KNOWLEDGE SHARING GUIDELINES

Adaptation Fund: Knowledge Sharing Guidelines for Implementing Entities

Knowledge Sharing for Adaptation Fund Projects

The act of passing knowledge to others is a fundamental means for societies to survive and thrive. The simple transmission of information, known as "knowledge sharing," gives others the ability to build upon valuable innovations and insights that enable everyone to accomplish their goals faster and more effectively or to avoid critical mistakes made in the past.

1.   The Adaptation Fund is dedicated to providing guidance to project and programme managers and staff in carrying out knowledge sharing activities of all kinds. As demand for adaptation activities grows and the number of projects and programmes increases, the Fund wants to ensure that implementers are documenting and making available the wealth of lessons learned so that contemporaneous and future practitioners, as well as other interested parties, can benefit. Knowledge sharing can boost the efficiency of countless adaptation efforts in terms of both time and money by helping to establish best practices and flag potential pitfalls; assist policymakers in crafting more effective legislation; and educate the public on the importance of adaptation for the future.

2.   Knowledge sharing has applications for both the present and the future. In the present, knowledge sharing can help to drive projects forward. Over the long term, the legacy of easily accessible information can help others achieve or surpass what you have accomplished. Despite the obvious benefits, the practice of passing on knowledge does present challenges and is not always easy to accomplish in an orderly or regular fashion during project and programme implementation. Shortages in time, budget, and staff all reduce the amount of attention paid to knowledge sharing. The Fund recognizes these challenges and has compiled the following guidelines as a tool for project managers to more easily and seamlessly integrate knowledge sharing practices into the daily operations of projects and programmes.

3.   The guidelines outlined in this document are part of the Knowledge Management strategy approved by the Adaptation Fund Board at its 14th meeting:
https://adaptation-fund.org/sites/default/files/AFB.EFC_.5.3_Knowledge_Management.pdf

4.   They can be used in conjunction with the guidelines for knowledge management in the Results Framework and Baseline Guidance document:
http://adaptation-fund.org/sites/default/files/Results%20Framework%20and%20Baseline%20Guidance%20final%20compressed.pdf

5.   Sound knowledge sharing practices can also assist significantly in preparing the required Project Performance Report:

https://www.adaptation-fund.org/page/project-performance-and-reporting

Knowledge Sharing Guidelines

<u>Synergies</u>
6.   The same activities and products used to build a knowledge legacy can have multiple uses at the beginning, middle, and end of a project. Examples include external communications, publicity, and educational outreach during the project. Those who are implementing a project over the course of several years may find it useful to keep a knowledge record that is easy to reference for use throughout the duration of a project and for subsequent projects elsewhere. A solid knowledge repository, in the form of public blog posts, private daily notes, or even an internal project wiki built up incrementally for the duration of the project, can greatly ease the process of writing any final reports that may be required.

<u>Audience</u>
7.   Determine the present and future audiences for the knowledge you are gathering. The audience might include all current and potential stakeholders; other practitioners; local, national, and international policymakers; non-governmental organizations; academics; the general public; and the media. The audience can also include current and future members of the team. Consider also how you and your own team members can benefit professionally from knowledge sharing. For example, the act of preserving knowledge generated by your current endeavor can assist in executing future projects, policies, and programmes or help with record-keeping.

<u>Organization</u>
8.   Organizational tools are crucial to effectively tracking and ultimately making accessible the lessons learned and other forms of knowledge. Designate folders on your desktop and in your email account for knowledge sharing, as well as a file drawer or folder for hard copies of reports, photos, DVDs, or other media. Label and date all items so that you and others can keep track of it all.

<u>Media</u>
9.   Media technologies provide the opportunity to take advantage of the synergies mentioned above between knowledge sharing and other project activities. Websites, regular weekly blog posts, or social media streams (twitter, facebook, etc.) reflecting on progress, lessons, plans, milestone events and other aspects of the project or programme enable implementers to simultaneously engage in record-keeping and publicity/communications. Knowledge sharing can be performed publicly and in real time. Complementary products that can be integrated into knowledge streams include videos, photos, media interviews, voice recordings, and PowerPoint presentations. The act of making these products can have added benefits. For example, team participation in a regular video diary can help with professional development by honing the presentation skills of the entire team. Having this material on hand will make generation of reports much easier than having to write from scratch and rely on long-term memory.

<u>Schedule</u>
10.   Knowledge sharing does not have to be time-consuming and can be part of the daily project or programme routine. Many activities, such as blogging, consume very little time and can be performed consistently throughout the life of the project. A knowledge sharing schedule might include taking and uploading a photo once a week, creating a 100-word blog entry every

other day, or regularly reserving some time during team or stakeholder meetings for a brief rundown of lessons learned by all participants.

Content
11.   Good knowledge sharing products require self-examination and analysis of the team's actions to be truly useful. Integrating the following concepts into knowledge sharing and related products will make the products more useful and relevant for the present project, for similar projects occurring at the same time, and for those in the future. Specific, concrete language is infinitely more useful than vague generalities. Try to use straightforward language, rather than jargon and strengthen abstract recommendations with concrete stories or steps. For example, the importance of stakeholder involvement is common knowledge. How did you ensure their involvement? What steps did you take to handle disagreements between stakeholders?

- Context: Describe what was going on in the environment (internal and external drivers relating to politics, organization/culture and local conditions) where and when the knowledge was created. Think of what someone else would need to know to be able to make sense of what you did and adapt and apply it in their situation.
- Actions: Describe the knowledge in the form of an experience, good practice or lesson learned and how it was applied. Explain the steps you took, and/or core processes/activities you worked through. Be specific and concise.
- Impact: Describe the impact or result enabled by the application of this knowledge and why it made a difference. Quantify or qualify the pain or gain, which might motivate someone to actually act differently as a result of your experience. Where possible, share the experience through the words used by those who felt the impact of the knowledge - a quote or paraphrasing someone can go a long way toward giving your methods credibility and convincing others to seriously consider using the knowledge you have generated.
- Key Learning & Advice: Describe what you learned from the application of the knowledge. What's the one thing that stands out for you that you want to remember the next time you apply this knowledge? What would you advise someone else who may want to apply this knowledge in the future?[1]

Continuity and Context
12.   Knowledge created through a project should ideally—and usually does—have its roots in the lessons learned by prior projects. Smart project implementation will take into account that knowledge sharing works two ways: you transmit knowledge to others and absorb it as well. Being able to clearly demonstrate how your project has built upon, synthesized, or complements the previous experiences of others provides a highly useful tool for both your own project and those that follow. Understanding and communicating how your project improves upon the past or how it generated novel information requires actively taking stock on what knowledge already exists and how it can be accessed. On a practical level, this can facilitate the branding and targeting of knowledge products and enable project implementers to identify the most appropriate audiences and best channels of sharing knowledge. Effective use and communication of existing knowledge will keep the "chain" of knowledge sharing strong and unbroken.

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[1] http://greenesconsulting.com/sites/default/files/GC_Knowledge%20Capture%20One-Pager.pdf