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United Nations Development Programme

UNDP KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK 2014-2017

UNDP KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Cover image: A visualization of online conversations and exchanges among UNDP staff, UN partners and participants of knowledge mobilization initiatives such as the 'Rio+20 Dialogues' and 'World We Want 2015', demonstrating how UNDP's knowledge management integrates previously separate networks in one collaborative environment.

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BACKGROUND

On the ground in 177 countries and territories, UNDP is the most universal actor in the area of technical development assistance and capacity development. The activity that is facilitated, executed, or encouraged through UNDP's global network generates not only direct development outputs, but also a rich base of collective knowledge. Since 1998, UNDP has been working on ways to tap into this base of experience in order to allow for accelerated lesson sharing and comparative analysis. A cornerstone of this effort was the establishment of thematic practices and the institutionalization of its global knowledge networks. This approach corresponded with the first two Global Cooperation Frameworks (1997–2004), when sub-regional resource facilities (SURFs) were established to provide policy support to country offices. During the decentralization phase of GCF-II and GCF-III (2005–2008), knowledge management (KM) activities were streamlined to coordinate work at the global, regional and local levels and capture the knowledge generated by the country offices, including support for the annual Human Development Report. Despite its strategic importance, however, KM in UNDP for many years was lacking an overarching strategic framework, and instead was mostly implemented through catalytic pilot initiatives[1] which were rarely scaled up due to inconsistent organisational support to embedding KM in UNDP processes and modus operandi. UNDP's approach to Communities of Practice stood out as the primary pillar of its KM work, widely recognized for setting the stage for formalized KM within UN organizations[2].

> UNDP will focus its KM work on understanding what does and does not work in the above areas, collecting, analysing and using evidence from a global and country perspective, and from external and internal experience.

In 2009 UNDP set forth its Knowledge Strategy 2009-2011[3] to harness knowledge in support of its business objectives, putting heavy emphasis on supporting 'just-in-time' peer knowledge sharing by making new investments in people, processes, and technology. The 'people' element consisted of the establishment of a Knowledge Management Group, assembling dedicated staff to manage and facilitate knowledge sharing for the organization and its partners. Training was also conducted in over 60 country offices, promoting the idea of proactive lesson sharing as well as tapping the global UNDP network for answers and support. Processes were altered, allowing individuals to post queries to the global network without having to select a thematic area first (this was seen as necessary given the increasingly 'multi-practice' nature of UNDP interventions). Finally, investments in technology were made, principally in the Teamworks global knowledge networking platform. This platform addressed many of the weaknesses noted in prior UNDP knowledge evaluations, including the establishment of an open archive of prior knowledge exchanges across all thematic networks, an attempt to decrease 'information silos' that had developed as a side effect of the practice architecture, and the ability for individuals to originate complex knowledge sharing exercises by opening new consultation spaces.

Engagement and satisfaction numbers show that there has been a widespread, if uneven, uptake of the new processes and tools across the UNDP network, and that staff report that the knowledge strategy investments have had a generally favourable impact on getting their work done[4]. The Knowledge Strategy played a key role in both internal and external KM, strengthening the role of individual staff as knowledge workers, as well as UNDP's profile as lead knowledge organization within the wider development community that is connecting partners to global knowledge[5].

While the efforts undertaken have given staff more control over asking and solving their own knowledge queries, it did not put heavy emphasis on incentivizing staff to follow a standard model for doing their knowledge work, and as a result the potential for 'reuse' of knowledge that is flowing through UNDP has been difficult to consistently realize.

With a new UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 put in place, the need arises to establish a strategic KM framework that directly contributes to the Strategic Plan's results, and that aligns with the structural and thematic adjustments proposed as part of the plan's implementation. This document sets out to establish such a KM framework, drawing from lessons from the last strategy implementation as well as feedback from staff, clients and formal evaluations.

Knowledge Management that serves the Strategic Plan

The **purpose of this document is to formulate a Knowledge Management Strategy Framework that directly serves the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017**. The Strategic Plan re-aligns UNDP's attention on a set of priority areas around Sustainable Development Pathways, Inclusive and Effective Democratic Governance and Resilience. Focusing its attention on these redesigned areas of development work will allow UNDP to allocate its resources more effectively, position itself more distinctively as a thought leader in the global development debate, and increase its impact on development results. For UNDP's KM Strategy Framework this means that any knowledge management activity in UNDP has to serve these three areas of development work, either directly though externally oriented evidence collection, analysis, knowledge capture, generation and exchange initiatives and engagement in policy debate, or indirectly by improving organizational

effectiveness and efficiency and fostering a culture of learning and exchange.

The **key objective of KM in UNDP** is to drive UNDP's global leadership in achieving (1) inclusive and sustainable growth and development, (2) stronger systems of democratic governance, (3) strengthened institutions to deliver access to basic services, (4) gender inequality and women's empowerment, (5) reduced likelihood of conflict and risk of natural disasters, (6) early recovery and return to sustainable development pathways in post-conflict and post-disaster settings, and (7) development debates and actions that prioritise poverty, inequality and exclusion, formulated in the seven outcomes of the Strategic Plan. To this end, UNDP will focus its KM work on understanding what does and does not work in the above areas, collecting, analysing and using evidence from a global and country perspective, and from external and internal experience.

Triple paralympic medalist Liudmila Vauchok takes part in the MY World survey in Minsk, Belarus. Photo: Alexey Shlyk/UN Belarus.

Successes, Feedback and Lessons Learnt

UNDP's successes in KM

UNDP can build on a number of KM successes since the establishment of the practice architecture in 1999:

1. **Communities of Practices (COPs)** have become a cornerstone of UNDP's global policy and programme functions, connecting practitioners across regions, flattening hierarchies and increasing exchange among staff[6], thus serving as model for partners and growing a strong tier of UNDP staff versed in KM.

2. With **Teamworks** UNDP has created the first and most advanced corporate peer-to-peer platform within the UN, taking knowledge networking across UNDP and partners to the next level.

3. Country office-led efforts such as the **public online consultations and knowledge mobilization** during the Rio Dialogues and Post-2015 consultations positioned UNDP as the go-to partner for citizen consultations, leveraging the organization's years of experience in moderated knowledge mobilizations.

4. **At the regional level specific KM initiatives** such as knowledge systematization exercises, knowledge fairs or national knowledge networking projects like Solutions Exchange have received notable traction with clients. In addition, UNDP Regional Centre and Global Policy Centres have built on various innovative approaches to strengthening knowledge networks of policymakers in support of south-south learning.

On the substantive side, the above KM initiatives, modalities and tools, as well as the stronger approach to KM introduced by the Knowledge Strategy 2009-2011, led to various success that helped UNDP to achieve stronger results and positioned it as a substantive thought leader, such as

- The embedding of social inclusion as a key characteristic of its work on Sustainable Development and Post-2015, as showcased by the inclusive public online consultations championed by UNDP;

- Strong co-leadership in four of the eleven thematic Post-2015 consultations: (a) governance and human rights; (b) environmental sustainability; (c) conflict, violence and disaster; and (d) growth and employment;

- The aggregation of lessons and experiences on MDGs acceleration and scaling up of development solutions in support of MDG achievement, generating notable momentum within the UN for the 2010 High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly;

Incubating youth action in Armenia. Dozens of young people presented with passion their ideas to Kolba Labs, a social innovation lab jointly launched by UNDP and UNICEF to tackle Armenia's most pressing societal challenges. Photo: UNDP Europe & CIS.

- The emergence of a substantive innovation agenda and a growing body of evidence on experimentation, prototyping, social innovation and open governance approaches, enabled in particular through UNDP's community of bloggers in Eastern Europe & CIS;

- The improvement of the cross-practice work in key thematic areas such as attaining the MDGs, promoting a human development approach as well as in the HIV, health and development practice;

- Recognition of the Nairobi Drylands Development Centre by donors as a credible policy and knowledge hub for drylands development, and the establishment of the Rio Centre for Sustainable Development and Global Centre for Public Service Excellence in Singapore as global knowledge and research hubs.

In the roll-out of UNDP's Knowledge Strategy 2009-2011 UNDP has learned a number of lessons from its KM efforts of the last years:

Evaluations and feedback on KM

The **Knowledge Management Survey 2012** showed that areas in which UNDP seems to be most advanced are *"Formal networking"* and *"Leadership behavior".* Users gave lowest scores for the dimensions *"Capturing knowledge"* and *"Learning before, during and after".* With the phase of necessary major technology investments now complete, the survey summary recommends strengthening the KM components *"people"* and *"processes"* to balance those three components more equally. For a new KM framework the survey summary suggest building on the achievements of the previous strategy (e.g. maintaining Teamworks as an important enabler) but putting particular emphasis on KM approaches and initiatives that move beyond information technology. On the processes side,

UNDP would be well advised to place special emphasis on the areas *"Capturing knowledge"* and *"Learning before, during and after".*

The **Global Programme IV Evaluation** highlighted that, as many of UNDP's partner countries have graduated from least developed country (LDC) and low-income status, the services requested of UNDP have changed in nature, requiring more emphasis on partnership and the strategic use of KM. There has been increasing demand for knowledge on innovative approaches and solutions, advisory services and support from country offices. The report made detailed references to the need for greater strategic clarity, the narrowness of the latest knowledge strategy which emphasised connectivity rather than production and collation of knowledge, the need to improve of all aspects of knowledge products, the need to strengthen cross-bureau and cross-regional sharing, as well as users' difficulty adapting to new online systems such as Teamworks and the need for a better integrated user-experience across the multiple necessary ICT systems. The evaluation report concluded that UNDP should ensure that systematic knowledge sharing activities are put in place and their effectiveness is regularly monitored. UNDP should institutionalize knowledge sharing as a key crosscutting dimension of the UNDP programme, provide incentives at different levels of programming; and address constraints that impede knowledge sharing.

The **Multilateral Organization Performance Network's (MOPAN) "Assessment of the Organisational Effectiveness and Reporting on Development Results"** from 2012 reports that *"UNDP's use of performance information to report on results is considered adequate by surveyed stakeholders. The document review rated UNDP weak in this area and noted room for improvement in reporting on the achievement of outcomes, presenting performance*

With Teamworks UNDP has created the first and most advanced corporate peer-to-peer platform within the UN, taking knowledge networking across UNDP and partners to the next level.

information using measurable indicators, reporting on changes to policies or strategies based on performance information, and reporting on how lessons learned and best practices are used to improve programming. UNDP is considered adequate in disseminating lessons learned both within and outside the organisation. Its use of online communities of practice was noted as an effective means of sharing".

The **BDP/BCPR KM Assessment Report from 2010** confirms UNDP's traditionally unwavering commitment to KM, but that the system of capturing and transferring experiential and organizational knowledge needs to be stronger. New formal processes to capture tacit knowledge and make it available need to be introduced. Staff roles should be formally supplemented with 'knowledge citizenship' expectations, where sharing is not a luxury, but an obligation. Strategic direction should be clearer with regard to the knowledge processes and a formal incentives programme should be designed to encourage knowledge sharing.

In addition to evaluations, **UNDP received feedback from a number of partner organizations** on its past KM work. In 2012 UNDP won the *"Pillar of Knowledge"* from the Knowledge Institute in Vienna for its *"cutting edge"* use of new techniques and technologies to tackle vexing challenges common in all large organizations, and called UNDPs social knowledge approach *"the most promising KM initiative within the UN focusing on knowledge networking within a global knowledge partnership."* UNDP has also been invited by organizations including World Vision International, the International Olympic Committee, UNESCO and UNICEF to advise on KM strategy and application of knowledge sharing techniques.

What are UNDP's Knowledge Challenges?

Even though UNDP has been a recognised innovator and leader in knowledge networking and online engagement, challenges to effective KM remain. The evidence and feedback above show that UNDP's KM challenges lie in six distinct areas:

Organizational Learning and Knowledge Capture

a) **There are multiple approaches to capturing, aggregating, sharing lessons within the UNDP network, so it is difficult to reliably find a universal compendium** of UNDP's activities and projects. Knowledge sharing expectations and processes are not systematically embedded in the programme and project cycle to capture lessons and with an aim of reuse, not simply project reporting and closure, and where they are prescribed (e.g. as requirement in the POPP for regular lessons learned logs with mandatory review by Project Boards), compliance is low.

b) **Knowledge sharing is not yet fully institutionalized as a natural cross-functional and cross-practice exercise**, with slightly different KM approaches emerging within individual practices and bureaus. Also, not enough emphasis is put on cross-fertilization between projects and programmes.

c) Codification of knowledge has typically been in the form of formal, lengthy reports and guidance notes for which the impact is unknown. The current **process of knowledge product definition, development, dissemination and measurement** does not yield the quality, reach and impact that is needed for UNDP to be a thought leader in development.

Knowledge Networking

d) Even though Communities of Practices significantly contributed to open sharing across regional silos, flattening hierarchies and increasing knowledge flows among professional peers, the fact that they were directly aligned with thematic business units also nurtured **the emergence of new thematic silos which often prevent cross-practice sharing** and inter-disciplinary work across business units.

e) While UNDP's networking and collaboration platform Teamworks strengthened UNDPs' 'market leadership' position in knowledge networking, **Teamworks still requires improvements with regards to efficiency and usability** on a day to day basis, in particular with regards to user-friendliness, navigation and search based on user needs as it emerges from surveys, evaluations and other feedback.

Measurement and Incentives

f) **There is inconsistent or lacking reward for the sharing of knowledge** and for support to colleagues in other units, due to funding dynamics, as well as the decentralized nature of the organization structures. Therefore **staff lacks incentives and time to engage in knowledge sharing and learning** beyond the bounds of their immediate deliverables. In addition, there might be actual institutional dis-incentives that need to be addressed in order to stimulate knowledge sharing and collaboration, such as the use of information monopolies as an instrument for personal advancement, and the prevalence of internal hierarchies and political sensitivities make sharing difficult within organizational boundaries.

g) **Metrics and indicators for successful KM are underdeveloped**, and the potential of evidence-based statistics, including social network analysis, for incentives, business intelligence and data-driven decision making are underutilized. Indicators for measuring the policy impact of knowledge products in a systematic way are also underdeveloped.

Openness and public engagement

h) Internal hierarchies and political sensitivities **favor private knowledge sharing, with public sharing limited to highly processed knowledge products. This makes open public sharing of challenges, shortcomings and lessons outside organizational boundaries difficult and 'against the culture'.** Despite the push for bottom-up knowledge sharing under the prior knowledge strategies, some staff members still report that local matters often trump wider sharing and consultation.

i) **UNDP needs to do more to tap the goodwill knowledge value of its wider audiences and beneficiaries**, in order create ongoing feedback loops that

Young participant at the Post-2015 Forum on Education under the theme: "Making education relevant to workplace for Youth in Jordan". – Amman, February 2013. Photo: UNESCO Jordan.

> Knowledge is both a key output that UNDP delivers to its clients, as well as a key resource that the organization needs in order to deliver its results

would systematically inject UNDP's knowledge into policy discourse, and inform UNDP's programmes and project design and implementation. Traditional corporate focus of knowledge sharing tends to be on ensuring that traditional donors and direct project clients are included in knowledge exchanges, while engagement with the wider academic, and policy communities, emerging and non-traditional donors, civil society and the general public has not been systematized.

Talent Management

j) The potential of KM for **identification and management of talent and expertise** is underutilized, and existing mechanisms such UNDP's rosters lack incentives for widespread accessibility and use. Even though KM is listed among the key responsibilities of UNDP staff, it is not consistently emphasized in HR processes as a core criterion for recruitment, staff development or performance evaluation. In addition, UNDP does not analyze what knowledge it needs, and what expertise it therefore needs to develop internally, or import through recruitment.

What is Knowledge Management for UNDP?

For the purpose of this strategic framework, **UNDP defines KM as the summary of all measures designed to address its knowledge-related challenges**. It recognizes that knowledge is both a key output that it delivers to its clients, as well as a key resource that the organization needs in order to deliver its results. KM means using the resource 'knowledge' more effectively to improve the way UNDP does business and to achieve greater impact in its development outcomes as formulated in UNDP's Strategic Plan.

External versus internal knowledge work

In doing so UNDP's KM covers both **external KM for and with partners and clients** to draw on external knowledge, expand our perspective beyond UNDP's internal view, build our partners' capacity and respond to client demand for KM advisory and policy services, as well as **internal KM to support the organization's** flow of substantive expertise and operational efficiency. UNDP's KM framework suggests that facilitating and resourcing both aspects in appropriate measure is key for UNDP to be a leading knowledge organization:

External

- KM for South-South Cooperation and Effective Development Cooperation

- Building of an external evidence base with partners on policies and solutions and active participation in and shaping of development solutions and discourse

- KM advisory and support services to and capacity building of partners and clients

Internal

- Improved quality and efficiency of thematic and operational work of staff, consultants, and project teams

- Getting the greatest possible advantage of existing knowledge resources available through UNDP's global network

- Evidence and lessons for learning, reporting, results-based management and communication

Learning versus knowledge sharing

The KM Strategy Framework acknowledges that both learning and sharing are key elements of the experiential learning cycle[7] in

energy
water
environmental sustainability
health
education
food security
conflict and fragility
governance
growth and employment
inequalities
population dynamics
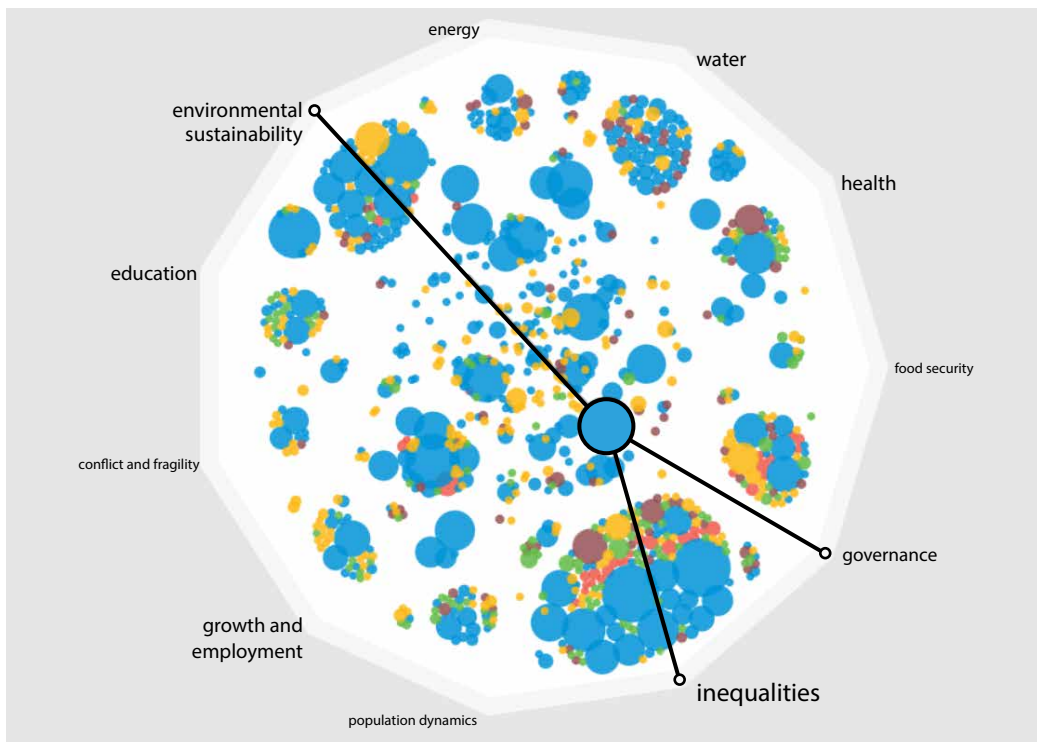
Data from the World We Want online consultations, aimed at gathering the priorities of people from every corner of the world and help build a collective vision to be used directly by the UN and world leaders to plan a new development agenda in 2015.

which we make an experience, reflect on it, learn from it through conceptualization and apply what we have learned, at which point the cycle starts again with a new experience. Knowledge creation and learning is the ultimate objective of UNDP's knowledge work in its new priority areas. This needs to be grounded in evidence-driven learning, based on rigorous data collection and analysis of experiences, in systematic testing and evaluation of applied conceptualized approaches, and therefore on robust evidence of what works and what does not work. Knowledge sharing plays a key role both as part of the reflection process in which we openly share, discuss and try to make sense of what we observe, which triggers insight and learning and supports the conceptualization process, as well as after the conceptualization stage when we reach out with our evidence and results to help others apply what we have

learned. **Learning and sharing thus depend on each other as complementary and mutually re-enforcing elements of a virtuous learning cycle** which underpins evidence collection, reflection, knowledge generation, dissemination and use, all the while sharing what was learned and learning from what is shared.

Guiding Principles

In addressing its KM challenges, UNDP is building on principles derived from common KM practice in the field of KM for development that will guide its KM approach:

1. Most of UNDP's knowledge is tacit, stored in the minds of its employees and consultants. Only a part of this tacit knowledge can be documented and made available in information systems. Therefore, **KM**

KM always needs to be people-centered rather than document-centered

Photo contest - Human Rights Day Celebration in Armenia. Winning photo - 3rd prize, Age category 15-19, "We have a right to know". Photo: Arshak Khudaverdya/UN Armenia.

always needs to be **people-centered rather than document-centered**, with processes and technology being supportive functions[8].

2. Knowledge is most effectively assimilated when transferred **within a specific context[9]**, where the situational variables that were present when a lesson was learned are known, and the context in which certain knowledge might be valuable is clear. Much like the science of organ transplantation, the key factors for success in 'knowledge transplantation' are data-driven screening and matching,

and aggressive preparation of the target environment.

3. Knowledge is most effectively disseminated **when there is an audience that is listening[10]**, that gives the knowledge producer an idea how the knowledge can have a positive impact, and that gives the producer tangible recognition for his/her act of sharing.

4. In organizations that don't offer standardized products, but rather customized and innovative services, knowledge is most effectively applied when an **experience can be attributed to the person**

who made the experience, and where opportunities are available for follow-up discourse and adaptation of the experience to a given problem[11]. This is known as the personalization approach to KM, versus a codification approach.

5. The Cynefin framework[12] provides a typology of four different contexts in which different knowledge solutions might apply: **Simple**, in which the relationship between cause and effect is obvious to all; **Complicated**, in which the relationship between cause and effect requires analysis or expert knowledge; **Complex**, in which the relationship between cause and effect can only be perceived in retrospect; and **Chaotic**, in which there is no discernible relationship between cause and effect. When developing KM solutions it is crucial to understand the context we are in, as different KM tools only work in specific domains above.

6. **KM is not for the organization only**. The public is the ultimate priority and target of any public organization. In addition, UNDP is one player among many from which it can learn in an increasingly complex development arena. There is significant untapped scope for engaging external expert communities and the global public in development solutions, learning from and sharing UNDP's knowledge with different stakeholders.

7. For an organization that must drive complex transformative changes in developing contexts, KM cannot be seen as an additional activity carried out on top of managing development projects, but rather as **an activity that is the core value proposition for the organization**, and thus as a key contribution to programme delivery, not a stand-alone activity[13]. Donors and partners are looking for UNDP's leadership in tackling difficult challenges requiring a high level of integrated thinking and analysis. Such results are difficult to achieve without high frequency knowledge exchanges between a wide network of actors.

8. While there are valid management rationales for top-down KM initiatives, there will be no value of KM for management (e.g. for RBM or donor reporting) if there is not first a value of KM for practitioners, who make experiences and hold tacit knowledge, and who need a rationale to capture and share this knowledge that answers their question **"What is in it for me?"[14]**.

9. **There is no "one size fits all" approach to KM[15]**. KM adds value to different groups in the organization in different ways. Therefore, different KM initiatives need to be designed targeting specific audiences in the organization for specific aspects of KM.

Knowledge Management Priorities for 2014-2017

The Strategic Plan 2014-2017 envisions UNDP to be *"a more **knowledge-driven, innovative** and **open** institution"* (page 4) and to achieve *"greater organizational **openness**, **agility** and **adaptability** to harness knowledge, solutions and expertise"* (page 42). This vision builds the overarching frame to formulate UNDP's KM priorities going forward.

More specifically, the Strategic Plan sets out to *"draw on knowledge and expertise gained in all development settings, thus, able to grasp and respond flexibly to common concerns and important differences between countries and regions"* (page 15). It demands the *"utilization of South-South and triangular cooperation, in particular, to share knowledge on policy and*

There is significant untapped scope for engaging external expert communities and the global public in development solutions.

UNDP will embed the principle of "learning before, during and after" in programme and project cycles

institutional issues" (page 19), emphasizing that UNDP's *"role will be that of a knowledge broker, builder of capacities and facilitator of exchanges driven primarily by programme countries themselves, working with other interested stakeholders."* (page 26)

UNDP intends to *"encourage the [UN development] system to reflect regularly on critical global and regional development issues",* suggesting that *"'quick wins' within 9-18 months could be targeted at … practical actions to improve knowledge sharing"* (page 30).

Regarding organizational learning, the Strategic Plan describes an end state in which *"knowledge and lessons learned will be readily accessible to country offices to support high quality project design and inform policy advice"* (page 43) and UNDP will *"leverage its extensive knowledge of the similarities and differences between countries at different stages of development, and translate that into evidence-based insights for effective, adaptable development solutions. We will introduce systems, from the project level up, to entrench evaluation, learning and knowledge management more strongly in the organization"* (page 45).

The Strategic Plan 2014-2017 Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) makes explicit references to knowledge-focused results. Output 7.7 of the Outcome *"Development debates and actions at all levels prioritise poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles"* is set to put *"Mechanisms in place to generate and share knowledge about development solutions",* and Results Statement 3 for 'Improved accountability of results' demands that *"Knowledge management is institutionalized and learning is made part of its performance culture."*

Achieving this overarching vision as well as addressing the KM challenges identified

earlier will require strengthening UNDP's KM practices overall. However, in times of limited financial and human resources, UNDP will make a special effort to identify those key priority areas in KM practice that are most suited to address its specific challenges and achieve its strategic corporate objectives.

Following the lessons and feedback from internal and external stakeholders of the last years as well as consultations in preparation to developing this framework, and following the priorities of the Strategic Plan, KICG proposes to prioritize and invest in the following six KM focus areas to strengthen UNDP's role as knowledge broker, builder of capacities and facilitator of exchanges in KM for development practice:

I.   Organizational Learning and Knowledge Capture

II. Knowledge networking

III. Openness and public engagement

IV. South-South Cooperation and External Client-Services

V. Measurement and incentives

VI. Talent management

I. Organizational Learning and Knowledge Capture

A. **Knowledge generation in UNDP's new areas of development work**

In order to be a thought leader in development, UNDP will need to lead generation of knowledge and solutions in its newly identified thematic priority areas. The breeding ground for new development solutions and knowledge will be UNDP's newly formed Development Solutions Teams (DST) assembled for periods of times around distinct priority areas (e.g. around extractive industries, sustainable

economies, or urbanization). DSTs will conduct needs/gaps analyses on what specific knowledge is needed in the global development marketplace within their priority area, identify key stakeholders, partners and forums to engage with that produce such knowledge, such as think tanks, international organizations, NGOs and existing thematic networks, and conceptualize solutions as part of a reflective, consultative process that emphasizes knowledge from outside UNDP over internal knowledge from its projects and programmes. The DSTs, in close cooperation with country offices, will serve as UNDP's "knowledge-seeking eye" looking into countries and partners. To this end, UNDP will develop a methodology that will allow DSTs to effectively scan, analyze and engage with the development marketplace and devise steps to establish 'knowledge production plans' addressing knowledge gaps in priority areas identified this way. These knowledge production plans will link directly to outcomes formulated in UNDP's Strategic plan and serve as key contributor to their achievement, while policy advisors will play a key role in seeking external knowledge and driving evidence-based learning and knowledge generation as part of implementing them.

➡ *Proposed Project 1: "Knowledge production plans for DSTs"*

B. **Learning before, during and after**

UNDP will embed the principle of "learning before, during and after" in programme and project cycles so the organization consistently looks into past experiences – including both success and failures – and applies lessons learned from similar projects at inception stage. UNDP will put systems – including but not limited to a searchable lessons learned repository – in place and link them to each other to ensure that throughout their life cycle, projects will systematically capture, codify and disseminate experiences and lessons to inject them back into the programming and project processes[16]. In doing so, UNDP will analyze existing policies and reasons for non-compliance, draw on experiences of various UNDP offices with proven tools such as Evaluation Scans, Peer Assists, Appreciative Inquiry, After Action Reviews (AAR), Knowledge Systematization, Knowledge Fairs and Exit Interviews, and scale up their application throughout the organization globally. An internal questions & answers market will serve as a supply mechanism for a lessons learned repository to extract and consolidate learning points from staff and clients. UNDP will also make a distinct effort to link evaluation with KM and learning, thereby improving of the organizational capacity to learn and use lessons from evaluations for future programming.
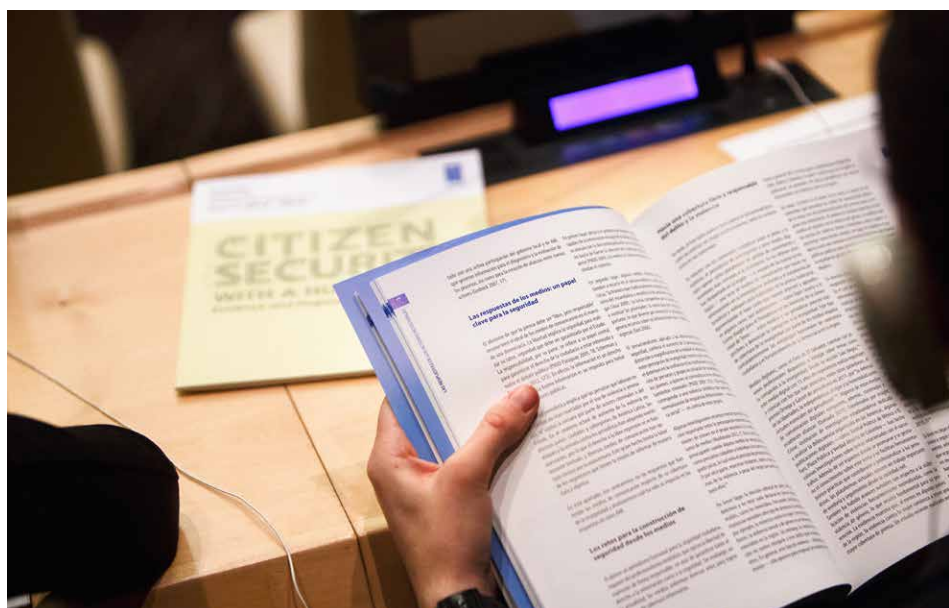
Knowledge Products: Launch of the 2013 Latin America Human Development Report, November 2013, ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations, New York, NY. Photo: Fabrice Grover / UNDP.

➡ *Potential Project 2: "Lessons Learned Database"*

➡ Potential Project 3: "Lessons Learned Campaigns"

C. **Revising the approach to Knowledge Product development**

UNDP will revise the process of planning, developing, and disseminating knowledge products (UNDP's "Wikipedia" function) in a way that makes them more easily accessible, more relevant to clients' needs, more accountable towards the community they seek to engage, more flexible and timely in their development and format, more tailored to highly efficient online distribution and measurement opportunities, and more measurable in their quality and impact. This would require KM components being injected and staff committing to mutually beneficial behavior in all phases of the production of a knowledge product, ensuring consistency and relevance to both internal and external audiences. For this purpose UNDP will conduct a review of the Quality Assurance Process (QAP) and typology for knowledge products, and will also make use of new technologies and innovative practices such as 'book sprints' and online crowdsourcing of publications. Investments in improving existing IT infrastructure for KM will establish mechanisms that allow for systematic presentation and dissemination of UNDP's knowledge products and lessons learned and targeted knowledge campaigns[17] will accompany the release of knowledge products to amplify their reach and impact. Dissemination systems will make it clearer to users which knowledge content is vetted and quality-assured by advisors, compared to what is shared informally, and establish a feedback loop

with users to assess the value and impact of knowledge products.

➡ *Proposed Project 4: "Revision of K-Products development and dissemination process"*

D. **Sharing across headquarter bureaus, global policy centres, and regions**

UNDP aims at institutionalizing cross-practice and cross-regional knowledge sharing through a combination of regular moderated online events and topic-specific internal knowledge fairs in subjects found in the strategic plan. In addition, the KM framework proposes a crowd-sourced redesign of the Mutual Exchange Initiative championed previously in the Asia-Pacific and Arab States regions, allowing offices to exchange staff members for a certain amount of time. The initiative can encourage in particular staff from different thematic areas to work for a certain time in a topic different from their main subject matter area of expertise, so knowledge sharing becomes fully institutionalized as a natural cross-functional exercise.

➡ *Proposed Project 5: "Organization-wide knowledge mobilization exercises around Strategic Plan outcomes"*

➡ *Proposed Project 6: "Redesign of the Mutual Exchange Initiative"*

II. Knowledge networking

E. **Fostering emerging knowledge mobilization and networking models**

UNDP will solidify its leadership in emerging online knowledge sharing, social collaboration and networking models (UNDP's "Facebook" function), capitalizing on UNDP's competitive advantage with community-created knowledge and networking (Teamworks, Solutions

UNDP will solidify its leadership in emerging online knowledge sharing, social collaboration and networking models

Exchange), as well as on recent experiences with public dialogue and crowd-sourcing initiatives (Rio Dialogues, Post-2015 consultations), to create further opportunities for virtual community engagement and crowd-sourced collaboration. The service offering on knowledge mobilizations and dialogues will be further strengthened as a key selling point for UNDP's role, and both KM and communications teams will work more closely together to promote these projects.

➡ *Proposed Project 7: "Online Dialogues"*

F. **Re-aligning Communities of Practice to the new Strategic Plan**

As UNDP's policy bureaus and thematic practices are transformed by new organizational structure, the existing global practice networks will be realigned to support UNDP's new strategic outcomes. The Framework emphasizes that formal Communities of Practice (COPs) transcending regional, thematic and organizational boundaries are a critical complement to informal social networking, and that successful communities require dedicated facilitation, content curation and quality assurance that need to be adequately resourced. UNDP intends to preserve the successful elements of its decade-long work with COPs, while adjusting their substantive intent along the priorities of UNDP's new Strategic Plan, and opening them up further to external partners. Particular attention will be paid to strengthening an integrated community model that is specifically designed to avoiding the creation of new thematic silos and instead foster and reward engagement with external networks, cross-thematic thinking and inter-disciplinary exchange of peers across teams formed around development solutions.

➡ *Proposed Project 8: "Re-alignment of UNDP's Knowledge Networks"*

G. **Solidifying Teamworks for consistent knowledge networking**

The role of the Teamworks platform is that of an 'operating system' on which various internal and external business applications for KM can be built (online consultations, lessons learned collection, expertise location, training facilitation, etc.). It will be further maintained and improved, focusing on its particular strength in people-centric knowledge flow, social connections and informal knowledge exchange, next to other systems that fill particular KM-related niches in the KM portfolio, such as a much needed central repository of knowledge products, a global service tracker, or internal workflow tools (e.g. for the collection of BTORs). Special attention will be paid to improving Teamworks' user-friendliness and search capability, integrations with other
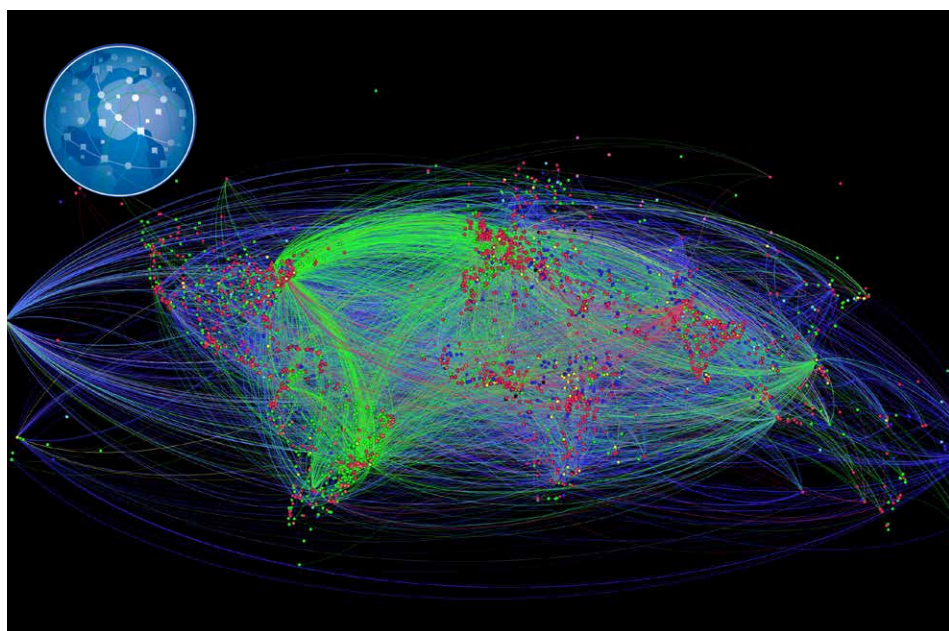
All Teamworks user connections based on location/duty station.

UNDP will establish continuous sharing of work in progress and open reflection on ongoing activities as a key principle of its business

systems in UNDP such as the intranet, the public website or a future corporate planning system, as well as leveraging better the available data within the system to connect users to expertise and relevant content. New platforms and website for specific thematic purposes should wherever possible build on the Teamworks architecture to leverage the synergies of a single UNDP marketplace of development solutions.

➡ *Proposed Project 9: "Revised Teamworks interface for better usability and search"*

### III. Openness and public engagement

H. **Working out loud**

Agility and speed required in responding to emerging development needs depend on the availability of a continuous stream of real-time information and ongoing substantive conversations that can be followed by all. UNDP will establish continuous sharing of work in progress and open reflection on ongoing activities as

a key principle of its business, in thematic policy work and advisory services as well as operational and administrative work. Sharing what we do as we do it, in person as well as online, will be promoted, incentivized, supported with appropriate tools and rewarded as default mode of doing business, with senior management staff leading the way. Working out loud provides great organizational value as well, as it makes it possible to 'rewind' successful initiatives to see how specific sequencing, key decisions, and bottlenecks impacted outcomes. Over time, the growing database of measured engagements will provide an unparalleled research base.

➡ *Proposed Project 10: "Replacing Back-to-Office-Reports with Back-to-office Blogs"*

I. **Sharing knowledge with the public**

UNDP will make strides for greater system-wide openness and transparency that emphasizes public-facing status updates, real-time reporting and lesson sharing, and integrate public knowledge sharing as default mode of operation into the Results Framework. Global transparency mechanisms such as open.undp.org and the new IATI secretariat will play an important role in promoting openness of information towards the public. Existing public and real-time sharing initiatives in the regions will be cultured, exposed to market scrutiny, and mechanisms for rigorous public feedback collection will be introduced to iterate and replicate initiatives that find traction in the marketplace of the international development community. Finally, it intends to institutionalize blogging as strategic tool to share UNDP's development thinking with the public, and receive feedback on a continuous basis.
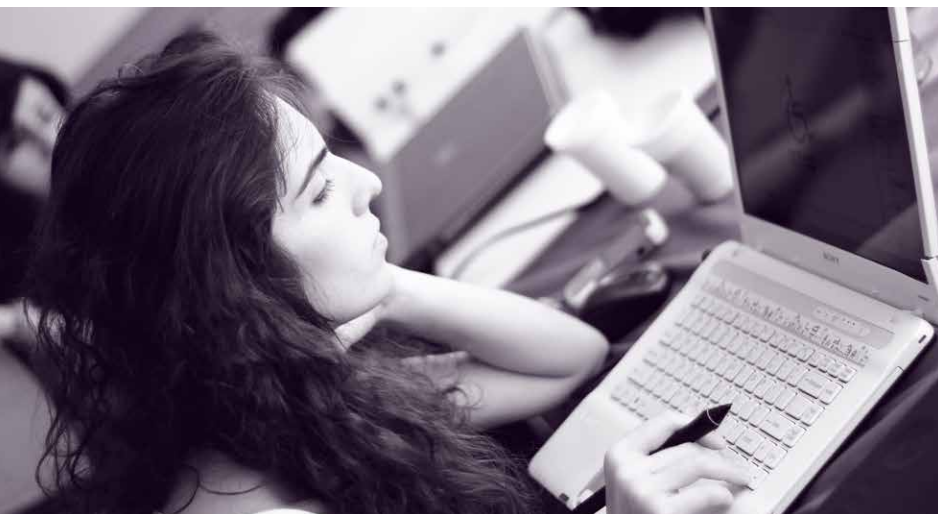
June 2013 HuriLab brought together citizens, geeks, troublemakers, designers, organizers and connectors to further the cause of human rights through the use of technology.
Photo: UNDP Europe & CIS.

➡ *Proposed Project 11: "Public Blogging Initiative"*

J. Engaging in public debate

UNDP aims at injecting itself into the public development conversation by actively reaching out to its audience such as readers of publications, visitors of websites, and participants of events. It will engage with local and regional public intellectuals, research-based institutions, think tanks, policy forums and public media to learn and shape policy debates, emphasizing in particular local adaptation of knowledge and ownership of solutions that are responsive to local needs and support the scaling up of local innovations. UNDP will also initiate regularly thematic discussions in public forums and networks, to trigger debate and inject reflections on policies and solutions. To this UNDP it will map out the landscape of policy forums, think tanks and institutions for each of the Strategic Plan's area of development work and develop clear 'engagement plans' with the goal to increase UNDP's inputs into the development debate.

➡ *Proposed Project 12: "Mapping of public forums and implementation of engagement plans"*

IV. South-South Cooperation and External Client-Services

K. KM for South-South and Effective Development Cooperation

UNDP's external KM efforts will closely align and directly tie in with UNDP's Global Support to South-South and Triangular Cooperation the Strategy which "focuses on evidence-based research and analysis and global knowledge sharing of scalable Southern solutions for sustainable human

development". UNDP, through its Regional and Global Policy Centres and with support of the South-South Task Team in BPPS will – in collaboration with the UN Office of South-South Cooperation – support country offices in responding to demands for knowledge from SSC partner countries through clearly established strategic niches and business models, facilitating South-South learning and developing strategies for engaging regional institutions and intergovernmental forums. This includes creating a global knowledge hub to collect, analyze and interpret experiences from across the world, and interact with relevant online communities of practice and knowledge networks to feed into and benefit from global policy research agendas, as well as encouraging innovation through cross-country partnerships, experimentation and learning to adapt appropriate responses to development challenges[18]. UNDP will also further promote knowledge-sharing as part of the Effective Development Cooperation agenda and as a means to help countries and institutions to learn from each other, to create visibility for their experiences and successes and strengthen them in their role as suppliers of development solutions. UNDP will in particular emphasize the role of its Global Centres of Excellence as knowledge brokers that can connect solution seekers with providers and transmit existing practical knowledge and expertise from practitioners. Proposed Project 13: "Global South-South Knowledge Exchange platform for Scalable Southern Solutions"

➡ *Proposed Project 14: "Regional South-South Knowledge Fairs"*

L. **Knowledge Advisory Services**

UNDP will further sharpen its profile in KM advisory services through its global and regional advisors in order to respond to a growing demand for services for knowledge-related partnerships and the strategic use of KM coming from emerging and developing nations. Country offices capacity to deliver tested and effective knowledge services and citizen engagement will be enhanced. Special emphasis will be put on offering integrated services on knowledge, innovation and capacity development together as a mutually re-enforcing and supporting package, rather than providing these services independently from each other.

How the World Voted
Rankings of priorities (so far)

Priorities

- Better job opportunities
- A good education
- Better healthcare
- Affordable and nutritious food
- Support for people who can't work
- Phone and internet access
- Access to clean water and sanitation
- Reliable energy at home
- Protecting forests, rivers and oceans
- Action taken on climate change
- An honest and responsive government
- Political freedoms
- Protection against crime and violence
- Equality between men and women
- Freedom from discrimination and persecution
- Better transport and roads

What are the global and local priorities? See how the world has voted so far in the MY World global survey for citizens led by the United Nations and partners.

V. Data Analytics, Measurement and Incentives

M. **Data Analytics within an Evidence-based Approach**

In order to foster evidence-driven learning within its new areas of development work, UNDP needs to take full ownership of the collection and analysis of robust data and evidence on UNDP's priority areas from a global and country perspective. To do so, it will strengthen its statistical analysis capacity and proactively harness evidence-based statistics, including social network analysis, for business intelligence and data-driven decision making. This will include data from corporate sources, such as the ROAR, the new Corporate Planning System, HR databases, the Human Development Report, Communities of Practice, knowledge networks and Dialogue platforms, as well as analysis from external sources, such as World Bank's pool of open data, open academic data sources, as well as traditional and social media. UNDP will work closely with UN Global Pulse in identifying opportunities for collaboration in each of UNDP's areas of development work that will create new knowledge and quality-assured insights to drive UNDP's global leadership in development dialogue and debate on sustainable development pathways, democratic governance and resilience.
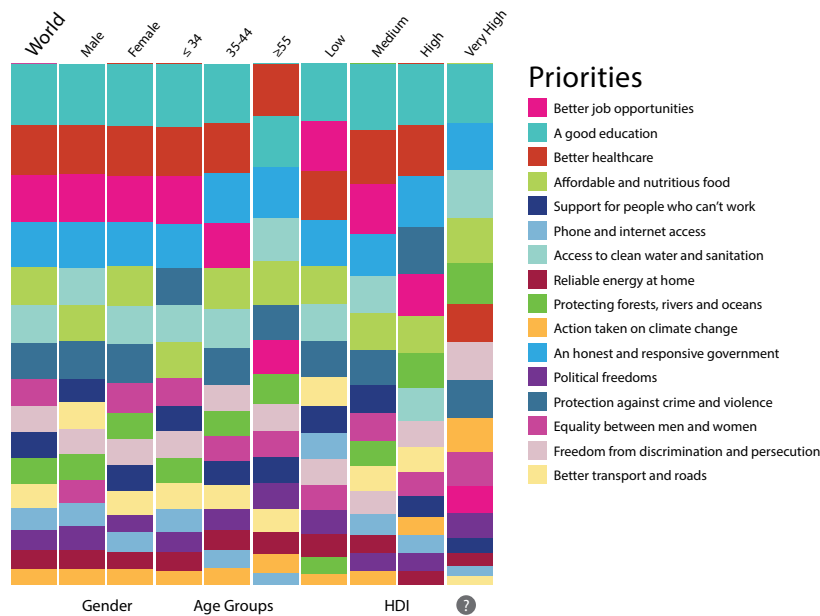
➡ *Potential Project 15: "Data science projects on evidence-based knowledge with UN Global Pulse and other partners"*

N. **Measurement**

UNDP emphasizes linking KM activities directly to measurable results. It will therefore develop a detailed performance indicator framework for KM with metrics

and tracking mechanisms across COs, RCs and HQ that help us measure impact of knowledge generation, knowledge sharing efforts and knowledge products, and integrate KM elements effectively into the Results-Based Management Framework. Sources of metrics for initiatives and knowledge products will come from both inside and outside the organization, including 'alternative metrics' of social media footprints, and tie into UNDP's Balanced Scorecard system. In addition, transparent systems will be put in place to allow for real-time assessment of how effective our knowledge services and products are.

➡ *Proposed Project 16: "KM Performance Indicator Framework"*

O. **Incentives**

Based on its performance indicator framework UNDP will align and boost incentives for business units as well as individual staff at all levels, fostering a culture of open exchange by institutionalizing special recognition for those who make a distinctive contribution to knowledge and innovation in UNDP. The aim is to create healthy competition for quality of knowledge products and services, to reward individuals whose work reflect a culture of ongoing knowledge generation, sharing and working out loud, to give staff a clear understanding of "what's in it for them" when doing KM, and to embed KM metrics into business work plans, projects and programmes. This will include the promotion of strong corporate core values related to knowledge sharing, as well as the definition and assessment of KM deliverables and competencies in the staff performance appraisal system. Given the complex nature and interdependencies of corporate incentives across all

aspects of operations and programming, a discussion on addressing incentives for desired staff behavior cannot be limited to incentives for knowledge generation and sharing alone. UNDP will initiate an internal project spanning across business units to look at current incentive dynamics in UNDP, what incentives do work for different operational and programmatic outcomes, which new ones should be added, and how to complement internal incentives by incentives that can be given to countries and partners. As part of such a corporate exercise UNDP will be looking – among other things – at how to foster a virtuous learning circle at country level, how to promote effective testing of new development approaches across different settings in order to generate quality-assured evidence, and how engage to partners so that they actively participate in the KM processes.

➡ *Proposed Project 17: "Aligning corporate incentives"*

VI. Talent management and KM capacity

P. **Expertise rosters and virtual project teams**

UNDP will leverage KM for identification, development, mobilization, and management of talent and expertise (UNDP's "LinkedIn" function) in ways that allow the organization to draw from a pool of qualified practitioners and experts at any time, mobilize staff members to be available for ad-hoc initiatives and virtual projects, and streamline UNDP's roster functions to provide universal access for business units to UNDP's pool of consultants.

➡ *Proposed Project 18: "Open UNDP-wide Expertise Roster"*

Q. **Developing KM capacity**

UNDP emphasizes linking KM activities directly to measurable results

Scaling Up in Asia-Pacific. The region held 4 Scaling Up Clinics to provide Country Offices with the creative space and seed funding to experiment with new ways to tackle complex development issues. Clinic #2 in Delhi, India. Photo: UNDP India.

UNDP will develop capacity of staff in KM methodologies, communication, storytelling and online networking skills to ensure knowledge sharing, lessons learning and networking activities in projects and programmes yield the desired quality and impact, and seek collaborating with other UN agencies to this extent. The establishment of a clear career track for KM experts throughout all professional staff levels within UNDP will ensure that its KM capacities at HQ, Regional Centres, Country Offices, Liaison Offices, Global Policy Centres, and Project Offices are sustainable and clearly aligned with the demand for KM services at all levels of the organization.

➡ *Proposed Project 19: "Restructured KM team"*

R. **KM for human resources planning**

KM and HR teams will work together to foster the systematic streamlining and application of KM incentives and indicators in HR recruitment, staff development and performance assessment across all staff levels and units, to emphasize the role and responsibilities of each UNDP staff member as a knowledge worker. UNDP will analyze the knowledge base of its staff, identify expertise gaps, and plan staff development and recruitment accordingly.

➡ *Proposed Project 20: "KM in HR processes initiative"*

Organizational Culture and Behaviour Expectations

KM is driven by openness and innovation rather than by how we organize our internal corporate processes and procedures so that "boxes are filled out" in corporate systems. When one treats KM in terms of compliance, it gives the impression that there is a top-down, tiered division of labour, under which only part of the organization is responsible for learning, and another part is responsible for providing information for harvesting and generating knowledge. In reality, however, successful KM depends on every individual embracing their role as a 'knowledge citizens' whose value proposition to the organization is the extent to which s/he is engaged in the entire knowledge cycle: keeping oneself abreast of, process and aggregate evidence, innovations and developments in one's subject matter area, sharing on-going work, questions and learning points with peers and actively injecting oneself in conversations to shape development thinking, policies and solutions. This is explicitly not an internal and compliance-driven process, but requires an open and external view that builds on soft incentives such as mutually beneficial peer support, reciprocity, reputation, career development and individual professional learning in the public realm of the development sector.

The expectation of UNDP is that its staff fully embraces this role of a 'knowledge citizen' and actively seeks opportunities to increase UNDP's body of knowledge and foster, rather than inhibit, the free flow of information and knowledge across business units, locations and functional positions within the organogram. Concretely, this means among other things that

- Programme staff actively seek out knowledge, innovations and lessons from outside the organization and find ways to incorporate them into UNDP programming and project proposals;

- Policy staff proactively vet ideas and trajectory of policies and knowledge products with the development community outside UNDP to identify knowledge gaps and needs that UNDP is able to respond to;

- Advisors at all levels proactively and regularly inject themselves in discussions on internal and external forums and networks to drive thought leadership;

- Management in Country Offices actively encourages and releases staff to support peer support requests from staff in other Country Offices;

- Project managers regard the capture, analysis and sharing of lessons learned as key deliverable of their projects.

Operational Structure and Implementation by Business Units

The UNDP Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 dictates that the organization shift from a practice-based architecture to a more fluid issues-based approach and the deployment of KM specialists will need to adapt in response. Focusing on the above KM priorities during 2014-2017 will require re-imagining the structure and resourcing of knowledge services in UNDP in a way that maintains high-quality and dependable KM support to UNDP's practices, projects and programmes, but is better able to adapt to the emerging structure and issues-based delivery model of advisory services. The Knowledge, Innovation and Capacity Group (KICG) will lead UNDP's work in knowledge management, working

KM depends on every individual embracing their role as a 'knowledge citizen'

jointly with various business units on the implementation of specific initiatives of the KM Strategy Framework, while aligning its work and staff structure with the requirements of the Strategic Plan. Following this framework document as well as the results of UNDP's institutional review, KICG will present a proposal for a realigned organizational structure for UNDP's KM staff functions.

Apart from the dedicated role of the KICG, it is crucial to note that KM is a shared task across UNDP offices. HQ Policy Advisors, Regional Service Centres and Global Policy Centres will be accountable for collecting and developing thematic knowledge, as well as promoting south-south knowledge sharing and transfers. Similarly, Regional Bureaus will have a mandate to translate UNDP's knowledge agenda into Regional Programmes and work plans and ensure that the work of Country Offices is aligned with the knowledge agenda. A results framework and work plan will be developed for this framework which will specify the details of the strategy implementation and assign clear tasks to UNDP business owners for the listed KM priorities above.

Key Risks

- A potential difficulty in changing norms and practices could hamper uptake ofconsistent KM and knowledge sharing processes. This includes maintaining focus and continuity for new ways of working and for supporting knowledge sharing across teams and throughout project/programme cycles, and encouraging consistency across bureaus, regions, and issue areas.

- An organizational culture that has an uneven acceptance and differing definitions of transparency, openness, risk-taking and competitive entrepreneurial incentives.

- A potential discrepancy between expectations and commitments from evaluations and management mandates on one side, and allocation of limited resources to fulfill these commitments and mandates on the other. Achieving all objectives that KM in UNDP is mandated to pursue without prioritization might require more human and financial resources than the organization is able to allocate, resulting in uneven achievement of results.

- The decentralized structure of UNDP offices globally is a great asset when it comes to innovation and new service development, but it might pose a challenge to mainstreaming new standard KM-related policies, procedures and incentives equally across bureaus and regions.

- Unclear definition of mandates for external KM for partners and clients in context of external service delivery, policy advice and partnerships for effective development cooperation on one side, and internal KM for UNDP business units, effective processes and organizational learning on the other.

- The ability of offices across UNDP, at HQ, region and country levels, to keep pace with the scale of technology and social media developments that support modern good practices in effective KM, as well as their ability to train, attract and retain highly qualified staff and fund KM functions.

- The ability of UNDP to make sufficient investments in providing staff with IT tools that are user-friendly and responsive to user needs, and ensure their ongoing maintenance and improvement in adaptation to ongoing technological evolution.

ENDNOTES

1. A Strategic KM Road Map was brought forward in 2004 (https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bdp/kmarchive/Master-Knowledge-Sharing-Intranet/KS%20Resources/KM%20Roadmap%20report%20-%20April%202004.doc), and again in revised form in 2007, but did not receive sufficient funding to do much else but carry on the existing knowledge networks.

2. As showcased by the KM4Dev Journal Article "The knowledge sharing approach of United Nations Development Programme", http://journal.km4dev.org/index.php/km4dj/article/viewFile/21/17

3. https://undp.unteamworks.org/node/44690

4. In the KM and Teamworks Survey 2012 84% of users found Teamworks beneficial for UNDP's business, and 70% found it beneficial for their personal work. By end of 2011 all of BDP's and BCPR's global knowledge networks have been fully migrated into Teamworks. 86,740 files, 7,721 blog posts, 5,282 discussions, 26,172 Status updates and 10,432 bookmarks (as of 7/2013) shared by users within UNDP's Teamworks domain show that this approach to knowledge sharing experienced notable uptake beyond traditional email-based networks.

5. Internally by boosting informal peer-to-peer exchange as evidenced above, and externally by breaking new ground in knowledge networking and mobilization through its Rio Dialogues, Post-2015 consultations and similar initiatives.

6. Before the establishment of the knowledge networks in 1999, it was still frequent practice in UNDP that every email being sent outside a bureau had to be signed off by supervisors. The COPs drove a fundamental culture change towards a standard of knowledge sharing across all staff levels that we benefit from and take for granted today. In UNDP's Products and Services Survey (PSS) the knowledge networks have consistently been rated highly, with 88% of staff members stating that participation in a practice or other network benefited their office, and 77% noting that participation benefited their own professional development (from PSS 2007, the last year this question was asked).

7. Kolb D. A. (1984) Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development

8. NHS National Library for Health (2005): "ABC of Knowledge Management", page 8

9. Murali Raman (2009): "Applied Knowledge Management in an Institutional Context"; Knowledge Management & E-Learning: An International Journal, Vol.1, No.2

10. Besser 2.0: "Enterprise 2.0 Knowledge management: A Revolution of Knowledge in Three Parts", http://www.slideshare.net/TSystemsMMS/enterprise-20-knowledge-management-the-wikipedia-myth-1135966

11. Hansen, Nohira and Tierney (1999): "What's Your Strategy for Managing Knowledge"; Harvard Business Review

12. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cynefin

13. NHS National Library for Health (2005): "ABC of Knowledge Management", page 55

14. Scott Alexander Krebs (2009). "What's in it for me?: Employee knowledge sharing on knowledge management systems : normative and social exchange perspectives"; School of Psychology, University of Queensland.

15. Franken, Braganza (2006): "Organisational forms and knowledge management: one size fits all?"; International Journal of Knowledge Management Studies 2006 - Vol. 1, No.1/2 pp.18-37

16. E.g. UNDP's new project quality assurance will ensure that lessons learned and past evaluation are taken into consideration when developing a new project, and Project Appraisal Committees (PACs) will consider KM as a key criterion to approve new initiatives.

17   This will include communication toolkits for staff on specific products, e-discussions on internal and external networks, engagement on social media and outreach through blogs, websites and newsletters.

18   See Concept Note "UNDP's Global Support to South-South and Triangular Cooperation"

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