MEMORANDUM

To:	All UN Habitat	Reference:	
From:	Raf Tuts, Director Programme Division	Date:	14 March 2018

Subject: **Guide for Integrating Knowledge Management in to Project and Programme Management**

As was agreed during the joint MOD/PD senior management workshop in December 2017, the implementation of the proposed action on Integrating Knowledge Management in to Project and Programme Management will be launched to coincide with the roll-out of the New Project Design and Umoja Start-Up workflow.

In this regard, please see the attached guide to support you in integrating Knowledge Management into your projects and programmes. This takes immediate effect.

This guide is expected to be used by Project Designers, Project Managers and Programme Managers and all interested UN-Habitat staff, consultants, and interns.

Templates to support you further will be developed and shared.

Please send related questions or comments to me or to Modupe Adebanjo.

Copy to: Andrew Cox, Director Management and Operations Division
              Martin Barugahare (Head, Evaluation Unit)
              Rosa Muraguri-Mwololo

Integrating Knowledge Management into Project Cycle Management – The What and How Guide

Introduction

Effective programme or project management contributes to achieving UN-Habitat's mandate, Strategic Plan, WorkProgramme and consequently the global development outcomes, such as the New Urban Agenda and SDGs. All the stages of programme or project management cycle should include a knowledge management component that clearly outlines the knowledge management processes involved and explain the main deliverables. The initiation and planning stages of projects or programmes should be informed by experiences and good practice from previous or other projects/programmes, and external sources. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages should be able to extract and codify lessons to apply not only to the project in question, but to the design of future programmes or projects.

The below guide provides suggestions on what can be done to build a knowledge management (KM) component into the development, implementation, monitoring and closure of programmes or projects.

1. At Concept Note and Drafting of Project/Programme Document:

Objective of Integrating KM

- To avoid duplication of effort, making the same mistakes or facing the same problem others have faced and to give a project or programme a firm foundation on which to build, by ensuring that new project or programme draw on and utilize similar or relevant work (including the experiences and lessons learned) that has already been done by others before it starts.
- To ensure a seamless interlink between the normative and operational work whereby knowledge from one feeds into the other in a conscious and systematic manner.

Examples of Possible Actions
- Find comparative experiences from previous or similar projects to draw upon. Read end-of project/programme reports of relevant/similar projects/programmes and contact relevant colleagues where necessary. External sources should also be consulted.
- Build on the experiences and Lessons Learned from previous or similar other projects/programme. Utilize and integrate Lessons Learned from related other project/programmes.
    - ✓ *Lessons learned is a key approach for embedding knowledge sharing in the project/programme work flow. As an input they help improve the project.*

Conduct Lessons Learned scanning exercise using key project parameters on the knowledge base to identify any previous lessons of relevance.

- Seek Best Practice approaches on the issue being addressed or on the thematic area. Review research and evidence on the issue, looking at what has been done in the area.
- Interview key stakeholders and gather knowledge and insight from other teams/colleagues/experts outside the project/programme team to reuse and reapply existing knowledge and experiences before embarking on a project or activity.
  - ✓ *Talking to experienced colleagues about the best way to approach new projects saves time and money and avoids repetition of mistakes. It also creates strong links across teams and relationships between people.*
- Consult relevant colleagues for relevant organizational policy, rules and regulations and procedures and any other required information. For example, in the areas of finance/budget, procurement, contracting Implementing Partners etc.
- Send Concept Note for peer review to all relevant thematic experts and to other designated peer reviewers (see Annex B - List of peer reviewers; of the Project Design and Umoja Start-up Workflow User Guide). You may call for a face to face peer review
- Incorporate knowledge from all sources into concept note and project document to improve the quality of the concept note/project document and increase the probability for successful fund raising or implementation
- Develop project specific knowledge management strategy as part of the full project document.

Resources/Tools
Project Database (PAAS), Evaluation Database, Lessons Learned database, Peer Review, Peer Assist, Existing ToRs, Existing Project Documents, WWW.

2. During Project/Programme Implementation and Monitoring

Objective of Integrating KM
- To ensure that achievement, challenges and lessons learned are recorded and fed back into the programme/project at regular intervals.
- To systematically monitor projects and update PAAS with status and updates (capturing lessons and knowledge)

Example of Possible Actions
- Clearly define and assign roles for Lessons Learned and Knowledge Management to team members
  - o *Lessons Learned are an essential asset to managing a project or programme; they are taken into account as well as created throughout a project or programme*

- o *Once your project or programme is underway, you are required to add lessons learned to the organization's database (it is an asset to the organization). As an output, Lessons Learned help make an organization better.*
  - o *To be as valuable as possible Lessons Learned should cover:*
    1. *Technical aspects of the project or programme - What was right and wrong about how the work was completed to produce the outputs/outcome*
    2. *Project Management aspect of the project or programme*
    3. *Management aspect of the project or programme – assessment of the Project/Programme Manager in communication and leadership of the project/programme*
- Establish an integrated, timely process to capture and share Lessons Learned.
  - o *Summarizing Lessons Learned and experiences and sharing them with others can help the organization build and retain its knowledge*
- Encourage participation of all project/programme team members, implementing partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholders in identifying Lessons Learned and sharing knowledge
- Train Project Managers (in the case of Programmes) and Task/Activity Managers (in the case of Projects) how to create and apply lessons
- Learn lessons and improve during the project/programme itself as much as at the end
- Add Lessons Learned to agenda items of meetings or schedule review exercise at the end of each phase or major milestone of the project/programme
- Conduct periodic progress review of the project or programme with strong Knowledge Management component
- Include Lessons Learned sessions as part of project/programme workshops and conferences
- Ensure that achievements, challenges and Lessons Learned are recorded and fed back into the project/programme at regular interval
- At each major milestone in a Project's/Programme's lifecycle, review existing lessons, determine the relevance of the lessons to the current project/programme, and assess project/programme's compliance with Lessons Learned recommendations
- Require end of assignment report or note for project staff leaving the project or programme for any reason
- Measure the impact of the Lessons Learned
- Update the project information management database (PAAS) with project status, progress, achievements, challenges and Lessons Learned
- Monitor lessons to verify that the lessons have truly become institutionalized

Resources/Tools
Periodic progress reviews with strong KM component, Lessons learned sessions as part of workshops and meetings related to the programme/project, and After Action Review (AAR)

3. At Project/Programme Closure

Objective of Integrating KM

- To document what others may be able to learn from experiences of a project or programme.
- To share the findings (knowledge products, experiences and lessons learned) of the programme/project widely.

Example of Possible Actions

- Conduct After Action Review (AAR)

    An 'After Action Review' is useful for reflecting upon a project during and after its completion. Sharing the results from your AAR can help future teams learn your successful strategies and avoid pitfalls you have worked to overcome.

    An After Action Review is a discussion or review of a programme or project or an activity that enables the individuals involved to learn for themselves what happened, why it happened, what went well, what needs improvement, and what lessons can be learned from the experience. Lessons learned are not only tacitly shared on the spot by the individuals involved, but can be explicitly documented and shared with a wider audience. After Action Reviews are an excellent basis for, and often feed into, the development of Lessons Learned papers[i]

- Prepare Final Lessons Learned report
- Prepare End of Project/Programme report
- Share Lessons Learned in the project or programme as widely as possible. Use emails, newsletters, workshops or meeting to give presentation
- Update PAAS with required information and upload all relevant documents/reports to PAAS (including the Lessons Learned report and End of Project/Programme report)
- Conduct project/programme evaluation and share report as widely as possible. Also, upload to the evaluation repository

Resources/Tools

Project Database (PAAS), Evaluation Database, AAR, Exit Interviews, UN-Habitat website, Habnet

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[i] UNDP Knowledge Management Toolkit for the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Practice Area (2007)
2016 APQC (American Productivity & Quality Center) https://www.apqc.org/
Project Management Institute (PMI) https://www.pmi.org
Managing Successful Projects with PRINCE2, AXELOS Global Best Practice (2013)