Training Workshop on Knowledge Sharing and Networking in the ESCWA Region

Knowledge Sharing and Networking as tools for the Sustainability of Telecentres/ICT Access points

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Outline:

Goal and objectives; What we want to achieve in these 20 minutes?

Important Concepts;

- Knowledge
- Sharing
- Knowledge sharing/Management
- Networking
- Sustainability?
- Telecentre/Access Point

Our own context

Challenges

Opportunities
Knowledge, Knowledge Sharing and Management

Knowledge is defined (Oxford English Dictionary) variously as
(i) expertise, and skills acquired by a person through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject,
(ii) what is known in a particular field or in total; facts and information or (iii) awareness or familiarity gained by experience of a fact or situation. Philosophical debates in general start with Plato's formulation of knowledge as "justified true belief". There is however no single agreed definition of knowledge presently, nor any prospect of one, and there remain numerous competing theories.

Knowledge acquisition involves complex cognitive processes: perception, learning, communication, association and reasoning.

The term knowledge is also used to mean the confident understanding of a subject with the ability to use it for a specific purpose if appropriate. See Knowledge Management for additional details on that discipline.

Knowledge Management (KM) comprises a range of practices used in an organisation to:

identify, create, represent, distribute and enable adoption of insights and experiences.

Such insights and experiences comprise knowledge, either embodied in individuals or embedded in organisational processes or practice. An established discipline since 1995, KM includes courses taught in the fields of business administration, information systems, management, and library and information sciences [1]. More recently, other fields, to include those focused on information and media, computer science, public health, and public policy, also have started contributing to KM research. Many large companies and non-profit organisations have resources dedicated to internal KM efforts, often as a part of their Business Strategy, Information Technology, or Human Resource Management departments [2]. Several consulting companies also exist that provide strategy and advice regarding KM to these organisations.

KM efforts typically focus on organisational objectives such as improved performance, competitive advantage, innovation, the sharing of lessons learned, and continuous improvement of the organisation. KM efforts overlap with Organisational Learning, and may be distinguished from by a greater focus on the management of knowledge as a strategic asset and a focus on encouraging the exchange of knowledge. KM efforts can help individuals and groups to share valuable organisational insights, to reduce redundant work, to avoid reinventing the wheel per se, to reduce training time for new employees, to retain intellectual capital as employees turnover in an organisation, and to adapt to changing environments and markets [3].
A social network is a social structure made of nodes (which are generally individuals or organizations) that are tied by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as values, visions, ideas, financial exchange, friendship, kinship, dislike, conflict or trade. The resulting graph-based structures are often very complex.

We are looking at the concept of networking not essentially “Social Networking”

Social network analysis views social relationships in terms of nodes and ties. Nodes are the individual actors within the networks, and ties are the relationships between the actors. There can be many kinds of ties between the nodes. Research in a number of academic fields has shown that social networks operate on many levels, from families up to the level of nations, and play a critical role in determining the way problems are solved, organizations are run, and the degree to which individuals succeed in achieving their goals.

In its simplest form, a social network is a map of all of the relevant ties between the nodes being studied. The network can also be used to determine the social capital of individual actors. These concepts are often displayed in a social network diagram, where nodes are the points and ties are the lines.
Telecentre/Access Point?

Sustainability .. A multidimensional Sustainability

• Social and Cultural Sustainability
• Technical Sustainability
• Policy/Strategy Sustainability

• Human Resources Sustainability
• Financial Sustainability
• Services ICT, Functional ICT, non-ICT

Knowledge .. Networking ... And Sustainability
Out own context
ESCWA Countries
Middle East North Africa
The Global South

Challenges
Language
Infrastructure
Content

Opportunities
Commitments
Government support
International organizations
Experiences and local knowledge built during the last decade

Empowering Communities Through Telecentres’ Networking – TC Egypt & MENA Project

December 2008
Project Goal:

Support the creation of a strong and independent national telecentre network that provides on demand support services to all IT Clubs in Egypt and spearhead the creation of a vibrant telecentre community in the MENA region. The initiative will be jointly supported by UNDP – Egypt and Egyptian Government through MCIT (Egypt ICT Trust Fund)**.
**Specific:**

- To build and nurture a vibrant telecentre community in the MENA region
- To develop capacity of staff so that they effectively manage the network and create high value services to strength IT Club activities across the country
- To support telecentres in achieving sustainability in direct and indirect ways.
- To create and manage an online telecentre helpdesk in order to deliver on-demand online support to practitioners
- To create platforms for online and offline knowledge sharing within Egypt and across the region

**Tools/outputs:**

- **Research knowledge needs**, expectations, opportunities and challenges (Egypt ICT Trust Fund Outreach team, Connecting to/look for regional partners)
- **Telecentre Times Arabic** (newspaper/newsletter) – biannual; first issue out, Second is ready
- **TC-MENA mail list** tc-mena@dgroups.idrc.ca ONGOING
- **Portal**: Knowledge Sharing/Community Content (KS/CC) Arabic Section of the global site [www.telecentre.org](http://www.telecentre.org)
- **Online help desk**
- **Regional Networking** Workshops, networking and research
Opportunities:
- Experience
- Infrastructure
- Networks/partnerships

Challenges:
- Sustainability
- Awareness
- Responsiveness/Participation (national/regional)
- Human resources and budget

Empowering Communities through Telecenter Networking
Some Key ideas to leave you with:

- A telecentre is a general term/name of an ICT for Development Community Center (serving local communities with focus on rural and less attended to, underprivileged ones)
- It can make money .. Well to spend it on more services
- It can also be a social business, making living of people running it, not buy stocks, and a new Ferrari
- Well, some partners thing it can be SME, it can a business model to start your own small project and make money

All the above is valid as the telecentre community’s values are inclusion, accepting of all working ideas and models

But our focus still be at least more on those who don’t have ACCESS, Opportunities, content ..etc

Knowledge (most of it) is out there, we do not need to invent it, empower people to share it

Knowledge is power and “sharing is caring”

WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF TELECENTRES
شكرًا

Thank you