



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



### Inception and Partnership Building Workshop

9-10 October 2018  
ICARDA, Rabat, Morocco

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

CapDev	Capacity Development
CEN	Central-Eastern Europe and Central Asia
CIHEAM-Bari	Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari
COSOP	Country Strategic Opportunities Programme
CNA	Capacity Need Assessment
CoP	Community of Practice
GIS	Geographic Information System
ENA-Meknes	École Nationale d'Agriculture de Meknès
IAV	Agronomic and Veterinary Institute Hassan II
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research
IDIS	Institutul pentru Dezvoltare și Inițiative Sociale "Viitorul"
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Research
INRA	Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique
KM	Knowledge Management
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NENA	Near East and North Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ONCA	Office National du Conseil Agricole
R4D	Research for Development
SAUM	State Agrarian University of Moldova
SSTC	South-South Triangular Cooperation

## Introduction

Knowledge Management (KM) has become key component to catalyze sustainable rural development. IFAD is supporting this project "[Strengthening knowledge management for greater development effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe](#)", led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) together with its international partners Virginia Tech, CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR and national partners in Moldova, Morocco, Sudan.

The aim of the project in 48 months is to develop effective and long-term knowledge management-related capacities in target countries, linking with ongoing IFAD and partner organization activities.

The first steps in the implementation has been taken with the inception and partnership building workshop held at ICARDA in Rabat, Morocco. The workshop was attended by the members of the project core team, representatives from partner institutions tentatively chosen for the project from Moldova, Morocco and Sudan. A full list of participants is provided in Annex 2.



## Objectives of the workshop

The main objectives of the inception workshop were:

- a) To formally launch the project and to build partnerships for implementation;
- b) To ensure that all parties have shared understanding of objectives and are familiar with planned activities, deliverables and approach to the implementation of the project;
- c) To learn and share experiences of national and international partners in institutional KM and discuss their uses in current project;
- d) To discuss and agree upon roles, functions, and responsibilities of project stakeholders, country focal points and project partners;
- e) To present, discuss, amend if needed, and adopt the project 6-month and 1-year workplans;
- f) To discuss the assessment methodology of KM gaps and learning needs, provide ideas for its adaptation to local conditions;
- g) To agree on next steps and project milestones.

## Workshop Day 1 – Tuesday, October 9, 2018

### Session 1: Introductions, implementation basis and structure

The opening session was led by **Dr. Michael Baum**, director of Biodiversity and Crop Improvement program and Morocco Platform, who welcomed workshop participants, IFAD team, the implementing partners (CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR, Virginia Tech) and the participating institutions to the venue and underlined the importance of partnership in knowledge management to tackle inter-regional development issues, through establishing **innovation platforms** and **communities of practice**, both routes navigated by ICARDA and IFAD in the course of implementation of several past Research for Development (R4D) projects.

**Dr. Rachid Dahan (INRA)** has then introduced and localized the subject of knowledge management within the Moroccan framework, shedding light on the need for **standardized practices** and **meaningful institutional connections** to drive notable resources within national partners much needed to manage the outputs of research in Morocco.

**Mr. Abdelkarim Sma (IFAD)** subsequent intervention focused on defining the IFAD perspective on the project matter and knowledge management concept.

**Ms. Mia Madsen (IFAD)** welcomed participants to the workshop and shared presentation<sup>1</sup> about IFAD's approach to KM and South-South Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) that are part of IFAD Strategic Framework for 2016-2025. IFAD recognizes KM as key engagement area and has developed first KM Strategy back in 2008-2010 and the updated strategy is being developed in 2018. At country level KM strategy was developed for Sudan in 2016. Several examples of SSTC integration in Country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOP) were provided during presentation, including technology transfer and sharing of best practices with Sub-Saharan African countries as part of Atlas Mountains Rural Development Project in Morocco. Emphasis for KM project are made to build strong partnerships and linkages with ongoing IFAD's regional and country level grants and investment projects.

This followed by introductory presentation<sup>2</sup> by **Dr. Akmal Akramkhanov (ICARDA)** about project providing background, objectives, structure and highlighting its components and activities and update about progress to the moment.

The session has resumed after coffee break with the presentation<sup>3</sup> by **Mr. Bastian Mueller (ICARDA)** on the Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA) key objectives, expectations for project partner organizations, methodology and selected tools, potential envisioned activities to address learning needs. Tools were derived from similar exercise that ICARDA conducted with ILRI in Tunis and were selected and adapted to

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<sup>1</sup> KM and South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) for agricultural and rural development: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8456>

<sup>2</sup> Strengthening knowledge management for greater development effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8457>

<sup>3</sup> KM capacity assessment for enhanced formulation of learning needs: Approach and methodology: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8461>

the needs of the project. During inception workshop some of the tools were planned to try to collect initial information about partner organizations from focus countries.

Overview of KM plan<sup>4</sup> with emphasis on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) was then presented by **Mr. Enrico Bonaiuti (ICARDA)** who went through project impact pathway, M&E at different levels covering project, institutional and impact that will be integrated into Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) platform led by ICARDA. M&E will target indicators that were developed in project proposal and will include results achieved via project activities such as trainings, symposia, learning routes and audience reached by knowledge products.

Session 1 was concluded by presentation on project visibility and communication<sup>5</sup> plan, consisting of defining target audience, influence pathways, proposed knowledge products and their dissemination approaches along with personnel required to carry out suggested activities.

## Session 2: Identifying partnership, capacity and knowledge management priorities at national level

The afternoon session was devoted to sharing KM experiences and lessons learned from both co-implementing and national partners from focus countries. Each presenter was requested to share in 10-15 minutes related information about institution's experience on KM which was followed by clarifying questions if any. Such discussion has provided each participant with a degree of understanding of the differences in terms of capacity and knowledge management practices among these diverse institution types and regional approaches, the first fundamental step towards **establishing a community**.

**Dr. Damiano Petruzzella (CIHEAM-Bari)** and **Dr. Jocelyne Jawhar (CIHEAM-Bari)** have introduced<sup>6</sup> CIHEAM-Bari and its approach for youth capacity building via mainly post-graduate studies and trainings, their achievements and experience in employing knowledge online platforms for learning. Their major focus is in Mediterranean area in several thematic areas that are targeted by this current project as well. CIHEAM-Bari's experience in natural resource management and inclusive development via exploring investments in new generation for youth employability and employment is valuable for the project.

**Dr. Barbara Massler (PROCASUR)** has presented<sup>7</sup> the different learning tools basis of PROCASUR KM approach, addressing scaling up local knowledge and capacity development via the Local Champions, the Learning Territories and the main tool requested for the project implementation the Learning Routes. PROCASUR's innovation-based KM and practical experience in South-South Cooperation in multiple developing countries is of particular interest to build on project activities.

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<sup>4</sup> Knowledge Management plan: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8919>

<sup>5</sup> Communication plan: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8460>

<sup>6</sup> Strengthening knowledge management for greater development effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8454>

<sup>7</sup> PROCASUR innovation-based Knowledge management & empowerment of rural actors for South-to-South Cooperation: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8455>

**Prof. Jeffrey Alwang (Virginia Tech)** shared the concept of “economic” impact assessment, stressing the need to focus on the outcomes of the implementation efforts in terms of return on investment on the long run for capacity building and development. In this perspective, the strengthening of knowledge management is a much-needed activity, with the great potential to pay off for investments required by the target institutions.

In her presentation<sup>8</sup> **Ms. Carolina Ungureanu (IDIS)** introduced IDIS Viitorul and its major areas of engagement such as modernization of public sector, strengthening functional market, and supporting the emergence of competitive society that coincides with overall with objectives of the project. Carolina highlighted the need for sustainable management and development practices to take into account the regional socio-economic growth, a long-term outlook that would ensure stronger partnerships and enhanced efficiency of CapDev activities.

**Ms. Svetlana Petrascu (SAUM)** presented<sup>9</sup> the State Agrarian University of Moldova and its capacity in numbers. Capacity development and education is at the heart of the university, efforts are made to facilitate international collaboration to enhance the provision and foster cooperation between education, research and entrepreneurship that could satisfy state and private sector.

**Mrs. Sanaa Zebakh (IAV Hassan II)** introduced institution and highlighted<sup>10</sup> the key message despite the academic focus of institution the need for institutional KM systematization, solutions to prevent the loss of knowledge and enhance accessibility caused by capacity turnover over time. IAV Hassan II is active in focusing on SSTC via contribution in initial training of 1,400 engineers and veterinarian doctors for African partner countries. Currently, 10% of annually enrolled students come from African partner countries.

**Mr. Othman Sebbata (INRA)** briefly introduced his organization<sup>11</sup>, stressing that KM is important in institutional mission and major efforts were made to establish information system within INRA to provide access to its journal archive via digitizing their collection, disseminating information via variety of conventional and non-conventional channels, integrating with different reference databases globally. Currently INRA operates 18 websites dealing with thematic areas, social activities and generated maps. Despite being relatively advanced in recognizing and facilitating KM within institution, INRA identified gaps and areas in need of intervention, provided valuable suggestions to be tackled within the project framework, such as a) knowledge generation and management; b) capacity building on KM systems; c) experience sharing between NARS on success stories in KM; d) Inter-NARS collaboration for setting national and regional networks on Knowledge and Information systems.

**Dr. Elamin Hassan Elamin (KariaNet)** introduced<sup>12</sup> the Sudan e-Agriculture Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2020) with focus on ICT use in agriculture, along with experience from KariaNet proposed approach on knowledge management and capacity development, a circular model where KM practices are defined at partnership level and CapDev activities are implemented accordingly; the overall feedback on the

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<sup>8</sup> Institute for Development and Social Initiatives (IDIS) “Viitorul”: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8462>

<sup>9</sup> State Agrarian University of Moldova: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8458>

<sup>10</sup> Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II (IAV):

<sup>11</sup> Current status of agricultural information and knowledge generation and management at INRA: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8463>

<sup>12</sup> Networking for management, knowledge and knowledge sharing: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8459>

resulting implementation achievements shall then inform the development and adoption of new KM strategies. This model stresses the importance of consensus building in partnership and monitoring and evaluation practices to assess results consistently and learning for improved institutional awareness.

**Ms. Ekhlas Elomiry** presented project related KM activities in Sudan (presentation and slides were in Arabic language).

**Dr. Gada Kadoda (Sudanese Knowledge Society)** shared her presentation<sup>13</sup> about Sudanese Knowledge Society and its approach to knowledge, based on a) involving diverse communities in meaningful events; to b) trigger engagement and transformation processes; which lead to c) social development and empowerment for food security, with the added value of understanding communities' mindsets and practices rationales.

### **Key questions and interventions**

Brief interventions without presentations were made by Dr. Rachid Mansouri (ONCA) about institution and the need for knowledge for their organization acting as extension arm of the state. Prof. Boris Boincean stressed the need for systems approach for sustainable agriculture including conservation agriculture system.

Discussion points were raised around identifying one thematic area for the project to tackle, number of national stakeholders to engage with as opposed to trying to address all thematic areas and involving too many diverse stakeholders. Recommendation was made to focus the project activities and then scale out to other additional stakeholders and countries. National stakeholders were interested in hearing where KM system or best practices were successfully implemented in order to learn and integrate such good practices in home institutions. Viewpoints were also made about the value of knowledge, the need for impact assessment to demonstrate expected change in institutional commitment.

Concluding exercise for the Day 1 consisted of the "**parallel country working groups**", where the stakeholders grouped by countries had discussions in order to provide feedback on what the key KM and CapDev institutional issues are, what actions are needed to focus on and what should be prioritized.

Guiding questions were as follows:

- What information, knowledge, methodology, or policy-related gaps inhibit agricultural and rural development?
- Which are key capacities required for KM system within institutions?
- What capacities exist and which ones need to be developed for KM system?
- Key actors in the development of these capacities?
- What products KM plan should include?
- What communication materials are needed?

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<sup>13</sup> KM for agriculture: Sudanese Knowledge Society Experiences: <http://dx.doi.org/20.500.11766/8487>

The results informed the **Results of the Workshop** section of this report. Additional comments were made from the stakeholders to include a “**Social Network Analysis**” and an assessment of favorite KM approaches based on the different cultural milieu of the participating institutions.

## **Workshop Day 2 – Wednesday, October 10, 2018**

### [Session 3: Technical aspects and capacity building for implementation operational plans](#)

The second day has begun by discussing the outcomes of the “parallel country working groups” (day 1, session 2). The answers have been summarized presented in the form of keywords and key sentences, to which the partners have responded with their own reflections on the subject, identifying **common grounds** and **partnership**. Here follows an example of results for country groups:

- What information, knowledge, methodology, or policy-related gaps inhibit agricultural and rural development?
  - Lack of awareness of research results;
  - Unstructured knowledge: it is not useful and cannot be transformed into results;
  - Knowledge inaccessibility for advisers and farmers;
  - Missing feedback from advisers and farmers;
  - Lack of collaboration and duplication of efforts;
  - Lack of knowledge platform;
  - Lack of a national information system in agriculture.
  
- Which are the key capacities required for KM system within institutions?
  - Knowledge generation;
  - Using existing KM tools;
  
- What capacities exist and which ones need to be developed for KM system?
  - Capacity able to restructure research results and inform on knowledge creation;
  - KM trained capacity for guidance on KM tools;
  - Partnership building and creating capacity.
  
- Which are the key actors in the development of these capacities?
  - Private sector actors.
  
- What communication products, materials and media a KM plan should include?
  - Publications;
  - Radio;
  - TV;
  - Farmer field school;
  - Call Center;
  - Data sets;

- Maps;
  - GIS Data;
  - Experimental Trials;
  - Open House Visits;
  - WhatsApp.
- Additional observations
    - Merging of Ardna (Moroccan agricultural KM network) with existing call centers for enhanced knowledge dissemination.

A second round of working groups has then been established, the “**parallel institutions working groups**”, featuring stakeholders by type of institution – NARS, Advanced Research Institutes, Government, Agricultural Extension Services - thinking of specific problems that are hindering exchange of knowledge and fostering exchanging knowledge between the beneficiary organizations. Also, stakeholders looked at common thematic areas they work on. The following areas of common interest were highlighted to further the knowledge exchange:

- Youth Employment (Startups);
- Water Management;
- Land Management;
- Animal Health;
- SLM (Sustainable Land Management);
- Seed, Variety, Multiplication;
- Conservation Agriculture;
- Food Quality;
- Farm Management;
- IPM (Integrated Pest Management);
- Innovation in local products/ecological products;
- Soil & Fertilization;
- Machinery.

#### Session 4: Conclusions

The concluding session was chaired by Dr. Michael Baum who thanked the participants of the workshop for the fruitful exchange of views and regarded the discussions as the beginning of a long-term process of strategic planning to operationalize KM processes for the period 2019-2022. The final thoughts from all participants about the project and related expectations have been collected.

## Results and next steps

Based on the planned Objectives of the workshop, the following is the summary and outline of the results and related next steps:

- a) The project has been formally launched with this inception workshop and the partnerships formed for implementation.

Next step: to formalize partnership agreements with co-implementing partners.

- b) Project partners gained broad understanding of the project objectives, planned activities and deliverables. Activities mentioned during workshop were pertaining only to the inception phase of the project calling for more engagement with all stakeholders to detail plan of work for the whole duration of the project.

Next step: to expedite capacity needs assessment and develop detailed workplans for each country.

- c) Stakeholders shared KM related experiences during presentations, such exchange of information and interactions provided initial awareness about the KM related activities and views of presenters. Stakeholders expressed great interest in project objectives to help institutions to initiate or strengthen KM.

Next step: to clarify the activities that will be supported by co-implementing partners, to be indicated in the partnership agreements.

- d) Based on initial inputs provided during group work, stakeholders identified common areas of thematic interest and communication products and formats to disseminate available knowledge of their institutions. Agreed with the stakeholders to take the project on the next level (implementation) in 2019 once the final documentation on the approach and activities has been shared, no later than one quarter behind in the project's schedule but with a perspective of fast progression once started;

- e) The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) platform, used by ICARDA to support the project's M&E, has been presented to the stakeholders, triggering interest and a degree of engagement, showing what could be in terms of Knowledge Portal (one of the main deliverables of the project) and hosting as online tool for Communities of Practice. In this occasion, the need to connect, sharing and participating in capacity and partnership building, has been highlighted, marking it as a main feature of the future Knowledge Portal;

- f) Country presence of project team has been discussed with IFAD team calling for personnel present and dedicated to coordinating project activities in focus countries.

## Annex 1 Workshop agenda

Day 1: Tuesday, 9 October 2018

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER
08:30 – 09:30	Registration	
<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Opening session</b>	
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Dr. Rachid Dahan, National Agricultural Research Institute (INRA), Morocco</b>	
09:30 – 10:00	Opening addresses	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Rachid Dahan, INRA, Morocco</li> <li>• Dr. Abdelkarim Sma, IFAD</li> <li>• Dr. Michael Baum, ICARDA</li> </ul>	
10:00 – 10:30	Introductions, agenda of the day Objectives and organization of the workshop	Akmal Akramkhanov
	<b>Introduction to the project “Strengthening knowledge management for greater development effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe”</b>	
10:30 – 10:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KM and South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) for agricultural and rural development</li> </ul>	Mia Madsen
10:45 – 11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the project: background, history, objectives, structure and progress</li> </ul>	Akmal Akramkhanov
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break	
11:30 – 11:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KM capacity assessment for enhanced formulation of learning needs: Approach and methodology</li> </ul>	Bastian Mueller
11:50 – 12:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity development and knowledge systematization: KM plan</li> </ul>	Enrico Bonaiuti
12:10 – 12:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced regional knowledge exchange: Visibility and communications plan</li> </ul>	Akmal Akramkhanov
12:25 – 12:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of AWPB for the first 6-month period</li> </ul>	Akmal Akramkhanov
12:35 – 13:00	<i>Open discussion:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>KM system within institutions, number of countries, ongoing initiatives</i></li> </ul>	
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break	
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Identifying capacities, needs, gaps and priorities at national level</b>	
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Prof. Boris Boincean, Research Institute of Field Crops “Selectia”, Moldova</b>	
14:00 – 15:30	Sharing KM experience and lessons learned from partners – 10(+5) minute presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIHEAM-Bari</li> <li>• PROCASUR</li> <li>• Virginia Tech</li> <li>• Morocco</li> <li>• Moldova</li> <li>• Sudan</li> </ul>	All partners
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break	

<b>16:00 – 17:00</b>	<i>Facilitated discussion: relevancy and integration of experiences, interest from national counterparts, scaling, private sector, information system (available within institutions? needed? what and how it should operate?)</i>	
<b>17:00 – 18:00</b>	Parallel country working groups (please refer to guiding questions)	
<b>19:00</b>	Reception dinner	

Day 2: Wednesday, 10 October 2018

<b>TIME</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>
<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Technical aspects and capacity building for operational plans for implementation</b>	
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Dr. Elamin Hassan Elamin Agricultural Extension and Technology Transfer General Directorate Knowledge Access to Inter-connected Rural Areas Network (KariaNet), Sudan</b>	
<b>09:00 – 09:30</b>	Presentation and discussion of outcomes from the working groups	
<b>09:30 – 11:00</b>	Group work for capacity needs assessment (guiding notes)	
<b>11:00 – 11:30</b>	Coffee break	
<b>11:30 – 12:00</b>	Reflections, modifications to current workplan and summary of points to include in the next year workplan-2019	
<b>12:00 – 12:30</b>	Nominations and formation of the Project Steering Committee (voting members from Moldova, Morocco, Sudan (+2); non-voting members: CIHEAM-Bari, PROCASUR, Virginia Tech)	
<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Conclusions and closure</b>	
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Dr. Michael Baum, ICARDA</b>	
<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	Next steps	
	Workshop evaluation	
	Closing remarks	
<b>13:30</b>	Lunch break	

## Annex 2 List of participants

##	Name	Country/Affiliation	Contact
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