United Nations Children's Fund
Regional Office for South Asia

Report of
Information and Knowledge Management
UNICEF ROSA
April 2008

Learning from KM Experiences

Case studies on KM initiatives
in UNICEF South Asia, UN Regional Offices and
Selected Agencies

Possible Scenarios of
Ways Forward for UNICEF ROSA

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Learning from Knowledge Management Experiences

Case Studies of Knowledge Management Initiatives in UN Agencies
Possible Scenarios and Ways Forward for UNICEF ROSA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Knowledge management in its many forms can be used to expedite and improve the way organisations communicate and transfer knowledge both internally and externally. Organisations worldwide - within the UN system and globally - are at a crossroads: they have started using some of the more obvious features of knowledge management but are not yet taking maximum advantage of what new knowledge management systems and technologies have to offer in terms of collecting information and connecting people. To do so will require that they decide on both the strategic knowledge management areas their organisations need to focus on, and how much effort, time and financial resources they are willing to invest.

UNICEF's Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) is at such a point. ROSA still uses many of the traditional methods of storing and sharing information (traditional libraries, printed reports, etc.) while also making use of many recent innovations such as e-mail, web based materials, electronic databases, and others. How can ROSA strengthen its approach to knowledge and information management in order to generate better results and become the knowledge management hub and key source of reference for information on children's issues in South Asia?

To answer this question it was instructive to learn how similar organisations use knowledge management and what the UNICEF South Asia Country Offices and the ROSA staff perceive are their particular knowledge management needs. This report looks at case studies of how over 20 global, regional and country-level organisations within the broader UN family implement knowledge management. Each organisation deploys knowledge management in its own unique way; to date no one strategy has been universally adopted or accepted. Many of the organisations surveyed reported that their knowledge management initiatives started as part of their communication efforts, or as part of planning, monitoring and evaluation efforts, and to a lesser extent from their documentation centres. While global agencies seem to have consolidated knowledge management functions into a separate entity, at the regional and country level knowledge management is still distributed over several areas, with each contributing some part to the whole. The lessons learnt and the experiences gathered from this survey are instructive for ROSA and are discussed.

The report summarises the information gleaned from a survey of UNICEF South Asia staff, in both the regional and country offices. Most staff are already conversant in the more obvious aspects of knowledge management but are currently thwarted by systems that promise much but deliver little, usually because they have been implemented only partially. Traditional channels of communication function in a segmented and hierarchical fashion that no longer matches available new technologies. UNICEF South Asia Country Offices in particular reported that they would welcome any enhanced knowledge sharing and additional tools that could facilitate more effective and efficient compilation and dissemination of information both between and among country offices and with their regional office.

The report's final section makes specific suggestions for enhancing knowledge collection and dissemination within UNICEF ROSA. Improved functionality of the existing regional Intranet is a major such case in point; another might be participating in UN regional knowledge management initiatives. Other specific examples are also discussed.

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List of acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIMS	Agricultural Information Management Standards
APAIC	Asia and Pacific ATS Information Centre
APO	Assistant Programme Officer
ATS	Amphetamine Type Stimulants
AUSAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CEE/CIS	Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
CO	Country Office
COAR	Country Office Annual Report
CoP	Community of Practice
CoP-MfDR	Community of Practice on Management for Development Results
CPD	County Programme Document
DPP	Division of Public Policy
EAPRO	UNICEF East Asia Pacific Regional Office
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
EPO	Education Project Officer
ESARO	Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HIV-AIDS	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus & Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
HR	Human Resource
HQ	Headquarters
ICO	India Country Office
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IKM	Information and Knowledge Management
IM	Information Management
IMARK	Information Management Resource Kit
IRC	Information Resource Centre
IT	Information Technology
ITO	Information Technology Officer
JPO	Junior Programme Officer
KCCI	Knowledge Community on Children in India
KM	Knowledge Management
KM4Dev	Knowledge Management for Development
KMOC	Knowledge Management for Organisational Capacity
LAC	Latin America and Carribbean
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDGNet	Millenium Development Network
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA RO	Middle East and North Africa Regional Office
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MTSP	Medium-Term Strategic Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PER	Performance Evaluation Review
PKN	Programme Knowledge Network
PME	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
RCB	Regional Centre in Bangkok

RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
RMT	Regional Management Team of UNICEF
RO	Regional Office
ROMP	Regional Office Management Plan
ROSA	Regional Office for South Asia
RSS	Really Simple Syndication
SA	South Asia
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SPO	Senior Programme Officer
SURF	Sub-Regional Resource Facility
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
TACRO	The Americas and Caribbean Regional Office
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNEDAP	United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia Pacific
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCAP	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNIS	UN Information Service
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WAICENT	World Agricultural Information Centre
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

SECTION I
INTRODUCTION
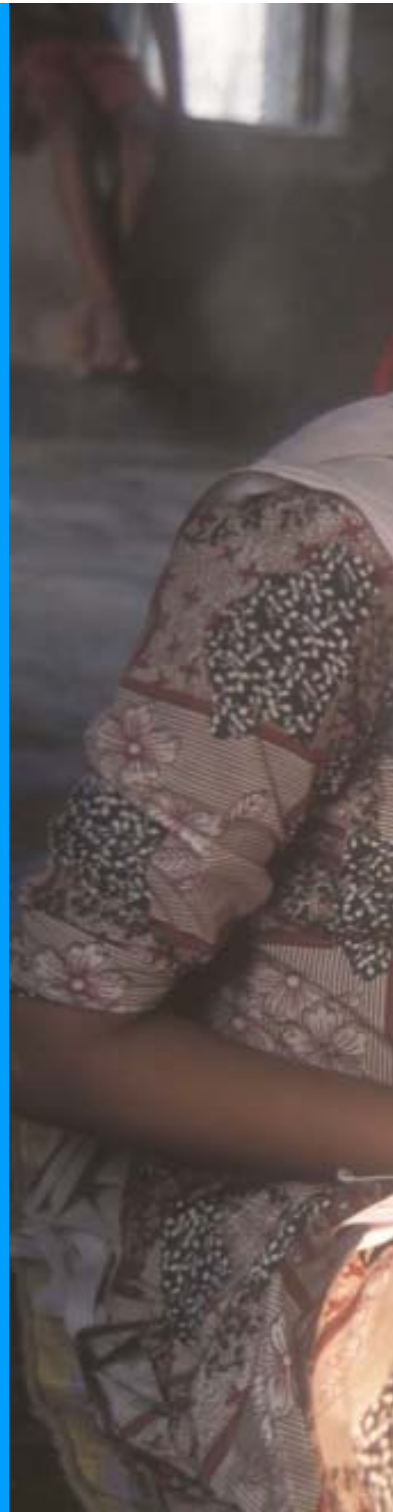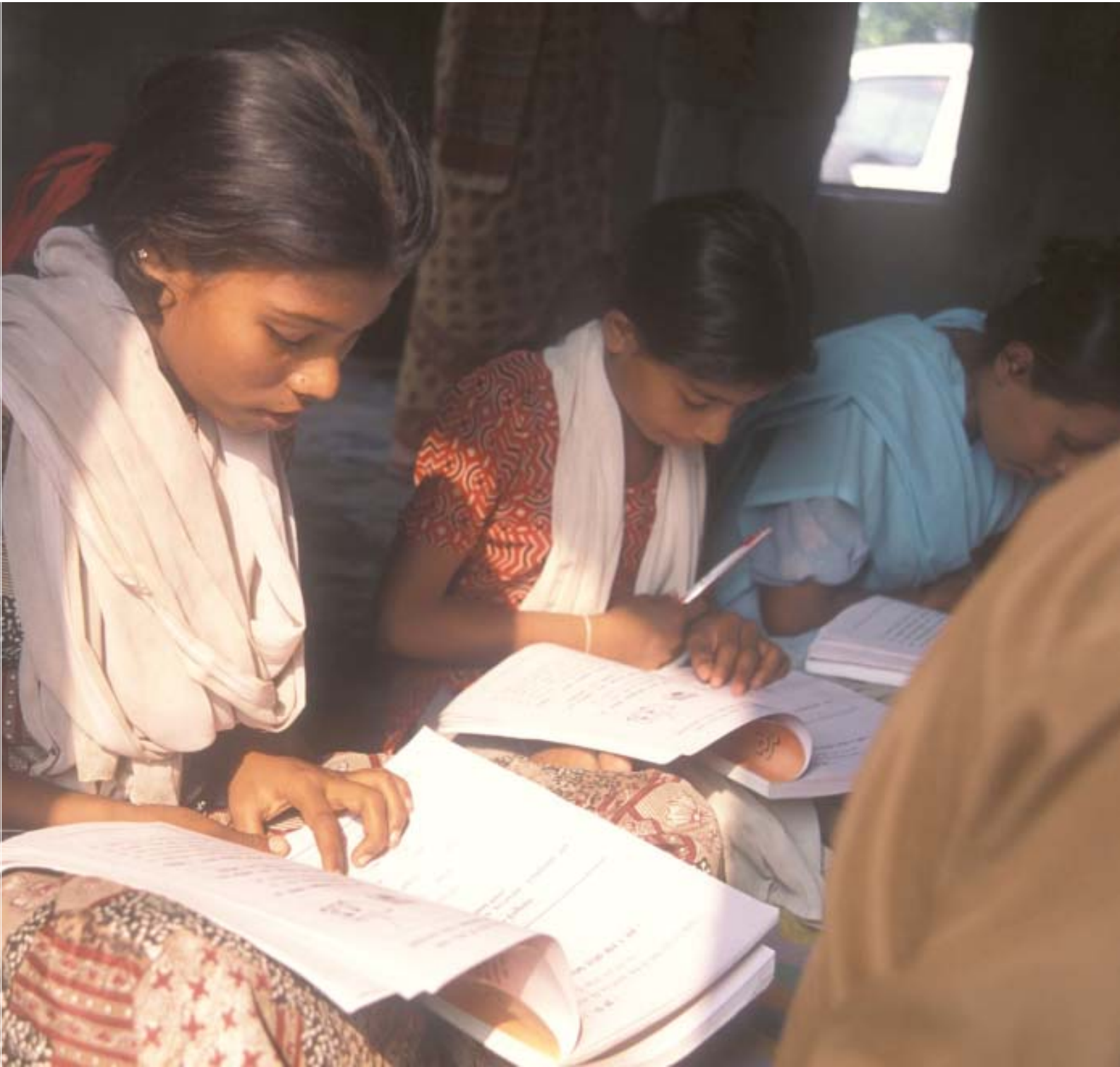
Organisations worldwide are making fundamental changes in their existing knowledge management (KM) systems. The UN, a knowledge-based, knowledge-gathering and knowledge-disseminating organisation, is in the process of changing to ensure that the full potential of the new tools of knowledge management are harnessed to assist countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Developments in information systems and communication technologies that have occurred over the past ten to fifteen years have completely revolutionised the way information is collected, retrieved and exchanged. Organisations worldwide are making fundamental changes in their existing knowledge management (KM) systems to take advantage of these developments. The UN, a knowledge-based, knowledge-gathering and knowledge-disseminating organisation, is in the process of changing to ensure that the full potential of the new tools of knowledge management is harnessed to assist countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Specific changes are also taking place within UNICEF to make certain that it keeps pace with this global movement. Most recently, UNICEF's organisational review identified that it needs to create and sustain a global knowledge leadership network to help make available the best solutions for children everywhere. UNICEF will continue to invest in research that will strengthen its independent voice, enable it to convene partners and continue to help it shape the future agenda for children. An enhanced capacity for data collection, analysis, monitoring and reporting is essential if UNICEF is to maintain its key role in evidence-based decision-making and advocacy for children.[1]

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The present report aims to identify concrete ways forward to assist the Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA) in maintaining and enhancing its position as a valuable repository for specialised information on children in the different countries of South Asia. After the Introduction, the report is divided into three main parts. In an attempt to learn from the experiences of other organisations, the first part consists of case studies from over 20 global, regional and country level offices within the broader UN family showing how they have deployed and are in the processing of deploying KM technologies and systems. The second part describes a survey of the KM needs of UNICEF in South Asia. The needs assessment was an attempt to learn directly from users, and was carried out by directly questioning South Asia staff in both the regional offices (ROs) and country offices (COs). The third section takes the information gathered in the first two parts and proposes some options for ways forward, suggesting what can be done at the level of strategy as well as actual implementation.

Knowledge management: an ambiguous term in an emerging field

What is knowledge management and why is it important? What does knowledge management mean for the United Nations? Although even practitioners have not agreed on a single definition of what knowledge management is, more and more organisations in the public, private and non-profit sectors are demonstrating an increased interest in the topic. The term is used loosely to refer to a broad collection of organisational practices and approaches related to generating, capturing and disseminating know-how and other content relevant to the organisation's business.[2] KM in its broadest sense also encompasses 'tacit knowledge', the undocumented knowledge that is part of staff experience. Some practitioners prefer to speak of 'knowledge-sharing', thereby stressing the connections among people over collecting information. Overall, regardless of the term being used, KM is increasingly seen - not merely as the latest management fashion - but as a way of understanding and exploiting knowledge in the process of getting work done, and as an authentic guide for individuals and organisations in coping with the increasingly complex and shifting environment of the modern economy.[3]

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1   Ann M. Veneman, UNICEF Executive Director, Update on the Organisational Review, February 16th, 2007
2   What is KM? - A background document to the World Development Report, World Bank, October, 1998
3   Ibid.

Private sector versus development definitions

The private sector has embraced KM with the aim of improving organisational efficiency - measured in terms of production and profit. In the development sector, while organisational efficiency is important, the main aim is to make a difference in terms of development outcomes for people. All multilateral development agencies today work towards the MDGs and measure their success in terms of how much impact they have had on poverty reduction, achieving goals in education, health, HIV-AIDS awareness, water and sanitation, gender equality and policy change. In order to work towards these larger objectives, agencies need efficient internal coordination and an increased ability to analyse the situation of the poor, as well as the capacity to influence debates and policy. The KM and learning needs of the development sector therefore differ somewhat from those of the private sector, and recommendations developed for the private sector cannot be transferred indiscriminately. Recognising this, development consultants and authors have started writing about KM specifically in relation to different types of development organisations.[4] Knowledge management programmes and definitions are typically tied to organisational objectives and are intended to lead to the achievement of specific outcomes.

Diverse definitions within the UN system

The overarching definition of knowledge management commonly used in the UN system as a whole is: **"an integrated, systematic approach to identifying, managing and sharing an organisation's knowledge, and enabling groups of people to create new knowledge collectively in order to achieve the objectives of the organisation".**[5]

Within the UN system, slightly different definitions of knowledge management have also evolved to cater to different agencies' specific needs. For example:

- The **UN Development Programme** defines knowledge management in the development context as "the creation, organisation, sharing and use of knowledge for development results".[6]
- The **UN Office of Internal Oversight Services** defines knowledge management networks according to the different functions of their divisions, which:
  - Communicate knowledge and lessons about programmes and projects within and outside the organisation;
  - Connect staff interested in cross-cutting topics to share ideas, help each other and move the organisation's understanding of those topics forward;
  - Capture and organise critical knowledge gained by staff as they transfer or retire;
  - Tie knowledge-sharing to organisational goals;
  - Deepen and develop knowledge critical to the organisation's success.[7]

From the perspective of this UN department, knowledge and experiences that are shared effectively can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the UN's work in general and of its advisory services in particular. This can enrich the development policy debate and offer both new solutions and the adaptation of successful practices for re-application. It can help staff participating in virtual communities of people (for example interactive mailing lists) who share similar goals and interests do their jobs better with less effort, build bonds with peers, and keep up to date with trends in their own and related fields. According to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), systematically connecting people so that they

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4   KM Organisational Learning: An International Development Perspective - Ingie Hovland, August 2003
5   United Nations System Staff College, http://www.unssc.org/web1
6   KM Discussion Note for UN Regional Co-ordination Meeting, Bangkok, 7 Dec 2006
7   Report of the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services on the thematic evaluation of Knowledge Management networks in the pursuit of the goals of the Millennium Declaration, ECOSOC Committee for Programme and Coordination on 26 March 2006

can exchange ideas, insights and experiences is at the core of most successful knowledge-sharing activities outside the United Nations.[8]

- **UNICEF Headquarters** defines knowledge management as "a management activity that seeks to enhance the organisation, integration, sharing and delivery of knowledge. There are three major elements of knowledge management: knowledge, tools and systems."[9] It clarifies that "knowledge management is about getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time. Knowledge management is a component of the organisational knowledge function, explicitly focusing on managing knowledge systems for better organisational performance and improved outcomes. Knowledge management is a management activity that seeks to enhance the organisation, integration, sharing and delivery of knowledge."[10]
- **UNICEF ROSA** uses a working definition of knowledge management, defining KM as "the means to create synergies of people, processes and technology in the management of information and research in order to improve the lives of children of South Asia, in line with the MDG commitments."[11,12]   The main emphasis is that KM should enable better results for South Asian children, and should provide tools that help build UNICEF's capacities to achieve the MDGs.

Linking knowledge management to the MDGs and UNICEF's MTSP

Using KM to improve the situation for children in South Asia

South Asia is a region struggling with poverty as well as gender and social exclusion. About 31% of the region's population lives on less than 1$ a day.[13] The situation of women and children in particular is often dire. The MDGs and other child-related development objectives remain un-achieved in many countries of the region. South Asia has extremely high rates of child mortality, maternal mortality and female illiteracy, along with a growing incidence of HIV/AIDS and particularly persistent low levels of proper sanitation. It also has the highest proportion of underweight children under five (46%),[14] with three countries - India, Bangladesh and Pakistan - accounting for half of the world's underweight children (73 million).[15] Maternal and infant mortality rates in some of the countries are among the highest in the world.[16] School enrolment and literacy rates in South Asia remain dismally low: regionally, only 74% of children are enrolled in primary school, in Pakistan and Afghanistan the numbers barely exceed 50%.[17] Globally, the largest number of out-of-school children (42 million) live in South Asia.[18]

Since UNICEF regional offices (ROs) are uniquely positioned to be 'information hubs', knowledge management has emerged as an important area of opportunity for the United Nations.

8   Ibid.
9   UNICEF HQ, Intranet, KM Blog, Q&A, "What is KM?"
10   Improving Knowledge Management in UNICEF - a concept note, SPPG, DPP, UNICEF HQ, September 2006
11   "Linking KM and PME in ROSA and COs for Better Results for the Children of South Asia", a briefing note with a conceptual framework prepared by the Social Policy and Monitoring and Evaluation clusters, formally presented to the KM session in September 2006 and circulated within UNICEF
12   Mariana Stirbu, "Briefing Note: A Conceptual Framework for KM in UNICEF ROSA", Sept. 22, 2006
13   UNICEF ROSA, The Millennium Development Goals: Progress and Challenges in South Asia, 2006
14   Ibid.
15   Ibid.
16   Ibid.
17   Ibid.
18   Ibid.

The focus on MDGs is of paramount importance to South Asia's children as this is the poorest performing region within Asia and one of the poorest performing regions in the world.[19]   Since UNICEF ROs are uniquely positioned to be 'information hubs', knowledge management has emerged as an important area of opportunity. As centres for information, the ROs can best fulfil their mandate by providing and facilitating access to and the exchange of the most complete and up-to-date information possible. To be true information hubs, the ROs should become better sources of information as well as platforms for debates on children's issues.

Over the last decade the rise of the Internet, the proliferation of e-mail and the electronic dissemination of information have revolutionised how information and knowledge are managed, and have substantially altered the way UNICEF's work is conducted.[20]   UNICEF has recognised the importance of re-thinking knowledge management at all levels as a means of maximising the return on its intellectual expertise and information resources (both explicit and tacit knowledge). The organisation anticipates that these changes will enhance its capability to achieve the MDGs.

Ultimately, the goal is to "… transform UNICEF into a more effective partner for advancing the Millennium Declaration"...

19   Ibid.
20   WCARO Information/Knowledge Management Workshop 13-17 October, 2003, Dakar, Senegal

UNICEF's commitment to KM in the Medium-Term Strategic Plan 2006-2009

UNICEF has been mandated by its Executive Board to develop improved knowledge management systems.[21]   Its commitment is detailed in the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2006-2009, which states, "With partners and through improved knowledge management systems, establish knowledge banks facilitating access to data on children and women."[22]   Ultimately, the goal is to "… transform UNICEF into a more effective partner for advancing the Millennium Declaration and its goals by generating evidence and knowledge on the effects of poverty and deprivation on children."[23]

The MTSP promotes knowledge generation regarding the overall situation of children and women and related causal factors and supports this function by promoting the surveys and analysis that are needed to better understand the causes of goal-specific problems affecting children.[24]   These important tasks call for UNICEF to reorganise its capacities and strengthen its approach in order to become a more effective trusted ally and advocate of children's and women's rights and of gender equality. A UNICEF-wide agenda of enhancing KM frameworks aimed at strengthening systems, structures, tools and practices for generating, enriching and applying knowledge will help UNICEF respond to the challenge.[25]

The ROSA KM study

Problem statement

By building on internal and external experiences of knowledge management UNICEF ROSA can strengthen its approach to knowledge and information management in order to generate better results and become the knowledge management hub and key source of reference for information on children's issues in South Asia.

Aims of the report and target audience

This report aims to:
- Conduct an inventory of KM definitions, practices, technologies and systems in use:
    - by a few representative global institutions, including the UN Secretariat and UN agencies, with the aim of summarising the best practices in use globally and
    - by selected UN agencies in South Asia in general and for the UNICEF ROs and UNICEF South Asia COs in particular;
- Based on the information gathered in the survey, recommend ways to best manage/ create a KM system in ROSA which is conducive to making knowledge and information accessible and usable to partners, policy-makers and advocates so that ROSA can in future remain a central part of informed policy debates within the region;
- Propose an action plan for implementation of the above system that can deliver the maximum benefit within the context of staffing and funding constraints.

The target audience for the report will be the ROSA RO and UNICEF South Asia COs. The report will also be shared with UNICEF HQ and other UNICEF ROs as well as with partners and donors.

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21   The UNICEF Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2006-2009, Investing in children: The UNICEF contribution to poverty reduction and the Millennium Summit agenda, United Nations, Economic and Social Council, UNICEF, E/icef/2005/11
22   Focus area five (in organisational target 3) of the MTSP (2006-2009)
23   "Improving Knowledge Management in UNICEF - a concept note", 07/2006, UNICEF HQ
24   UNICEF MTSP (2006-2009) Op.cit.
25   Mariana Stirbu Op.cit.

Support

In August 2005, the Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID) and UNICEF ROSA signed a Partnership Agreement to address issues of social exclusion and knowledge management. The overall objective was to contribute to interventions which would enhance progress on the MDGs in South Asia. One of the outputs concerned generating improved knowledge-sharing by creating approaches for sustainable and up-to-date compilation of research findings regarding exclusionary processes and their impacts on child survival and development, basic education, gender equality and child protection, and relevant intercessions such as special efforts, targeted interventions and policy measures.[26] Specifically, Phase I of the Agreement is designed to generate strategic communication, advocacy and networking tools for the targeted dissemination of this knowledge .[27] With this aim in mind, ROSA assigned a communication and knowledge management consultant to carry out this task between November 2006 and April 2007.

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26 Addendum to Programme Funding Request under the Partnership Agreement between the Government of Australia and the UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, Phase 1, June 2006

27 Ibid.

Many UN Agencies, funds, programmes and departments have already designed and implemented KM frameworks and technologies. Seeking to learn from previous experiences, this report reviews current KM systems within the broader UN global family and UN regional offices.

KM is often seen as a way to avoid 're-inventing the wheel'. Many UN Agencies, funds, programmes and departments have already designed and implemented KM frameworks and technologies. Seeking to learn from previous experiences, this report reviews current KM systems within the broader UN global family and UN ROSA.

The case studies presented here are based on information gathered from reports, a survey and web sites, as well as information collected during personal interviews. Semi-structured interviews based on various questions designed to probe different aspects of KM were conducted with KM focal points or other designated KM in-charge. Sample questions were:

Interview questions:
- Did your office draft a regional KM strategy or concept note you could share with us?
- Did your office adopt a definition for KM? If so, which one?
- Where (i.e. in which department) is KM located in your office?
- How many staff members work directly on KM?
- What KM tools or initiatives have you developed?
- What lessons learnt could you share with UNICEF ROSA about those tools and initiatives? What are the major obstacles you have encountered?
- Do your KM activities have an external focus? (global or regional ?)
- What are your future plans related to KM?

Global KM case studies

Individual UN organisations - globally, regionally and at country level - use a mixture of KM approaches and strategies.

According to the KM Discussion Note from the UN Regional Coordination Meeting, Bangkok, Dec. 7th 2006, prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Centre in Bangkok, widespread agreement is found within the UN on the utility of knowledge-sharing as a development tool and as an organisational approach that will help achieve the MDGs. However, no overarching UN knowledge - sharing policy or strategy exists, and individual UN organisations - globally, regionally and at country level - use a mixture of KM approaches and strategies.[28] An example of a particular initiative is the pilot knowledge-sharing project of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) 'Working Group on Knowledge Management' that combines four organisational knowledge-sharing models on the topic of HIV/AIDS. The project includes a knowledge asset guide contributed by UNFPA, a knowledge network from UNDP, an on-line document system from the World Health Organisation (WHO) and a training module from UNICEF.[29] Another example is the UNDG MDG Network which began in January 2002, originally to support United Nations country teams and governments to produce quality MDG reports. Since then, the Network focus has shifted to more general topics related to the MDGs. The Network hosts electronic discussions and research (including consolidated replies to discussions and news updates), and is managed by a full-time facilitator. It has over 2,000 members drawn from over 25 different United Nations entities.[30]

Recent UN reform efforts stemming from the Paris Declaration and the Secretary General's High Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence have increased awareness among UN agencies of the need to work together as a single team in order to provide coordinated support to national development programmes. The establishment of a Chief Executive Board

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28 Section based on the KM Discussion Note for UN Regional Cordination Meeting, Bangkok, 7 Dec. 2006, prepared by the UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.

Task Force on Knowledge-sharing has been announced. The purpose of the task force is to develop a knowledge-sharing strategy for the United Nations system that will focus on information needs, and to devise a framework for inter-agency co-operation. The Task Force will begin with an assessment of the present knowledge-sharing environment and use this to determine what types of knowledge-sharing activities the system should engage in, ultimately developing a road map for implementing an overall cohesive strategy.[31]

The five global models presented below[32] come from well-known international organisations that have taken the lead in knowledge management worldwide.

Asian Development Bank

KM initiatives[33]

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has a knowledge-sharing network, 'Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results' (CoP-MfDR). This is a virtual network that promotes learning and knowledge exchange among public managers, organisations, executing agencies and practitioners on management for better development results.[34] CoP-MfDR aims to contribute to enhancing sustainable capacity for results management among developing countries in Asia and the Pacific region. Its mission is to promote learning and knowledge exchange primarily through the active participation by community members in a virtual learning network. The specific objectives are to:

- Increase regional dialogue and information sharing for the dissemination of good practices and expertise on managing for development results;
- Facilitate the sharing of demand-driven advice and problem-solving assistance from international experts;
- Introduce a range of self-directed learning opportunities, products, tools and support services;
- Create a knowledge base of good practices that will help community members improve their own understanding and skills in managing for development results in the Asia-Pacific region.

KM strategy

The unifying theme of CoP-MfDR is 'management for development results' and is a strategy focused on development performance and sustainable improvements in country outcomes. It provides a coherent framework for development effectiveness in which performance information is used to improve decision-making. It includes practical tools for strategic planning, risk management, monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes. Although 'management for development results' is a fairly new term, the concept itself is not; other organisations have successfully applied it under the rubric of 'results-based management,' 'performance management' and 'managing for outcomes'.[35]

Future plans

ADB's Knowledge Management for Development (KM4Dev) Forum was organised and hosted by ADB in February 8-9, 2007 in Manila, Philippines. The aim was to provide a venue for KM practitioners to interact, network, learn and share experiences and concerns on creating, disseminating, transferring and managing knowledge and information.[36]

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31   Ibid.
32   Based on information gathered by Mariana Stirbu for the PME meeting in ROSA, September 2006
33   Based on information from ADB's knowledge-sharing website and other sources
34   See web site link: https://cop-mfdr.adb.org
35   Ibid.
36   Ibid.

United Nations Development Group

Background

The United Nations Development Group[37] (UNDG) is an instrument for UN reform created by the Secretary General in 1997 to improve the effectiveness of country level UN development efforts. UNDG supports several knowledge-sharing networks and platforms, including the Coordination Practice Network, the UN Human Rights Policy Network and the Millennium Development Network.

KM initiatives

The Millennium Development Network (MDGnet) helps UN country teams, governments and civil society practitioners in their efforts to produce high-quality national MDG reports. MDGNet invites participants to exchange creative approaches to MDG advocacy, share good practices and lessons learnt, circulate knowledge of MDG related events and identify expertise to help with preparation of the MDG reports. The MDGnet is managed by UNDP on behalf of the UNDG.

The Coordination Practice Network allows UN staff with an interest in UN coordination to share good practices and experiences, launch new ideas and increase knowledge on how to implement the UN reform agenda. A key Network function is to provide UN policy makers with practical experiences and ideas for improvement, and to test and validate new UN reform policies.

Focus

The primary target group consists of UN system staff with an interest in UN coordination topics.

United Nations Development Programme

Background

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build better lives. The organisation works in 166 countries, helping them find their own solutions to global and national development challenges.

UNDP has aimed to strengthen KM as a key driver of operational effectiveness and efficiency in the organisation since 1999.[38] Knowledge-sharing and networking helps connect people with relevant information they may need, including comparative experiences, best practices and expertise. It involves acquiring and transferring knowledge in the hope of being able to influence responses. In UNDP, knowledge-sharing and networking are principally facilitated through two mechanisms - 'Communities of Practice' or 'knowledge networks' and regional centres and sub-regional resource facilities (SURFs).

'Knowledge networks' or 'Communities of Practice' are networks of people whose members are connected through a common professional discipline or interest such as, for example, 'democratic governance' or 'advancing the MDGs'. A Community of Practice (CoP) is commonly defined as "a group of people who communicate with each other because they share common work practices, interests and aims" and "have a regular system of interchange that allows the sharing of knowledge concerning their field of expertise."[39] CoPs

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37   United Nations Development Group website: www.undg.org
38   Based on information shared by Kim Henderson, Bureau of Development Policy, UNDP, www.undp.org and other sources
39   United Nations System Staff College, http://www.unssc.org/web1/programmes/km/about.asp

share information through mail groups (electronic networks), workshops and other initiatives designed to promote peer interaction and mutual support. They function as professional communities in which members support each other to become even more valuable sources of development knowledge and expertise.

Regional centres and SURFs aim to foster knowledge networking, information sharing and learning by UNDP staff in order to strengthen UNDP's capacity to be an effective and credible international development agency. The first priority of the SURFs and regional centres is to provide UNDP COs in their region with easy access to knowledge through high quality advisory services based on global applied research and UNDP lessons learnt. The second priority is to build partnerships and promote regional capacity building initiatives that will allow UNDP, governments and other development partners to identify, access, create and share knowledge relevant to solving their particular development challenges. Each regional centre or SURF focuses on specific thematic areas corresponding to those outlined in the Multi-Year Funding Framework.

Location and staffing

Knowledge management is an integral part of UNDP core activities and is decentralised. Different units across the UNDP have initiated KM activities to enhance their work. While some are linked to SURFs and virtual knowledge networks, others reflect home-grown attempts to capitalise on new information and Communications technologies and the growth of new approaches to knowledge-sharing that pervade both public and private sector institutions.

All Bureau of Development Policy staff, whether based at headquarters or in a field location, must allocate a dedicated portion of their time to networking. For example, all Asia-Pacific regional centre policy and programme specialists are required to spend between 10% and 40% of their time specifically on KM. Moreover, dedicated knowledge services teams or KM staff who have explicit KM roles and functions exist in almost all SURFs or regional centres. In addition, Global Thematic Networks have dedicated network facilitators and research officers.

'Communities of practice' are networks of people whose members are connected through a common professional discipline or interest.

Global KM initiatives

All of the UNDP's core activities (poverty reduction, democratic governance, energy and environment, crisis prevention and recovery, and HIV/AIDS) have an integral and decentralised KM component. Regional centres, sub-regional resource facilities and knowledge networks provide KM and practical policy support in the field.

Knowledge networks and CoPs were established in 1999 in UNDP priority thematic areas to serve as capacity-building mechanisms for staff, to bridge between headquarters and the field, to connect UNDP's COs and to promote South-South exchanges.

CoPs connect experts and practitioners with a common professional interest. CoPs use face-to-face meetings, knowledge networks and workspaces to promote peer interaction and to provide mutual support needed by staff in the field. Each network or community is linked primarily by an electronic network or a moderated mail list, but is also supported by regular face-to-face meetings and other community-building activities.

The UNDP now has 19 global knowledge networks, including six practice networks (five in development and one in management); four knowledge networks open to other UN agencies and external partners; two cross-cutting networks and seven sub-practice networks. UNDP is also currently supporting 15 UN agencies to establish similar knowledge-sharing systems.

Membership in the UNDP's CoPs and knowledge networks grew from a few hundred in 1999 to over 12,000 by the end of 2006. Participation rates and quality ratings have also continued to climb.

- Between January 2004 and December 2006, UNDP staff membership in one of these 19 knowledge networks increased by 140% from 8,916 to 28,997 subscriptions.
- During the same time period, the average network membership increased from 1.8 to 2.3 networks per staff member.
- Participation (defined as having contributed at least once to any one of these 19 networks) rose from 46% in January 2004 to 71% at the end of 2006.

A total of six regional centres and three SURFs provide knowledge based services to UNDP COs and UN country teams in the following areas:
- Policy advisory and capacity development;
- Networking and knowledge-sharing between staff and development partners;
- Referral of experts and access to technical and programme-related information;
- Technical support for programme identification, design, formulation and review;
- Documentation and dissemination of comparative experiences and best practices.

Where possible, the aim is to 'scan globally and reinvent locally'.

Focus
UNDP's position is to gear knowledge to the needs of external partners, to learn from them and to remain demand-driven. Where possible, the aim is to 'scan globally and reinvent locally'. Thematic knowledge networks are used to gather expertise in specific areas by drawing on local, regional and global expertise and to promote the exchange of more nuanced information to enhance the delivery, relevance and effectiveness of its work and advisory services.

Lessons learnt and obstacles
UNDP's networks and CoPs have been the entry point for the organisation's focus on knowledge management. However, the CoPs alone cannot accomplish the shift to an organisation where knowledge-based systems are mainstreamed. CoPs and networks represent only one part of the whole; while these are successful 'connection' systems, they must be complemented by systematic 'collection' mechanisms.

The qualitative and organisational impacts of CoPs and knowledge networks include:
- Improving staff capacity: in a 2005 global survey of Headquarter's (HQ) services and products, 83% of staff surveyed said participation in knowledge networks benefited their professional development and 94% said it benefited the professional development of their office.
- Facilitating organisational transformation: knowledge is now shared across offices and departments and between COs and HQ and from one CO to another on a daily basis. The prevailing organisational culture now values and rewards the sharing of knowledge rather than the owning of knowledge. Knowledge exchange has encouraged a levelling of the hierarchy so that inputs are now allowed from all grades, and into both policy and practice. Previously, little or no exchange occurred across units or hierarchies.
- Improving the policy development process through enhancing links between policy and programming: CoPs and networks are used as consultation mechanisms, avenues to identify policy issues from the bottom up, for peer review and to identify good practices which can then feed into policy development.

UNDP is uniquely positioned to draw maximum benefits from knowledge management: it has a global reach of countries and cultures, vast expertise on many issues, and extensive depth of experience and skills. Linking these diverse dimensions requires substantial effort

and focus, however. Establishing a knowledge-sharing culture is an on-going task that requires commitment, persistence, proper sponsorship and the ability to be a force for change throughout the organisation.

Future plans

In 2004, UNDP took further major steps to develop an agency-wide KM strategy to map and coordinate needs and services on knowledge management across the organisation. Despite progress on several fronts, the KM roadmap project encountered some obstacles in implementation and UNDP is now in the process of reassessing its strategic vision for KM.[40]

Future strategies aim to build on the success the UNDP has had with CoPs by broadening the approach to include a number of initiatives such as mainstreaming knowledge management into human resources to include KM in performance assessment and career tracking. The UNDP approach within the UN system can also eventually be expanded to include in-country networks. Moreover, the connection strategy is also being enhanced, with improved content management systems supported by improved systems and tools.

The World Bank

Background and focus

Knowledge management at the World Bank has evolved from its original emphasis on simply capturing and organising knowledge.[41] Today it focuses on adopting, adapting and applying knowledge in a way that helps World Bank staff, clients and partners work more effectively to reduce global poverty. In 1997 and 1998, the World Bank emphasised collecting information (knowledge repositories) and connecting people internally (knowledge communities or thematic groups). In 1999 KM shifted to include connecting people externally (knowledge partnerships, gateways, etc.), and from 2002 onwards, the Bank aimed to also broker global knowledge, facilitate adaptation to local knowledge, connect stakeholders and generally act as a catalyst for change - perhaps the most ambitious demand made of any KM approach studied.

KM initiatives

Its current knowledge-sharing practices include knowledge networks, help desk and advisory services, knowledge collections on the web, tacit knowledge debriefing and a platform to share knowledge with the wider development community through the Development Gateway website.[42]   Most of these activities can be classified under the 'Knowledge Management for Organisational Capacity (KMOC)' programme, which was developed by the World Bank Institute to enhance the capacity of development-oriented organisations to achieve greater impact through the application of knowledge management tools and approaches. KMOC includes a diagnostic survey tool designed to help organisations evaluate their KM capacity. The results of this assessment are used by the KMOC team to provide targeted recommendations for addressing KM strengths and weaknesses. The other toolkits are the Advisory Services Toolkit, the CoP toolkit and the E-Discussion Toolkit. It also provides a Thematic Group Toolkit[43] which, since first being launched in 1996, has supported the creation of CoPs among World Bank staff.

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40   Information from Kim Henderson; Op.cit.
41   Based on information from the World Bank web site (www.worldbank.org); the United Nations Economic and Social Council, Committee for Programme and Coordination, Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on Evaluation of Knowledge Management Networks in Pursuit of the Goals of the Millennium Declaration; an interview with Richard Tobin (Manager of the World Bank Institute Evaluation Group) at ROSA, 15 February 2007; and other sources
42   Link to web site: http://www.developmentgateway.org/
43   See Web site: http://info.worldbank.org/etools/WBIKO/TGtoolkit/index.htm

Establishing a knowledge-sharing culture is an on-going task that requires commitment, persistence, proper sponsorship and the ability to be a force for change throughout the organisation.

The Knowledge Bank was created in 1996 with the goal of improving the Bank's operation and effectiveness through knowledge-sharing and learning, enhancing the sharing of knowledge with clients and partners, and enhancing clients' own capacity to access and make effective use of knowledge.

Over the past seven years, the World Bank has implemented the following KM activities as part of its Knowledge Bank:
- Thematic groups (80 Communities of Practice)
- Advisory services (25 help desk facilities)
- Sector knowledge collections (Web)
- Country/sector statistics (live database)
- Directories (people page)
- Debriefings and videotaping of narratives (tacit knowledge)
- Africa indigenous knowledge
- Global development gateway
- Development forum (discussion groups)
- B-SPAN (webcasting)
- Dissemination (formal/informal learning).[44]

Regional UN KM case studies in Asia and the Pacific

Six world-wide UN agencies with ROs in Asia have all recently been involved in introducing, updating or enhancing their knowledge management capabilities. These case studies have been very instructive for the efforts now underway in ROSA.

Food and Agriculture Organisation, RO for Asia and the Pacific

Background and KM strategy
The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has one of the oldest (1989) agency-wide KM strategies in the UN,[45] called the World Agricultural Information Centre (WAICENT).

Location and staffing
Every staff member is involved in some way with KM; ideally, everyone spends up to 15% of his or her time on KM. Each of the four ROs has a KM focal point who is an information management officer (P2 level). All officers are connected with the KM and Communications Department in Rome.

The Knowledge and Communications Department has four divisions:
- Conference and Council Affairs Division
- Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Building Division
- Communications Division
- Information Technology (IT) Division

In the RO for Asia and the Pacific (based in Bangkok), three other officers work with the information management officer on KM-related issues: the information officer, the meetings and publications officer and the IT officer.

KM initiatives
The FAO RO for Asia and the Pacific focuses its information management programme in

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44   Ibid.
45   Based on information shared by Michael Riggs, Information Management Specialist, FAO RO for Asia and Pacific, Bangkok and other sources

three different areas: capacity building, supporting the adoption of global standards and norms, and providing technical support to manage and disseminate information.

1.) *Building capacity* among member countries and organisations to promote best practices in information management. Through partnerships, the FAO assists in developing capabilities and networks for accessing and sharing of information. Key areas include improving the efficiency, quality and relevance of knowledge exchange and communications using electronic media.

FAO's information management field activities provide advice and technical assistance to governments, institutions and rural communities in order to help them strengthen their capacities in agricultural information management and in the effective use of information and communication technologies. The Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK, www.imarkgroup.org) is a partnership-based e-learning initiative containing a comprehensive suite of distance learning resources that cover concepts, approaches and tools for agricultural information management. The first module on electronic documentation and bibliographic data management was introduced by workshops in the Asia-Pacific countries in 2004. Since then the FAO and its partners have supported seven training workshops involving more than 200 participants. These have led to nationally supported workshops that continue disseminating skills to a wider audience.

The interactive Knowledge Forum provides a gateway to the organisation's vast expertise and wealth of knowledge through a series of interactive services. It also provides an opportunity to learn from and give a voice to the agricultural community regarding a wide range of issues that affect food security and agricultural production today.

2.) *Supporting the adoption of global standards and norms.* The volume of agricultural information and knowledge continues to grow; the FAO and other organisations produce considerable data and information but need to put it into 'useable' knowledge.

One of the primary goals of the information management programme is to produce and maintain tools for information and knowledge management that will facilitate both gathering and producing information as well as its availability and accessibility. This requires effective methods, guidelines and procedures to identify, acquire, manage and exploit the information and knowledge to its maximum potential. The Agricultural Information Management Standards (AIMS) project is dedicated to this end. Its goal is to share and promote the uptake of common methodologies, standards and applications. Expected benefits are a reduction in the costs of creating new systems and an increase in the quality of services provided to users. The AIMS website brings together partners and collaborators, and offers a comprehensive collection of information on developing methodologies, standards and applications for management of agricultural information systems.

3.) *Providing technical support to manage and disseminate information* on agriculture and food security through WAICENT. Recognising the value of information in fighting global hunger and achieving food security, FAO established WAICENT. Through the WAICENT framework, FAO disseminates the Organisation's wealth of information on agriculture and food security in accordance with its belief that information is power only if it is easily and freely accessible.

The FAO also promotes policy issues related to the management and accessibility of agricultural information and enhancing information dissemination through on-line library facilities and cutting-edge information systems and search tools. FAO provides access to its publications, both in print and in electronic format, through its web site, through the Corporate Document Repository and on CD-ROM.

Organisations produce considerable data and information but need to put it into 'useable' knowledge.

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Both the AGRIS (the FAO's country profiles and mapping information system), and the WAICENT portals facilitate access by making information available and searchable by keyword, subject and geographical region.

Focus
FAO's KM focus is both external and internal.

Lessons learnt and obstacles
Different agencies look at KM in different ways; the FAO's view is that KM at the global and field levels are different but complementary. KM is an integral component of any field work project, and can be in areas as diverse as, for example, making sure that lessons learnt are disseminated for greater impact and mapping development indicators. The FAO also tries to put together the best case studies for corporate level dissemination.

Cultural and organisational issues are extremely important but are often underappreciated in KM initiatives. Knowledge-sharing can sometimes be seen as a waste of time; collaborating on a horizontal level can be construed as extra work with no professional benefit. These attitudes must be overcome if KM is to be successfully deployed.

Any organisation faces the risk that staff members fail to really participate in KM, viewing it as a responsibility of the KM focal point only. Experience shows that everyone needs to take an active part in KM for it to be completely successful.

Future plans
The FAO plans to continuously improve corporate and field level KM and to bring added value to the diverse types of information it has regionally. The FAO presently has very good KM on statistics, formal publications and GIS data. Work is ongoing at the RO to improve the dissemination of other types of knowledge (tacit knowledge, brochures, posters, etc.).

FAO is also interested in harmonising and standardising certain types of information and KM standards globally; using the same standards will help make the information become useful knowledge.

United Nations Development Programme, Regional Centre in Bangkok

Background
The UNDP has three regional centres in Asia and the Pacific:[46] one in Bangkok, Thailand; one in Colombo, Sri Lanka and one in Suva, Fiji. Each centre has a knowledge-sharing section. The knowledge services teams in Bangkok and Colombo work jointly with policy and programme teams in the region to contribute toward greater effectiveness by promoting, coordinating and supporting knowledge-sharing across the 25 COs, regional centres and partners in Asia and the Pacific.

Strategy and definition
In 2004 the Regional Centre in Bangkok (RCB) established its working definition of knowledge management as "the creation, organisation, sharing and use of knowledge for development results."[47]

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46 This section is based in part on information provided by Robert Juhkam, Knowledge Services Team Leader, UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok, and Tam Pham, Chief of Knowledge Services Team, UNDP Regional Centre in Colombo

47 KM Discussion Note for UN Regional Coordination Meeting, Bangkok, 7 December 2006

Believing that the UNDP's comparative advantage lies in sharing its country level experience across the region and around the globe, the regional centres in the Asia-Pacific region stress connecting people over collecting knowledge. The knowledge services teams in UNDP Asia and the Pacific aim to improve awareness and understanding of KM concepts, approaches and methodologies and to support the effective application of KM for better results at regional and country levels. The second objective is to connect people to knowledge in order to enhance access to sharing, application and leveraging of existing knowledge and thus better respond to development challenges on the ground. UNDP also aims to build and leverage institutional partnerships for meaningful collaborations, better coordination, effective knowledge-sharing and innovation. Finally, UNDP supports the development of staff capacity through knowledge-sharing, peer-to-peer support and action learning.[48]

Location and staffing

Each UNDP regional centre around the world has at least one international and two national staff working on knowledge services teams. Some of the COs also have a KM focal point.

KM is considered to be part of each staff's responsibility and is routinely written into job descriptions. In addition, UNDP currently has seven full-time KM staff working in Bangkok and Colombo. KM staff is now being hired in Fiji.

KM tools and initiatives

Positioned as knowledge hubs in the Asia Pacific region, the regional centres connect people to knowledge in a variety of ways, as follow:

- Provide KM advisory and technical support services, with KM assessment services and support to COs to develop appropriate KM strategies and implementation plans. UNDP also provides support for web-based collaboration and knowledge-sharing.
- Support building of CoPs: the Knowledge Services Team works at the regional level with Practice Teams at the regional centres to build, monitor, map and connect regional CoPs. At the country level, the Team works with UN Country Teams (UNCTs)/COs to develop and implement in-country communities and networking solutions and help link them to relevant regional and global networks.
- Provide access to expertise, working at the regional level with Practice Teams to provide recommendations for high quality experts to UNCTs/COs; and at the country level, providing technical support to UNCTs/COs to develop and implement roster systems for national experts. Staff training to manage the roster is also provided.
- Provide research and information services related to comparative experiences and lessons learnt.
- Build regional web-based knowledge platforms (Extranet with registered users from outside the organisation): UNDP is working on a common regional knowledge platform for UNDP and its partners in Asia and the Pacific, which will provide an on-line, community-based capability for communication, deeper information and knowledge exchange and collaboration between COs Regional Centres and development partners. Invitations to join the Extranet are mainly through CoPs.
- Support planning and implementation of knowledge conferences, both at regional and country levels.
- Promote action learning through the Mutual Support Initiative and provide peer-to-peer support through partial funding to encourage the exchange of talented staff between COs and for placement of CO staff on short assignments to regional centres. The Mutual Support Initiative is a database of consultants and internal staff (including a map of the staff's experiences).[49]

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48   Ibid.
49   Information based on the UNDP Knowledge Services in Asia and the Pacific brochure and face-to-face interviews

- Develop and disseminate knowledge resources and products based on research and analysis of policies, development trends and country experiences.

Lessons learnt and obstacles
In order to successfully implement KM initiatives, an organisation needs both dedicated KM staff and commitment from all staff members to making KM work; ideally, KM duties and responsibilities should be part of each staff member's job description. An organisation also needs the proactive support of senior management. Organisations would benefit from a change of corporate culture - from protecting knowledge to sharing knowledge. Incentives are important; for example, making KM part of the job description, evaluating KM contributions during the performance reviews, recognising participants who proactively take on KM initiatives, etc. Often KM approaches are disconnected from the business processes. Obstacles can arise when Senior Management lacks clarity and policy direction. Dedicated funding and clear institutional frameworks are also needed.

An organisation needs both dedicated KM staff and commitment from all staff members to making KM work.

Focus
Increasingly, the regional KM activities have an external focus in addition to their existing regional focus. UNDP KM activity must benefit countries, governments, local communities, NGOs and others in a clear and visible way. Otherwise people lose interest, systems are not updated and eventually fall into disuse.

Future plans
The Regional Centre Knowledge Services Teams are planning more direct capacity support to COs by assisting them with mission advisory, knowledge assessment and KM strategy. A plan has been developed to improve UN collaboration and to find a common KM approach for Asia and the Pacific. The Regional Centres are planning to launch a Microsoft-supported Knowledge-sharing and Collaboration Portal later this year.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Background[50]
In 2005 a KM expert from the ADB spent a year at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) to help develop a KM strategy. In 2006, the Executive Secretary decided to become directly involved in bringing KM into the conduct of routine work. This was the beginning of many KM initiatives.

KM strategy
UNESCAP provides an enabling environment to acquire, access, share and use internal and external knowledge to achieve organisational goals. The organisation's specific KM initiatives are based around CoPs and are intended to avoid information overload and create a best practice system. UNESCAP is now developing a comprehensive KM strategy.

Location and staffing
KM is located in the office of the Executive Secretary. Three staff work full time on KM, including the KM officer (P4 level), and two persons part-time: an Information Technology Officer (ITO) and an Assistant detached from administration.

The KM task force includes one member per knowledge area or division. With a total of 20 people, the KM task force has an executive role. It is chaired by the chief of administration and meets once a month. The KM committee, another group of 10 people, has a decision-

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50 Based on information shared by Tim Westbury, Programme Management Officer; Manuel Rincon, KM officer, UNESCAP Bangkok and other sources

making role. The committee is formed by Chief of Divisions and the Executive Secretary. Its chairperson is the Deputy Executive Secretary. The committee only meets when there are recommendations, four times a year.

KM tools and initiatives
To date, UNESCAP has initiated or is using the following KM activities and goals:

- Awareness creation: series of KM trainings and seminars with other UN organisations and the ADB;
- READ Database: Online mission report system on the Intranet for UNESCAP's regional advisers;
- Online resource guide for programme and project planning;
- Library;
- UNIS (UN Information Service, developed by the United Nations Library, New York);
- I-Seek on the Intranet includes HR rules and regulations, reports from divisions;
- World Press is an open source tool that facilitates collaboration, blogs, web sites;
- UNESCAP Today is an initiative that compiles what is happening in the building (for example: conferences, trainings, meetings), and is sent by e-mail to staff daily;
- Skills Mapping is the HR approach to KM, as a map of 'who knows what' in the organisation, and UNESCAP is discussing use of the same consultant database with the UNDP Regional Centre Bangkok;
- KM portal: An internal site with numerous articles, discussions, minutes of all KM meetings from the task force – it is planned to make some sections accessible externally as a shared working area.

KM involves changing an organisation's mind-set.

Lessons learnt
KM involves changing an organisation's mind-set, a challenging task in an organisation with a 60-year long history. People who lack understanding of the tools have difficulty adjusting to the Internet, Intranet, blogs, and so on. KM is not a technology *per se* but it has a technological component; making users more aware of the technical aspects can remove some of the obstacles. The support of senior management is essential.

Focus
Based on a decision to concentrate initially on internal KM before promoting the concept externally, the present KM focus is mainly internal. External CoPs are, however, one of the three pillars of the organisation's strategy.

Future plans
UNESCAP Bangkok will soon have a KM strategy. The organisation also plans to have pilot CoPs, especially for cross cutting issues (for example climate change). At the end of 2007 and 2009, the present KM initiatives will be evaluated according to a number of indicators, including the number of best practice systems, the perception of improvement as expressed by internal comments through a survey, the number of members of a CoP, etc.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Asia and Pacific, Bureau for Education, Bangkok

Background
In the Bureau for Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Asia and Pacific, the Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) unit is responsible for the information resources of the Bangkok Regional Bureau for Education.[51]

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51 Based on information shared by Clive Wing, Chief Information and Knowledge Management Officer, UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok, Thailand and on information from the UNESCO Bangkok website

Staffing and location

The Regional Bureau's Communications Unit was merged into the new Information and Knowledge Management unit in 2005. All together, 18 staff work in the IKM unit including two international staff at P4-P3 level, 16 national staff and two interns. As no budget is specified for the IKM unit, it is funded from the Regional Director's budget.

KM tools and initiatives

The library manages the report and periodical collections, makes available an on-line catalogue, and provides training to staff on the Bureau's subscription databases. The subscribed databases include ABI/Inform, ScienceDirect, World Bank and OECD. The Librarian maintains the Regional Bureau's homepage (www.unescobkk.org) and the publications page where a PDF of every book and report produced by the Regional Bureau is published.

The Publication Services Unit edits, prints and publishes monographs and reports for the Regional Bureau. The IKM distributes these publications to insure that the results of projects and deliberations are available throughout the Asia-Pacific region. The IKM has an agreement with two major database owners (with whom it shares the profits) to market PDF versions of these publications as e-books to universities and research institutes around the world. A catalogue of these e-publications and PDF downloads is also available from the website. IKM works with both traditional and new media to make UNESCO's publications available in different ways to different audiences. It welcomes inquiries from print distributors, e-book aggregators and database owners as well as from publishers and organisations who require translations or adaptation of the publications. The IKM Unit subscribes to on-line facilities to check for plagiarism (ithenticate.com).

Intending to bring academic rigor to the work and procedure, all staff were also trained on how to access academic on-line subscription databases.

UNESCO RO for Asia and Pacific is a major publisher. IKM works with print and electronic media to inform the public about activities at the Regional Bureau. The on-line press room provides press releases and details of newsworthy events, as well as an opportunity for journalists to learn more about the Regional Bureau's work.

Lessons learnt and obstacles

Although KM was initiated only in 2005, the visibility of the IKM is now high. People who had never worked together in the past are now learning to do so; Unit Webmasters, for example, who previously had minimal contact with each other, now work together and meet regularly under the auspices of IKM. To continue its success, the IKM would need additional funding for consultants, software issues and special projects. For the moment, the unit works with interns and well-qualified graduates from the Australian Youth Ambassador Programme.

Future plans

The Regional Bureau is looking into the possibility of having a regional Intranet (possibly using Microsoft's Sharepoint, a knowledge management solution). It is also considering a staff skills database (languages, software skills etc.) to help share tacit knowledge. Another consideration is an e-mail archiving system (possibly RISS from Hewlett Packard) to make e-mails available and searchable by all staff.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific

Background, strategy and KM definition

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific works in co-operation with partners in the region to help eradicate drug abuse

People who had never worked together in the past are now learning to do so.

and trafficking, transnational organised crime, human trafficking, money laundering, corruption and terrorism. The Office does not have an explicit strategy or KM concept note.[52]

Location and staffing

At present, the Regional Project Coordinator's initiative 'Improving ATS Data and Information Systems' is the first KM commitment and constitutes one element of a full-fledged KM strategy. The Regional Project Coordinator assesses Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS) and other drug data collected via an on-line data collection mechanism; drafts an annual report for distribution (in the region and around the world), and operates an on-line information centre/clearinghouse (www.apaic.org). No staff member works directly on KM as such.

KM tools or initiatives

The UNODC Regional Centre developed a clearinghouse for ATS, only one of its kind in the world. The Asia and Pacific ATS Information Centre (APAIC) is an on-line clearinghouse available at www.apaic.org; it provides information on the 'Improving ATS Data and Information Systems' project; regional and national drug profiles; reports and data collection related activity updates; ATS information; ATS abuse prevention materials; a searchable library; and links to partner governments' and internationally recognised websites. In addition to dissemination of information, the clearinghouse is a place where partner governments post information they want to share with the UN, other governments and NGO counterparts. They contribute data to the Drug Abuse Information Network for Asia and the Pacific and to the ATS Network directory of data sources.

Focus

At present the UNODC's KM focus is regional, but - pending approval - UNODC HQ Vienna may also make the annual report and clearinghouse globally available.

Future plans

A new regional KM project is being designed to continue activities in East Asia and the Pacific. HQ is considering a global project incorporating elements of this regional project.

World Food Programme, Regional Bureau for Asia

KM regional strategy and definition

The Regional Bureau for Asia of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) does not have a regional KM strategy *per se*,[53] but it does have 'Pass It On', a corporate system for sharing best practices and passing on practical advice.

Location and staffing

Pass It On is now rolled out at the regional bureau level where the Programme Unit oversees it. At the HQ level, the Pass It On team is in the Policy, Strategy and Programme Support division.

KM is located in the regional bureau in Bangkok. The WFP Bangladesh office has a dedicated knowledge management officer and HQ has two dedicated staff. The other regional bureaus each have at least one focal point.

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52 Based on information shared by Jeremy Douglas, Regional Project Coordinator UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand and other sources

53 Based on information provided by Parvathy Ramaswami, Programme Adviser, Regional Bureau for Asia, United Nations World Food Programme, Bangkok, Thailand and other sources

KM tools or initiatives

Pass It On is based on sharing information collected in peer-assisted and cross-site visits, or after action reviews, and by the templates for 'let us talk' and 'how did we do it'. This information is then stored in the Pass It On web-based application where it is retrievable through a topic tree.

Lessons learnt and obstacles

WFP is in the learning phase with Pass It On. Initially, it was greeted with some scepticism as yet another HQ initiative. Resistance emerged both because it takes time to document what works and what lessons have been learnt, and because no feedback is provided after the information has been shared. Some individuals found the templates difficult to use. A positive change occurred in the perception of KM once the RO began systematic training in KM and started sharing with staff how other COs were documenting and contributing.

Focus

The present focus is internal. The RO, however, is encouraging COs to document their activities (this project is funded by special donor grants) with an aim to collect and showcase best practices and other interesting information that can eventually be incorporated into donor reports.

Future plans

WFP Asia's current focus is to continue to roll out Pass It On and to develop the practice of sharing within the organisation. The organisation will be promoting this application for at least the next two years, after which it is hoped that staff will consider it one of their daily e-tools.

The regional office is encouraging country offices to document their activities with an aim to collect and showcase best practices and other interesting information.

UNICEF KM case studies

KM is of special importance for an organisation such as UNICEF, where offices are globally dispersed, and where high mobility of professional staff requires constant learning and continuous sharing of knowledge and information. A survey of how UNICEF headquarters in general and of how the other South Asia ROs and COs in particular have adopted and adapted KM systems and technologies was of particular interest to ROSA.

UNICEF HQ: Progress in KM (2006)

Over the past year, UNICEF HQ concentrated its work on four different areas of knowledge management:[54]

- In 2006 a formal KM concept note was developed to provide a framework and articulate the specific focus and methods needed to improve KM in UNICEF. The four KM 'core functions' are:
  a. Improving access to good practices and lessons learnt, internally and externally;
  b. Better sharing and reapplying of experiential (tacit) knowledge;
  c. Improving explicit knowledge-sharing;
  d. Fostering innovation and new ideas.

During 2007 the ongoing work on the core functions will continue and the framework will be 'fleshed out' into a more detailed strategy.

- Two weblogs were launched and are currently in use by UNICEF staff. Weblogs are good examples of initiatives contributing to the core functions since they provide an organisational 'space' to share ideas, discuss external developments and document personal experiences. The first weblog focuses upon aid effectiveness and UN reform and is called 'Eyes on the World'. It scans external agencies and activities for new developments, research and policies relevant to child rights and development.

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54 Based on Ross Smith's web blog "In The Know", HQ's KM progress in 2006, January 2007

Summarised entries are used as the basis for internal discussion and debate among UNICEF staff. The second weblog, called 'In the Know', scans for activities, research, evaluations and theories of KM specifically geared to development and promotes internal discussion on KM.

- In realisation of - and in response to - the growing need in this emerging area, several new positions were created in both the areas of knowledge 'management' and 'acquisition'. Specifically, the Programme Division now has seven knowledge acquisition posts and Division of Public Policy (DPP) has four knowledge management posts.[55] In the coming year, KM focal points in both divisions will form working groups whose task will be to identify and document lessons learnt and good practices from different areas of the MTSP.

- New Intranet sites on the MTSP focus areas: young child survival and development; basic education and gender equality; HIV/AIDS and children; children's protection from violence, exploitation and abuse; Avian Influenza; early childhood development; adolescent participation and development; and gender equality have been developed.

UNICEF regional offices

In all seven ROs, all professional staff members are nominally responsible for KM in their areas of expertise. In addition, most ROs have a designated KM person in the Communications and/or PME clusters, and generally short term consultants or programme assistants working full time on KM.

UNICEF HQ has contributed to the successful implementation of KM by preparing a concept note, creating weblogs, Intranet sites on MTSP focus, etc. UNICEF ROs have developed the following KM tools and initiatives around the world: regularly updated regional Intranets, regular e-mail alerts, mailing lists for publications, integration of the UNICEF library into a UN library, KM working groups and mailing lists, regional web sites, MTSP mapping tools, regional calendars, programme resource packages, rosters of consultants, monthly staff newsletter (Infoshare), Website highlights newsletter, Bibliographic and Electronic databases, Information Resource Centres (including photo missions to COs, orientation packages, video library, training of KM focal points, etc.), rosters of policy experts and database of policy impact studies, staff KM survey and KM strategies.

The most common lessons learnt or obstacles shared by the ROs' KM focal points are that resources are needed if information and knowledge are to be well-shared. To succeed, KM must be a priority for senior management. KM tools should be developed with the end-user in mind. A governance structure is necessary for a regional Intranet. People can lose interest in new KM tools when feedback on their use is not shared. In the end, KM often relies on people, requires quality work and proper dissemination. Ultimately, KM takes time and requires a strong commitment from all staff.

Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Geneva, Switzerland

Background
The UNICEF RO for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS), along with the RO for Latin America and the Caribbean, was one of the first

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55   Seven knowledge acquisition posts focus primarily on KM issues (levels: 1 P5, 2 P4, 3 P3 and 1 G7), and two posts (levels: 1 P4 and 1 P2) and an Special Service Agreement focus part-time on KM issues. All sections in the PD have knowledge acquisition focal points if they do not have a dedicated post. In DPP, three KM posts (levels: 1 P5, 2 P3) have primarily KM focus, while one (level: 1 P5) has part-time focus.

ROs to implement knowledge management initiatives.[56] In April 2005, CEE/CIS launched the first UNICEF RO web site. A few months later, it conducted a survey among all staff in the CEE/CIS RO to find out how information was being shared and what improvements could be made. The results of the survey were discussed at the Regional Retreat in December 2005. This internal assessment was the beginning of a series of KM reports, funding proposals and action plans.

KM tools and initiatives
The CEE/CIS KM reports precipitated concrete improvements in the way knowledge was exchanged within the RO; including weekly stand up meetings (intended mainly - but not exclusively - for professional staff), daily management of the CEE/CIS web site, conceptualisation of a regional Intranet to address the needs of the RO, creation and maintenance of programmatic resource packages (e.g. violence against children, child protection), etc. The RO also developed a roster of policy experts to assist national policy makers, as well as a database of policy impact studies on social protection.

KM tools should be developed with the end-user in mind.

Location and staffing
KM functions are mainly concentrated in three sections: Communications; Social Policy, Advocacy and Partnerships; and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. There is, however, no formal focal point working full time on KM.

Lessons learnt and obstacles
Staffing continues to be a challenge. A consultant has been assigned to work full time on the web site and on the regional Intranet; in all likelihood, this position will be converted into a P3 post managed by the Communications Section.

Important lessons learnt were first, that time and strong commitment are required to encourage staff to share information systematically; and second, that commitment at the highest managerial level is essential if knowledge management is to succeed.

Focus
CEE/CIS is a regional KM hub, both internally and externally. The regional web site, which receives more than 120,000 hits per month, is intended for the general public and is updated daily with relevant information from COs. Most COs also have their own web sites, but these are updated only infrequently. The CO Communications officers weekly send stories, publications, newsletters and pictures to the RO who selects, edits and posts the material on-line. A monthly newsletter is sent to RO staff to inform them of what is new on the web site, what the major launches are, web statistics, etc.

KM takes time and requires strong commitment from all staff, and the support of senior management is essential.

Future plans
A regional Intranet based on each section's resources is now being finalised, with the following functions: to facilitate knowledge-sharing in the region as well as with other ROs; update Who's Who (complete with contact information) and facilitate the linking of staff within CEE/CIS. A Regional Director's blog and a forum for discussion (or feedback) are also being considered. Every section is responsible for selection and sharing via the public network drive where the resources to be posted on-line include: all final reports, state of the art information, publications, etc.

Ideally, the CEE/CIS regional Intranet will eventually be exported to a UN platform in order to share the information with partner organisations. The creation of the CEE/CIS RO Intranet is being seen as a possible step toward a global UN Intranet which would avoid the unnecessary duplication of work, promote collective actions by a more unified UN system, aim at fulfilling the promises of the Millennium Declaration and help ensure that the rights of children worldwide are realised.

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56 Based on information provided by Gaëlle Sévenier, who was affiliated with CEE/CIS for two years, and other sources

East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand

Background
In 2004 UNICEF's RO for East Asia and the Pacific (EAPRO) in Bangkok, Thailand conducted a workshop on KM and produced a draft information and KM strategy and action plan.[57]

KM definition
EAPRO's definition of what KM can become envisions it as an environment where results-based programming is supported by a culture of generating, sharing, accessing and effectively using information and knowledge for children's rights.

KM draft strategy
EAPRO has put forth a detailed strategy designed to make the most of UNICEF's extensive information and knowledge resources.

- Build stronger partnerships aimed at achieving positive outcomes for women and children in the region:
  - Target advocacy efforts in favour of children's rights with media, civil society and the private sector;
  - Influence policy and legislation for children through sustained advocacy with decision makers at both national and sub national levels;
  - Highlight the concerns of children in the UN Reform process;
  - Participate in Sector Wide Approach(SWAp) exercises in order to influence allocation of resources in favour of children.
- Enable staff to become more effective in information and knowledge management:
  - Broaden awareness and understanding of information and knowledge management concepts and systems;
  - Ensure better use of existing information and knowledge management tools;
  - Invest in improving the capacity of staff members, including availability of time, for information and knowledge management.
- Improve access to available internal and external information and knowledge:
  - Identify key areas where sharing of knowledge would enhance programme effectiveness;
  - Ensure staff access through improved connectivity to UNICEF and to external sources of information;
  - Make programme information available to staff and partners through appropriate channels such as CD-ROMs and regional and country level websites;
  - Improve the access UNICEF staff have to state-of-the-art scientific and technical information and knowledge;
  - Improve quality of evaluations and use these systematically to improve programme performance.
- Improve the ability to generate, acquire, manage and use statistical data from the region:
  - Complete the roll out of DevInfo[58] within UNICEF and support its use by partners (including government);
  - Continue and enhance the MICS[59] process in collaboration with governments;
  - Support surveys for areas not or insufficiently covered by MICS, e.g. child protection, child injury and nutrition;

Commitment at the highest managerial level is essential if knowledge management is to succeed.

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57 Based on information shared by Madeline Eisner, Regional Communication Adviser; Richard Bridle, Deputy Regional Director; Shantha Bloemen, Communications Officer; Christopher David, PME Adviser and other sources
58 DevInfo, a United Nations project, allows the sharing of data across government departments and UN agencies using the same system, adapted from UNICEF's ChildInfo software
59 MICS is the Multi Indicator Cluster Survey that takes place every 5 years

- Ensure the development and integration of indicators for new areas;
- Improve access to and the use of statistical data.
- Ensure that the information and knowledge generated and circulated is of sufficient quality and that UNICEF staff have the critical competence to recognise that quality:
  - Ensure preparation of basic orientation materials intended to enhance competency in the skills needed to critically view and interpret data;
  - Ensure that all programme (and communication) staff have basic M&E skills;
  - Use planning and M&E staff more effectively to reinforce quality control in the generation and use of data;
  - Develop evaluation standards and criteria that can be used to review technical and analytical work.
- Put in place mechanisms to take better advantage of unrecorded knowledge and experiences (tacit knowledge):
  - Find better ways of systematically documenting and sharing best practices;
  - Develop a regional directory of expertise in areas of regional priority and make it available through the EAPRO Intranet;
  - Build communities/networks that can be used to exchange information and experience based on identified needs.
- Establish an overall framework for information and knowledge management in the region:
  - Adopt and promote IKM as a regional priority and include this in the regional office work plan;
  - Define regional IKM policies and associated guidelines;
  - Define and assign roles and responsibilities for IKM at both the regional and the country level;
  - Develop a monitoring framework for IKM;
  - Integrate IKM into existing processes at the country level, including annual reports, staff training plan, country programme planning process, etc.[60]

Location and staffing

The Planning Monitoring and Evaluation section originally took on the bulk of the KM functions but more recently the approach has been broadened, with more groups becoming involved. KM is also part of the regional advisers work plan, even if the extent of their involvement has not yet been specified and remains somewhat *ad hoc*. For example, the Social and Economic Policy Adviser spends a substantial proportion of time on KM and a proactive assistant documentation officer works full time on KM with the help of the IT office on implementing KM newsletters, updating the web site, etc.

KM tools or initiatives developed or used

- DevInfo
- MICS
- Contribution with ROSA to the UN Initiative Evaluation Development group
- EAPRO invested in a roster of consultants, especially emergency focused
- Library
- EAPRO web site (35,811 hits in February 2007), updated by the Assistant Documentation Officer with information coming from COs; a web site advisory group meets quarterly with one focal point per section
- Photography and video catalogue on Lotus notes
- Programme meetings once a month
- Regional Intranet
- InfoShare - a very attractive and user-friendly monthly newsletter discusses what is new in the region, provides links to new documents on the Intranet, provides a regional

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60   Proposed EAPRO Information and KM Strategy and Action Plan, 29 September 2004

activities calendar, shares new resources from COs, provides country situation analyses, links to interesting news stories, etc.

- East Asia and Pacific Website Highlights - a monthly newsletter sent to all staff in the region and, on request, to external subscribers.

Lessons learnt and obstacles

- KM often relies on individual initiative. For example, a proactive and creative assistant documentation officer updates the web site and also writes informative and attractive KM newsletters - she receives feedback and her role is appreciated. People often lose interest in maintaining new tools because they do not receive feedback on usage.
- Available tools and knowledge-sharing technologies must be advertised, especially to newcomers. More often than not, tools are produced but not adequately shared with or presented to staff for their use.
- Web sites need to be designed with the end-user in mind. For example, EAPRO's attempt at developing a website based on UNICEF's Red Dot template lacked the needed flexibility to be EAPRO's face to the world and be a useful tool for its COs.
- KM tasks must be prioritised to avoid conflicts of time management and financial commitments.

KM tasks must be prioritised to avoid conflicts of time management and financial commitments.

Focus

The KM activities have an external focus through the web site and newsletter that are accessible to outsiders. Internally, the RO has monthly programme meetings with staff in each cluster; these are open to all. Since 1991 this RO has facilitated the East Asia and Pacific ministerial consultations on children that occur every two years. The present focus is on building a regional body of knowledge on emerging issues related to children.

Future plans

- In the long term, EAPRO plans to share information beyond UNICEF. However, exactly how this will take place and how it will be managed has not been articulated. In the short term, EAPRO is about to launch an on-line database or resource package to be an emergency tool book for communication materials on key 'facts for life' areas. At present, EAPRO's main focus is Avian Influenza.
- Senior management plans to set guidelines on how much staff time should be dedicated to KM. KM is expected to play a role in the next bi-annual budget and to soon be included in job descriptions.
- EAPRO is examining the possibility of adapting the Solution Exchange initiative at a regional level.
- Plans have been made to improve the regional Intranet; in its present form it is not user-friendly.
- EAPRO is also considering a survey and an internal assessment of KM similar to the one ROSA is sharing in this report.
- Senior management plans to address staff complaints that the RO is too fragmented, and to improve internal communications by organising monthly brown bag lunches.

Eastern and Southern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya

Background

The External Communications Section of UNICEF's RO for Eastern and Southern Africa (ESARO) in Nairobi, Kenya was tasked with developing ways to enhance advocacy outreach in the region, to facilitate information circulation and to improve the sharing of lessons learnt.[61] As part of this work they joined forces with their IT and other sections to

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61 Based on information shared by Patricia Lone, Senior Communication Adviser, both in 2007 to ROSA and in 2005 during an interview with the author for UNICEF CEE/CIS, and other sources

create the ESARO Intranet site (launched in October 2005), and in so doing developed this RO's first knowledge management tools.

Location and staffing
This RO has no KM focal point *per se* and KM duties are shared. The External Communications Section works on a few specific KM initiatives, as does the planning section. An Assistant Documentation Officer (NO-B) is responsible for posting new documents on their Intranet. In addition, in most sections, all professional staff members manage knowledge in their respective areas and share it with their counterparts in the COs.

KM initiatives
The ESARO Intranet contains:
- Resource materials on regional priority programmes as well as on special initiatives such as the Unite for Children campaign, and the Secretary General's study on Violence against Children, etc.
- An extensive document database which consists of the electronic versions of many publications that were previously available only in printed form from the RO library.
- Contact lists intended to help users identify contacts and possible partners.
- A calendar of events which helps share dates for events, etc.
- The Intranet is updated on a regular basis and subscribers are alerted about new materials through bi-monthly e-mails.

ESARO has also developed a mailing list that has improved the distribution and targeting of publications.

In addition, the External Communication Section managed the transfer and integration of the UNICEF library collection into the UN library of the UN complex in Nairobi. UNICEF ESARO now has a presence in the UN library and UNICEF staff in the RO can access the library's catalogue on-line.

Lessons learnt
- Skilled KM professionals are needed if information and knowledge are to be shared well. ESARO does not presently have enough resources to adequately manage the Intranet.
- KM resources must be easy to use. At present, access to the ESARO Intranet site is indirect; since links to it must go through the main UNICEF Intranet it is very cumbersome to use.
- Since information sharing takes time and effort, experience shows unless KM is a top management priority contributors lose interest, pages are not updated, and the original efforts quickly become obsolete.
- Unlike the Intranet, which is passive and user-driven, other forms of information sharing activity need to have clear objectives and positive buy-in from users to operate effectively; otherwise even good systems quickly become neglected.

Focus
While the ESARO Intranet was primarily intended as an internal information sharing resource for offices within the region, it has nevertheless become a resource for UNICEF users from other regions and also for HQ.

Future plans
A case can be made for a regional Internet web site, but this is not feasible with present staffing and financial resource levels.

Middle East and North Africa, Amman, Jordan

Background
The principal motivations for organisational change in UNICEF's RO for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in Amman, Jordan in the area of KM is the need to re-position UNICEF as a credible knowledge-based organisation in the region and to respond to the growing need to report on the basis of evidence.[62] The demand for knowledge leadership roles includes identifying knowledge assets within the organisation; recognising the potential for future intellectual capital, 'training young blood' and maximising MENA's potential as a learning organisation. The RO also needs to deal with upgrading technology to stay in synch with changing knowledge management strategies; to continuously learn from others' successes; and finally to strengthen KM along the lines envisioned in the current MTSP. These transformations are being guided to some degree by HQ, which provides information in the form of HQ newsletters, Information Management Unit and Intranet, and Infonet updates.

KM strategy and definition
MENA does not have a KM strategy, concept note or definition *per se*, but a survey of its activities shows that the implicit definition is of a process involving acquisition, dissemination and utilisation. MENA is presently promoting knowledge networking with its COs, and this enhanced interaction is expected to eventually result in shared knowledge databases (best practices, expertise directories, centres of excellence, etc.) that can be updated regularly. Integrating this approach within the existing planning and strategy formulation processes is expected to help achieve sustainable success in the area of knowledge management.

Location and staffing
KM was originally envisioned as a core function of the communications team and grew out of the team's work, which involved exchanges with COs and media partners in the region. The Information Resource Centre (IRC) was first established to make UNICEF's wealth of information on policies and programmes more easily available in-house. Today at least two-thirds of RO staff regularly rely on the IRC's services. The IRC's original internal customer-service orientation has evolved over time as it has acquired a growing number of digital and broadcast-quality materials; in part because of this collection the centre now has excellent visibility. The extended mandate of the IRC includes giving orientations on corporate branding, scheduling of photo missions to COs and updating the digital video library, among other duties. The IRC has an especially strong relationship with the monitoring and evaluation unit, which helps it measure the effectiveness of approaches, clarify common goals in the use of the IRC and collect reliable information needed for decision-making.

The IRC is managed by a permanent coordinator who is MENA's communication assistant. The IRC regularly reviews its actions and prospective annual work plans with the RO Communications Section. All regional and CO staff members contribute to the IRC in one way or the other.

KM tools or initiatives developed
- Bibliographic and electronic databases that include a contact tracking database, a digital photo library, a video library, several electronic databases, general collection and subscription to an e-journal database.

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[62] Based on information shared by Akila Belembaogo, Krishna Belbase, Samia Salameh, Wolfgang Friedl, MENA RO in collaboration with Anna Riatti, Azimur Rahman, Golda El-Khoury, Hem Bohora, Mahendra Sheth, Malak Zaalouk, Munir Safieldin, Nargis Pervin, Osama Makkawi, Thomas Davin, Trish Hiddleston, Vincent Smith, Anis Salem and other sources

Skilled KM professionals are needed if information and knowledge are to be shared well.

Information sharing activities need to have clear objectives and positive buy-in from users to operate effectively.

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- MENA Intranet: the RO has a limited Intranet which includes a contact list, calendar of events, document repository and a discussion database on specific issues.
- The IRC also schedules photo missions to COs with the purpose of updating their image and video catalogues on children (particularly those relevant for MENA).
- Starting in 2005, the IRC took the lead in assigning well-trained KM focal persons at the CO level to enhance their networking. IRC also provides guidance and support to COs to help them build up their information systems in line with standards used in HQ.
- Other RO products intended to facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge:
  - UNICEF global website in Arabic
  - MENA fact sheets and regional and country-specific Q&As
  - Thematic media spokespersons list (UNICEF, UN and beyond)
  - Strategy papers
  - DevInfo / ArabInfo
  - Database development
  - Dissemination of studies and evaluations
  - Management responses to evaluations.

Lessons learnt and major obstacles

Time is the biggest constraint; managing knowledge in a systematic manner requires serious thinking, quality work, proper dissemination and overall organisation, all of which take substantial inputs of time and effort. Also needed are financial and other resources that are not always readily available.

Only strong leadership at the highest levels of management will provide the necessary direction to effectively implement a knowledge management strategy. The leadership must become directly involved in creating a vision of how the organisation can use knowledge more effectively, in communicating that vision, and in building a culture that regards knowledge as a vital resource.

Focus

At present, the IRC is mainly internally focused but as it continues to acquire materials, it is slowly moving towards a more global focus.

Future plans

MENA plans to give KM a more systematic and concrete focus and to support this with adequate resources. Existing processes and products need to be enhanced to become more effective and efficient and there needs to be additional focus on the user requirements. The RO will need to continue to be alert to the potential of new technologies, and to encourage the COs to develop their own KM strategies and help them implement them as needed.

Latin America and the Caribbean, Panama City, Panama

KM definition

UNICEF's RO for Latin America and the Caribbean (TACRO) defines knowledge management in terms of 'collecting and connecting', a definition deriving from a realisation that while collecting, organising and facilitating access to information is necessary, linking people who have questions to those who have answers is equally necessary. Knowledge management is more than either a static documentation centre or a new technology; it is an ongoing process that promotes a participatory approach to information and knowledge creation, capture, organisation, dissemination and use. It is not a passive exercise, but requires the involvement and commitment of its users in order to function.

KM strategy

TACRO was the first RO to create an extensive Intranet, to draft a KM strategy and to collaborate with other UN organisations on KM.[63] In its approach to KM, it is at the forefront of all UNICEF ROs.

In 2005 TACRO's Planning Unit developed a KM draft strategy whose objective was to develop mechanisms and processes to better manage the knowledge, information, experience and learning acquired as an organisation. The aim was to promote learning through better access and management of information, improved capturing and sharing of experiences and organisational learning (both within and outside of UNICEF), and to increase interaction between individuals, teams and offices.

TACRO's draft KM strategy identifies several new mechanisms and processes that can be used to organise information and knowledge, including:

- A programme gateway giving access to basic UNICEF programme information and programming and management tools;
- A linkage to state of the art information in key programme areas within UNICEF and with other organisations;
- Mechanisms to identify experiences and lessons learned within UNICEF;
- Processes to facilitate 'interlinkage' i.e. connectivity and networking among individuals and groups for the express purpose of sharing experiences;
- Mechanisms to centralise and make accessible information and statistics on the situation of children in the region;
- Mechanisms to centralise access to information in key areas of communication, mobilisation, advocacy and partnership development;
- A 'space' that could be used to share information and invite discussion on internal staff events and issues; and
- A link with existing and proposed documentation centres to support their increasing regional co-operation.[64]

Managing knowledge in a systematic manner requires serious thinking, quality work, proper dissemination and overall organisation, all of which take substantial inputs of time and effort.

Location and staffing

Most sections in this RO perform knowledge management functions in their own areas and share with their counterparts in the COs. However, the Planning Section has specific and explicit responsibility over KM initiatives even though it lacks any staff whose sole responsibility is KM. Two persons in the Planning Section and one or two in the Communication Section have KM functions in their job description.

KM tools or initiatives

TACRO developed the following KM tools and initiatives: the new RO Intranet, the LAC Internet site, the MTSP mapping tool, the regional calendar and a special site built specifically for communications.

The leadership must become directly involved in creating a vision and in building a culture that regards knowledge as a vital resource.

Lessons learnt and obstacles

- TACRO's PME team reported on the many possible pitfalls when starting KM initiatives. They have learnt from the creation of the new Intranet and the previous one the importance of clearly assigning governance and responsibilities. The lack of a clear definition combined with a somewhat fuzzy notion of KM in general tends to discourage users from seeing potential benefits.

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63 Based on information shared by Michelle Baron of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit; Robert Cohen, the Regional Communications Adviser; John Fallgren, Intranet manager and KM consultant; and other sources

64 TACRO's KM draft strategy, 2005

- The end-user must be kept in mind at all times when developing new tools. When tools are developed in isolation, without consulting the end-user during the development process, they often end up not being used.
- The development of Intranet tools usually takes longer than initially anticipated and obtaining buy-in from the different sections at the outset is essential. The TACRO experience is that assistant programme officers were initially willing to participate by dedicating 10% of their time to knowledge management functions. In the end, however, the work involved was more onerous than originally anticipated; because of other conflicting work pressures, the KM functions, which had not been included in their PERs, were quickly abandoned. Today, a consultant manages their Intranet.
- With the new Intranet, TACRO is developing an interesting new concept. TACRO is seeking collaboration with other countries in Latin America by requesting that they maintain their own pages within the TACRO Intranet. It is too soon to draw any decisive conclusions about the outcome of this experiment, but at first look the results appear inspiring and seem to suggest that this could be something that other regions could adopt.
- Finally, there is an HR issue which must be addressed – since posts are often left vacant a long time, there is an urgent need for debriefing protocols to ensure that tacit knowledge remains in the office. The organisation recognises that the debriefing protocols are needed to ensure that new staff members have a proper hand over.

The development of Intranet tools usually takes longer than initially anticipated.

Focus

For the time being TACRO's KM focus is regional and the presence of a number of UN and other NGO organisations in the 'city of knowledge' in Panama provides unique opportunities for regional collaboration and initiatives. Should these materialise, TACRO can possibly begin to consider global collaborations.

Future plans

TACRO plans to continue to develop the new Intranet and to build alliances with other UN organisations to create an Extranet. The KM team had interesting discussions with another UN organisation about tapping into their new knowledge platform in order to ensure a more strategic focus. A very exciting project of creating an Internet Master's course on evaluation is being developed. This is a joint collaboration between UNICEF and the academic world. TACRO hopes it will increase the quality of evaluations within the UNICEF organisation.

South Asia, Kathmandu, Nepal

UNICEF's information hub in South Asia

UNICEF's RO for South Asia (ROSA) serves eight countries of South Asia where, collectively, one quarter of the world's children live. These are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. This RO provides oversight and guidance, technical support and coordination to the eight COs of the region. ROSA provides trend analysis of commonalities and diversities, and manages financial and human resources within the region to support individual countries to achieve results for children. ROSA is also the key facilitator of a process of peer review and exchange among UNICEF offices whereby decisions at the country and regional levels can profit by sharing and drawing on the rich experiences and capabilities of UNICEF staff and partners.[65]

ROSA began systematic work on Knowledge Management in mid-2006. It created a Knowledge Management Team and commissioned a conceptual work on KM outlining the

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65 Consolidation provided by Suleiman Braimoh, Regional Programme Planning Adviser and Regional Coordinator, Child Rights, ROSA

purpose and function of KM in general and for UNICEF in South Asia in particular.[66] Subsequently, a consultancy looking into KM practices was undertaken in 2006/2007, the result of which is this report.

Conceptual framework

ROSA aims at being UNICEF's KM hub in South Asia, coordinating and facilitating the management of information and research on child rights and development and providing the technical means and platforms for sharing the results with the wider development community and governments.[67] UNICEF ROSA has already begun to institutionalise KM in its regional plan, and in order to reach that goal it needs to use information and knowledge more systematically, including:[68]

- capturing, compiling, enriching, systematising, codifying and storing knowledge and information from:

There is an urgent need for debriefing protocols to ensure that tacit knowledge remains in the office.

ROSA KM Conceptual Framework[69]

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66   Mariana Stirbu, Op.cit.
67   Dr. Suleiman Braimoh, Regional Planning Officer, ROSA September 2006, "Linking KM and PME in ROSA and COs for better results for the children of South Asia",
68   Mariana Stirbu, Op.cit.
69   Draws on UNICEF ROSA's KM Hexagon. See Mariana Stirbu, Op.cit.

- recorded CO experiences, CO ARs and M&E reports;
- policy analysis provided by COs and Regional Advisers;
- existing regional and country research;
- documents in various formats that are available in the region; and
- personal experiences and tacit knowledge.
- generating new knowledge by commissioning research;
- developing better KM sharing practices among ROSA and CO colleagues and ROSA and the wider UN community/development community in South Asia;
- developing advocacy and communications tools; and
- developing the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems needed to better enable dissemination of knowledge and information.

ROSA also identified five main conceptual axes:[70]

1. **Collecting**: pulling together knowledge and information for use in programming and policy analysis and advocacy.
2. **Connecting**: linking knowledge, people and technology to support learning and organisational development and achievement in areas relevant to children's development. This implies interaction with people inside and outside the organisation (building existing partnerships, networks and creating new ones).
3. **Planning**: designing, conceptually and operationally, programmes for achieving better results for children. Effective planning is the outcome of high-quality evidence-based analysis.
4. **Monitoring and evaluation**: monitoring outcomes and performance for improving interventions for better results for children. M&E findings feed into the design of new interventions.
5. **Policy analysis and advocacy**: applying knowledge and information to influence governments and leverage resources and policies for better results for children.

ROSA is advising the use of KM results in programming; KM is therefore seen as integral to the entire programme of UNICEF both at the country and regional level. This approach was first presented at the PME meeting in Sept. 2006.

Inventory of ROSA's existing KM systems and tools

This section provides an inventory of the KM systems and tools presently in use within ROSA.

- *KM working group*

A KM working group was set up in ROSA with eight members including the Deputy Regional Director (Frances Turner), Regional Adviser for Social Policy (Gabriele Koehler), Regional Communications Officer (Martin Dawes), Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (Soma De Silva), Regional IT Officer (Raul Castillo), Assistant Documentation Officer (Shyam Giri), Assistant Communications Officer (Binita Shah). The Communications and KM Consultant (Gaëlle Sévenier) worked closely with this working group and the Social Policy Project Officer (Mariana Stirbu). The group meets periodically to discuss KM strategy and action plans in the RO. The Assistant Documentation Officer in the ROSA library works full time on KM and KM related tasks.

- *Regional Web site : www.unicef.org/rosa*

In December 2006 ROSA launched a regional website which provides updated thematically-clustered information on young child survival and development; maternal mortality; basic

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70   Mariana Stirbu, Op.cit.

education and gender equality; HIV/AIDS and children; social policy; and child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse.[71] The web site was created by the Communications Section with inputs from advisers. The number of hits to the ROSA web site has increased every month since its inception: December 2006: 15,910 hits; January 2007: 19:469 hits; February 2007: 30,237 hits. While the numbers of hits doubled in three months, it remains low in comparison to other ROs such as CEE/CIS, which gets 120,000 hits per month. The regional site is occasionally updated by the Communications Section, a task shared between the Assistant Documentation Officer and the Assistant Communications Officer. The target audience of the web site is the general public as well as ROSA and CO staff.

- *ROSA library*

ROSA has its own library staffed with a full time resource person. It archives 6,000 to 7,000 documents including ROSA publications, publications from UNICEF SA COs, HQ, partner organisations, etc. Most users come to the library for academic journals and magazines, and to a lesser extent for books and hard copies. ROSA also subscribes to many on-line publications.

- *ROSA Intranet*

The RO developed a small database on the global Intranet. Restricted information is accessed with a password. A child protection database was developed in 2005 by the Child Protection Section. There is also a consultant database of regional advisers set up by HR. The ROSA library also has a password protected platform Intranet. The existing ROSA Intranet is a possible base for a more complete Regional Intranet.

- *Electronic databases*

Lotus Notes Databases facilitate the sharing of internal information. Presently, Lotus Notes contains 20 databases including a Bulletin Board, ROSA Calendar of Events, Property Inventory, Trip Reports, ROSA's roster of consultants, etc.

The most visited databases are:
- Bulletin Board, with a hit rate of 420 reading and 30 writing sessions (Jan. 2007);
- Donor Reports, with a hit rate of 123 reading and 87 writing sessions (Jan. 2007);
- Trip Reports (created at the end of September 2006) with a hit rate of 60 reading sessions and 24 writing sessions (Jan. 2007).

Several other databases are planned to be added, a Security and Travel Database as well as linkages established with the evaluation databases.[72] The plan is also to convert other UNICEF databases into Lotus Notes, so that everything is consolidated into one application.

- *Shared network drives*

ROSA's public drive P:/ is accessible to all staff from their personal computer, although new resources are only uploaded by IT. Most sections own their own network drive (G/, N/, S/…).

- *Communities of Practice*

A high proportion of ROSA staff belongs to a CoP or a network specific to their area of expertise. This is a community that is electronically connected and whose boundaries stretch far beyond the ROSA office itself.

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71   Ibid.
72   Based on information provided by Sudip Khadka, IT Assistant

- *Tacit knowledge*

ROSA's experienced staff are the repository of much tacit knowledge; the office is still in the process of deciding how best to handle this knowledge so as to share it electronically. For the time being, this knowledge resides in the ROSA staff and can be accessed by the more traditional method of in-person interviews.

- *ROSA staff meetings*

Considerable information is still shared at in-person meetings. Heads of all clusters meet weekly on Mondays and have another 'topic of the week' meeting on Wednesdays. Staff also meet on specific issues, for example security, organisational review and the like. The ROSA Regional Biannual Retreat includes all ROSA staff.

- *KM publications and other channels*

ROSA has many other channels for disseminating information to the public; these include workshops, seminars, presentations, publications, etc. Publications include the 'Working Paper' series and the 'What Works' booklets, both of which provide good examples of recommended practices. ROSA clusters also publish series on specific topics, such as Education and the Child, Social Policy, etc. and other *ad hoc* publications as needed.

- *KM innovations developed by staff*

Staff members from the RO have contributed to innovations that have helped increase networking and knowledge-sharing or have helped ensure the dissemination of best practices and the latest research in their area of expertise. Innovations already developed by staff include:
- Newsletters
- Tool kits
- Resource kits on the ROSA web sites
- Various CD ROMs
- A synopsis of studies and evaluations for 2006
- Research institute databases
- A consultant database
- Child protection information centre in the RO Intranet
- Manuals distributed during workshops
- Pilot testing of simulation exercises in COs in case of an Avian Influenza pandemic, involving other UN organisations
- Multi-sectoral rapid assessment toolkit
- Mailing lists, including extended generic e-mails list by functions with 2 or 3 people for each CO
- Network meetings

> Most users come to the library for academic journals and magazines, and to a lesser extent for books and hard copies. ROSA also subscribes to many online publications.

West and Central Africa, Dakar, Senegal

In July 2004 UNICEF's RO for West and Central Africa, (WCARO) in Dakar, Senegal recruited a mid-level professional (P3) to oversee and coordinate IKM in the region, finalise and implement IKM regional strategy, promote IKM initiatives in the region, support IKM staff in COs etc. WCARO now has a small regional Intranet designed to facilitate information sharing among its COs in West and Central Africa. The Intranet provides information on good practices, innovations and lessons learnt, as well as a regional calendar and other items of interest.[73]

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73   Based on information compiled in 2005 by Gaëlle Sévenier from the WCARO home page and other sources

UNICEF South Asia country offices

The COs in the South Asia region have direct roles to play in collecting and compiling data and information, and most of them have complemented these roles with KM projects. In four South Asia COs, KM is mostly placed under PME in close collaboration with Communications. Bhutan has one KM focal point; in Bangladesh, one project officer works full time on KM with the help of a Database Assistant and Chief PME Officer; in India, the PME Officer dedicates some of her time to KM, with the help of a librarian, a consultant and many interns who write case studies for the CO. South Asia COs participate in or have developed many KM tools and initiatives, including: Solution Exchange (India and Bhutan), M&E networks, KM needs assessments, KM working groups, digital libraries, maps and networks with partners, research agendas, networks of libraries, KM web sites, academic courses, field monitoring networks and travel management systems; as well as initiatives like donor lunch meetings.

This section provides four case studies of South Asia COs and their KM initiatives.

Methodology
Along with an on-line survey, interviews (both face-to-face and on-line) were conducted in January 2007 with selected KM focal points in the South Asia COs. KM focal points in COs were asked the following questions:
- Did your office draft a KM strategy or concept note you could share with us?
- Did your office adopt a definition for KM? If so, which one?
- Where (in which department?) Is the KM initiative located in your office?
- How many staff members work directly on KM?

- What KM tools or initiatives have you developed in your CO?
- What lessons learnt could you share with ROSA about those tools and initiatives?
- Do your KM activities have an external focus? (global or regional ?)
- What are your future plans related to KM?

UNICEF Bhutan

KM tools or initiatives developed[74]

Knowledge-sharing among UN agencies takes place at the UN Country Team meetings, but discussion is often limited. Knowledge-sharing with the donor community occurs at regular donor lunch meetings, which provide a forum for information exchange. In either case, however, a proper knowledge-sharing forum is lacking and sharing best practices and lessons learnt remains difficult.

The office is currently involved in re-organising the internal UNICEF library, updating electronic folders and revitalising the CO website.

UNICEF Bhutan participates in a KM initiative coordinated by UNCT, and is now involved in a pilot modelled on the Solution Exchange India experience.

UNICEF is presently co-operating with the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) on Monitoring and Evaluation - this area has two KM anchored initiatives:
- DrukInfo, a version of DevInfo, a data sharing mechanism tailored to Bhutan's particular needs. In 2007, it will be launched in a web-version and will allow monitoring of MDG indicators as well as key indicators of the 10th Five Year Plan.
- Monitoring and Evaluation Network aimed at government officials to help them strengthen the linkages among different levels of the country's M&E institutional structure. A concept paper is being drafted. Links with the Solution Exchange project are also being identified.

At the office level, several coordination and knowledge-sharing mechanisms are already in place: Programme Implementation meetings, Country Management Team meetings, retreats, quarterly and annual reviews, various committee and *ad hoc* purpose-specific meetings. The office also plans to improve the library and e-filing systems, research studies and evaluation reports. At present, no specific strategy is in place that encompasses all the various knowledge-sharing and coordination practices.

Location and staffing

The PME Section is running the KM project in conjunction with the RGoB. One staff member is the KM focal point but also has other assigned tasks.

Lessons learnt

In order to achieve buy-in, KM tools and initiatives need to be shown and proven to be a sound necessity. They must be simple and user-friendly and entail as little cost as possible; otherwise people lose interest and the system becomes difficult to sustain. Good documentation of UNICEF experiences, lessons learnt and tacit knowledge is lacking.

Focus

At first the Solution Exchange initiative will be nationally oriented. During the pilot stage, the membership is limited to the UN and bilateral donors in Bhutan. In the long run, members of the network community will be expanded to include out-of-country members

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74 Based on information shared by Alexandru Nartea, JPO, M&E, Bhutan Country Office and other sources

with an interest in Bhutan, those whose jobs are in one way or another related to Bhutan, or who have experience in or exposure to Bhutan.

Future KM plans

The intention is to first support and subsequently to assess the feasibility and potential of the Solution Exchange initiative. If this initiative is successful, Bhutan will explore the possibility of integrating the M&E network with the Solution Exchange initiative by creating a thematic community.

In 2007 DrukInfo/BhutanInfo will be officially launched in a web-enabled version. As the site continues to be updated with relevant information and as users and administrators become more comfortable with it, use of the system should increase.

UNICEF Bangladesh

KM strategy[75]

The CO KM system aims to identify information on the situation of children and use it to enhance planning, monitoring and evaluation of programmes as well as to generate knowledge to support evidence-based policy analysis and advocacy.

Location and staffing

In 2005 a consultant was hired to carry out a needs assessment and to recommend a strategy. KM is presently part of the PME Section but also has close ties with the Communications Section. This section will include a sub-unit for KM, to be implemented by three staff, but to date two out of the three staff have not yet been recruited. The project officer (NO-B) works 100% on KM with the help of a database assistant (GS-6). The head of PME (L 3) spends 5-10% of his/her time on KM, and the M&E officer spends about 20% of his/her time on KM.

KM tools and initiatives

Before starting to implement the new KM system, a needs assessment had pointed to the need for a better system with which to access shared data and information between sections, the need for an agreement on key statistics and a common protocol for sharing these, the need for more effective use of strategic data and information, and the need for strategic and systematic tracking of project partners and lessons learnt.

The Bangladesh CO KM initiative is built on the idea of incentives for sharing information within the organisation and between sections, identifying partners and capitalising on their information capacity, establishing a resource and reference point for knowledge on children and advocating for children's rights through evidence-based policy advice contained in briefing papers. Its key components are to set up KM working groups to periodically assess needs and priorities; to upgrade the existing databases (such as, for example, DevInfo and Ryan's News Archive); to create a digital library of documents and data for general use; to establish protocols for accessing and using external data; to map and establish networks with partners in Bangladesh; and to disseminate enhanced information and policy advice within UNICEF and to partners.

Focus

Initially the focus will be on the internal KM system set up within UNICEF (during the first half of 2007). Later, the strategy will shift its focus to generate and disseminate knowledge externally within Bangladesh, and eventually also globally. In the long term, it is expected

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75 Based on information shared by Misaki Ueda, and Kirsty McIvor, Chief, Communication and Information, Bangladesh Country Office, the 2006 work plan concept note and other sources

that a similar KM system on children's and women's issues will be developed in the government and among national partners.

Future KM plans and expected outcomes
The expected outcomes of an enhanced KM system in the Bangladesh CO include:
- Better collection and sharing of data,
- Efficient systems to update and maintain contacts,
- The compilation of evidence-based information that should promote a better understanding of issues for policy advocacy.[76]

UNICEF India

KM strategy and definition[77]
The India CO did not adopt a KM strategy *per se* but drafted the Knowledge Community on Children in India (KCCI) "Turning Policy into Practice" concept paper in 2005. This concept paper puts forth the following strategy: the KM initiative will promote the involvement of key partners such as the government, UN agencies, NGOs, think-tanks, academic institutions (at national and state level) and will also promote the involvement of UNICEF staff members. Key individuals and institutions from the international community will supplement this capacity at strategic intervals. This initiative will coordinate with other relevant systems and add value by focusing primarily on processes that promote knowledge generation and sharing related to children and women.[78]

Location and staffing
In the CO, the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation team is the KM hub, which works closely with Communications. In terms of staffing, while the PME Officer dedicates some time to KM, this work is often superseded by issues deemed to be more important. Many interns (100 in 2006) work in the internship programme to write case studies. The system Project Officer also contributes some of his/her time. A resource centre person (the librarian, working at a GS level) works full time on KM resources and a full time KM consultant has been hired.

KM tools or initiatives developed[79]
KCCI is India's umbrella for KM strategy. In brief, it is a platform for sharing information on children. It has the following different pillars:
- A research agenda on children through publications. The India CO works on coordinating an effective and unified research agenda that includes the publication of studies, case studies, evaluations, assessments, working papers and policy briefs.
- The internship programme has produced a large number of case studies and learning videos. One objective of the internship programme (among many others) is to produce high quality documentation, and to collect field-work based data and information relating to children across India. In 2006, 49 cases studies were recorded and 30 films produced.
- A network of libraries shares available resources on children and the resource centre promotes sharing through different tools. The library provides access to key reference books, articles and data on children. The Speaker Series offers lectures on topical

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76 Ibid.
77 Based on information shared by Sumaira Chowdhury, Monitoring and Evaluation Project Officer, Cecilio Adorna, India CO Representative and other sources
78 Ibid.
79 Based on interviews with staff as well as a presentation given to the RO on September 2005 by Sumaira Chowdhury, Project Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation, India CO

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issues. Networking libraries enhances management as well as knowledge-sharing. Now available only in key libraries, this programme will eventually also be available in at least one library per state. Finally, the India CO provides additional support such as a weekly digest, research, etc.

- The KM web site (www.KCCI.in) contains publications (UNICEF and others), films and data, and facilitates knowledge-sharing via the web.
- Academic courses/ fellowships within various prominent institutions are available.
- Additional 'pillars' are on-going though not fully managed under KCCI. These includes the annual Lecture on Children, the training of civil servants and partners, village planning data generation and DevInfo.

The India Office also has a Lotus Notes database for external research where staff post important papers or studies. The existing Intranet for India is presently being redesigned to include information from the network drives.

UNICEF India is part of Solutions Exchange, led by UNDP.[80] This CoP provides development practitioners a UN-sponsored space where they can both provide solutions to and benefit from each other's experiences on the day-to-day challenges they face.

Neglecting KM activities in favour of others deemed more urgent or immediate needs is all too easy.

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80   More infromation is available at www.solutionexchange_un.net.in

Lessons learnt and obstacles

The main obstacle has been a shortage of staff time; neglecting KM activities in favour of others deemed more urgent or immediate needs is all too easy. The project officers complain of lacking adequate 'thinking time' to write papers. The India CO advises ROSA to employ a full time KM professional if it is to seriously embark on KM.

Focus

The KM web site has an external focus. Interns placed with research organisations and who often develop ongoing professional relations with them, also have an external focus. Indian Administrative Service officers are trained at the CO to look at children's rights and this is also an external focus.

Future KM plans

Apart from the continuation of ongoing efforts, India plans to investigate having more academic courses. The CO also plans to strengthen its relationship with the Planning Commission of the Government of India in order to share lessons learnt, good practices, etc. It is expected that studies will soon be posted on the Intranet and that the KCCI web site will soon be officially launched.

UNICEF Maldives

Background[81]

Prior to the tsunami, UNICEF's programmes in the Maldives were limited to a few atolls. The post-tsunami expansion of the programme has taken UNICEF inputs (varying in scope and scale) to almost every one of the country's 20 atolls and 200 inhabited islands. All 20 atolls have received large amounts of supplies - mainly in terms of hardware for water and sanitation facilities, school reconstruction, school stationary, and equipment. Almost every atoll has also received support in terms of community-based services, advocacy and support to national policies.[82]

KM strategy

The office has not yet established a standard definition of KM, and no strategy paper or concept note has been prepared. Nevertheless some KM initiatives have been undertaken.

Location and staffing

KM functions are presently managed by the M&E Section but no specified staff has direct responsibilities for KM.

KM tools or initiatives developed

A UNICEF Maldives Intranet was established in 2006. The Intranet resides on the Local Area Network and has been a repository of all internal and external (government, UN agencies, NGOs, external international agencies) evaluations, studies, surveys, and reports for Maldives since 2003. The Intranet also contains planning documents, programme

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81 Based on information shared by Abheet J. Solomon APO, Monitoring and Evaluation, Maldives Country Office and other sources
82 UNICEF Maldives Field Monitors Network Concept Note

concept papers, meeting minutes, e-learning courses, the office calendar and other frequently requested documents, but since there is no information on how often it is used it is difficult to access its usefulness.

Significant progress has been made in establishing DevInfo in the Maldives in 2006 in conjunction with the Ministry of Planning and National Development and partner UN agencies.

Since 2005, a Travel Management System has made available all previous field trip reports and follow up action points for UNICEF travel. Field Trip Reports are readily searchable by locations visited, programme, staff member, type of travel and dates.

Focus
The KM activities do not have an external focus as such, but the initiatives and lessons learnt may eventually be useful regionally or globally.

Future KM plans
DevInfo is scheduled to be launched in March 2007 and will be expanded during the year to include all national indicators.

SECTION III
UNICEF SOUTH ASIA STAFF SURVEY

For an inside understanding of how KM presently works, and how it could possibly work better in the context of UNICEF SA it was necessary to survey the SA staff who use KM as part of their daily work. The staff was queried on a range of KM topics including their familiarity with KM tools.

The previous sections have presented different case studies about how the UN and other organisations around the world manage KM initiatives in their particular contexts. KM initiatives in the SA COs and in ROSA in particular have also been presented. However, for an inside understanding of how KM presently works, and how it could possibly work better in the context of UNICEF SA it was necessary to survey the SA staff who use KM as part of their daily work. The staff was queried on a range of KM topics including their familiarity with KM tools, how frequently and by what means they share and disseminate information, their use of Intranet and web tools, etc. The results of these surveys are discussed in some detail below.

How staff understand and use KM

The UNICEF SA Knowledge Management Survey was conducted in February 2007 in an effort to explore background, opinions and understanding of KM among UNICEF's SA staff as well as to try and understand how information is shared in the region. A survey was conducted in two parts: 1.) an on-line survey intended to gather quantitative statistics on KM issues, and 2.) information gathered in face-to-face interviews intended to probe qualitative issues in more detail.

Methodology

On-line survey
The on-line questionnaire was developed in collaboration with ROSA's KM team and senior management. The on-line survey, accessible at the following URL,[83] was structured with 54 closed-ended questions intended for both ROs and COs, seven additional questions for RO staff only, and one open ended question. The survey questionnaire outcomes are available.[84] The survey was distributed through e-mail by ROSA's Deputy Director to each of the Representatives and Senior Programme Officers of the eight COs. Each office then requested its international professionals and national officers to complete and submit the survey between 8-16 February 2007.

Individual interviews
During January and February 2007, individual hour-long interviews were conducted with international professionals and national officers in the RO and COs.

The ten open-ended questions used to guide the interviews with the intention of soliciting KM innovative ideas and personal recommendations are given below. A full compilation of staff recommendations and inputs is available.[85]

- *Are there any innovations you have contributed or developed to increase networking and knowledge-sharing related to your area of expertise or to ensure dissemination of best practices and latest research?*
- *How do you think tacit knowledge, the knowledge in people's heads as well as their experience, is currently being captured in ROSA, if at all?*
- *How would you recommend capturing tacit knowledge in ROSA?*
- *How do you presently use the evaluations?*
- *What would help you to use evaluations more effectively?*
- *What are your suggestions concerning the shared network drives?*
- *Are you satisfied with the way information is shared in the RO? Please explain.*
- *What improvements would you recommend?*

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83 http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=95148315414o (Password: unicef)
84 Available by inquiring at ROSA@unicef.org
85 Ibid.

- *Are you satisfied with the way information is shared between the RO and COs? Please explain.*
- *What improvements would you recommend?*

On-line survey
- UNICEF South Asia staff total 1590, including national, international and support staff from the RO and SA COs. The on-line survey targeted all international and national professional officers, a maximum target of 540. Of these 540, a total of 318 professional staff members were directly requested to respond to the on-line questionnaire; 235 actually responded. Figure 1 presents a breakdown of the respondents by country.
- With respect to grade: respondents from P1 and P2 made up 40% of the total whereas P3 and P4 made up 46%; 9% of respondents were P5 and above; and 6% skipped the question.
- 13% of the respondents were from ROs whereas 84% were from COs.

## On-line survey: limitations and making the most of the results

When analysing the survey results, certain inherent limitations of this type of survey should be kept in mind:
- The on-line survey received replies from 121 self-selected respondents in the first survey and 114 in the second. The respondents were self-selected in that while they were requested to participate in the survey, they were not obligated to do so. This probably biases the results in favour of respondents who are interested in KM related issues. Although the number of people who participated is about one third of the possible, it is still a statistically small sample size.
- The questionnaire was distributed to ROSA and all eight SA COs. Response rates were highest for Pakistan (39%) and Sri Lanka (29%).
- The low participation by some offices may itself highlight different issues. Either insufficient staff members were available in the office or difficulty was experienced in sharing the information across the UNICEF hierarchy.

Despite the above limitations, useful conclusions can be drawn from the survey by comparing and contrasting replies from COs and the RO while remembering that most replies came from COs. Similarly, replies across the professional grades should be compared and contrasted, keeping in mind that 90% of respondents were P1-P4 grade. An overwhelmingly positive (or negative) response from both COs and the RO, and across all grades, has a high probability of being generally valid. Additional checking and validation also comes from the results of the face-to-face interviews and the brainstorming session that followed a presentation of these results to all ROSA staff. Many of the comments and recommendations resulting from the survey surfaced during these discussions. Conversely, small differences highlighted by the survey are probably not valid and should not be given undue significance since they are likely a result of small sample size.

Figure 1: South Asia on-line survey participants*: ROSA and South Asia COs

- Afghanistan** (22)
- Bangladesh (13)
- Bhutan (7)
- India (15)
- Maldives (6)
- Nepal** (6)
- Pakistan (95)
- ROSA**(26)
- Sri Lanka** (37)
- Unidentified (14)

* actual number of participants shown in brackets
** some participants shared CO and RO responsibilities

Individual interviews
Out of the 55 professional staff invited to the individual interviews, 37 national and international professional staff in ROSA and 18 Communications and KM focal points from SA COs were interviewed.

LEARNING FROM KM EXPERIENCES
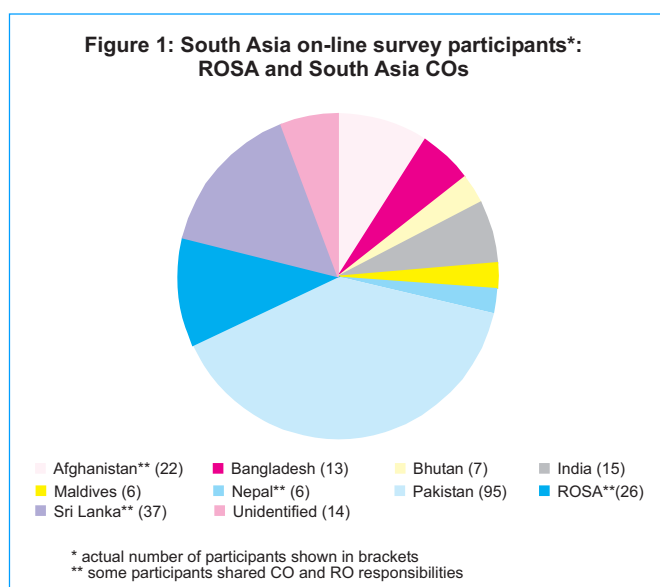
Results of the survey and discussion

The on-line survey queried many different aspects of knowledge-sharing and management, which are summarised and discussed below.

High mobility of UNICEF staff

The survey shows that whereas more than 60% of the respondents had been in their present positions for under two years, about 50% had nonetheless been with UNICEF for more than five years. See Figure 2. This information highlights the high mobility of UNICEF staff and indicates that most officers probably spend considerable time on a steep learning curve. Officers at a new post (which at any given time is over half the population) might be the ones to benefit most from easy access to knowledge and information.
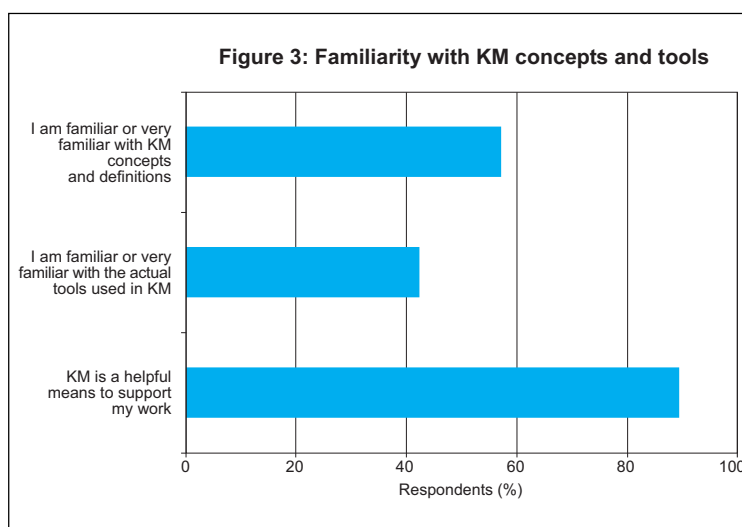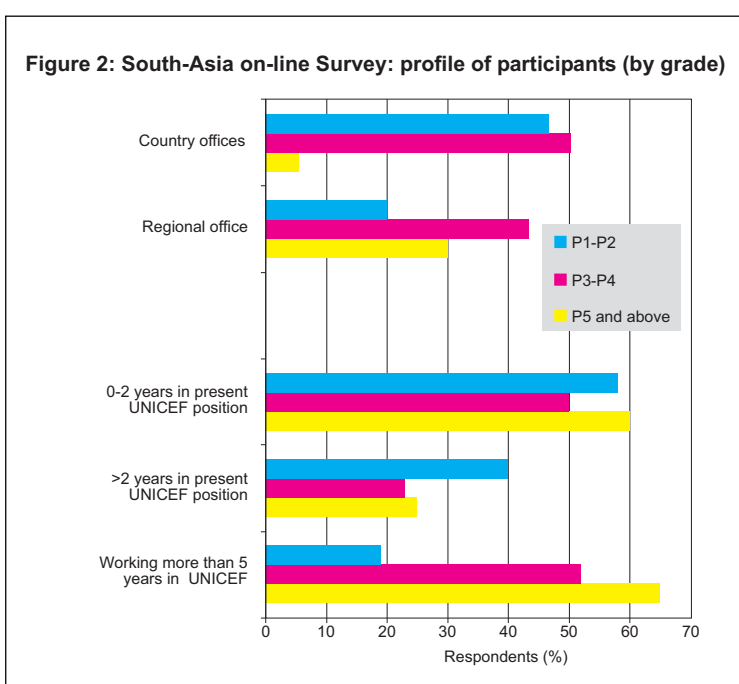
Respondents' perception: familiarity with KM and using it in day-to-day work

The on-line survey asked respondents to assess their own level of familiarity with KM concepts, definitions and tools. One minor variation occurred between the COs and the RO, with little difference between the grades. Overall:

Figure 2: South-Asia on-line Survey: profile of participants (by grade)

- About 60% of respondents indicated that they were either familiar or very familiar with KM concepts. When asked about their familiarity with actual KM tools, across the board an even lower proportion (about 42%) responded positively. See Figure 3.
- In spite of rather poor familiarity with KM and actual KM tools, over 90% of the respondents thought that KM would be a helpful means to support their work. See Figure 3.

Using all five aspects of KM

- When asked how different KM functions are used in their day-to-day work, respondents said they use all five aspects (i.e. creating and capturing, analysing and enriching, classifying and storing, sharing and disseminating, improving interventions) almost equally – approximately 20% for each component. See Figure 4. The only function that seems to differ is sharing and disseminating information – being used more frequently than the others, especially by regional offices staff (approx. 40%) and by P1-P2 staff (approx. 40%).
- Interestingly, whereas it was recently suggested[86] that advisers in UNICEF ROs should mostly be engaged in 'analysing and enriching', the survey shows that RO officers themselves responded that this component of their KM work was only slightly about 20%.
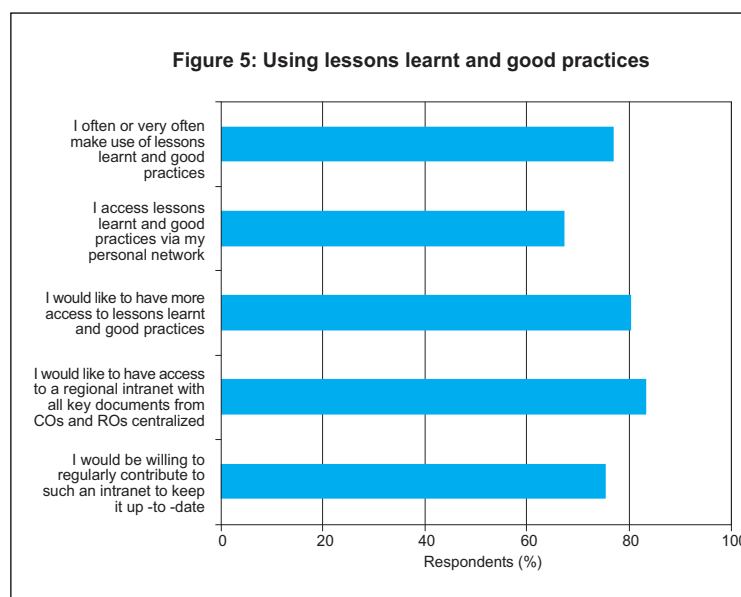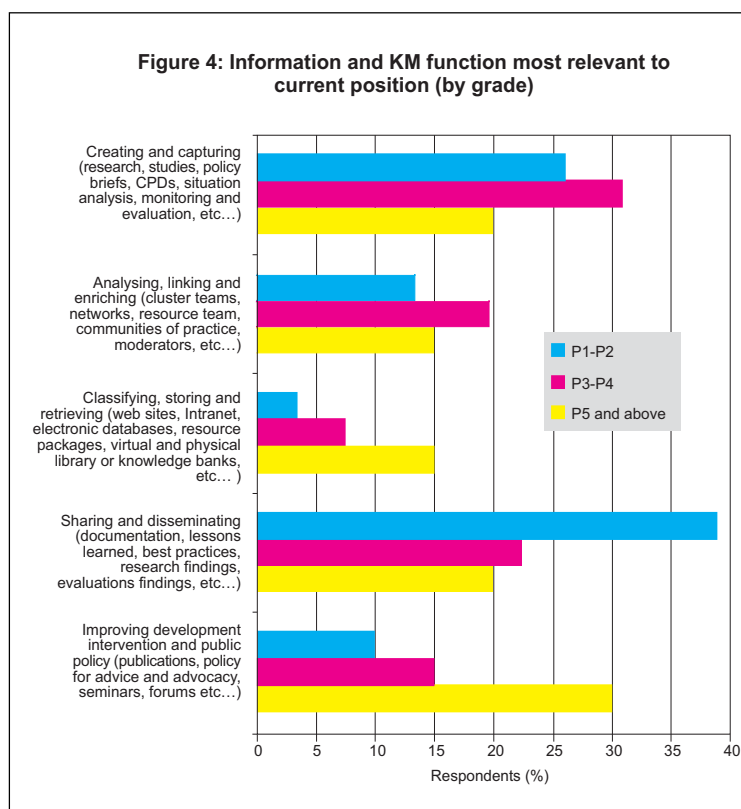

Figure 3: Familiarity with KM concepts and tools

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86   Sharad Sapra, UNICEF HQ, Communications Workshop, Kathmandu, 6 February 2007

How staffs search for information: using lessons learnt and good practices

- Almost 80% of all staff often or very often make use of lessons learnt and good practices, which they have more often than not (~70%) accessed through their personal networks. The same is true across all grades and among both COs and the RO with only a small variation. See Figure 5.

- Lessons learnt and good practices are accessed from personal networks (~70%), annual reports (60%), evaluations (54%), the global Intranet (48%) and the UNICEF web sites (53%). Surprisingly, 7% of respondents did not know where to find them.

- 77% of staff would like to have **more** access to lessons learnt and good practices. This number is only slightly lower in the RO but is much lower (approx. 60%) among P5 and above.

- Overwhelmingly, i.e. more than 80% of all staff would like to have access to a regional Intranet with all key documents from COs and ROs centralised; slightly fewer would be willing to contribute regularly to such an Intranet to keep it up-to-date. See Figure 5.

How staff share and disseminate information

- Most staff have their own network of people they contact when information is needed. Therefore, within programme sections, knowledge and information are generally available, but access between sections is not systematic. More than 70% of staff daily pass information to colleagues within their section and to a much lesser extent (30%) beyond their section. The exception to this is P5 and above, 57% of whom daily pass information beyond their sections.

- Almost 90% of the respondents would like to receive fewer and more targeted e-mails.

- Between 40-45% of staff spend more than three hours daily on e-mails – the same is true across all grades and in both the COs and RO with only small variations.

- Between 40% and 50% of staff spend more than two hours weekly communicating with UNICEF colleagues beyond their sections. Almost twice as many staff in COs spend more than two hours weekly collaborating with UNICEF staff beyond their section than do staff in the RO.

- Between 20% and 30% of P1-P4 staff spend more than two hours daily giving feedback (including time for reading and analysing the subject), and about 40% of P5 do so.

- Between 60% and 70% of staff belong to CoPs – the same is true across all grades and

Figure 4: Information and KM function most relevant to current position (by grade)

Figure 5: Using lessons learnt and good practices

in both the COs and RO with only small variations. About 94% also belong to a network within UNICEF, 40% to non-UN specialised networks, 26% to international UN specialised networks and 30% to regional UN networks.

Communicating between sections: differences among the grades and offices

Satisfaction with how information is shared is generally low. Only about 24% of all staff are satisfied with the way information is presently shared between COs and the RO, and only 38% are satisfied with how information is shared within their own office. See Figure 6a and Figure 6b.

Notable differences are found between the grades and between the RO and the COs.

- The need to be informed and to communicate both within their offices and beyond their offices is greater among P1- P4 staff than among P5 and above staff. See Figure 7a. Note the following:

How staff share and disseminate information:
Comments shared by staff and others:

- '*I am overwhelmed by e-mails and links,*' was a frequent comment.
- The e-mail traffic is a recurrent theme among staff members, who say e-mails are over-used, not targeted enough, that they "*sometimes can't differentiate what is urgent from what is not important*" and that they "*don't have time to read them*".
- According to the January 2007 Organisational Review, there is an overall feeling in UNICEF that in the RO, "*Knowledge-sharing is episodic and undisciplined.*"[87]

- 82% of P1-P4 would like more feedback on their work, but only about 68 % of P5 and above feel that they need more feedback.
- 35% of P1-P2 and about 23% of P3- P4 staff would like more formal meetings whereas none of the P5 and above staff felt they needed more meetings.
- The need to share information through more informal meetings was welcomed by more than 70% of P1- P4 and about 37% of P5 and above.
- The need to know more about the work of other sections in the office is greatest among P1-P2 (about 84%), less among P3-P4 (about 76%) and least among P5 and above (36%).
- The need to have access to information about country offices beyond their own is greatest among P1-P2 (83%) but still high even among P3-P4 (76%) and P5% and above (73%).
- Overwhelmingly (more than 80%), staff would like to receive fewer and more targeted e-mails.
- More than 80% of P1-P4, but only about 20% of P5 staff would like to be copied on more e-mails related to their field of expertise.

Overwhelmingly, (85% or more of P1-P4 and about 80% of P5) staff would like to have access to summaries of key documents.

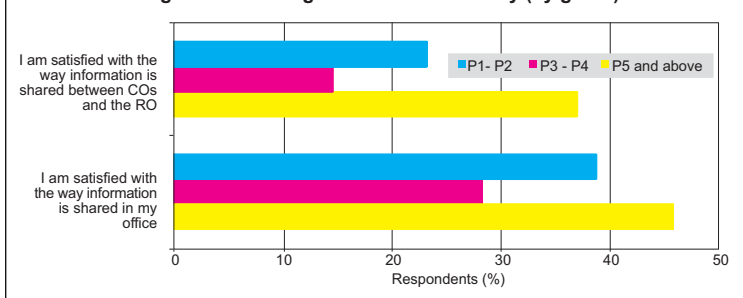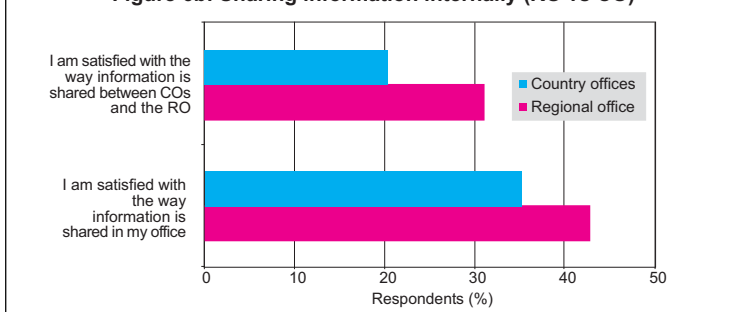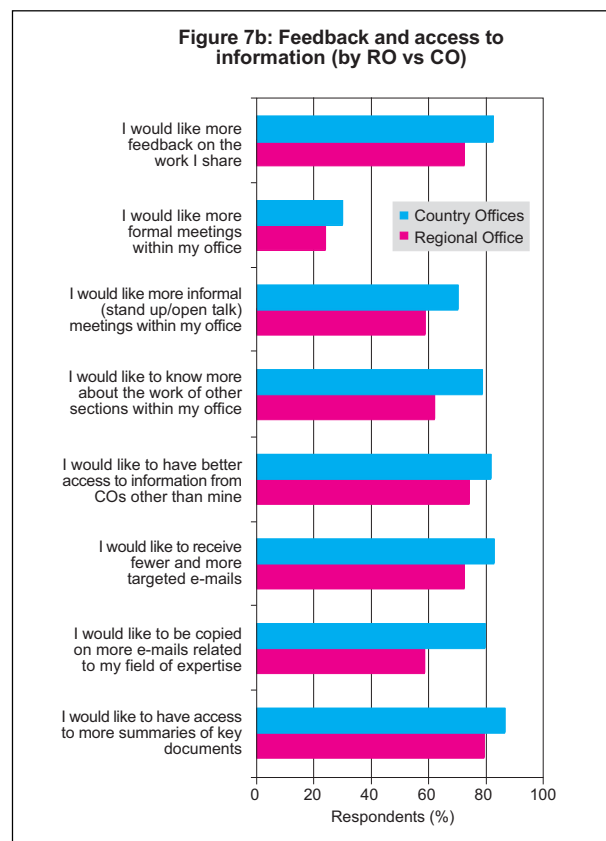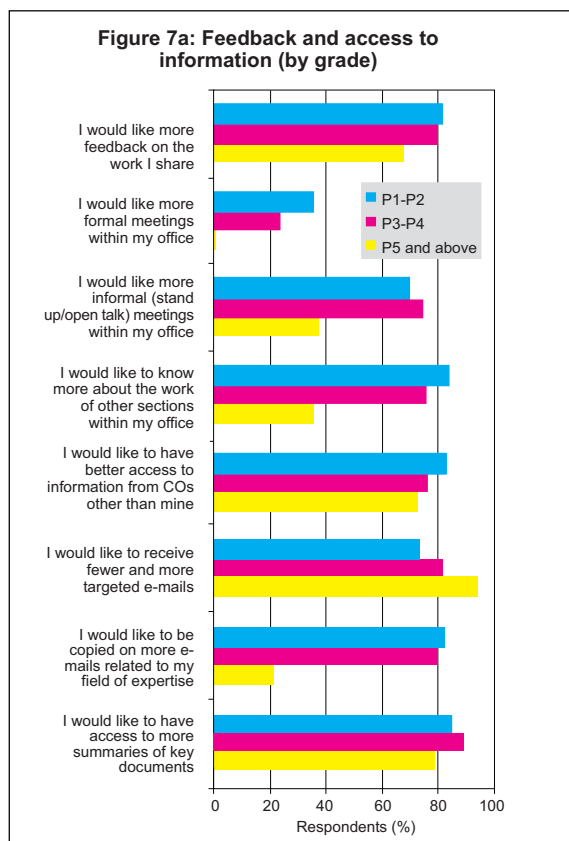Figure 6a: Sharing information internally (by grade)

Figure 6b: Sharing information internally (RO vs CO)

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87   Organisational Review, slide from UNICEF HQ presented to all staff by Cecilia Lotse, Regional Director, 31 January 2007

Figure 7a: Feedback and access to information (by grade)

Figure 7b: Feedback and access to information (by RO vs CO)

- Staff in COs generally feels a greater need to communicate both within and beyond their offices than do RO staff. See Figure 7b. Note the following:
  - About 82% of CO staff but only 72% of RO staff would like more feedback on their work.
  - Only about 27% of CO and RO staff wanted more formal meetings, but the need for informal meetings was somewhat greater in COs (70%) than in the RO (60%).
  - About 79% of CO staff but only 62% of RO staff wanted to know more about the work of other sections in their office.
  - The need to have information about country offices beyond their own is greater among CO staff (82%) than RO staff (74%).
  - The need to have access to summaries of key documents was high overall but even greater among CO staff (87%) than among RO staff (79%).

Overwhelmingly, staff would like to have to have access to summaries of key documents.

Communicating between sections: observations on the need for information Sharing

The survey reveals obvious differences in the need for more information between different grades and between COs and the RO – and that the greatest need resides with the junior grades. However, one aspect not captured by the survey – which the individual interviews also did not satisfactorily ask – was: what level of detail did respondents feel was not available to them? Did they want to have detailed information about all programmes in their COs and the RO or did they merely need a general overview? This aspect requires further investigation before a response can be formulated and made operative.

Communicating between sections: observations on the process of internal communication

The process of distributing information vertically through the UNICEF hierarchy (i.e. first to office heads, asking them to forward the message on down the grades) is typical of how information is shared in the UN system. Information is shared in a segmented and

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The protocols for information sharing may need to be reviewed in light of the new expectations for much shorter response times facilitated by e-mail and other new technologies.

hierarchical manner to ensure systematic sharing through well-defined communication channels, as a form of efficiency. However, now that information is shared electronically, the sender often expects an almost instant reply and a hierarchical protocol for sharing information is vulnerable to breaks in the communication chain (someone is out of the office, the e-mail system is down for a day, etc.) resulting in what are today regarded as unacceptable delays in response times. The protocols for information sharing may need to be reviewed in light of the new expectations for much shorter response times facilitated by e-mail and other new technologies.
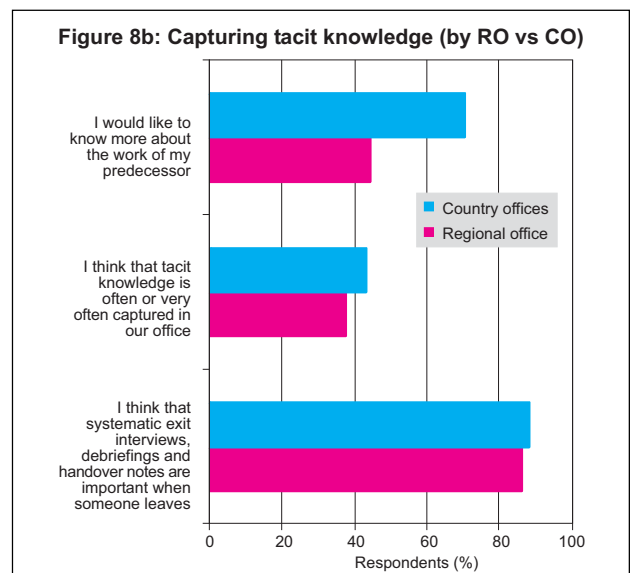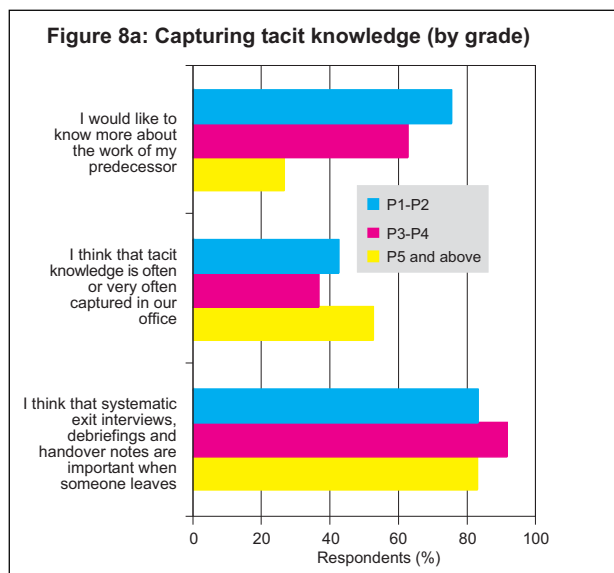
Capturing tacit knowledge

- About 75% of P1-P2 and 63% of P3-P4 felt they needed to know more about the work of their predecessors but notably, among P5 and above, only about 27% needed this. See Figure 8a.
- 35-40% of P1-P4 think that tacit knowledge is often or very often captured within their offices, but only about 53% of P5 think so.
- There is an almost unanimous consensus (across the board: all grades and both COs and RO) that systematic exit interviews, hand-over notes or debriefings are needed when someone leaves a post or consultancy. See Figure 8a and Figure 8b.

Storing information for long term use

There is an almost unanimous consensus that systematic exit interviews, hand-over notes or debriefings are needed when someone leaves a post or consultancy.

More than half of the respondents already store their internal documents for long term use on the office network drive; only about 20% or so use the office library for this purpose. See. Fig. 9a and Fig. 9b. Most professional staff from the RO find the shared network drives in the office useful for sharing and storing information (75% of the staff surveyed); however, 50% say that they are rarely able to find relevant internal information there. The system is generally useful but the current organisation and use by clusters does not allow easy access to information across clusters.

The only notable exception was within the P5 and above category, where staff seemed to make much less use of either the shared drives or the library for data storage. Nevertheless, the overwhelming response indicates that staff members are already quite familiar with electronically sharing information and that the use of traditional libraries with printed documents is declining.

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Figure 8a: Capturing tacit knowledge (by grade)

Figure 8b: Capturing tacit knowledge (by RO vs CO)

Capturing tacit knowledge: feedback from individual interviews

Comments shared by staff:

- *Handover notes should be shared with everyone, not just senior management.*
- *It should be a requirement to systematically have 1 or 2 phone calls with your predecessors which are not seen as 'I can't cope'.*
- *Staff volunteered that there are presently many ways of sharing tacit knowledge; it can be captured through meetings of different kinds: regional staff meetings, professional meetings, section meetings, Wednesday thematic meetings, head of cluster meetings, thematic task force meetings, etc. Other avenues include intersectoral dialogue, collaborative work on joint projects, informal notes, minutes, briefings to new staff, handover notes, interviews, individual discussions between staff, informal discussions (lunch, social events), diaries, regional events, feedback by e-mail, trainings, brown bag lunch, workshops, etc.*

Use of Programme Evaluations

UNICEF's Programme Evaluations are evaluations that are prepared at the end of a project (or at the end of a sector programme and/or at the end of a cycle) and discuss whether the desired objectives have or have not been achieved. Slightly more than 50% of respondents are familiar or very familiar with UNICEF's Programme Evaluations and roughly the same percentage often or very often refer to these findings in their work.

Level of satisfaction with capacity building

About 70% of staff said that the learning opportunities they took advantage of in 2006 matched their actual needs; about 20% did not participate in any capacity building. Of those who took training roughly one third had only face-to-face training, one third only on-line training and one third took both.

Using UNICEF's and other web pages

- More than 60% visit the UNICEF Intranet daily or weekly and about 50% visit the UNICEF web sites daily or weekly, although many complained that accessing UNICEF ROSA information from this site was not straightforward.

Figure 9a: I often or very often store my internal documents for long term use (by grade)
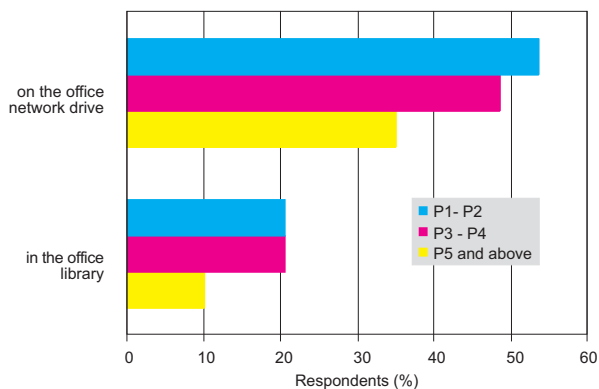
Figure 9b: I often or oftern store my internal documents for long term use (by RO vs CO)
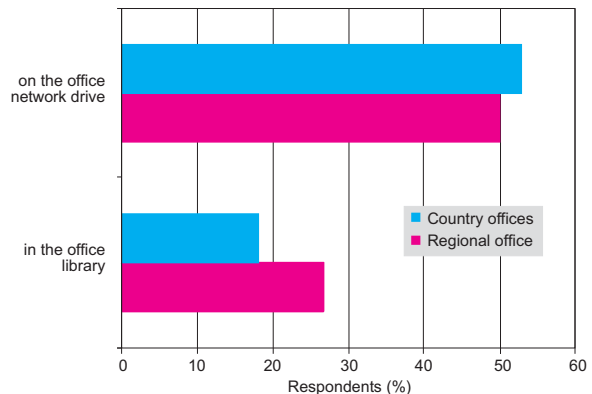
- Most users who had tried to post information on the UNICEF web page noted long delays and complained of how difficult and convoluted the process was, asking whether it could be simplified and accelerated.
- Only 15% regularly checked the ROSA web site (UNICEF's regional face to the world) – a fact that may be explained by the site's external focus as it is intended for the general public. Staff visit this site only infrequently, although 81% mentioned they would like to receive a monthly newsletter highlighting for them what is new on the ROSA site and 60% indicated their interest in the web site statistics, including the number of hits per month and how many times a specific document had been downloaded.
- More that 92% of respondents would like to be notified when regional and global UN

reports come out (such as Human Development Reports, World Development Reports, Economic and Social Surveys, Global Monitoring Reports, and the like).

- Only about 33% of staff regularly use RSS feeds and less than 20% use wikis. (Note: RSS is a program that acts like a personal secretary who clips newspapers and magazines that you   might be interested in and forwards them to your computer desktop. Essentially RSS delivers up the latest headlines from user-selected websites, magazines, newspapers, and weblogs into a newsreader.[88] A different but related type of electronic knowledge database is Wikipedia; a 'wiki' is a type of web site that allows visitors to easily add, remove and otherwise edit and change available content, sometimes without the need for registration. It is thus an effective tool for collaborative authoring.[89])

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88   Definition in the Time Magazine Article "Let RSS Go Fetch"
89   Wikipedia definition used by UNICEF HQ KM blog

LEARNING FROM KM EXPERIENCES

SECTION IV
WAYS FORWARD IN KM

This report summarises KM practices currently being used by other UN agencies, other UNICEF ROs and some SA COs as well as the KM needs of UNICEF SA staff, which were compiled using the on-line survey and the individual interviews. This section proposes possible options for KM approaches that could be used to address these needs.

This section proposes possible options for KM approaches that could be used to address the needs of ROSA and SA COs. The options are based in part on the information and experience gathered by collecting information on how other UN agencies and UNICEF offices around the world deal with similar issues, but they are also partly based on innovative suggestions offered by SA staff. "Ways Forward in KM" is divided into two parts. The first part discusses possible KM regional approaches for Asia and the Pacific, and includes specific suggestion for South Asia COs. The second part discusses possible overall approaches to KM within ROSA and discusses in detail some concrete KM methods and tools that could be used to implement the suggestions. The discussion on methods and tools is itself divided into three parts according to the intended beneficiary: ROSA internally, ROSA and its partners, and ROSA the general public.

Possible KM regional approaches for Asia and the Pacific

 "Building Communities of Practice in the Asia Region", a knowledge-sharing meeting organised by UNDP (New Delhi, India, on January 23-24, 2007), brought together regional agency representatives and country teams interested in Solution Exchange. The UN's 'Solution Exchange' initiative builds CoPs, connecting people with similar concerns and interests through electronic e-mail groups and face-to-face interaction, with the common objective of problem solving.[90]

The meeting presented the Solution Exchange initiative in India and offered participants an opportunity to brainstorm on a potential regional level Community of Practice. A concept note for the creation of a UN Regional Solution Exchange within Asia-Pacific was prepared (28/2/07) by a selected task force.[91] Highlights of the concept note include the following:

Outline for a UN Regional Solution Exchange within the Asia-Pacific region

- **Objectives:**
    - Provide a knowledge base to development practitioners within the Asia-Pacific region by piloting a standardised, UN-convened, knowledge networking approach for working together on key development issues;
    - Complement UN reforms at the regional level by strengthening the ability of the UN regional agencies to work together in the Asia-Pacific region;
    - More effectively connect existing country, regional and global networks with an aim to enhance knowledge flows in general, and to enhance the ability of UN Solution Exchange communities in the Asia-Pacific region in particular to tap the widest possible range of experiences;
    - Address existing gaps in knowledge exchange.
- **MDG framework:** The MDGs would form the overarching framework for the regional CoP, which could be formed according to the following criteria: sensitive and/or emerging issues, trans-boundary issues, regional public good, issues of common concern.
- **'One UN':** The regional CoPs are expected to contribute to enhanced collaboration between the UN agencies at both regional and country levels, and therefore to a more coordinated and coherent 'One UN' in line with UN reform expectations. Development practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region, including policy makers in regional inter-governmental bodies, would also have access to knowledge services and solutions to help them more effectively address development challenges within countries or across the region.

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91   A concept note for the creation of a UN Regional Solution Exchange within Asia-Pacific, 28/2/07

- **Staffing and funding:** One agency would assume overall substantive leadership and responsibility for the running of a particular community. In terms of staffing and funding, one moderator and one research associate would be required per CoP. Face-to-face meetings will also require budget resources. The regional initiative will be funded on a principle of cost-sharing by the UN regional agencies, to be decided by the Regional Directors. Donor funding will also be sought. In-kind contributions from the UN RO will be required to help reduce cost and to help complement other funding.
- **Timeframe:** In the proposed timeframe, Phase One (January to June 2007) would include consultations on the concept with a targeted approval by the agencies and the Regional Directors. Phase Two (July to December 2007) would consist of establishing implementation arrangements. Finally, Phase Three (January 2008 onwards) would begin with a launch of the initiative in January 2008, followed by ongoing implementation throughout the agreed-upon span of the initiative.[92]

Taking the first steps towards regional KM

Many UN knowledge management initiatives are taking place in the Asia-Pacific region. These include:

UN regional coordination meeting

Both the challenges and the benefits of regional-level knowledge management were discussed at the recent UN Regional Coordination Meeting (Bangkok, 7 Dec. 2006). Regional knowledge management at this level is an internal process requiring the investment of significant resources and the commitment of everyone involved.[93] The benefits of regional - level information sharing would be increased connectivity and better access to relevant regional information people would more easily know where to go for information. The meeting invited technical staff from all interested agencies to meet and then advise their agency heads.[94]

UN regional roster of consultants

As suggested during the Bangkok meeting, a common UN roster of consultants for UN-Thailand and UN regional agencies is being developed as part of the UN common services project. This roster, being piloted with UNESCAP, UNODC, UNFPA, UNEP and UNDP,[95] is the first such collaborative effort at any level (country, regional or global).

UN evaluation development group for Asia and the Pacific

UNICEF ROSA and UNICEF EAPRO are developing a UN Evaluation Development Group for Asia Pacific (UNEDAP) as a pioneering initiative. While a global UN Evaluation Group is operating, the initiative of a regional-level UNEDAP will strengthen evaluation capacity and help promote a culture of evaluation in the Asia-Pacific region. UNEDAP was proposed in the spirit of simplification, harmonisation, and enhanced professionalism of the evaluation function as part of UN reform.[96]

KM 4 Development

The annual KM 4 Development conference was organised by the Asian Development Bank in consultation with the World Bank, other regional development banks and the UNDP (Feb. 2007, Manila, Philippines). The conference objective was to strengthen the work of the KM4Dev community in the Asia-Pacific region, to learn and to discuss issues of common interest. This event marks the first time a global annual KM meeting took place in Asia.

The benefits of regional-level information sharing would be increased connectivity and better access to relevant regional information - people would more easily know where to go for information.

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92   Ibid.
93   Comment by Ms. Elizabeth Fong (Regional Manager, UNDP Regional Centre, Bangkok)
94   Based on recorded key outcomes of the UN Regional Coordination Meeting, Bangkok, 7 Dec. 2006
95   Ibid.
96   Terms of Reference for the UN Evaluation Development Group for Asia Pacific (UNEDAP), drafted by Amita Kulkarni, Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Consultant

The UN's 'Solution Exchange' initiative for South Asia COs

The UN Resident Coordinator for India[97] presented 'Knowledge Management Partnership', at "Building Communities of Practice in the Asia Region", UNDP (23-24 January 2007, New Delhi, India). The knowledge management partnership branded 'Solution Exchange' is an initiative of the UN Country Team that puts forth a new and innovative role for the UN system.

The Solution Exchange initiative has been implemented by the UN Country Team in India since early 2005 and has met with good success in the Indian context. Solution Exchange brings together development practitioners to form CoPs around MDG-related topics and offers them avenues for both sharing knowledge and capturing relevant experiences. The role of the UN Country Team in this case is that of convener: providing an impartial space where professionals from government, NGOs, policy and research institutions, donor partners and the private sector can constructively interact and take forward their common development agendas.[98]

The project's overall goal is problem solving in support of India's development priorities corresponding to the MDGs.[99] The project in India (16 CoPs, 700 participants and 310 consolidated replies as of January 2007) cost 3.5 million for 3 years (2006-2007). The Solution Exchange team admits that the long-term sustainability of such a costly project will be a challenge. One possibility is that the cost will be absorbed by the UN system; another is that it will become necessary to tap the private sector and governments, for example, by selling subscriptions.[100]

The adviser to the KM partnership/Solution Exchange project in New Delhi explained that the project is successful first of all because people like sharing, "New idea is that knowledge is your power, it only works if you give it away."[101] He went on to discuss the importance of sharing experimental knowledge, explaining that thanks to Solution Exchange, "people find out what's happening on the ground". Solution Exchange works because, "it is also a research service". He underlined that the impartiality of the UN platform is essential because it "encourages the community to speak out". Finally, people are encouraged to contribute to the CoP, "because it is good for their careers. Some people even put it on their business cards. This is a way to become known in one's community."[102]

UNICEF's Deputy Director, India CO, recognises that "Solution Exchange has been a valuable tool for sharing information and improving knowledge in a particular area. It has tremendous potential, not just through COs but throughout the region as well."[103] Bhutan is now looking at 'adapting and adopting' Solution Exchange at the country level, as is Mongolia.

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97 Maxine Olson
98 Solution Exchange, Building Communities of Practice in the Asia Region. A Proposal from the UN Resident Coordinator in India, January 2007
99 Section based on the KM Discussion Note for UN Regional Coordination Meeting, 7 Dec. 2006, Bangkok, prepared by the UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok
100 Steve Glovinsky, Adviser for Solution Exchange in India, interviewed during the New Delhi meeting "Building Communities of Practice in the Asia Region", 24 January 2007
101 Ibid.
102 Ibid.
103 Eimar Barr, UNICEF deputy director, India Country Office, during the meeting, "Building Communities of Practice in the Asia Region", January 23, 2007

Possible Overall KM Approaches for ROSA

- ***Promote a culture of sharing: improve knowledge-sharing and facilitate connecting people***
  A culture must be created where the time and energy needed for Knowledge Management is seen as well-spent and reciprocated. ROSA would benefit from improved, more systematic, knowledge-sharing and from connecting staff – within the RO, between the RO and the COs and with practitioners – outside the organisation (partners, experts, etc.), possibly through enhanced connectivity and communication in meetings, Intranet, Internet, etc.

- ***Facilitate the collection and compilation of information and enhance institutional memory***
  ROSA requires certain forms of knowledge to help it accomplish its mission. First, ROSA can map out existing resources and knowledge; secondly, it can identify essential resources that can be created or acquired. KM tools could be used to create systems to collect, compile and eventually also disseminate this knowledge. (Examples can include an improved and more accessible library, links to external databases, improved methods to capture tacit knowledge, etc.)

- ***Provide coordinative KM support to COs and partners***
  As a KM hub, ROSA could coach UNICEF's SA COs in KM and eventually help extend KM practices to partner organisations as well as to the general public. ROSA could systematically share information on KM with COs and provide them with KM support that would allow them to 'scan regionally and reinvent locally'. ROSA could take on a strong coordinative role in KM; doing so would also foster stronger ties with the COs.

- ***Collaborate in UN regional KM initiatives***
  UNICEF ROSA could take a leadership role in collaborating with other UN regional agencies to create a regional UN KM strategy. (Examples of activities that could uniquely position ROSA on the South Asia KM scene include participating in on-going UN KM initiatives, participating in the regional Solution Exchange project, the UN regional roster of consultants, etc.) Taking a leadership role in KM at this level might put ROSA in a position to eventually become a key player in developing a UN common platform for child-related issues in Asia.

Options and recommendations for KM methods and tools for ROSA

KM is essential if ROSA is to remain a central player in helping South Asia achieve the MDGs. The points below summarise the information and suggestions gathered both in the case studies and in the surveys and go some way to help answer the question of what overall approaches ROSA can adopt to help it manage a powerful KM system. The intention is to create a system that is conducive to making knowledge and information accessible, first internally and then also highly usable to partners, policy-makers and advocates.

The recommendations and options related to KM tools and methods provided in this section are based on the results of the on-line survey and the individual interviews conducted with SA CO and RO staff, and on the experience of other UN and UNICEF offices and other global organisations discussed in the case studies in the first part of this report.

The recommendations for methods and tools which would be part of implementing an effective KM system will depend on the intended users and beneficiaries. This section is therefore subdivided into three parts: KM for ROSA , KM for ROSA staff and partners, and KM for ROSA and the general public.

KM options for ROSA internally

Implementing 'overall KM approaches'

Concrete suggestions for strengthening internal KM processes <u>first</u> and encouraging staff and management to commit to KM

- UNICEF ROSA's KM strategy should focus first on processes within the organisation,[104] capturing, organising and disseminating information that is already available. Strengthening and making the most of what already exists is a necessary first step. The Programme Evaluations are a case in point. This is knowledge that has been painstakingly collected and compiled but is too often not made available to people who can make the most of it. A more systematic and efficient use of programme monitoring and evaluation reports needs to guide decisions and shape new programme and evidence-based contextualised policy options.

- A powerful tool in strengthening internal KM first will be to enhance and expand the capabilities of the Intranet. Exactly how to do this is discussed in detail in the box below.

- Management: KM experts in UN and other organisations, both global and regional, all agree that commitment at the highest managerial levels is essential in order for KM initiatives to succeed. Ideally, senior management needs to decide upon a clear KM framework and strategy and then allocate adequate funds and staff time.

- Staff: KM systems require a considerable input of staff time and effort to run efficiently; otherwise they run the risk of being an activity with low credibility.[105] Most KM focal points in UNICEF and other organisations agree that KM is every staff member's responsibility. How is a culture that values the sharing knowledge and information instilled?

  - The use of incentives is one possible way. A KM time allocation could be included in Terms of Reference (TOR) for professional staff and/or a professional's commitment or contribution to KM can be assessed during their Performance Evaluation Review (PER).

  - Following the example of the UNDP, the percentage of time allocated to work on KM could depend on the staff's position. While most international staff could spend about 10% of their time on KM, some regional advisers in Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation teams, or in Communications and Policy and Advocacy teams may need to spend more time on KM (for example, other offices use 30 to 40% as a guide).

Concrete suggestions for promoting a culture of sharing, improving knowledge-sharing and facilitating connecting people

Findings from both the on-line survey and the individual interviews show that ROSA needs more informal meetings that include all staff, and more systematic sharing from advisers.

- The cluster head meetings, normally intended for advisers to share information about their cluster's activities, could possibly be opened up to a limited number of other staff on a 'need to know' basis.

- The 'Topic of the Week' meetings could be open to all staff, including consultants.

- Clusters could have systematic weekly meetings, which would allow information to cascade from the advisers' meeting through each team member.

- Periodically, once a month or on request as opportunities arise, ROSA could organise brown bag lunches with all staff. This would provide a venue conducive to sharing and would help widen the possibility for information sharing in different areas.

- Videoconferencing can be a way of staying in touch between ROSA and the COs: more personal than e-mailing, less taxing than travel and less costly.

Sidebar: Commitment at the highest managerial levels is essential in order for KM initiatives to succeed.

Sidebar: The regional Intranet could become a major tool.

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104 Following the example of the World Bank
105 Ian Thorpe, KM UNICEF HQ, KM Session "Linking KM and PME in ROSA and COs for better results for the children of South Asia", September 2006

Concrete suggestions for facilitating the collection and compilation of information and enhancing institutional memory:

- The regional Intranet could become a major tool to help connect people and to help systematise the collection of information. It is discussed in some detail in the box below.
- Systematic exit interviews and systematic handover notes from professional staff leaving their posts would help capture tacit knowledge; they would also facilitate the rapid orientation of newcomers. The ideal would be to also allow joint time or shadowing between posts.
- A KM focal point or consultant could be responsible for conducting systematic interviews to capture tacit knowledge by writing it into a report; exit interviews and handover notes could be shared with everyone in the office.
- Newcomers could be welcomed with a package containing information from their predecessors, links and passwords to publications available on-line, useful information from the office.
- Institutional memory is also often captured in Programme Evaluations but only about half of the staff are familiar or very familiar with them and make use of them in their work. Use of Programme Evaluations can be improved and promoted by:[106]
    - Improving their quality and accessibility by requiring that they be written in more concise terms, with good presentations, executive summaries, etc. and distributing them to all staff;
    - Making UNICEF responsible, at the senior management level, for utilising findings from the Evaluations to improve programmatic designs and evidence-based policy proposals to achieve results for children;
    - Systematically preparing Evaluations in each field of expertise.

Institutional memory is also often captured in Programme Evaluations.

Allocating KM responsibilities in the RO

KM is a cross-cutting issue that concerns all UNICEF clusters. Because it is cross-cutting it is not immediately obvious who should take on the responsibility. Two options are possible:

- **Option #1**. KM functions could be managed by one of the clusters in ROSA. Possibilities include:
    - The Communications cluster, in close collaboration with the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and the Social Policy clusters could take on this function. The Communications cluster typically has a good overview of what is going on in each cluster; it has the capacity to collect information internally as well as externally and thus is ideally suited to the task. As discussed in the first section, many UN agencies have adopted this model, and it is the model currently in operation at ROSA.
    - The Monitoring and Evaluation cluster (in close collaboration with Planning, Communications and Social Policy) could also take on this function, since this cluster monitors all programmes and is responsible for transmitting knowledge through

Possible additional KM innovations suggested by staff during the interviews:

- *Encourage COs to post documents on the Early Warning Intranet.*
- *Balance e-mails with face-to-face meetings so that people interact and share knowledge more personally.*
- *Agree on an e-mail protocol which encourages people to be discriminating about what information needs to be sent to whom. Staff too often indiscriminately reply 'to all', creating a nuisance for recipients – especially for those who are not interested in the message, and even more so when there are attachments which then clog the email inbox.*
- *Encourage staff to share useful information from on-line UN discussions.*
- *Encourage technical working groups on communication techniques.*
- *ROSA is developing a template to capture and document all on-going and planned research in ROSA, with primary and secondary research and their objectives.*
- *Offer a ROSA Intranet page on stress management.*
- *Start a blog on social exclusion and social policy.*
- *Develop a resource package on social policy analysis methods and tools.*

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106 Recommendations based on RO staff recommendations during face-to-face interviews

Evaluation results. As discussed in the first section, many UN agencies have also adopted this model.

- The Planning cluster could take on the function since it is in charge of interaction with the COs.
- Staffing: KM duties could be distributed across the RO. For example, smaller time allocate across all clusters (as needed) to reflect the reality that KM is everyone's responsibility, in addition to the full-time position in the cluster that leads KM.

- **Option #2**. KM could become a separate cluster with one KM focal point. In this case it would be a 'service' unit that would support the KM needs of the other sections, reporting directly to the Regional Director. An information and knowledge management officer could be appointed as the KM focal point for ROSA. This officer would work in close collaboration with an assistant documentation officer and IT assistant. A draft TOR of a professional KMofficer that can be used as a basis for further discussion is available.[107] The KM officer could, among other duties, perform the following tasks in the RO:
  - Facilitate the capturing and sharing of tacit knowledge through the application of KM techniques, including building CoPs; constructing knowledge maps; interviewing key players; conducting exit interviews; creating a Knowledge Package for newcomers; facilitating formal and informal meetings.
  - Establish an appropriate KM regime (strategy, plans, policies, procedures, guidelines, standards etc.) based on an assessment of the information needs of the office. Periodically evaluate the implementation of the regime to ensure its continuing relevance. Promote the importance and value of improved KM to senior staff in the office.
  - Participate in ongoing UN KM activities (UN KM regional partnerships, UN regional rosters of consultants, UN Regional Solution Exchange initiatives, UN global KM meetings).
  - Create and coordinate a SA KM focal points working group (share KM experiences, provide feedback and guidance, organise an annual workshop, etc.).
  - Disseminate current information relevant to programme concerns through internal and external creative, user-friendly and attractive newsletters, information bulletins, etc.
  - Assist other sections in building efficient systems to disseminate the programme's resources, and to maintain documents, files and other records. Advise staff in KM, information handling, the management of records and archives and in the use of related tools.
  - Preliminary budget proposal scenarios that can be used as a basis for further discussions are available.[108]

Funding KM initiatives

Many global agencies already have a separate KM cluster with dedicated staff and resources. Regional and country offices, on the other hand, generally lag behind. They have some KM initiatives but typically have staff working only part time on KM in addition to other responsibilities. Many of the case studies seem to indicate that KM initiatives are often driven by the dynamic individuals who initiate them and promote them.

In order to fulfil its KM mandate, ROSA would require additional KM resources to allow better organisation of internal and external KM so that all staff and partners have access to the knowledge and information they need. The discussion above proposes two options: either the creation of a separate KM unit, or distributing the work among several clusters. In either case, increased KM capability and functionality means that additional human resources will be needed and that appropriate budget allocations need to be considered.

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107 Available on request from ROSA@unicef.org
108 Ibid.

KM initiatives are often driven by the dynamic individuals who initiate them and promote them.

Creating and implementing specific KM tools

Creating e-mail protocols
- Additional protocols could be instituted in the use of e-mail mailing lists to avoid overloads.
- More targeted e-mails could be sent to staff with information related to their field of expertise.
- Instead of sending many e-mails every day to all staff (situation reports, drivers' schedules, announcements, etc.), these announcements could be collated by the KM focal point who would ensure that only one e-mail was sent per day containing all of that day's relevant information.

Reorganising the shared network drive
- The shared network drive could be organised in a standardised way, with a protocol for posting information, and for deleting and archiving documents.
- Newcomers could be given a short orientation on how to use the classification system, etc.

Listing who's who
- In order to facilitate communications, HR could provide a monthly updated list of personnel in the office – a 'who's who' in the SA offices, and inside the RO. This list could provide pictures of each staff member, his or her post title, office location and telephone extension.[109] This list could be shared via the regional Intranet.

KM newsletters:
In response to staff request for more information in the form of newsletters:
- Monthly newsletters, one to all staff in UNICEF SA, and one to all staff in UNICEF SA and external subscribers.[110]
- InfoShare: a monthly newsletter could be sent to all staff in SA (similar to the one sent by EAPRO) containing news on what is new in the region, links to new documents on the Intranet, a regional agenda, new resources coming from the COs, new regional and global UN reports, Country Situation Analyses and links to interesting news stories, external resources, etc.
- A South Asia Website Highlights newsletter could be sent to all staff in the region, with the possibility of including external subscribers upon request.

Mapping existing knowledge and on-going research:
- ROSA plans to develop a template to capture and document all research projects going on in ROSA, including primary and secondary research and their objectives. This initiative could be done at least twice a year (the project could, for example, be carried out by ROSA's assistant documentation officer).
- ROSA could also look into the possibility of mapping the know-how that presently exists among staff in the RO as well as in COs (this project could be carried out by HR). For example, discovering who has specific experience in specialised areas, programme areas, languages, etc.

Reorganising ROSA's electronic documentation centre and library
- Findings show that professional staff make little use of either the electronic documentation centre or the library. Better use can be made of the library by making the on-line library catalogue available on the Intranet; proactively encouraging use of the library; and investigating whether the library would be more useful if it was reorganised.

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109 Following the example of the Geneva UNICEF office
110 Following the example of UNICEF EAPRO and the Geneva Regional Office's on-line magazine's weekly e-mail

- Some organisations in the region produce excellent documents but they are available only as hard copies, usually for a small fee. This prevents the documents from being widely accessible through the web and hinders wide dissemination of the knowledge contained. Examples of such organisations include Mahbub Haq Human Development Centre, Pakistan, which publishes the South Asia Human Development Report annually; the Haq Centre for Child Rights; India's Children and Budget Report. Even SAARC has many nominally priced publications that are not available on the website. One idea is to compile a list of all such key UNICEF knowledge products and come to some understanding with these providers to make electronic versions of the publications available through websites or possibly through ROSA's Intranet discussed below.
- Following the example of UNESCO's IKM unit, PDF versions of ROSA's publications could be produced and made available in different ways to different audiences.

Writing targeted information, consolidating information, making reports easier to read

PDF versions of ROSA's publications could be produced and made available in different ways to different audiences.

- With so much information available, users are often overwhelmed by how much they need to assimilate. There is a general need for shorter, more concise reports, summaries and good executive summaries.
- The summaries requested in the bullet above require good writing skills and the discipline to limit what goes into short summaries without losing content. Native and non-native speakers alike would benefit from some capacity building in this area.

ROSA Intranet: Proposal for creating a complete regional Intranet

Intranets are a practical way to promote knowledge-sharing, and form an essential part of any overall KM strategy.[111]   A regional Intranet containing all internal information from each cluster and from each CO would go a long way to facilitating information within ROSA. This box presents background information, a strategy for the creation of a regional Intranet and a draft structure for discussion.

ROSA already has a basic Intranet, which is password-protected for ROSA staff only, but it has limited information and functionality. At present, only some resources from Child Protection have been posted on the site.

Findings from the ROSA KM on-line survey show that almost 90% of the respondents would like to have access to a regional Intranet that centralised all key documents from COs and the RO. Staff mentioned that it would be an improvement over the RO shared network drive and that it would make communication with COs easier – a document repository with a search engine would be much appreciated. Moreover, almost 80% said that they would be willing to contribute information regularly to such a regional Intranet to update it.

A fully-functional ROSA Intranet would:
- Facilitate information and knowledge-sharing among UNICEF SA COs;
- Facilitate easy access to crucial information and working resources for programming;
- Facilitate exchange of information on good practices and lessons learnt;
- Complement the UNICEF global Intranet with region-specific information;
- Serve as a base for a future UNICEF Asia and the Pacific RO Intranet and later for a UN interagency KM platform.

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111 Linda Stoddart "Managing Intranets to Encourage Knowledge-sharing: Opportunities and Constraints"

ROSA Intranet: intended users

South Asia COs, ROSA, other ROs, HQ. RO information should not be password protected inside the global Intranet. The idea would be to allow access to the RO Intranet Platform to all UNICEF staff and consultants, and later to share passwords with selected UN partners.

ROSA Intranet: strategy for creating

- *Accessing good practices and lessons learnt*
  The Intranet could be a platform to promote examples, lessons learnt and good practices in programmatic areas.
- *Using the Intranet as a basis for a regional CoP group*
  An internal CoP, endorsed by the regional management team, could hire a senior level consultant to facilitate implementation of the CoP. A series of network meetings would be needed to discuss how the CoP could best be implemented e.g. how ROSA and country cluster heads could take turns in moderating a thematic forum in their respective areas of expertise, etc.
- *Allowing more interactivity and capturing of tacit knowledge*
  The new regional Intranet would allow more interactivity between staff. For example, it could facilitate feedback on cross-cutting issues, and promote interactive discussion forums in specific areas of expertise such as communication, Avian Influenza, etc. A discussion forum is only efficient if one person takes the responsibility to 'animate' it, to edit and archive the responses and make them available in an easy-to-read form. This is a labour intensive task; however, the process is an excellent way to capture and share much tacit knowledge.
- *Encouraging the sharing of information and knowledge*
  Each cluster could be responsible to decide whether or not a document should be posted on the Intranet. A system of rewards or incentives could be developed to encourage staff to share resources. As mentioned earlier, it could be mandatory in the PER.
- *Creating a new regional Intranet using the present database*
  The present ROSA Intranet can be used as a base. Guidelines for what type of additional content would be appropriate can be decided upon and each cluster could contribute. Examples of possible contributions include lessons learnt from COs, field trips, evaluations, Who's Who, resources from each cluster, Front Office resources, etc.
- *Using the shared network drives*
  Following the example of CEE/CIS, it would be possible to create a section within the shared network drive, accessible to all, called 'Intranet'. Inside this section a set of folders would be created, each corresponding to a given programme. Inside each programme folder, a set of subfolders would correspond to Intranet pages. Every cluster would be asked to regularly drag their resources into those folders. A selected staff person (Web Master) would then only have to upload each file to the relevant Intranet page. If a document is misplaced or if the Web Master has any doubt, he/she would need to contact the cluster for more information.

ROSA Intranet: implementation timeline

A KM focal point could create a structure which reflected the clusters' needs and could encourage staff to share information, while an assistant documentation officer would physically upload on-line the information coming from each cluster as well as from COs. While the KM unit could work directly under the Communications Adviser, the unit could also work in close collaboration with the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Policy and Advocacy clusters.

Following the example of CEE/CIS, which is in the process of launching its regional Intranet, six months would be required to develop a complete Intranet containing all the information available in the office. This would include two months for a professional focal point to conceptualise the site in collaboration with each cluster, and four months to upload the resources.

ROSA Intranet: expected outcomes

Sharing information in a systematic way will facilitate the creation of knowledge in support of programme needs. Over time, it could become a habit for staff to share their resources for Intranet use, because in the long run this will save everyone's time. New staff would benefit by having ready access to all information, even before joining the RO. Advisers would benefit because most of the documents commonly requested by COs will already be available on-line. COs will benefit by being able to access necessary resources on-line, including best practices and lessons learnt. A well deployed Intranet will increase the overall efficiency of UNICEF in the South Asia region.

ROSA Intranet: long term vision

- *Collaborating with South Asia COs*
  Following UNICEF TACRO's experience, ROSA could seek collaboration with the countries in South Asia to maintain their own pages within the ROSA Intranet.
- *Contributing to a UNICEF Asia and the Pacific Intranet*
  The ROSA Intranet could be transferred and used in a UNICEF Asia RO Platform, with data from all Asian countries.
- *Contributing to a UN Interagency KM Platform*
  Action 14 of the Secretary-General's report on "Strengthening of the United Nations: An agenda for further change" requests UNDG to prepare an implementation plan for the development of common databases and shared knowledge networks that would ensure access by country teams to the knowledge and expertise available in the United Nations system throughout the world.[112]

ROSA could plan ahead and think of a long-term vision linked to the UN reform. According to UNICEF's IT unit in NY, once a Regional Intranet is created within the global UNICEF Intranet, the site can be replicated on an Extranet site. It would be the same database but with possible access from a different server. Access could also be provided to designated external partners.

The possibility of a UN KM Regional Intranet is a long-term plan to keep in mind. The idea could be discussed at a UN Regional Directors meeting. In the mean time, it is important to have already created a complete UNICEF Regional database before thinking about the next step of a wider knowledge-sharing tool.

There is a general need for shorter, more concise reports, summaries and good executive summaries.

KM options for ROSA and partners

Participating in the UN Regional roster of consultants

A common UN roster of consultants for UN-Thailand and UN regional agencies is under development as part of the UN common services project. The roster is being piloted in conjunction with UNESCAP, UNODC, UNFPA, UNEP and UNDP.[113] This pilot effort is a first at any level (country, regional or global). ROSA could look into the possibility of participating in this project.

Participating in the regional Solution Exchange initiative

Before July 2007 ROSA and EAPRO are encouraged to discuss the possibility of a regional Solution Exchange.[114] EAPRO's Deputy Director[115] suggested that both offices could look

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112 Action 14 of the Secretary-General's report on Strengthening of the United Nations
113 Ibid.
114 A concept note on a UN Regional Solution Exchange is available on request from ROSA@unicef.org
115 Interview with Richard Bridle, EAPRO's Regional Deputy Director, New Delhi, India, January 22, 2007 during which he also added: "I'd be very keen to identify the CoP UNICEF would lead. We would need to agree with ROSA on how to do that. We are going to start looking at raising money outside with a possibility of a joint fundraising with UN organisations."

into the possibility of joint funding of a Solution Exchange CoP. In such a proposition, it would be necessary to clarify which CoPs UNICEF would lead and what fund-raising strategies would be needed.

KM options for ROSA and the general public

Improving the ROSA Web site

The ROSA web site was launched in December 2006 and in the first three months received between 15,000 and 30,000 hits per month. This is similar to the number of hits EAPRO receives on its regional web site (35,811 hits in February 2007), but is well below that reached by UNICEF CEE/CIS RO (which had 127,893 hits in February 2007).

- ROSA could improve the number of hits to its regional web site by increasing the number of links it uses; more links from other sites means more visitors come. The Communications Section could spend some time networking with other CO web masters and other UN regional organisations and partner organisations to create reciprocal links. Every staff member could also create a link to the site in their signature when they send out an e-mail.
- In order to promote the site externally, ROSA staff must know what is available on-line, but at present staff reported that they rarely checked the site after it was launched initially. Interest in this web site could be spurred by a regional web newsletter (see recommendations above) that would make staff aware when new material was available.
- The global UNICEF web site structure does not allow easy access to UNICEF regional web sites. Moreover, many web managers in UNICEF suggested that the Red Dot[116] template (developed by UNICEF HQ) is too inflexible. The template could be more flexible and customised for regional web sites (as distinct from CO web sites). Headquarters should be made aware of this and could be requested to allow RO web sites around the world more flexibility in design and more visibility within the global site.
- The regional web site could be updated weekly with information coming from the field, videos from HQ, external links to useful information, etc. The weekly cluster meetings could include a discussion of the web priorities for that week.

ROSA could create programmatic resource packages providing statistical analysis, best practices, internal and external resources on certain issues.

Creating regional resource packages

ROSA could create programmatic resource packages (web sites and CD-ROMs) providing statistical analysis, best practices, internal and external resources on certain issues. The resource packages could be accessed via the regional web site. For example, ROSA's Social Policy Cluster could look into the possibility of creating a resource package to share existing policies and researches with COs and partners.

Two examples of resource packages recently created for the CEE/CIS RO include:
- UN Regional Consultation on Violence against Children in Europe and Central Asia. http://www.violencestudy.org/europe-ca/. This regional resource package was part of a joint project with other UN organisations and NGOs that provided regional resources on violence against children.
- Child Protection Resource Package for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: http://ceecis.org/child_protection/home.html. About six months was needed to conceptualise and create this site, analyse the data, collect the resources (mostly from COs) and to write the content of the 330 web pages.

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116 Web-based software used by UNICEF

SECTION V
CONCLUSIONS

This study, among the first to be carried out in South Asia, reports how other UN organisations have approached the implementation of KM and discusses ROSA's specific needs. The survey revealed a great need among staff for better access to information and for greater interconnectedness.

Organisations everywhere are expressing great interest in making the most of new knowledge management tools and systems. They want to take maximum advantage of increased capabilities to collect information and to connect people. Within the UN system, KM is being encouraged at the highest levels, both as a powerful tool to aid in the achievement of the MDGs worldwide, and as a tool to promote the connectedness that will make a restructured UN more effective.

This study, among the first to be carried out for the UN in South Asia, reports how other UN organisations have approached the implementation of KM and discusses ROSA's specific needs. The survey revealed a great need among staff for better access to information and for greater interconnectedness. Many possible solutions have been suggested, both as a result of observing how other organisations tackle different issues and as a result of direct creative inputs from staff. At this crossroads ROSA can choose to strengthen its approach to knowledge and information management in a number of different ways. Two possible methods that came up repeatedly were to augment and enhance the ROSA Intranet for use as a base and a multi-functional sharing tool, and to take advantage of existing UN regional knowledge management initiatives. The challenge now remains of choosing which among the many options put forth will be the best way forward for ROSA and which will position ROSA as a true knowledge management hub and key source of reference for information on children's issues in South Asia.

Ultimately, any technical solution that is chosen will need to be implemented with the support of management at the highest levels as well as by a cultural change within the organisation. Such a cultural change is slowly taking place worldwide, with the recognition that knowledge management is everyone's responsibility and that while knowledge is power, sharing knowledge is an even more powerful way to improve the situation of children in South Asia.

LEARNING FROM KM EXPERIENCES

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