ICARDA
Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas

IFAD
Investing in rural people

SKiM PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Strengthening Knowledge Management for Greater Development Effectiveness

SKiM Project
COVID-19 Updates

CIHEAM BARI

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Harvesting Innovations, Spreading Opportunities

VT VIRGINIA TECH

INTRODUCING THE SKiM KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PORTAL

Figure 1: Knowledge Portal Homepage

The **homepage** (above) is where all the latest knowledge by all institutions is made accessible and showcased by type, namely: news, projects, data, publications, networks, and resources.

The knowledge is gathered directly from source repositories and websites – such as MELSpace – or reported, curated and stored in the **KM platform** (right) accessible by login through the knowledge management portal.

Figure 3: Partner Profiles in the KM Portal
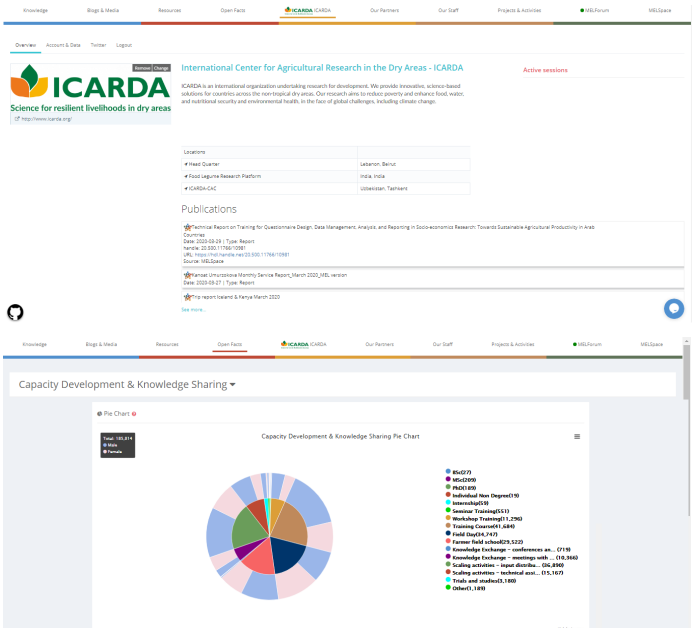
Based on feedback gathered at the National Writeshops on Capacity Development and Innovation Plans, the **SKiM Knowledge Portal** is now primed and ready to be populated with the data from all project participants and stakeholders.

ICARDA served as the first test partner to publish on this new platform. Now, ICARDA knowledge is readily accessible through the portal, including all news from SKiM!

Soon, project partners will be invited to showcase their knowledge and try out the special features of the portal available by **logging-in**.

The credentials to access the KM platform are granted to selected personnel indicated by the institutions as the **data manager**.

The data manager will be able to add, edit, publish or un-publish any information and knowledge about his or her institution. This data will be stored on the **partner-specific portals** (left), and showcased to site visitors.

The accounts of SKiM project partners will be activated starting April 2020.

HOW IS KNOWLEDGE SHARED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION SCHEMES?

by Tyseer Elhadi Omer, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Sociology
Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development
University of Khartoum, Sudan

Hi, my name is Tyseer and I will introduce the approach of **social network analysis** to understand knowledge sharing in agriculture production schemes. I recently investigated how farming knowledge is networked among different actors in the Rahad Agricultural Scheme in Eastern Sudan (RAS) (260 Km South East of Khartoum) so as to facilitate the settlement of agro-pastoralist farmers that practice irrigated farming.

Traditionally, innovativeness (assessing the degree of adopting new ideas or innovations over time) within agricultural schemes has been measured using quantitative parameters including level of education, income and contact with extension agency. However, the effect of

Figure 4: Connections between actors at the RAS level

social relations (friendship between farmers and informal knowledge i.e. indigenous knowledge) are generally ignored. Therefore, the objectives of this research were to use the concept of knowledge networking examine the roles of these actors within RAS, and understand the structure and pattern of communication in seeking information on farming and livestock keeping.

Within the RAS, different actors were interviewed using **Rapid Appraisal of Agricultural Knowledge Systems** (RAAKS), a participatory methodology to enquire about knowledge systems including agricultural innovations. Semi-structured interviews and group discussions were employed to survey different actors representing RAS management, government, extension, research, investment, and the private sector. Another group of actors consisted of farmers' and pastoral associations, women associations, youth clubs, and local leaders or sheikhs (around 40 individual interviews and 20 group discussions). Then, to assess relations between interacting entities and/or individual actors, I employed Social Network Analysis. Connections between actors are known as relational ties (Figure 4); there can be different kinds of relationships connecting actors, i.e. biological relations, affiliations, behavioral interactions, etc. I collected social network data by asking about such connections and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses.

It was very important to understand the structure of social networks within the RAS so as to provide suggestions on how to improve communication and knowledge flow between participating actors. Such insights could help in designing and implementing new interventions, and could be relevant for the recently approved IFAD project: Sustainable Natural Resources and Livelihoods Programme in Sudan.

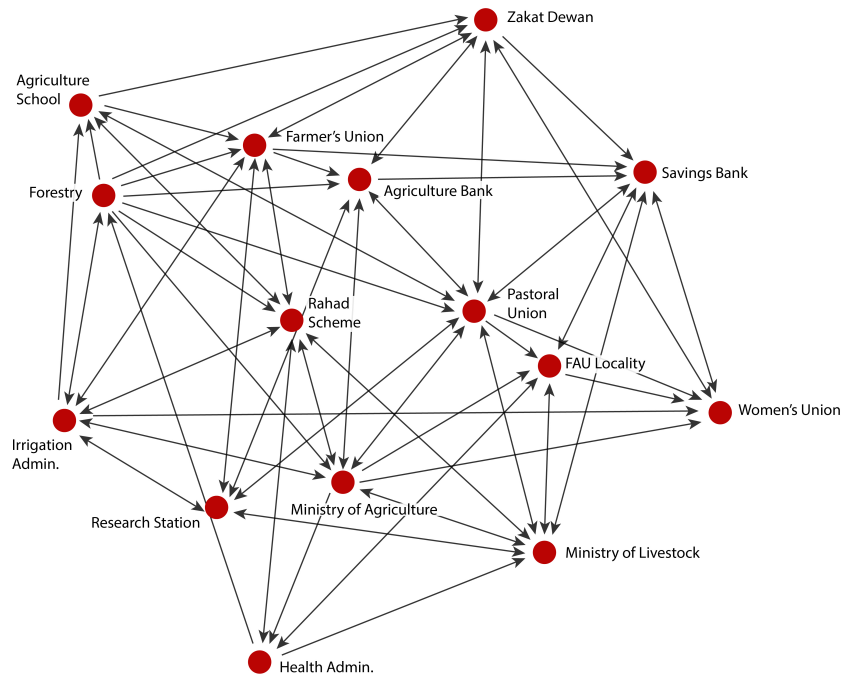If you're curious about **the results** of my research, be sure to check out the next newsletter in April!

SKiM PROJECT COVID-19 UPDATES

The global spread of the Covid-19 pandemic is disrupting daily life all around the world. As an multi-stakeholder initiative based on international collaboration, the SKiM project has had to make some adjustments in order to take the highest precautions in protecting the wellbeing of all project personnel. In response to these circumstances, there are continued efforts to arrange remote work for all staff, a difficult transition for many who are now living in quarantined conditions (see work-from-home blog below).
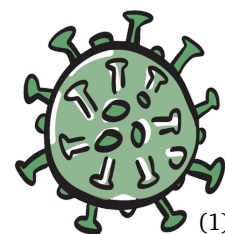
In addition, several activities planned for 2020 have to be updated. An April trip to Sudan to be taken by the project team and representatives from PROCASUR and Virginia Tech has been postponed to the second half of the year. This will delay the design and implementation of Learning Routes, which are now scheduled to be implemented towards the end of the year. The study assessing the value of knowledge management in Sudan will also be adapted based on how and when the pandemic situation stabilizes.

At the same time, adapting project activities to this new social order presents an opportunity to test new approaches in organizing training courses, digitalizing course content, and virtually implementing project activities. If the current travel and social restrictions remain in place for the next couple months, this approach will be tested with upcoming training activities planned in Moldova with CIHEAM-Bari - originally scheduled for the end of June - in order to avoid further delays in project implementation.

Do not hesitate to reach out to project staff with any questions or concerns. Best wishes to all in these difficult times.

FURHTER READING:

✳ **NEWS**: CGIAR's Response to COVID-19 *(CGIAR)*

✳ **ANALYSIS**: COVID-19 Measures, Daily Laborers and Their Nutrition *(CGIAR - GLDC)*

✳ **BLOG**: The ICARDA MEL Team Reflects on Work-From-Home (WFH) *(ICARDA)*

✳ **BLOG**: As COVID-19 Spreads, No Major Concern for Global Food Security Yet *(IFPRI)*

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SKIM PROJECT IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

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