



Setting-up the knowledge management (KM) and knowledge sharing (KS) National network in Sudan
Khartoum- Sudan, August 14 & 15, 2011



“Knowledge is like a Baobab tree, one person’s arms cannot encompass it.” – African proverb

Context of the workshop:

Knowledge Access for Rural Inter-connected Areas Network (KariaNet) is an open access regional network for the management and sharing of knowledge (KS), information and experience in agriculture and rural development in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region¹. The project is a multi-stakeholder partnership between the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) & the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). KariaNet aims to link knowledge providers and brokers with knowledge seekers through three thematic networks: a) knowledge management (KM), b) food security, and c) rural enterprise development. It also seeks to mainstream knowledge management into development practice through KM/KS capacity building, action research and pertinent networking activities.

On a National level, the project intends to establish an inclusive network for the sharing of information and knowledge and answering the needs and expectations of its different members.

Sudan is one of the ten countries participating in the network, and the wealth of information and knowledge as well as expertise in the country is worth sharing and disseminating across the Arab region. This networking visit-workshop was directed to promote knowledge management (KM) and knowledge sharing (KS) in agriculture and rural development in Sudan. It aimed at initializing kariaNet work in Sudan, starting-up the establishment of the national network and setting the plan for further activities in collaboration with IFAD and the different national stakeholders.

The workshop took place at the ministry of agriculture in Khartoum with the presence of his Excellency the minister of agriculture Dr. Mohamed Ali El Hag Alloba, and representatives of different ministries, IFAD-funded projects and research institutes. The participants met with the kariaNet team for two days and came up with a temporarily skeleton of the network structure, identified some of their learning priorities and capacity-building needs and finally drafted their work plan for the coming 6 months with a tentative budget that will be adjusted in the week to come according to IDRC's template.

The objective of the workshop to Sudan was three-folded:

- 1- To network and meet with the widest number of partners and projects working on KM-KS in rural and agricultural development in Sudan.
- 2- To elaborate the Sudanese national roadmap in order to mainstream knowledge management in policies and practices.
- 3- To establish a national network that will set the priority activities in KM-KS in Sudan.

Outputs of the workshop:

- 1- Contacts of projects and programmes working in Sudan on rural and agricultural development
- 2- National roadmap validated by all partners
- 3- National network establishment initiated
- 4- List of activities for the coming 6 months with expectations from KariaNet

Day 1, Sunday August 14, 2011

The workshop took place at the ministry of agriculture in Khartoum on the 14th and 15th of August, and was inaugurated by Dr. Mohamed Ali El Hag Alloba, the minister of agriculture. IFAD central coordination unit (CCU) was KariaNet's counterpart and was represented by Engineer Rasha Omar, the

¹ The project will serve directly 10 countries in the MENA region: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen

Sudan country portfolio manager and Mr. Mohammad El Hag who was also the facilitator of the meeting during the two days.

The highlight of the welcoming addresses was the emphasis of knowledge management and knowledge sharing in food security and rural development. HE the minister, defined knowledge management as **getting the right information at the right time to the right person and for the right purpose** and he stressed on the importance of this meeting by promising that the ministry will adopt within its capabilities the recommendations of this event.

KariaNet was later introduced and its directions elaborated by Dr. Hammou Laamrani in terms of networking and sustainability, capacity building to create a mass of experts in KM-KS in the region and applied research to innovate and contextualize knowledge management. Dr. Laamrani also addressed the context of the project, its goal and objectives and finally what kariaNet is not so that there is no room for assumptions and the expectations are well-directed.

Key points discussed after the introductory presentation:

- 1- There is an obvious missing link between the different ministries and between the different directorates of the same ministry as well. The directorates have websites but the information and knowledge are not shared properly and cannot be retracted easily.
- 2- KariaNet should collaborate with the National Information Centre www.nic.gov.sd that aims at sharing public knowledge through the use of ICT tools. The project should link up as well to the National Centre for Research www.ncr.sd that has a mandate of conducting scientific applied research for development.
- 3- The project in Sudan will face some challenges in collecting the knowledge and rechanneling it in a manner that suits all stakeholders.
- 4- Because Sudan has a weak infrastructure for knowledge management and sharing, communication networks should be included in the implementation.
- 5- Sharing information is different than sharing knowledge and there is a need to know about useful experiences in KM-KS
- 6- Success stories and lessons learned need to be systematically systemized and documented to be accessible and available for different stakeholders.
- 7- Knowledge products are very important because we cannot think KM-KS without good knowledge products
- 8- KM-KS is about institutions and not individuals. There should be clear policies to mainstream and institutionalize the ways to get to the knowledge.

Work group 1: setting-up the network

The first working group addressed the structure and organisation of the National level by answering the following questions:

- 1- Who are the members of KariaNet in Sudan (org. and ind.)
- 2- Who is the focal point of KariaNet in Sudan (org. and ind.)
- 3- What is the governance of the national network:
 - Who should manage the network under what kinds of rules and regulations?
 - Membership structure: who can join the network? Closed or open network? Institutional or individual membership?
 - Who decides on the annual workplan and activities?
 - M&E
- 4- What are your suggestions to sustain the National KM-KS network?

The participants were divided into three groups and each group came up with a list of organisations and institutes who can be part of the National network:

1. Ministry of Agriculture
2. Ministry of Science and Technology
3. Ministry of Animal Resources & Fisheries
4. Ministry of Health
5. Ministry of Communications & Information Technology
6. Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs
7. Ministry of Foreign Trade
8. Ministry of Finance & National Economy
9. Agricultural research corporation: <http://www.arcsudan.sd/arcarabic/home.htm>
10. Centre of research at the ministry of animal resources and fisheries
11. National Information Centre www.nic.gov.sd
12. National Centre for Research www.ncr.sd
13. Faculty of Agriculture and animal production at the university of Khartoum
<http://www.uofk.edu/?direction=ltr&lang=en>
14. Development Studies & Research Institute at the University of Khartoum
<http://dsri.uofk.edu/index.php?direction=ltr&lang=en#>
15. The Sudan Institutional Capacity Programme: Food Security Information for Action (SIFSIA)-
FAO <http://www.fao.org/sudanfoodsecurity/en/>
16. Technology transfer and extension administration <http://www.ttea.gov.sd/English-Site/about.htm>
17. Agricultural development projects
18. IFAD-funded projects
19. NGOs
20. CBOs
21. Communication companies
22. M&E directorates
23. Media
24. Donors: FAO, World Bank, IFAD...

As for the focal point of KariaNet in Sudan, it was agreed that the central coordination unit (CCU) of IFAD, under the umbrella of the ministry of agriculture will play this role with a steering committee composed of:

- 2 representatives from Ministry of Agriculture (extension and information center),
- 1 from the Ministry of Animal Resources & Fisheries (information center),
- 1 from the National Information Centre,
- 1 from an NGO
- 1 from the private sector
- 1 from the Development Studies & Research Institute at the University of Khartoum

This steering committee will be led by Mr. Mohamed El Hag SirelKhatim as a senior coordinator of IFAD-funded projects in Khartoum and in the same time from the MoA.

The information centers of different directorates and ministries were brought up as focal points, but from the discussion, it was agreed that they will be represented in the steering committee.

As for the governance of the network, there was a common answer of having the national network in Sudan following the rules and regulations of the national information center.

The network should be managed by a steering committee that will be assigned after the completion of the knowledge mapping in Sudan. However in the meantime, there will be a temporarily core group led by Mr. Mohamed El Hag (CCU-IFAD) to initiate the establishment of the network and implement the pipeline activities.

The membership was thought to be restricted and that there will be specific requirements for adhesion. The work plan and budget should be set by all members of the network.

Regarding the sustainability of the network, the idea for the financial sustainability was to impose membership fees; to include the Ministry of Finance & National Economy that has in its mandate policy-reduction policies, and to attract donor's fund.

In addition, the participants addressed the marketing of knowledge, linking to institutions with available resources, collaboration with rural development projects and aligning some of the network activities to theirs in terms of co-funding , and finally, linking the network to regional and international networks.

Key points discussed and questions addressed:

- 1- Importance of public-private partnership and having private, non-state actors in the network
- 2- The focal point will be the CCU for the time-being until the knowledge mapping study is ready. The CCU was chosen for its presence under the umbrella of the MoA and having financial independency.
- 3- The CCU will be assisted by a steering committee composed of information centers at different ministries, the national information centre, private sector, NGO and a research institute
- 4- What are the incentives for participation?
- 5- Who are the champions at the ministries and different institutes and centers?
- 6- How can we move practically to building the network?
- 7- The focal point task is a responsibility and administratively is at the disposition of the network and its members

Working group 2: The situation analysis

For this working group, the idea was to present what was proposed at the start-up workshop in Agadir at the end of March in terms of needed capacity-building and learning priorities and to add to it:

1. Capacity building
 - a. Orientation on knowledge management
 - b. Training : ICT, KM tools and methods
 - c. Content development
2. Thematic workshops
 - a. Food security
 - b. Rural enterprise development
3. Knowledge mapping
4. Partnership
 - a. Local Media
 - b. Research Centres
 - c. Development projects
 - d. Private sector

Additional capacity-building and learning priorities suggested by the participants:

- Social media and the use of web 2.0 tools
- Writeshops and documentation
- Local culture and indigenous knowledge
- Organisational skills with business and market orientation
- Handbooks as support documents for the trainings

Key points

1. The entry point for KM-KS in Sudan is to find an institutional framework for the national network
2. The focal point and steering committee should look for what is there, because the topic didn't come from a void, and the national network should build on what is present and add value to it.
3. Search for local expertise because they will help in advancing the level of entry.
4. User-friendly handbook and/or manual should be prepared for each ToT

Day 2, Monday August 15, 2011

The highlight of the second day was the workplan and budget proposed for the coming 6 months in two different working groups.

A task force was appointed by Mr. Mohamed El Hag to finalize the workplan and budget and that will be communicated to KariaNet team before the end of August.

Tentative workplan of group 1:

	Activity	Sept. 2011	Oct. 2011	Nov. 2011	Dec. 2011	Jan. 2012	Feb. 2012	Total Budget USD
1	Knowledge mapping							10,000
2	Orientation Workshop							1,000
3	KM & KS Workshop (TOT)*1							10,000
4	Documentation of good practice training*2							13,000
5	AWPB meeting for next year							1,000
6	Formation of SD. KariaNet Steering Committee							500
7	Setup of Sudan KariaNet Unit*3							5,000
	Total							40,500

1. *International Trainer to be assigned by Regional KariaNet*
2. *National Trainer to be assigned by Regional KariaNet*
3. *Eight members were nominated by the group*

Tentative workplan of group 2:

Activity	Budget (USD)	9	10	11	12	1	2	Observations
Institutional framework of KariaNet in Sudan	30 000							
a- The core working group	13 000							
b- The coordination committee	10 000							
c- The executive committee (director, M&E, content developer, backstopping)	7 000							
d- Start-up workshop								
Capacity-building	50 000							
a- Orientation training								
b- ToT								
c- Field training								
Needs assessment and knowledge mapping study	20 000							
Monitoring and evaluation								

The day ended by a presentation of the knowledge mapping study that was validated in terms of importance by all participants. In addition, the training on how to build a knowledge network was introduced to the participants, and it was agreed that it should be pushed until November, and not September, after the knowledge mapping and the identification of the partners and trainees.

The way forward:

- 1- KariaNet team to send the CCU the IDRC application for research grant.
- 2- The task force group to update the workplan based on the suggestions of the two working groups.
- 3- Knowledge mapping study: to identify potential experts who can conduct this study in Sudan.

Agenda of the visit:

Day 1: Sunday August 14, 2011

Time	Session	Description	Outputs and observations
10:00- 10:30	Opening session	Tour de table présentation of participants	
		Welcome address : MoA- HE the Minister of Agriculture Dr. Mohamed Ali El Hag Alloba IFAD- Ms. Rasha Omar IDRC- Dr. Hammou Laamrani	
10:30-11:00	KariaNet	Presentation of KariaNet approach, objectives and components	
11:00-01:00	Working group 1: setting-up the network	Presentation in plenary of the tentative roadmap for the National KM-KS network presented in Agadir end of March, 2011 at the start-up workshop of KariaNet	To ask the participants from Agadir to present what has been done so far and their vision for the National network
		Working groups (depending on the number of participants) to address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4- Who are the members of KariaNet in Sudan (org. and ind.) 5- Who is the focal point of KN in Sudan (org. and ind.) 6- What is the governance of the national network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who should manage the network under what kinds of rules and regulations? • Membership structure: who can join the network? Closed or open network? Institutional or individual membership? • Who decides on the annual workplan and activities? • M&E 7- What are your suggestions to sustain the National KM-KS network? 	Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- List of organizations and individuals as potential members of KariaNet in Sudan with an expertise and interest in rural development and knowledge sharing. 2- The organization of the network 3- Ideas on how to sustain the national network
		Plenary session 1 to present the findings	
1:00-2:00	Prayer time		

2:00-4:00	Working group 2: Situation analysis	Identifying the network needs and contributions to KariaNet in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Capacity-building in knowledge management and knowledge sharing 2- Innovations in KM-KS 3- Any other networking activity 	Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- List of capacity-building for the National network in Sudan in terms of KM-KS 2- Learning priorities for the National network in KM-KS
		Plenary session 2 to present the findings	
4:00-4:30	End of Day 1 Closing circle	A space for participants to provide feedback and evaluate the day	

Day 2: Monday August 15, 2011

Time	Session	Description	Outputs and observations
10:00-12:00	Working group 3: The Sudanese National network workplan and budget	To identify a list of activities with their timeframe as a priority for the coming 6 months and their budget. To think about the network direction and implementation for the 2 years to come.	
12:00-1:00	Prayer time		
1:00-2:00	The Knowledge mapping study	To present the concept of the study and get feedback from participants with a recommendation of potential experts capable of conducting the study in Sudan	Mr. Rashid Musaad as the chairman of the session
2:00-2:30	The September training: How to build a knowledge Network	To present the workshop planned in September and the trainers on how to build a knowledge network	
2:30-3:00	End of Day 2 Closing circle	A space for participants to provide feedback and evaluate the day	