Draft Case Statement to Create a Working Group On Capacity Development for Agriculture Data

Submitted to

Research Data Alliance

**Case Statement for Capacity Development for Agriculture Data WG**

**Charter**

**Introduction and Rationale**

**Introduction**

*This case statement is an effort to highlight the adequate need for capacity development of research data and open data practitioners in agriculture and related sciences, in particular to the existing RDA working groups related to IGAD. It shall broadly look at the existing gaps that requires urgent attention, so as to provide the right capacity for roles of all the stakeholders within the agriculture and nutrition ecosystem that can support international development goals. It shall present diverse use cases and linkages to different sectors of development, and cites resources for more in-depth examination of capacity development issues. It will aim to provide in-depth strategic actionable insights into capacity and capabilities necessary for managing today’s large scale data assets and opportunities for stakeholders to network; set methodologies for curriculum development and new approaches to some of the key techniques and tools for agricultural data management. It will provide practitioners with the necessary capacities to contribute to and utilize the vast open data ecosystem in agriculture and nutrition.*

**1.- Rationale**

The aim of this Working Group (WG) is to develop synergies between existing education and training activities and agricultural science needs by performing a landscape assessment to identify existing gaps and training requirements within the Interest Group on Agricultural Data (IGAD) WGs related. A particular focus will be on sharing knowledge about training initiatives and technologies, reducing digital divides so that researchers and practitioners in developing countries can also benefit. It will also empower the existing collaboration with GODAN and GODAN Action[[1]](#footnote-1).

Formed in 2013, since its inception the Interest Group on Agricultural Data (IGAD) has grown in community strength to becoming one of the RDA’s most prominent Thematic Groups. IGAD is a domain-oriented group working on all issues related to global agriculture data. It represents stakeholders in managing data for agricultural research and innovation, including producing, aggregating and consuming data. Beyond this IGAD promotes good practices in research with regard to data sharing policies, data management plans and data interoperability, and it is a forum for sharing experience and providing visibility to research and work in agricultural data.

At the RDA 9 in Barcelona , more than 100 data experts from more than 35 countries came together for the IGAD pre-meeting where the participants were briefed about ongoing [activities of IGAD Working Groups (WGs)](http://aims.fao.org/activity/blog/report-agricultural-data-interest-group-igad-activities-during-rda-8th-plenary-meeting) and conveyed new ideas through the proposals for future work. At the RDA9 Pre-meeting for IGAD there was strong interest for developing a WG for building synergies in Capacity Development, in the context of research data in agriculture and its potential contribution to the realization of the [Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)](http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/en/).

**2. Proposal**

The  **Capacity Development** Working Group aims to

1. Perform a landscape assessment to identify existing gaps and training requirements within the context of IGAD network including GODAN
	* Using existing needs assessment survey data from GODAN Action
	* Literature review of existing training capacity challenges and opportunities, taking into account language barriers
	* Focused around an identified IGAD research data community
2. Present a report of the landscape assessment to RDA11 and circulate for expert comment.
3. Develop a case study around an identified community to identify good practices for capacity development and advocacy.
4. Build synergies with other initiatives, such as GODAN Action, to increase the coherence and impact on the delivery of training.

The working group aims to identify and mitigate the gaps in capacity development as evidenced by the needs assessment of the different stakeholders in domains under agriculture. The WG also aims to map and enlist the active initiatives, organisations and agencies already involved in capacity development activities and build synergies between them and then evidence needs of the stakeholders. In view of the above, we will identify possible stakeholders such as the content providers, technology solution providers, user community (practitioners, researchers, policy makers) and resource persons.

**3.- Value proposition**

There is a recognised need for capacity development in the fields of agricultural data management. A number of different organisations are attempting to address this, however there does not appear to be a coordinated approach across all agricultural domains which can adequately identify training gaps and make recommendations. Language is a further obstacle for identifying and evaluating existing resources. This working group aims to address this gap by acting as a hub for coordinating the development and provision of training to agriculture practitioners, researchers and policy makers.

This WG outputs will be of benefit to a wide range of stakeholders, users and communities in the Agriculture and Nutrition domain.

Key impacts

* Reduce effort and duplication in development of curricula
* Support capacity development for individuals, communities, and initiatives that will benefit from utilising Agricultural data outputs
* Advocate for collaborative efforts agriculture and nutrition open data initiatives through knowledge sharing among capacity development activities
* Advocate programs, good practices, and lessons learned that enable the use of open data. Promote capacity development and diversity of open data users for a more effective accessibility, use, engagement and understand of open data.

**4.- Work plan**

The deliverables for the Capacity Development WG will be:

* Bring multidisciplinary inputs about best practices into the curriculum development process for Agriculture data with the objective to expand the societal impact of open agricultural research.
* To explore ideas for closer collaborations between RDA/IGAD - [RDA/Geospatial IG](https://www.rd-alliance.org/groups/geospatial-ig.html) - [GODAN Capacity Development](http://www.godan.info/working-groups/capacity-development) - [CODATA](http://www.codata.org/) and synergies to set up joint education and training activities on [Open Data](https://okfn.org/opendata/) in food and agricultural sciences. We will work with RDA-CODATA Summer Schools, Teaching TDM for Education and skills development initiatives to build synergies. A particular focus will be on sharing knowledge about training programs and platforms for reducing digital divides so that researchers in developing countries can also benefit.

The outcomes for the Capacity Development WG will be:

1. Report on the current landscape assessment.
2. From the landscape assessment, identify and report, with interested stakeholders, existing capacity gaps, including language barriers.
3. Develop a case study around the identified community to identify good practices for capacity development and advocacy
4. Initiate ideas for Joint training programs in Agricultural data (both online and hands- on ) in collaboration with interested organisations for example GODAN as well as other IGs in RDA (Geospatial IG)

**7.- Milestones**

 **Deliverables and Outcomes**

 **Engagement**

IGAD has spearheaded two important capacity development initiatives. These include two introductory online MOOCS course on data management, principally aimed at learners in Latin America, and four Forums on Open Data and Open Science in Agriculture for Africa. The MOOCs courses offer an introduction to themes of data management using examples from the international sphere and with a particular focus on data management research in fisheries and nutrition. As well as teaching how to define data; the course shall look at issues of data storage, sharing and long term preservation, highlighting the different resources available to researchers in data management. IGAD leads the course in conjunction with the FAO of the United Nations, Spain’s Polytechnic University of Valencia and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

The goal of the forums is to provide a platform for stakeholders in Africa to share knowledge on institutional and national initiatives aimed at enhancing the visibility, accessibility and usability of agricultural data and science, and the potential contribution to the realization of Africa’s sustainable development goals and the SDGs. We aim to reach out to GODAN Capacity Building activities to expand our synergies and work jointly for expanding capacity development in agriculture data globally.

**Work Plan**

A specific and detailed description of how the WG will operate includes:

1. The final deliverables of the Capacity Development in Agriculture Data WG will consist of:
	1. A landscape assessment on the current state of play for agricultural research data with emphasis on a selected case study group
	2. Good practice guidelines for identifying and addressing capacity gaps, derived from the case study (Including guidance on advocacy to support adoption )
	3. A capacity building resource hosted on the RDA website
2. Milestones for the WG shall include:
	1. November 2017 - Submission of the WG Case Statement to RDA
	2. November 2017 (M1) - Acceptance and endorsement of the WG Case Statement by RDA?
	3. March 2018 (M5) - Identified an Ag data community for the case study and completed and initial landscape assessment to identify the current state of play for the community,
	4. March 2018 (M5) - Present a draft report on the current state of play for the case study community to IGAD @ RDA11.
	5. April 2018 (M6) - Circulate report to IGAD community for expert feedback
	6. April 2019 (M18) - Report of good practices and lessons learned
	7. April 2019 (M18) - Handover of developed research data capacity development resource to the wider IGAD/RDA community
* A description of how the WG plans to develop consensus, address conflicts, stay on track and within scope, and move forward during operation

The WG will have all the discussions through the IGAD maillists to ensure openness and inclusivity in the capacity development training activities. This will ensure all viewpoints are discussed in an open and participatory way.

As contributors will be meeting regularly through GoTo Meeting facility and various conferences, they will be in an ideal position to let the wider agricultural community know about the importance and the status of the work done within the WG.

**Adoption Plan**

Work for Agreement among key agriculture capacity building communities (GODAN, IGAD, CODATA etc) by April 2019 to expand synergies in training programs using the guidelines developed as part of the deliverables has been established as an objective of the WG.

**Initial Membership**

* Muchiri Nyaggah (Local Development Research Institute, Kenya)
* Karel Chavat (Czech Center for Science and Society, Czech Republic)
* Antonio Sanchez-Padial (INIA, Spain)
* Andreas Kamilaris (IRTA, Spain)
* Elizabeth Zeitler (AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, USA)
* Ruthie Musker (GODAN, USA)
* Imma Subirats (FAO of the UN, Italy)
* Karna Wegner (FAO of the UN, Germany)
* Patricia Rocha (Embrapa, Brazil)
* Devika Madalli (Indian Statistical Institute, UK)
* David Tarrant (ODI, UK)
* Isaura Ramos Lopes (Netherlands)
* Michael Ball (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), UK)
* Shaik N. Meera (Rice Knowledge Management Portal, India)
* Carme Reverté Reverté (IRTA, Spain)
* Sonigitu Ekpe (Nigeria)
* Telemachos Koliopoulos (University of Srathclyde, Greece)
* Salman Siddiqui (IWMI, SriLanka)
* Sophie Fortuno (CIRAD, France)
* Marie-Claude Deboin (CIRAD, France)
* Zhang Xuefu (CAAS, China)
* Richard Ostler (Rothamsted Research, UK)
* Boniface Akuku (KALRO, Chair of the CODATA Task Group on Agriculture Data, Knowledge for Learning and Innovation, Kenya)

**Initial leadership in English(tbc):**

1. Suchith Anand (GODAN( UK/India) - Coordination
2. Chipo Msengezi (CTA, The Netherlands)
3. Karna Wegner (FAO of the UN, Italy)

1. GODAN Action is a project to enable the effective use of open data in tackling the food security and nutrition challenges by building the capacity of potential stakeholders to both understand the potential of open data for agriculture and nutrition and to engage with it practically http://www.godan.info/godan-action. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)