

EDITORIAL

Introduction to this issue

Sarah Cummings, Editor-in-Chief

1 Introduction

This issue represents the journal's 20th year of publication. In this period, the journal has attempted to document the emerging field of Knowledge Management for Development (KM4D), closely allied to the Knowledge Management for Development (KM4Dev) which has been running for 25 years in 2025. In most of its 20 year period, the journal has been open access – there was a three year period when the journal experimented with publishing with a mainstream, commercial publisher – and now all of the contents are available online, open access. In total, the journal has published 19 volumes and 42 issues. Thus is the 43rd issue.

The journal was designed to bring together practice, research and policy in the field of KM4D, as well as creating space for more imaginative contributions, like stories and poems. This issue contains one scientific paper, one case study, two tools and methods contributions, and two policy briefs. Four contributions come from the Knowledge Management for Agricultural Development (KM4AgD), a lighthouse project for a knowledge-based development in Africa. Since 2017, the project has been run by the Forum for African Research in Agriculture (FARA) for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme ex-Pillar IV (CAADP-XP4) organizations, including FARA, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Service (AFAAS), West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA) and North African Sub-Regional Research Organization (NAASRO), and other continental, regional and national agricultural stakeholders.

Contributions to this issue are primarily in English with one contribution in French with an English abstract.

2 The paper

The first contribution (Joseph Kiplang'at & Elisam Magara) is based on a study that assessed information and knowledge management curricula in selected universities in Africa with a view to identifying convergence and possible gaps. The study assessed the justification of the programmes, their rationale and purpose, curriculum outcomes, and career opportunities. Further, the paper analysed the content structure and delivery mode, and identified a cluster of courses with emphasis on professional interest and occupational linkages. The findings indicate that knowledge management programmes were developed in the context of national goals, global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), development plans and the occupational needs of the information and knowledge industry. There were major similarities in the curriculum offered, such as the occupational professional skills and competencies provided and the fact that learners were prepared to work as knowledge managers and practitioners in industry. Knowledge management curricula were generally found to emphasise professional discourse as a substantial body of theoretical knowledge that forms the intellectual foundation of the discipline.

3 The case study

This case study (Modou F. Sall) was undertaken to better understand the state of knowledge management within a Canadian international organization dedicated to research for development. Quantitative and qualitative studies were conducted to assess the practices, attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of the organization's employees, based on four key knowledge management facilitators: leadership, technology, engagement, and organizational structure. A

questionnaire administered to the organization's employees allowed for the measurement of perceptions and the collection of data using a five-point Likert scale. The findings aim to raise awareness among staff about the importance of knowledge and among senior management of the need to implement a knowledge management strategy which encompasses both explicit and tacit knowledge.

4 Tools and methods

The first 'tools and methods' contribution (Oluwaseun Bolarinwa Akinyemi, Emmanuel Amek Akoto, Bosede Adeyinka Ayinla, Narcisse Yehouenou, Kgothatso Lovey Tshipo, Guy Marius Assogba, Israel Non-Nde Djidaainairi and Ishmael Kgosietsile Maikano) explores the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for developing and enhancing agricultural knowledge hubs across Africa. As agriculture remains central to food security and sustainable livelihoods on the continent, there is an urgent need to close the knowledge gap between scientific advancements and smallholder farmers. This study presents a guideline for integrating AI/ML technologies into agricultural knowledge hubs, highlighting their capacity to improve data aggregation, user engagement, interoperability, and the delivery of timely, context-sensitive knowledge to the last mile. In addition to detailing the technical infrastructure and policy recommendations necessary for success, the article also addresses challenges related to digital divides, data governance, and trust. Emphasizing inclusivity, collaboration, and ethical use, this road map seeks to guide national and regional stakeholders toward building resilient, intelligent knowledge systems that empower agricultural communities, foster innovation, and promote long-term development outcomes across Africa. The article was written as part of the Knowledge Management for Agricultural Development (KM4AgD) Challenge 2024, an initiative of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and collaborating institutions.

The second contribution to the 'Tools and methods' section (Sarah Cummings, Bruce Boyes, Nyamwaya Munthali and Rocio Sanz) develops a novel qualitative, text-based method for the analysis of websites because texts of websites represent a huge, underused resource for research in international development and other fields. This method aims to make the most of the fact that websites provide a huge amount of 'authentic', unique, up-to-date, peer reviewed, topical data. Some of the challenges and

opportunities of using the texts of websites for textual analysis in research are outlined, followed by a draft protocol for documenting individual pages which overcomes many of these challenges, making websites more accessible for qualitative research and, in particular, for critical discourse analysis. This method is based on a previous article which piloted this approach (Cummings et al, 2025). This method can also be employed more widely as a way to document websites which might be under threat of neglect or destruction.

5 Policy briefs

The first policy brief (Sharon Oluwadamilola Abiodun, Ishmael Kgosietsile Maikano, Kgothatso Tshipo Lovey, Wilfrid Adjimoti and Mthokozisi Kwazi Zuma) advocates for a gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approach to knowledge management in African agriculture. Despite their substantial contribution to the agricultural workforce, women and persons with disabilities remain marginalized in accessing, creating, and utilizing agricultural knowledge. Barriers include biased content, inaccessible information formats, limited participation, and socio-economic constraints. The brief presents best practices such as inclusive content design, participatory methods, and targeted capacity building. It outlines a policy vision that prioritizes equity, accessibility, and empowerment through robust institutional frameworks, funding mechanisms, and partnerships. A participatory knowledge café identified practical strategies and stakeholder-driven solutions to enhance inclusivity. By transforming agricultural knowledge management systems, we can unlock the full potential of marginalized groups, boost productivity, and contribute to food security and sustainable development across Africa. The article was written as part of the Knowledge Management for Agriculture Development (KM4AgD) Challenge 2024, an initiative of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and collaborating institutions.

The second policy brief (Dorcas Alame Sanginga, Mabel Lum Shu, Diezou Evelyne Maurelle, Ruben Tchounyabe, Jean-Louis Tshisambu Mamba, Kwazi Zuma and Kisito Gandji) calls for a transformative shift in how Indigenous knowledge is valued and integrated across research, policy, and practice. It emphasizes the urgent need to recognize Indigenous knowledge as a foundational knowledge system, essential in agricultural research and development. Despite its proven effectiveness in areas such as sustainable land management,

climate adaptation, and biodiversity conservation, Indigenous knowledge remains marginalized due to systemic exclusion, cultural assimilation, and intellectual property exploitation. Drawing on concrete case studies on soil fertility management in Africa, the policy brief contrasts modern agricultural practices with inclusive approaches that integrate Indigenous knowledge with scientific knowledge. It advocates for the need to integrate indigenous knowledge and practices with scientific knowledge toward an effective knowledge system and development interventions. It also provides practical recommendations for researchers, policymakers, academia, civil society, and Indigenous communities to co-create equitable knowledge systems and institutional frameworks that value, protect, include and promote Indigenous knowledge. The policy brief was written as part of the Knowledge Management for Agricultural Development (KM4AgD) Challenge 2024, an initiative of FARA and collaborating institutions.

About the authors

Sarah Cummings is a Research Fellow at Wageningen University, the Netherlands. She is also the Editor-in-Chief of the *Knowledge Management for Development Journal*. She was previously Co-Director for the IKM Emergent Research Programme and is chair of the KM4Dev community. She is the Executive Director of Knowledge Ecologist where she undertakes knowledge-related consultancies for the UN and other clients. She holds a PhD from the VU University Amsterdam, a Masters' from Radboud University Nijmegen, and a Bachelor's from SOAS.

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