

# **Nurturing Networks in ActionAid International Federation for Learning, Knowledge Sharing and Use...**

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*Who  
am I?*



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# Who is ActionAid International?

- A federation of 44 countries; we are in 22 countries in Africa – **so knowledge sharing and learning is critical, but also comes with contextual challenges;**
- Mission – work with communities for social justice, gender equality and ending poverty;
- Target - women and youth primarily, and communities;
- Issues – women’s rights, public services, resilient livelihoods, climate, humanitarian response.
- Theory of Change – building people’s agency to change structural causes of inequality and poverty

# Learning and Knowledge Ecosystem Framework and 70-20-10 Learning Model



# Sibo's Week - Fostering Learning and Knowledge Sharing using an Ecosystem Approach

Tuesday



**Online or Face to Face Training**

- (3) Structured Learning and Sharing
- (4) Talent Management

**Communities of Practice and Networks**



- (5) Social Networking and Collaboration;  
= knowledge co-creation

Monday



**Learning@Action Aid bulletin; MS Teams Yammer**

- (1) Knowledge Curation
- (2) Performance Support



Thursday

**Programmes Learning Webinars;**

- (6) Access to Experts;  
= Peer to Peer Support;  
= Knowledge Seeking Behaviours

Friday

**Knowledge Harvesting**



Wednesday

## **Pause for reflection**

What communities or networks and spaces of learning and knowledge sharing exist in your organisation?



# **PEOPLE - Communities of Practice and Networks**

- Programmes International Platforms – **STRUCTURE** and **WORKSPACE**
- Heads of Programmes and Policy – **FUNCTIONAL ROLES**
- EAGLES Network – **EXPERTISE**
- Learning and Knowledge Functional Network - **MANDATE**
- Senior Leaders Learning Conversation Group – **LEADERSHIP ROLE**
- Fundraising Community - **EXPERTISE**
- Programmes Learning Community – **OPEN ACCESS**
- Team level e.g. Clusters; Office Hubs; Country Teams; Projects etc - **COVID19 has strengthened these because of regular check ins**

# TIP 1 – Know your target Audience – user experience design



**There are  
organizational  
barriers & enablers**

**There are also  
personal barriers  
& enablers**





# PROCESSES – What facilitates Knowledge Sharing?

- **Organisational mandated reflection moments**
  1. Strategy Review and Development – federation, country and global units level
  2. Annual Planning and Reporting – twice a year globally
  3. Project or Program evaluations
  4. External events with partners
- **Annual Learning Reviews** e.g. for Programmes International Platforms
- **Participatory Review and Reflection** – twice a year at country level or more
- **Communities and Networks check in points online** (various intervals) and face to face meetings e.g. EAGLES Network; all communities.
- **Learning Webinars; Week of Learning and Festivals with external resource people** e.g. Fundraising Community; Learning and Knowledge Functional Network etc
- **Intentionally created** e.g. Senior Leaders Learning Conversation Group with external Social Movements representatives
- **Team level** e.g. Clusters; Office Hubs; Country Teams; Projects etc - **COVID19 has strengthened these because of regular check ins**

## TIP 2 – Know your context and how change happens

- Global Strategy – everything flows from a binding strategy in a federation
- Resources follow strategy – people; finances and also clear leadership mandate
- Relationships - Go where there is energy and interest; start where you can – **Just pick 1 thing and move!**
- Visibility - profile the work to get others on board
- Senior leadership buy-in and sponsorship

## **TECHNOLOGY – What enables Knowledge Sharing?**

- Yammer
- MS Teams
- Zoom
- Skype
- Whatsapp...
- SharePoint Online for Storage and Collaboration
- Learning @ActionAid Bulletin - SWAY
- Face to Face events and processes that also leverage technology
- Culture of working online across countries

## TIP 3 - There will be challenges... 5 Key ones

1. Leveraging technology for KM is not only about selection of tools, technology is just an enabler and it is non-technical management that either ensures success or not.
2. It takes time and effort, so do not expect immediate results - Yammer
3. KM requires commitment as ***any KM initiative is a culture and behaviour change initiative***
4. Prepare for NO and negotiations with Senior Leaders...and other teams to get them on board
5. Money, Money, Money!!! – Note that there are things that you can do without money too

## **5 Key Lessons from our experience -**

1. Team - you need people who share the vision with clear functional leadership roles to drive the agenda;
2. Know how change happens in your organisation and building relationships to leverage on, to do pilots etc;
3. Learn from others outside your organisation and sector;
4. Have a responsive and flexible design and process, as it is a constant trial and error as you test what will work.....
5. Consistency in messaging and goals...keep at it until the KM initiative takes root; or your approach shows results.

***Thank  
You!***



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