ensures

- Collection of the data on performance of the KMP processes using templates developed by the SKIM project
- Collection of the data on the influence of the KMP on local knowledge management systems using templates developed by the SKIM project
- Analysis of the data on performance of the KMP processes and transform data into actionable information that informs management of the KMP about adaptive management options and actions
- Analysis of the data on the influence of the KMP on local knowledge management systems and reporting it to KMP management
- Monitoring the assumptions and risks of implementing KMPs and reporting their status to the platform periodically
- Conducting brief research tasks requested by the KMP to develop strategies and actions for enhancing knowledge management systems

The monitor also contributes to

- Preparing periodical reports on KMP activities
- Support monitoring and evaluation activities of the SKIM project
- Support research activities of the SKIM project

#### 4.3.3 Key Qualifications

The following qualifications are necessary for the KMP monitors

- Research skills (ability of finding statistics and facts, following data collection protocols etc.)
- Reporting skills (Preparing summaries, reporting metrics etc.)
- Presentation skills (written and visual communication, verbal communication etc.)
- Change management skills (current state analysis, risk assessment etc.)
- Soft skills (prioritization, problem solving etc.)

#### 4.3.4 Estimated Budget

Organization of the KMP is estimated to require 75 - 100 % fte of a middle experience monitor a year. Operational budget might range from 3000 USD to 5000 USD a year depending on the location and the needs of the platform.

### 4.4 Platform Member

#### 4.4.1 Purpose

KMPs leverage the resources of their members and benefit from combined competences of its members and collaborators. Knowledge management scientists have shown that although they can be supported by external initiatives for limited periods, KMPs need to have sufficient financial capacity, core competences and access to influential actors to be able to enhance knowledge management systems. Platform members are the people who ensure that the KMPs has sufficient financial resources, competences and networks.

#### 4.4.2 Main Responsibilities

Within the KMP, the members ensure

- Commitment to the agreed objectives of KMP
- Attendance to key KMP events and a subset of other events
- Financial contribution or access the key decision makers within the knowledge management system
- Providing at least one key competence for achieving KMP objectives

The platform members also contribute to

- Developing and implementing of KMP strategies
- Embedding of KMP products into knowledge management systems
- Informing KMP about key developments and events in knowledge management systems

#### 4.4.3 Key Qualifications

There is no pre-defined set of key qualifications for the platform members. Any competences and skills that are necessary for fulfilling the responsibilities above within the context the knowledge management platform operate can be considered as key qualifications.

#### 4.4.4 Estimated Budget

Attendance to the KMP is estimated to require 5% fte of platform members a year. Operational budget might range from 500 to 1000USD a year depending on the location and the needs of the platform. However, platform members are expected to fund and contribute to some activities of the KMP.

## 5. Additional Reading for the KMPs

1. Sartas, M., Schut, M. van Schagen, B, Velasco, C., Thiele, G., Proietti, C., and Leeuwis, C. 2020. Scaling Readiness: Concepts, Practices and Implementation. CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB). January 2020, pp 217.
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