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

Social Media Toolkit
For the Capacity Needs
Assessment (CNA)

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Keywords

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Tool

Material or digital resources with direct use, essential in performing an operation or necessary in the practice of a vocation or profession, such as corporate guidelines or programs supporting stakeholders' decision-making processes (analysis tool). *Source:* Merriam-Webster

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 taking into account gender equality and the role of youth in transforming the non-tropical dry areas.

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Disclaimer

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Abbreviations

ARC Sudan	Agricultural Research Corporation - Sudan
CNA	Capacity needs assessment
CIHEAM Bari	Centre International de Hautes Études Agronomiques Méditerranéennes – Bari
CPIU IFAD	Consolidated IFAD Programs Implementation Unit of Moldova
ENA Meknes	National School of Agriculture
GLDC	CGIAR Research Program on Grain Legumes and Dryland Cereals
IAV Hassan II	Agronomic and Veterinary Institute
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
IDIS Viitorul	Institute for Development and Social Initiatives "Viitorul" INRA
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INRA	National Agricultural Research Institute
KariaNet	Knowledge Access to Inter-connected Rural Areas Network KM
KM	Knowledge Management
ONCA	National Office for Agricultural Extension
PROCASUR	Procasur Corporation
SAUM	State Agrarian University Moldova
Selectia	Research Institute of Field Crops "Selectia"
SKiM	Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe
SKS	Sudan Knowledge Society
VT	Virginia Tech

Introduction

A Social Media Toolkit provides guidance for project partners to promote materials and disseminate information through popular social media websites. The guide breaks down the building blocks of format and content of messages, and provides instructions on proper dissemination depending on the social media platform. The objective is that by using the toolkit, project partners can save time in communication tasks and maintain a cohesive tone and image across social media platforms. Sourcing the content from the toolkit standardizes product promotion, ultimately increasing the clarity of the message to the target audience.

This toolkit has been designed to promote in particular the Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) report, completed as part of the Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (SKiM) project. The CNA was part of a process to identify knowledge management (KM) related gaps in institutions engaged in the initial steps of the project. The major purpose of the activity was to undertake an assessment and determine baselines for the current state of KM, knowledge sharing, and learning needs in target organizations in Moldova, Morocco and Sudan. The assessment allowed for a diagnosis of present KM- related practices and benchmarks for improvement.

The CNA report documents the results of the multi-method approach to identifying KM-related gaps in participating institutions. The report details key findings and outlines recommendations for institutions grouped by project country: Moldova, Morocco, and Sudan.

Organizations and Social Media Tags

Below are the organizations involved in the CNA and related social media channels.

Organization	Twitter	Facebook page(s)
ARC Sudan	--	www.facebook.com/ArcSudan/
CIHEAM Bari	@CIHEAMBari	www.facebook.com/CIHEAMBari
CPIU IFAD	--	www.facebook.com/UCIPIFAD/
ENA Meknes	@ENAMeknes	https://www.facebook.com/enamek/
GLDC	@GLDC_CGIAR	www.facebook.com/GLDC.CGIAR/
IAV Hassan II	@IAV_Hassan_II	www.facebook.com/IAV.HASSANII.IAV/
ICARDA	@ICARDA	www.facebook.com/icarda/
IDIS Viitorul	@IDIS_Viitorul	www.facebook.com/IDISViitorul/
IFAD	@IFAD, @IFADnews	www.facebook.com/IFAD/
INRA	--	www.facebook.com/INRA-Maroc-Institut-National-de-la-Recherche-Agronomique-319925781444231/
KariaNet	@KariaNet_MENA	www.facebook.com/karianet.mena/
PROCASUR	@PROCASUR	www.facebook.com/procasur.corporation/
ONCA	--	www.facebook.com/ONCAOFFICIEL/
Selectia	--	www.facebook.com/icccselectia/
State Agrarian University Moldova (SAUM)	--	https://www.facebook.com/UASMoficial/
Sudanese Knowledge Society	@skssociety_org	www.facebook.com/sksociety.org/
Virginia Tech	@VTAgEcon	www.facebook.com/VTAgEcon/

Twitter Posts

Twitter (twitter.com) is a social media platform on which users can publicly post short messages known as "tweets." Users who are registered on the site can post tweets, as well as like and re-post (known as "retweeting") other users' tweets. Tweeting is mostly associated with dissemination of news and information, knowledge products and publications, participating or feeding a trend deemed relevant.

With a limit of 280 characters, spaces included, twitter posts demand that the poster be creative and concise:

- Use questions, facts and figures to impress your audience and trigger reactions.
- Use a concise yet highly informative **narrative** to captivate the reader.
- Use **@ mentions** to engage partners with your content.
  In general, mentions should include @funder, @implementer, @partner (when applicable).
- Use between 1 - 3 **# hashtags** per post.
  Before using a hashtag, you can test it on sites such as https://ritetag.com/ to see how many people have used the hashtag before on twitter. More common hashtags will invite greater audience engagement and also have greater visibility on the platform. Twitter also provides a ladder.
- Embed an **image**, best if includes recognizable human expressions.
  The size should be 1080 x 1080 pixels. Always check for the rights to use the image before sharing, especially when including humans or private properties. Special attention is required to underage subjects. Use clear images and infographics that can be easily read on a mobile device.
- Include a **URL** to convert the readers and funnel them to an exhaustive source of information, such as a blog on an institutional website. It is best to use TinyURL (tinyurl.com), or another free link-shortening service to save up space and track how many people are clicking.

Facebook and LinkedIn Posts

Facebook and LinkedIn can host more content than their Twitter counterpart, reasons for posting include:

- Raising **awareness** on an issue
- **Informing** a target audience of relevant news
- Promoting an organization or **event**
- Disseminating a **knowledge** product
- Fostering conversation around a particular **subject**

While Facebook and LinkedIn platforms have greater flexibility than Twitter in terms of content length, it is also important to keep messages concise. Here are some additional general best practices for posting on these media:

- **Questions** perform well on Facebook and are favoured by the newsfeed algorithm.
  Shorter, simpler content receives higher levels of audience engagement, ideally 120 characters or less, for a maximum of 250 visible on Facebook newsfeed and 128 characters on LinkedIn newsfeed.
- Use **@ mentions** to engage partners with your content.
  In general, mentions should include @funder, @implementer, @partner (when applicable).
- No hashtags, except for visual emphasis, as their use does not improve metrics on Facebook.
- Embed an **image**, best if includes recognizable human expressions.
  The size should be 1080 x 1080 pixels. Always check for the rights to use the image before sharing, especially when including humans or private properties. Special attention is required to underage subjects. Use clear images and infographics that can be easily read on a mobile device.
- Include a **URL** to convert the readers and funnel them to an exhaustive source of information, such as a blog on an institutional website.
  You can delete any insert URL from the text once embedded in the post.
- Avoid "click-bait" language like "tag 5 people" or "comment with your thoughts" or "share this post" as Facebook's algorithm will penalize the post in the newsfeed.

Infographics

While it is a best practice to use photos with humans to engage viewers, infographics can also be useful tools to summarize information in a visual format.

Infographics are intended to communicate knowledge quickly and clearly using (usually a combination) of charts, icons, and simple text. Creative infographics attract attention and make complex concepts, processes, or data easy to understand. Infographics typically serve one of the following functions:

- **Explain** a process or procedure
- Illustrate a **timeline**
- Display **data** (e.g. survey results, descriptive statistics)
- Provide an **overview** of a topic
- **Compare** and contrast multiple choices in a certain context

Three simple steps for creating an infographic:
(1) Identify the goal of your infographic before starting to work on the design, layout, or other aesthetic features. (2) After outlining the purpose of the infographic, choose the data you want to feature and how you want to visualize this information. (3) Lastly, create a layout that presents these visuals in an attractive and engaging way.

Tips for infographic design include using a grid to help balance and structure the visual aids in a logical order, creating a flow of information that is easy to interpret for the reader. Several reputable and effective guides (i.e. https://venngage.com/blog/how-to-make-an-infographic-in-5-steps/) on how to build state of the art infographics are available Open Access online.

Single Stakeholder Dissemination

When one stakeholder is in charge of dissemination a knowledge product across social media, they are entirely responsible for the **variety of content**, **types of posts** and the **frequency** at which the content is posted.

The stakeholder must consider how many different ways they can package the knowledge product in order to leverage different content and aspects about their institution. For example, if one stakeholder were in charge of disseminating the CNA report, it would be wise to create a series of **different posts,** curated for **different social media outlets**, that highlight a **variety of aspects** of the report, such as: purpose, methods, activities, findings, or next steps. Chosen highlights of the report can then be linked to aspects of the institution.

For example, if the stakeholder participated in a writeshop that generated data for the CNA, this institution could highlight their participation in this activity, linking it to their contribution to the CNA report. The text could read as follows:

[institution] collaborates with [partner] [partner] [partner] at the [country] national writeshop as part of the @SKiM Project #CapacityNeedsAssessment for improving institutional #KnowledgeManagement. Read more about the writeshops here: [link to full report]

Curating a multitude of different posts that focus on different aspects of the report is essential for engaging a variety of audiences across social media platforms. Once the stakeholder has created several different posts to showcase the report, they must decide the frequency of dissemination. The best practice for frequency of posting suggested follows:

LinkedIn: one post per week
Facebook: one post per day
Twitter: two posts ("tweets") per day

Stakeholders should avoid posting the same content twice in a row. Depending on the variety of posts that can be made from a single knowledge product, stakeholders can even avoid ever posting the same content twice.

Multi-Stakeholder Dissemination

When communicating across multiple channels in partnership with several other organizations on the same topic, there are two main aspects to consider: **variety** and **consistency**.

The notable institutional effort behind a multi-stakeholder dissemination is likely to bring huge variety to the content shared, as well as true richness in terms of viewpoints, data and facts. This is good **variety**.

Consistency in style, however, is key to reaching the critical mass momentum for the highest dissemination potential to be reached; consistency in media style can highlight effective partnerships. This will generate branding value, helping the readers immediately recognize the content as quality, trusted and worth sharing.

Tools for Building a Post

Below are some examples of how to visually express elements of the CNA report, which could be used as building blocks for creating an infographic or visually branding a type of social media post:

## Color Palette
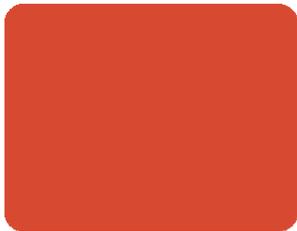
R:216
G:73
B:49

R:238
G:157
B:43

R:0
G:142
B:205

R:248
G:147
B:86

R:85
G:115
B:87
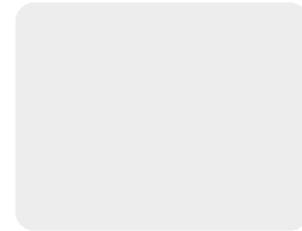
R:237
G:237
B:237

Countries

Moldova

Morocco

Sudan

Institutions

Government

University

National Agriculture
Research System

Agriculture
Research/Extension

Activities

Face-to-face
Meetings

Online Surveys

Concepts

Knowledge
Management

Capacity
Development

Partners

VIRGINIA TECH

IFAD
Investing in rural people

ICARDA
Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas

Procasur
Harvesting Innovations, Spreading Opportunities

CIHEAM
BARI

Examples of Posts

Twitter

@ICARDA teams up with Sudanese partners to identify #KM gaps and #CapDev opportunities through the #SKiM Project, funded by @IFAD. https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/10832

"The Capacity Needs Assessment was the first major study about what these institutions needed in terms of development for managing their knowledge."
@ICARDA works with partners in Moldova to improve their #KM strategies. @IFAD #CapDev #SKiM
https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/1/c835a1

Facebook and LinkedIn

How can agricultural research institutions improve their knowledge management (KM)?
In 2018, @ICARDA, in partnership with @CIHEAM-BARI @PROCASUR @VTAgEcon launched a process to understand the current state of KM and knowledge sharing within target organizations in Moldova, Morocco, and Sudan to determine areas for future training. The assessment identifies KM capacity gaps in need of improvement:

Find the full report here: https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11766/10436 #SKiM project funded by @IFAD
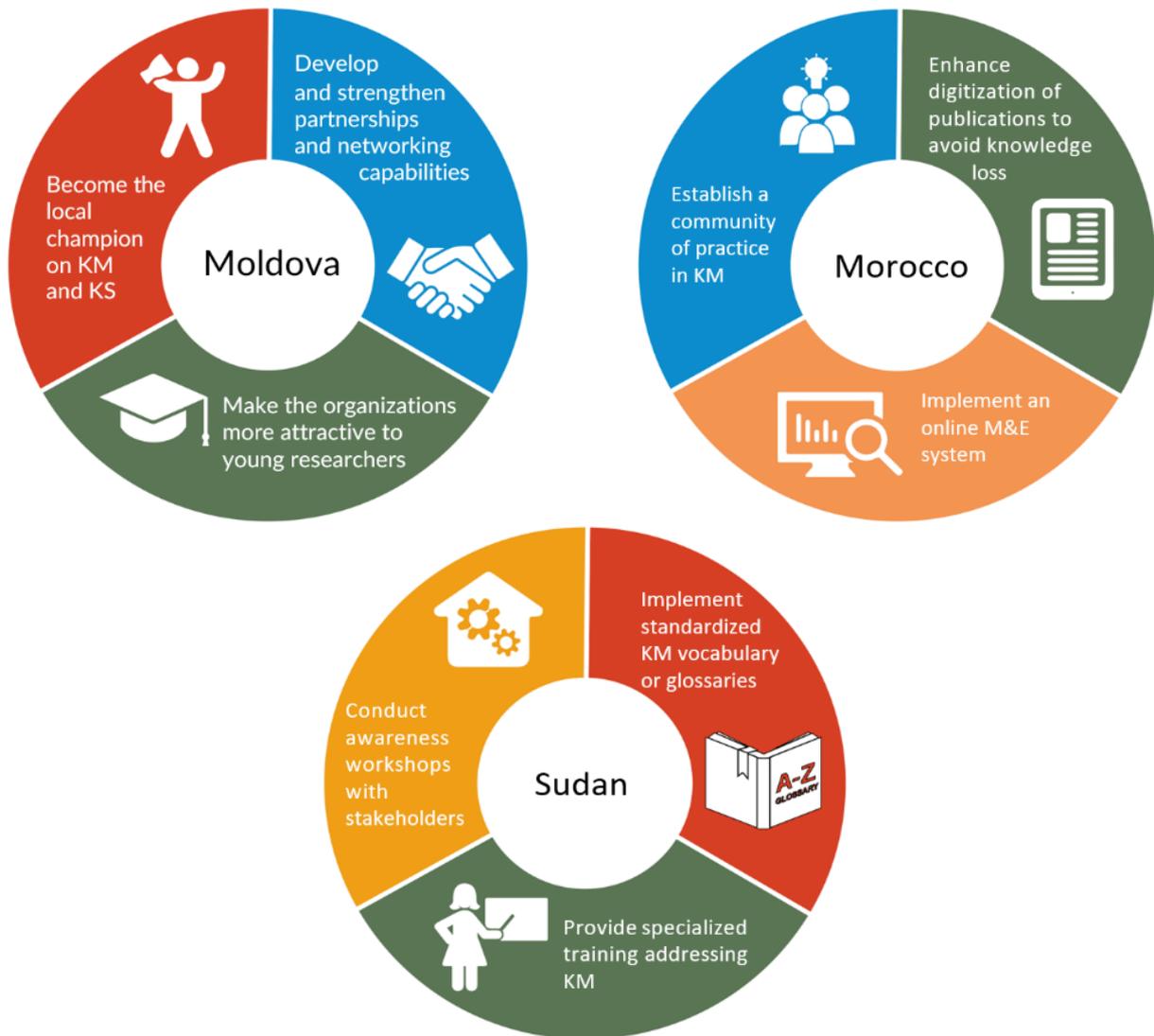
Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe (SKiM) is a grant project led by ICARDA and funded by IFAD. The project also works with international partners CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR, Virginia Tech as well as NARS, governments, 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 and will provide practical examples of KM best practices that will be analysed and adopted by participating institutions. Increasing the capacities of participating public institutions, by providing necessary structures and systems at the country and regional levels, will ensure 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 describes the project team, partners and stakeholders engaged. 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.