

Brochure

Background

KariaNet, the network for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), was piloted in 2005 until 2008 as a multi-stakeholder partnership between IFAD, IDRC and IFAD-financed projects in the MENA region. *KariaNet*'s pilot phase sought to test and develop tools and practices that could advance learning and the exchange of experiences and knowledge assets among IFAD-financed projects, towards an overall goal of improving projects' performance.

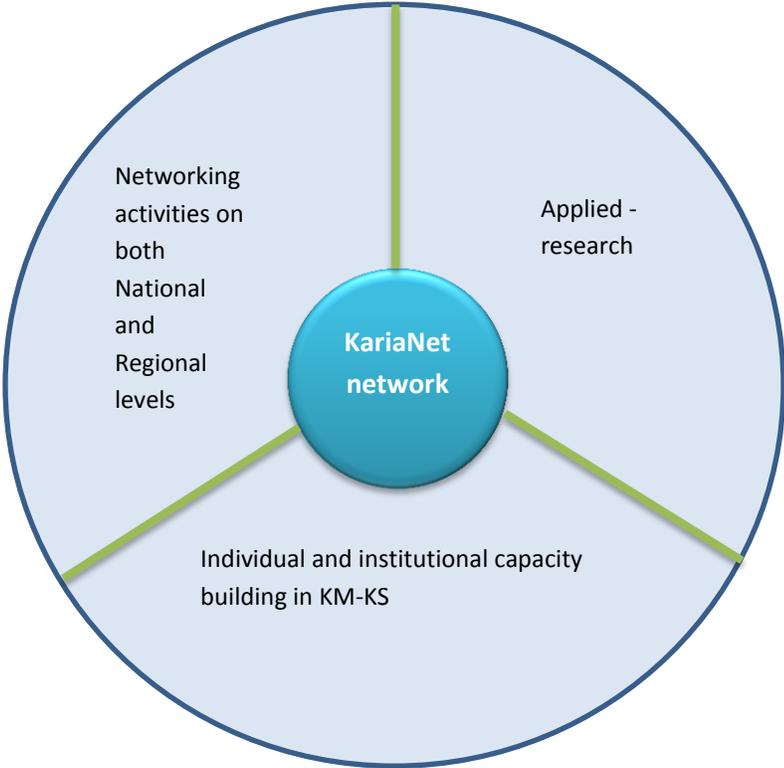
KariaNet II builds on the achievements and foundations laid by *KariaNet I* towards integrating learning and knowledge management into development practice with a vision of enabling/empowering rural poor man and woman through knowledge in order to overcome poverty. The project aims at enhancing national and regional competencies and capabilities in knowledge management (KM) and knowledge sharing (KS) in agriculture and rural development through capacity building, applied research and pertinent networking activities on KM-KS. This Network, inspired by 'open access principles', seeks to empower its members, IFAD and IDRC funded projects, researchers, governmental agencies, NGOs and farmers 'associations, through the use of ICT and non-ICT tools, to make knowledge available and timely accessible to the users. *KariaNet* aims to link up the knowledge providers and knowledge brokers with the knowledge seekers (two ways knowledge flow) through three thematic networks: i) food security, and ii) rural enterprise development and iii) knowledge management systems and practices in agriculture and rural development.

KariaNet at a glance

KariaNet II	
What?	Knowledge Access for Rural Inter-connected Areas Network (<i>KariaNet</i>) is a regional network for the management and sharing of knowledge, information and experience in agriculture and rural development in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.
Who?	International Development research Centre (IDRC) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
When?	2010-2013
Aim?	<i>KariaNet</i> aims to enhance the overall performance and effectiveness of development projects in MENA, to enable the rural poor to overcome their poverty.
Where?	Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen.
Why?	The overall purpose of <i>KariaNet</i> is to integrate learning and KM into development practice in MENA

How?	<p>KariaNet project is designed around three clusters of activities all centered on knowledge management (KM) and knowledge sharing (KS) including applied research on knowledge management, individual and institutional capacity building in KM-KS and networking activities within and across the ten countries.</p> <p>The network will focus on three thematic priorities: i) food security, ii) rural enterprise development and iii) knowledge management systems and practices in agriculture and rural development.</p>
Target beneficiaries	<p>Although the ultimate beneficiaries will be the rural poor, the KariaNet network will mainly consists of people at the intermediary level, i.e. IFAD-financed and IDRC supported projects, farmer organizations, development practitioners, researchers, government agencies and NGOs.</p>

KariaNet nexus to knowledge management



Goal and objectives:

The **overall goal** of KariaNet is to enhance the effectiveness of development projects and programmes that serve to enable the rural poor to overcome their poverty. Its **primary objective** is to develop sustainable mechanisms, using action research and learning, for sharing knowledge and innovations among rural and agricultural development projects in NENA, that enable them to improve their performance and impact.

The Objectives:

- To initiate and sustain a knowledge management hub that builds on and expands the existing networks and initiatives on knowledge management and knowledge sharing in rural development in ten countries in the MENA region;
- To build and sustain national and regional competences needed in networking and knowledge management on Food security and rural enterprise development.
- To enhance knowledge sharing and management culture and practices supported by the use of ICT's and non-ICT's tools for agricultural and rural development.
- To sustain the network after KariaNet completion.

Three thematic priorities:

KariaNet II will focus on three thematic priorities of regional relevance (i) Food security, (ii) rural enterprise development and (iii) knowledge management expertise development.

Both food security and rural enterprise development were chosen as two areas of concern in the MENA region as shown in the recent crisis of food price raise and as highlighted by the self-assessment study and the Needs assessment study made by KariaNet I. As for the third network, it is a cross-cutting meta-network dedicated to research issues related to methodology of knowledge management and learning.

(i) Food security:

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life —FAO, World Food Summit

Most Arab countries are facing shortages in arable land and water, rendering them vulnerable to international food supply and food price fluctuations in addition to climate change. All Arab countries import almost 50% of their food; hence food security has to be addressed urgently. From that perspective and taking into consideration the suggestions voiced from KariaNet I, food security is a regional priority that should be tackled from a knowledge management aspect and at different stakeholder levels.

(ii) Rural Enterprise Development:

Many initiatives in rural enterprise development took place in the region, by providing technical or /and financial services to small-scale farmers. These efforts represent a wealthy and helpful experience that needs to be captured and disseminated in order for its seekers to find it, build on and learn from it. This theme came as one of the recommendations and pillars to help counterbalance future vulnerability to price shocks and food insecurity.

(iii) Knowledge management systems and practices:

KariaNet II envisages the creation of a third thematic network that will be cross cutting and will be dedicated to search issues related to methodology of knowledge management, learning and on elaborating and validating an operational model for the future of KariaNet. The meta-network could provide an advisory and support role to the larger network and other potential thematic networks. This network aims at providing strong scientific backup to the KM approaches to be privileged in KariaNet and similar networks in the region.

KariaNet I & KariaNet II in continuity

KariaNet I	KariaNet II
ICTs based/supported knowledge management systems for effective rural development in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)	
<p>“Restricted space”</p> <p>Network</p>	<p>“Open Access principle” with focus on IFAD, IDRC and other projects and programmes</p> <p>META-Network (Projects and members “in and out”)</p>
<p>Only IFAD-funded projects</p>	<p>IFAD- funded and IDRC-supported projects, researchers, development practitioners, governmental agencies, NGOs and farmers’ organizations.</p>
<p>5 countries, 9 projects</p>	<p>Projects and members from 10 countries in MENA: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen</p>
<p>Pioneer in exploring Web based tools for knowledge management (KM) and knowledge sharing (KS) in the MENA region.</p>	<p>Will benefit from recent rapid advances and services in mobile phone tech and web based Social networks, Twitter, Facebook, YouTUBE, VIMEO, Kiva, Flickr, Google.doc, open access real time data management</p>

	systems
Sustainability not addressed directly in terms of concrete activities	Devolution business plan
Testing community knowledge initiatives (ICTs and non ICTs)	Consolidate successes and test new demand driven solutions through more innovation/action research

The implementation

KariaNet implementation plan has a specific directive for each year in order to build on and strengthen existing synergies and come up with a sustainable and demand-driven exit strategy.

2011: Expanding the National and Regional networks

The first year will focus mainly on reviving and revamping the network and enhance its capacities on a national and regional level. This entails capacity-building activities on a regional level with an emphasis on the three thematic networks: food security, rural enterprise development and knowledge management. Each thematic network will communicate its needs and learning priorities to be formulated as specific roadmaps with defined activities and responsibilities. At a national level, each country will be responsible for defining its network and its work plan. The respective work plan will include the network learning priorities, needs, expectations and contributions to KariaNet.

2011 will observe a clear plan for the devolution of KariaNet, which is a set of scenarios of the sustainability model with a recommendation of the best fit scenario for an incremental appropriation of the network after its completion. The aim is to have a sustainable network designed to ensure ownership, operation and growth centered on knowledge management and knowledge sharing among all segments of the society engaged in and affected by food security and rural enterprise development issues.

Networking activities

KariaNet sets out to integrate learning and knowledge into development practice. It seeks to promote learning, the use of knowledge and its management at three core levels of rural development work: at the level of the communities where development interventions are located, at the level of development projects that seek to instil change in the form of development outcomes, and at the level of institutions and policy-makers who provide direction, funds and oversight to development projects.

The networking activities will be two-dimensional covering the National network of each country participating in KariaNet and the three thematic networks: food security, rural enterprise development and knowledge management.

Capacity-building

The project aspires to establish and sustain a **critical mass of professionals** acquainted with state-of-the-art knowledge and competencies capable of making use of the instruments, tools and practices in knowledge management and knowledge sharing. The capacity-building component will be on-going during the lifetime of the project and will be demand-driven and based on the needs communicated by the National networks and the regional thematic ones.

Applied research

Competitive Call for proposal: Knowledge Management in Policy Formulation and Action Planning

A competitive call for innovative applied-research proposals will be launched to deliver new directions in mainstreaming knowledge management (KM) in the region in terms of policy formulation and practices and taking into consideration food security and rural enterprise development. The research trails ways in which the role of knowledge management is enhanced in the MENA. It seeks to map out the current situation of knowledge management, its users and its brokers in the countries of implementation. In addition, it aims to test and assess the knowledge flow and highlight opportunities to leverage it.

2012: The trial period

2012 is meant to be the experimental year where the implementation of activities will take place in order to ensure a certain margin for corrective measures. A participative reflexion is important at this stage, around the mid-term evaluation period to re-adjust and re-design the implementation timeline in order to accommodate the needs and priorities of the members. The national and regional networks will be operational, and their learning needs and expectations will be taken into consideration for the capacity-building and training activities planned for this year. The research will be in its first year of operation towards enhancing mainstreaming knowledge management in the MENA region.

2013: *The exit strategy of KariaNet*

2013 is considered to be the consolidation and exit strategy year, where minimum re-adjustment is expected and more engagement and empowerment of members in decision-making in KariaNet is anticipated. Concretely, knowledge products will be collected and disseminated through kariaNet and different networks.

Furthermore, kariaNet should be in the process of having an independent status to translate demand-driven National and Regional priorities and contextualize projects' needs. The devolution plan should be working towards achieving the best-fit scenario for an incremental institutionalization of the network and further for mainstreaming knowledge management and knowledge sharing through NGOs, public and private sectors.

The team:

KariaNet team:

Co-ordinator:

Dr. Hammou Laamrani

hlaamrani@karianet.org

hlaamrani@idrc.org.eg

Research Officer:

Ms. Layal Dandache

ldandache@karianet.org

ldandache@idrc.org.eg

Grant Administrator:

Ms. Hala Rafik

hrafik@karianet.org

hrafik@idrc.org.eg

Please contact KariaNet at:

Telephone: +20-2-37627729

Fax: +20-2-33367056

Email: info@karianet.org

Postal Address:

8, Ahmed Nessim street, 8th floor, Giza, Egypt.

PO. Box 14, Orman, Dokki