

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

## Virtual Learning Route Final Report



# 2020 SKiM Virtual Learning Route – Final Report

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## Prepared by

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

## Project

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

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## Report

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## 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, through strategic partnerships, linking research to development, capacity development, and by considering gender equality and the role of youth in transforming the non-tropical dry areas.

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## Abbreviations

ARC-Sudan	Agricultural Research Corporation - Sudan
CapDev	Capacity Development
CCU-IFAD	Central Coordination Unit for IFAD Programme Implementation
CIHEAM-Bari	Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari
CoP	Community of Practice
COSOP	Country Strategic Opportunities Programme
CRCVP	Climate Resilient Community Village Plan
DEGEVAL	German Society for Evaluation
GALS	Gender Action Learning Systems
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Center
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
KM	Knowledge Management
LMRP	Livestock Marketing and Resilience Programme
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
MGMT	Management
NRM	Natural Resources Management
PMU	Program Management Unit
Procasur	Procasur Corporation
UN	United Nations
ToT	Training of Trainers
SKiM	Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound
SSTC	South-to-South Triangular Cooperation
VLR	Virtual Learning Route
VT	Virginia Tech

## 1. About SKiM

Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (SKiM) is a grant project led by ICARDA and funded by IFAD. The project also collaborates with international partners CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR, Virginia Tech as well as NARS, governments, and agricultural extension services in Moldova, Morocco and Sudan.

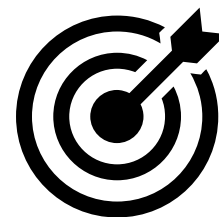
Initiated in June 2018, the project facilitates and supports KM and capacity development activities in the three selected countries, providing practical examples of KM best practices for analysis and adoption by participating institutions. Increasing the capacities of participating public institutions, by providing necessary structures and systems at the country and regional levels, ensures that knowledge can be effectively managed for long-term growth and development.

The project website (<https://mel.cgiar.org/projects/SKiM>) provides background information and outlines the project team, partners and stakeholders. The website also shares key documents including the project proposal, and outlines the goals, objectives and impact pathway of the project, as well as additional resources and information on news and events.

The SKiM Knowledge Management Portal (<https://knowledgemanagementportal.org>) is the open access page showcasing the latest info and achievements of SKiM institutions, organizations and networks partnering in Knowledge Management worldwide.

## 2. Introduction

In the framework of the IFAD funded SKiM project, the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and Procasur Corporation (PROCASUR) have published together a wealth of Information on Sudanese agricultural knowledge management best practices through a closely monitored and interactive-like social media campaign on Virtual Learning Route from 30 November to 4 December, 2020.



The SKiM partners have coordinated in a multi-stakeholder effort to bring the social media users along the path of the Learning Route, guiding them through agricultural challenges and knowledge expertise in the Sudanese context.

The course is Open Access, targeting participants from the three target countries (Moldova, Morocco and Sudan) plus additional external attendees during the social media campaign held in the 5 days (30 November - 4 December 2020) of the virtual course, showcasing the Procasur Sudan Country Source Book and the Virtual Learning Route in 7 steps overall: the Sudan Country Source Book, the Video Introduction, four Case Studies and a Learning Survey that has allowed users to connect directly with the knowledge providers.

This new approach to virtual training, combining Open Access knowledge and media campaign to promote it, shall contribute to raise awareness on the importance of knowledge management as an asset for rural development, through peer-learning, knowledge sharing and south-to-south triangular cooperation.

### 3. Structure of the Virtual Learning Route

The training was planned to be run in Sudan but due to Covid-19 emergency it was reorganized and proposed as a virtual course. The trainings combined:

#### The Sudan Country Source Book

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12117>

The backbone publication of the virtual Learning Route. It highlights the importance of an enabling framework and creating a learning culture as prerequisites for sustainable KM asset building. It addresses the 5 W's and H: what, where, why, who, when and how. The Source Book describes 4 best practices of knowledge management tools across 3 main themes.

#### Introduction to Knowledge Management

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12118>

The Sudan country programme has made important strides in building assets and tools for knowledge management. This is evidenced by knowledge systematization and cross-learning between the projects, particularly around natural resource management and governance, and women empowerment. Collaboration with international and/or national entities, e.g. CGIAR, Agricultural Research Center (ARC), Universities or similar research and academic agencies was also mobilized. Starting with functional monitoring and evaluation systems and corresponding capacity for critical reflection and analysis in projects, approaches to knowledge management were gradually developed. The good practices and knowledge generated are being scaled up and translated to wider institutional practices, policies and their implementation.

#### "Learning Routes" Case

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12119>

Learning Routes were introduced as a key knowledge management and learning methodology to the Sudan in the context of the IFAD Country Programme. Learning Routes are a means to exchange knowledge between peers, here usually farmers and rural development practitioners. Sudanese development stakeholders started abroad with Learning Routes on Best Practices in Natural Resource Management, Agricultural Productivity and Women Empowerment. Then insights were modified and successfully applied to the Sudanese project contexts and have significantly contributed towards greater development effectiveness. The Learning Route Methodology has been recognized, replicated, scaled up and institutionalized.

#### "Gender Action Learning System (GALS)" Case

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12120>

The introduction and mainstreaming of Gender Action Learning System (GALS), a women empowerment methodology based on empowerment through knowledge mobilization and transfer, in the IFAD portfolio in Sudan has led to remarkable economic, social, environmental, and political impacts. The Training-of-Trainers approach, supported by Learning Routes and exchange visits, all knowledge management tools, has created an ample number of committed national resource persons and qualified trainers in GALS.

#### "Community Knowledge-based Peer Networks At-Tasab" Case

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12121>

Establishing good natural resource management governance frameworks was identified as priority by local communities. The establishment of knowledge-based peer Community Networks in At Tasab provided an important impetus as well as a concrete indicator of community empowerment and the

institutionalization of social change processes. One of the visible important indicators of empowerment is the capacity of the communities to take own initiatives to improve community livelihoods.

#### "Natural Resources Governance" Case

<https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12122>

Non-conducive land legislation and the abolishment of the Native Administration put communal land rights in conflict with modern laws. A new bottom up Natural Resources Governance Framework and policies governing co-management of stock routes were informed by multi-stakeholder consultations fostered by IFAD co-funded projects. The consultations encouraged communities and their networks to share their knowledge in consultative natural resource management forums and conflict resolution processes.



## 4. Social Media Outreach and Participants Estimation

The Route has been packaged to be shared in a joint social media campaign by IFAD, ICARDA, CIHEAM-Bari, Procasur and Virginia Tech over the course of five days. The campaign and all preparation steps to it have been laid out jointly by SKiM partners and are detailed in the 2020 Virtual Learning Route Delivery and Communication Plan: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12250>

A Social Media Toolkit, containing all posts for the five days of the campaign, has been prepared for the partners to use, ready as-is: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/12124>

The event has been announced on the ICARDA website, the ICARDA MEL webpage and a blog. ICARDA: <https://www.icarda.org/media/events/strengthening-knowledge-management-greater-development-effectiveness>

MEL: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766.1/b920be>

MEL: <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766.1/cba7e3>

Over the course of the campaign, the organisers were able to collect metrics across the following channels – with IFAD providing Arabic coverage in addition to English.

### Twitter

@CIHEAMBari  
@ICARDA  
@IFAD, @IFADnews  
@PROCASUR  
@VTAgecon

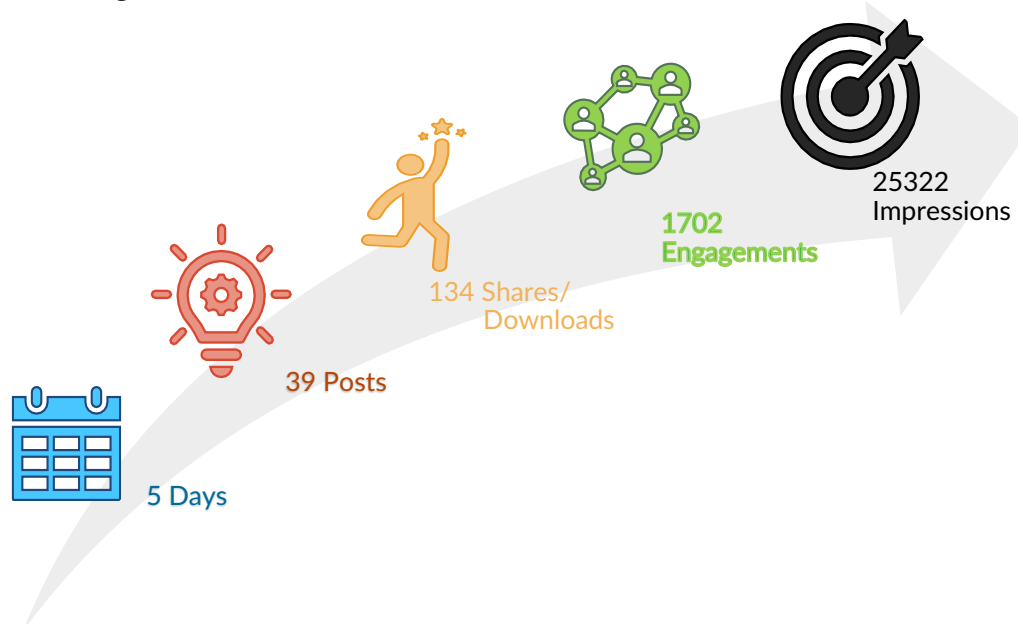
### Facebook

@CIHEAMBari  
@icarda  
@IFAD  
@procasur.corporation  
@VTAgecon

### LinkedIn

[www.linkedin.com/company/iamb](http://www.linkedin.com/company/iamb)  
[www.linkedin.com/company/icarda](http://www.linkedin.com/company/icarda)  
[www.linkedin.com/company/ifad](http://www.linkedin.com/company/ifad)  
[www.linkedin.com/company/procasur](http://www.linkedin.com/company/procasur)  
[www.linkedin.com/school/virginia-tech-agricultural-and-applied-economics](http://www.linkedin.com/school/virginia-tech-agricultural-and-applied-economics)

A total of 24 Tweets and 15 Facebook post were produced over 5 days, scoring 25332 impressions, 1702 engagements of which 134 retweets, shares and downloads. The social media campaign has made use of the hashtags #SKiM and #Sudan.



The core participants are esteemed at 134, an assumption based on the number of shares/downloads of the Route knowledge through the social media and the MELSpace repository hosting the publications, validated against the 155 average viewers of the Learning videos through YouTube.

## 5. Participant feedback

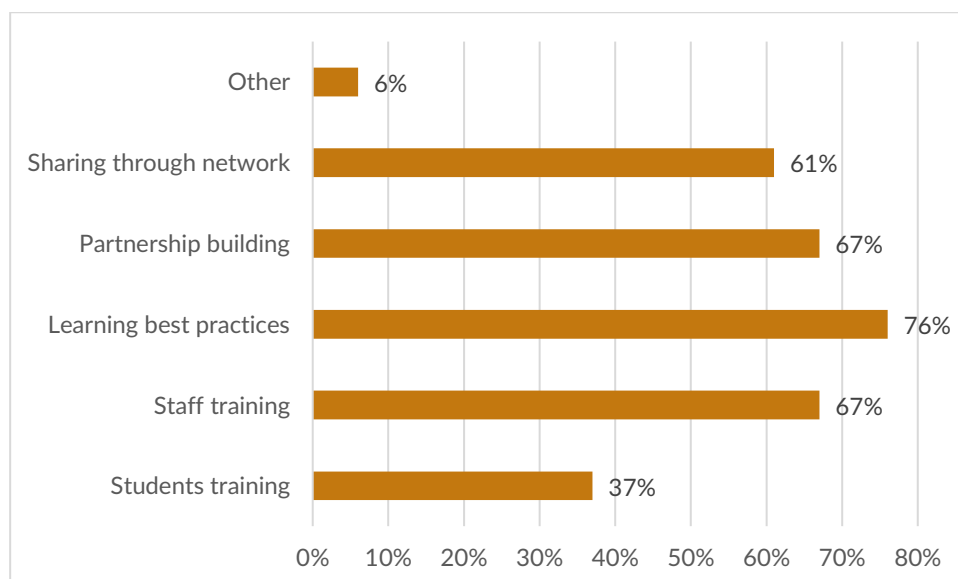
A Google survey has been issued to gather feedback from the participants, also allowing them to connect with and ask questions to the Source Providers, enhancing cross-regional SSTC in addition to national partnership building:

<https://forms.gle/t4cyyhLKhM8MGWzz9>



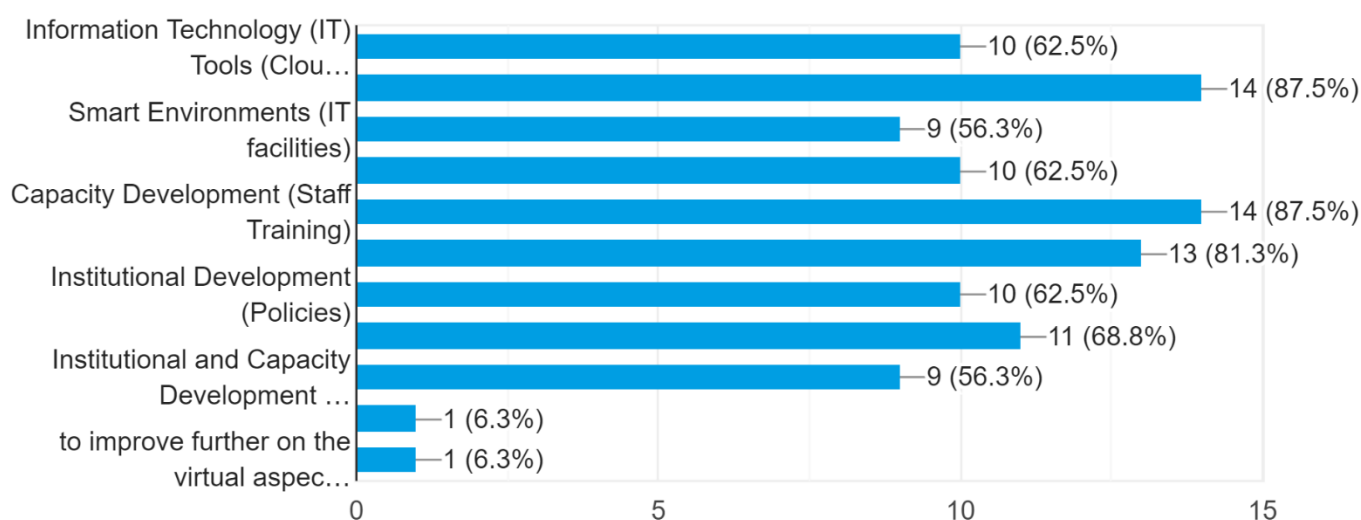
- Participants were followed up with regular reminder emails, with the support in country of the SKiM National Focal Points, scoring 16 responses from Moldova, Morocco, Sudan and additional countries.
- Of the respondents, 8 (50%) are involved in a KM peer-learning system outside SKiM, 3 (18,75%) are not, but would like to. The systems clearly identified were:
  - Knowledge Management Core Group
  - The German Society for Evaluation (DEGEVAL)
  - KariaNet
- Of the respondents, 7 (43,75%) are involved in a KM activities different from SKiM. The activities clearly identified were:
  - Training of Agriculture stakeholders in Sudan
  - Univesity research and post-graduate thesis
  - National Knowledge Management comittee
  - Institutional knowledge sharing with CGIAR centers
  - PROCASUR of KM projects in Latin and Central America and Africa
  - University-enterprise cooperation and entrepreneurship of students via SMART Caffes/SMART
- Of the respondents, 16 (100%) are likely to consider adapting, replicating or scaling Knowledge Management best practices from the Sudan Cases, and that their institutions are likely to commit as well.
- The knowledge provided by the Route has been deemed easy to read, clear and informative by 15 (93,75%) of respondents, and 16 (100%) of respondents would like to receive more publications on knowledge management best practices in their country.
- 14 (87,5%) respondents have expressed interest in establishing contact with the Source Providers.

- The following uses for the knowledge obtained from the Learning Route has been highlighted:



Is your organization planning for Knowledge Management assets enhancement in the near future? If yes, please state the nature of such improvements.

16 responses



## 6. Lessons Learned

Despite the numbers scored by social media campaign and the dissemination effort, only 16 SKiM participants took the Learning Survey, out of the 47 directly contacted via email. The National Focal Points have been marginally active on ensuring the compliance of participants with the request to take the survey, which highlights a need for better coordination from the SKiM PMU.

The Social Media Toolkit has been widely acclaimed by the stakeholders as a very useful tool although lacking in terms of audience definition. It has been noted, in fact, that better guidance in future Social Media Toolkits will help the Communication Officers deemed to use it in tailor its message for a more diversified audience, such as scientists plus students as well.

Developing multi-language communication has been a challenge, and only IFAD has contributed to Arabic outreach. This highlights the need for better preparation in terms of multi-language efforts from the PMU whenever an extended audience is planned for outreach.

The partners exhibit a growing consciousness and shared understanding in Knowledge Management and a wide range of interests in connecting with KM best practices Source Providers (Annex 1).

## Annex 1: Messages for the Source Providers (from the Survey)

Interested to know more about the success stories and how the lessons learned they can be scaled out.
Great experience in country office, would like to increase involvement of CCU-IFAD staff in Sudan in joint KM activities.
Would like to support the next Sudan COSOP 2020-2024; indicate opportunities for replication in other countries.
What to take into consideration in a KM plan elaboration?
As a university teacher how can I network with IFAD Sudan?
How to develop a strategy of Knowledge Management?
What aspects do the interventions of the IFAD projects aim at?
I'd like to get more information about environmental law and the use of that in agriculture practices.
How to build good partnership with communities?
How to enhance and integrate knowledge management activities and to be built in institutions through capacity development to be part of the day-to-day works?
I want to know how the sharing Knowledge process has to run to ensure good practice in a wide range including all segments of community.
I would like to how the good practices and knowledge are scaled up and disseminated.
How can I access to documents dealing with knowledge products, sharing of knowledge and learning route methodology, especially experimentation?
How to strengthen partnership in order to enhance knowledge management in different partner institutions in Morocco?
I am interested in knowing more about the success stories and how the lessons learned can be scaled out.
I'd like to get acquainted with LR, implement it in different setting or context and then replicate further; I would need to have step-by-step guidance material with flowcharts, key points and templates, and other details in well described and easy to follow form.
What are the plans to create a Network of former LR participants as agents of change?
How to convince communities that knowledge transfer is for their benefit?
What was the methods used to achieve that level of knowledge mgmt.
Do you think learning route is a better practice than live praxis?
What is the flow or organizational structure of learning routes?
How to sustain and upscale this activity with different stakeholders and partners other than IFAD funded programs and projects in Sudan?
Experimentation of learning knowledge; replication of learning knowledge (acquired knowledge); strengthening in knowledge that can be exported abroad. Can these offer practical solutions?
I am interested to know more about the success stories and how the lessons learned can be scaled out.
What would you recommend to have in a men or women dominated society to implement GALS, specific steps based on your experience from Sudan or elsewhere?
How is GALS as a KM tool scaled up beyond IFAD and CCU projects?
The best way to make society to value women?
What makes participants in LR successful or unsuccessful? How can it be improved?
Women and youth involvement in innovation processes are assessed as a way to move forward, and for sustainable development. In agriculture, where there is sometimes, heavy manual labour, there are stereotypes that women do not cope with tasks. What do you think about it KM wise?
I am interested to know more about the success stories and how the lessons learned they can be scaled out.
Based on your experience, where do you start to organize such network around certain issue and what do you think how much time one need to devote for such network and when to expect results? Few examples with some numbers to have general idea will be helpful.
Is the KM tool of Networking being scaled up beyond the IFAD (and other UN agencies in the Sudan) context?
The best advice to make communities work as a unit?
What methods have been used to train communities?
How motivated are the villages to join the network?
What are the challenges of creating/establishing a peer knowledge network?

How to evolve main institutions partners and stakeholders at federal, other states and areas not covered by IFAD funded programs and projects?
Who should lead multi-stakeholder consultations, who organizes the forum, and how to ensure enforcement of agreed decisions?
Conflict Resolution centres, stock route demarcation, and Natural Resources Forums and ensuing Natural Resources Governance Framework can be used for conflict resolution and resilience building to Climate Change?
The key to a successful collaboration between all stakeholders?
How involved are people working in different fields (not including agriculture) in solving problems of sustainable development and agriculture?
What are the stages of consultation of multi stakeholder platforms (bottom-up approach)?
How to evolve extension staff at all levels to enhance their capabilities and capacities for sustainability and upscaling this activity?

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