

The World Bank

Using Knowledge Management to Drive Innovation

The World Bank offers loans, policy advice, and customized assistance to more than 100 developing countries and countries in transition. As developing countries play a greater role in the world economy, the World Bank maximizes the benefits and cushions the shocks to poorer countries. The World Bank uses its resources and coordinates with other organizations to help developing countries follow a path of stable, sustainable, and equitable growth. Its main focus is on helping the poorest countries. Through interactions with all of its clients, the World Bank emphasizes the need for:

- investing in people, particularly through basic health care and education;
- protecting the environment;
- supporting and encouraging private-sector development;
- strengthening the ability of the governments to deliver quality services efficiently and transparently; and
- promoting reforms to create a stable macro-economic environment conducive to investment and long-term planning.

The World Bank is the largest provider of development assistance and commits about \$20 billion in new loans each year. The World Bank also plays a vital role in coordinating with other organizations—private, government, multilateral, and non-government—to ensure that resources are used to their full effect in supporting a country’s development agenda.¹⁶

The World Bank has recently focused on using innovation and knowledge as a currency in order to leverage the knowledge of organizations and invest in technology to hasten the exchange of knowledge. Major initiatives include helping people make decisions that impact the economy, strengthening government, protecting the environment, and supporting private business development.

¹⁶ www.worldbank.org/ks, retrieved 10/01/02.

DEFINING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

At the World Bank, knowledge management (or knowledge sharing as the World Bank prefers to call it) focuses on systematically capturing and organizing the wealth of knowledge and experience gained from staff, clients, and development partners; making this knowledge readily accessible to a wide audience internally and externally; and creating links between groups and communities working on similar topics.

Knowledge sharing at the World Bank focuses on:

- putting knowledge on par with money;
- learning from clients and partners;
- reinforcing continuous learning;
- building client capacity and widening partnerships; and
- promoting an open environment for effective knowledge sharing.

CULTURE AND COMMUNICATING THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES, AND BEHAVIORS

Creating, sharing, and applying knowledge has always been an important part of the World Bank's programs to assist its member countries to promote growth and reduce poverty. It is only since the mid 1990s, however, that the World Bank has attempted to organize its knowledge activities in a systematic way to maximize their potential benefits. The World Bank's knowledge strategy has three focal points:

1. improving the World Bank's operational quality and effectiveness by enhancing its capacity;
2. enhancing the sharing of knowledge with its clients and partners; and
3. enhancing client capacity to assess and make effective use of knowledge, whatever the source.

The World Bank believes that business survival requires sharing knowledge. Sharing knowledge will increase speed (faster cycle times), improve the quality of service, increase innovation (testing new approaches), and reduce costs (eliminate unnecessary processes). Lending alone cannot reduce poverty. Knowledge sharing brings new actors to the stage and provides global access to development know-how, which could change the poverty equation.

The World Bank focuses on both product and process improvement in its innovation efforts.

The World Bank's knowledge management community has the dedicated support of senior management. Through the communication of KM strategies to World Bank employees, top management acts as a change agent across the organization by raising the awareness of knowledge sharing. Senior managers also ensure the alignment of its strategy and KM programs.

Relationship of Knowledge in Innovation

In 1996 James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, announced that in order to continue serving its mission and its customers, the organization would, in effect, become a knowledge bank. This announcement meant a profound change in the way the World Bank conducted its business.

In 2002, after six years of developing a knowledge-sharing strategy, the World Bank felt that it had firmly established its three pillars of knowledge sharing. These three pillars represent a road map to innovation for the World Bank.

1. First pillar: sharing knowledge within the World Bank—Activities in this pillar include mentoring and coaching programs, orientation, debriefings, thematic groups, and advisory services.

2. Second pillar: sharing knowledge and learning with clients—Components of this pillar include the Global Development Learning Network, the Development Gateway, indigenous knowledge, and the development forum.
3. Third pillar: enhancing the capacity of clients—Components of this pillar include learning and innovation loans, the “development marketplace,” global knowledge initiatives (i.e., global development network, Africa Virtual University, “world links for development,” and “infoDev”), the knowledge economy program, and the consultative group on international agricultural research.

KM has stimulated innovation based on two developments at the World Bank.

1. Upper management supported KM from an early stage (1996), which led to greater resources for KM efforts and great experimentation and risk taking.
2. The absence of an organizational blueprint or strategy on how to implement KM. The lack of fixed guidelines and models, not surprisingly, contributed further to a more open and flexible environment of experimentation, original thinking, and innovative ideas.

Organizational Barriers to Knowledge Sharing and Innovation

The barriers to knowledge sharing and innovation faced by the World Bank are similar to the ones it faced when implementing knowledge sharing several years ago.

They include:

- the World Bank’s large size and bureaucratic nature,
- engaging and maintaining participation in the communities,
- a relatively inflexible mindset of many staff,
- continuing downsizing pressures, and
- low trust levels among middle management.
- The World Bank uses a variety of actions to address these barriers.
- Articulate and disseminate a clear knowledge strategy.
- Get organized for knowledge management.
- Provide support to communities of practice.
- Provide resources for knowledge-sharing activities.
- Change the personnel evaluation system.
- Provide suitable technology.
- Establish metrics to track what is happening.

FOSTERING COLLABORATION

Fostering collaboration and the exchange of tacit and explicit knowledge and information to support innovation is an explicit element in the World Bank’s knowledge cycle (Figure 18). The first two pillars of its road map to innovation fit under the “sharing knowledge” section of its knowledge cycle.



Figure 18

The World Bank shares knowledge externally as well as internally through a variety of activities and programs, such as mentoring and coaching programs, orientation, debriefings, thematic groups, advisory services, the Global Development Learning Network, the Development Gateway, indigenous knowledge, and the Development Forum.

Development Gateway¹⁷

The development gateway (the gateway) portal offers users access to development information, resources, and tools and provides a space to contribute knowledge and share experiences. The gateway helps users navigate the growing amount of development information available online and empowers virtual communities of learning to address key development issues.

The gateway is one of the key programs of the Development Gateway Foundation. The foundation is a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. A board of directors representing major donors and partners from international organizations, public and private sector, and civil society, as well as representatives of developing countries governs it. The gateway serves the needs of civil society, the public sector, the official donor community, the private sector, and many others.

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The gateway builds virtual communities, guided by development experts, around major development topics. In addition, “Development Focuses” address current and emerging issues in development. Guides and advisers for a particular subject work with their communities to highlight the most useful resources available online. Registered users can submit content on a topic page and receive e-mail alerts to let them know about new content available on a specific topic or focus of their interest.

Accessible Information on Development Activities, or AIDA, one of the Gateway’s services, is the largest online source of public information on development activities in the world, with information on more than 350,000 planned, current, and completed projects and programs from more than 200 development agencies. AIDA allows users to search activities by country, topic, source of funding, or status.

¹⁷ www.worldbank.org/ks, retrieved 10/01/02.

The dgMarket is a global marketplace that provides information on donor and government-funded development activities. Donors and government agencies can directly post tender notices and other procurement information on development projects. Companies can set up a detailed profile to obtain automated e-mail alerts whenever a tender notice that meets their specific business interest is published. The full text of tender notices is available to paying subscribers or can alternatively be purchased on a per-notice basis.

Country Gateways are locally owned and operated initiatives that explore the use of information and communication technologies for development in their countries. Country Gateway portals help create and share local and global development knowledge, solutions, and opportunities. By participating in and launching diverse online and offline initiatives, Country Gateways enhance the transparency, efficiency, dynamism, and sustainability of the development process in their countries.

The gateway provides simple user interfaces for numerous functions: sharing knowledge and discussing issues, registering and profiling users, accessing projects and statistical databases, joining a topic community, receiving e-mail notifications, searching, and branding community workspaces.

Development Forum¹⁸

The development forum is an electronic venue for dialogue and knowledge sharing among members of the World Bank’s development community. Its focal point is an ongoing and expanding series of electronic development dialogues on key issues and challenges facing the development community and the world’s poor, with a particular emphasis on learning from the experience of those who face these challenges in their daily lives. These dialogues are complemented by other features, including a speaker’s corner, that provoke discussion and debate on development issues and resources for those who wish to develop their own online dialogues on development issues or learn about other ongoing dialogues.

The focal point of the forum is an ongoing series of development dialogues, which vary in content, format, and duration. However, they all share a common goal: to foster increased dialogue and knowledge sharing on development issues, in an inclusive, collegial atmosphere.

The forum's organizers will work to mobilize active participation in these dialogues by individuals and groups from developing countries. A particular effort will be made to reach out to partner institutions in developing countries—through training and research institutions, think tanks, universities, non-governmental organizations, and other development stakeholders—to encourage them to foster participation in these dialogues and take an increasing role in proposing, planning, and leading online discussions and knowledge-sharing efforts on development issues of their own choosing.

¹⁸ www.worldbank.org/ks, retrieved 10/01/02.

The World Bank hosts the forum. Development dialogues in the forum are sponsored by the World Bank or by other organizations around the world committed to sustainable development.

Global Development Learning Network

The mission of the Global Development Learning Network is to improve development impact by using distance learning to train development decision makers. The aim of the network is to use information technologies to offer content from a wide range of sources and reach a critical mass of participants to effect change.

The participants are usually a mix of decision makers in government, nongovernmental organizations, academia, civil society, private enterprise, and other development agencies. The network allows participants to learn in their home environments by providing a cost-effective alternative to face-to-face learning. It uses a mix of technologies, including satellite communications, videoconferencing, e-mail, Internet, CD-ROM, videos, and telephone conferencing. The network is a growing partnership. It has 29 distance learning centers and distance learning networks that work together to bring development learning to approximately 20,000 participants each year.

Thematic Groups

Thematic groups, also known as communities of practice, are groups of people who are passionate about a common subject. They are mostly front-line staff that are working in the regions and networks. Leadership and membership in any thematic group is voluntary and open to all staff. The groups also have external partners, and knowledge sharing becomes seamless across the group through the e-mail distribution lists and Web sites.

Thematic groups receive funding from their sector board(s) based on work program agreements, which tie thematic group work to the sector strategy. Thematic group products, services, and activities include the production of knowledge collections (e.g., good practices and sector statistics), dissemination and outreach to staff and partners (e.g., brown bag lunches, clinics, workshops, study tours, Web sites, and

newsletters), and support to task teams, thus enabling staff to apply and adapt the global knowledge to the local situation. In addition, the groups raise additional funds for specific work program activities.

The World Bank's thematic groups provide some of its greatest innovations in its products and services due to the fact that group members work directly with partners and individuals in the regions to solve development issues.

Rewards and Recognition

The World Bank uses formal and informal incentives to foster and support knowledge sharing within its organization. One example of a formal incentive is the President's Award for Excellence program. This program nominates two to three teams annually who have excelled in knowledge sharing. Informally, project teams use After-Action Reviews to debrief about the project, capture key lessons, and share knowledge. Annual performance reviews now include knowledge sharing and learning as one of four key behaviors for all staff and managers. The innovation and development marketplaces reward outstanding creativity (of both staff and other organizations) in addressing poverty. The organization has learned the importance of embedding the organizational culture with the idea that knowledge and innovation is a competency and a highly desired activity.

To inspire innovation and a knowledge-sharing culture, the World Bank holds programs such as knowledge fairs, which are learning events to communicate about and encourage the spreading of knowledge. One of these fairs is called the development marketplace and provides a venue to seek new ways of addressing poverty. It involves a competition open worldwide for any individual or organization to develop new ways to fight poverty. In 2002 the competition resulted in 2,400 entries with 204 finalists, and more than 40 of the suggested programs were funded.

"We take what we've learned about sharing knowledge for global development and weave it back into the way the organization functions."

—Lesley Shneier, senior knowledge and learning specialist, the World Bank

Knowledge sharing is now widely perceived as an effective method to achieve the World Bank's mission of poverty reduction.

ESTABLISHING SUPPORT ROLES AND STRUCTURES

Knowledge sharing formally began in the World Bank when its president announced in 1996 that it would become the knowledge bank. At that time, the first thematic groups were created, and its advisory services group was piloted. The following chronology details the evolution of knowledge sharing at the World Bank:

- 1997—strategic compact or a plan for fundamental reform of the World Bank in which many changes were introduced, including an external client focus;
- 1998—knowledge-sharing attributes became part of the overall performance evaluation;
- 1999—produced the World Development Report on Knowledge for Development;

- 2000—launched the global distance learning network, development gateway, and “Knowledge 4 Development;”
- 2001—strategic assessment of past four years that noted that knowledge sharing moved to a more mainstream activity; and
- 2002—the three pillars of knowledge sharing at the World Bank were firmly established.

The World Bank moved very quickly into the equivalent of Stage 5 of APQC’s Road Map to KM Results: Stages of Implementation™. Some of the challenges it now faces as a consequence of its rapid growth include mainstreaming best practices, ensuring accountability, integrating KM and learning, scaling up efforts to share knowledge externally, and managing innovation (creativity vs. control).

The World Bank’s knowledge-sharing initiative resides in the World Bank Institute. Knowledge sharing is placed strategically within the World Bank to promote and help mainstream knowledge sharing and learning as a collaborative, multidirectional, continuous, and active process. The World Bank Institute is the nexus for learning and knowledge sharing for its staff and clients.

Leadership and Designated Roles to Support Knowledge Sharing

In general, knowledge sharing at the World Bank is decentralized and does not have a central pool of resources. It is a matrix structure with regions and networks (thematic in nature) that hold the resources. Each vice president office has a person to coordinate KM resources. This results in a decentralized system of knowledge management. There is a small coordination unit, but much of the real work takes place in the vice president offices. In the coordination unit at World Bank Institute, there are about seven full-time staff. Staff in networks and regions are also directly responsible for KM, although it is difficult to estimate a number, but there are dozens of people involved. At the World Bank there are roughly six regions and six networks, and each of them has a knowledge coordinator and advisory services (such as a help desk or call desk). There are 23 advisory services personnel, with usually two people providing each service. And thematic group leaders or heads of communities of practice spend about 10 percent to 25 percent of their time on knowledge-sharing functions.

The World Bank has several KM champions within the organization, but in terms of the overall responsibility, it falls with Bruno Laporte (manager, knowledge and learning services, the World Bank Institute), who is responsible for consolidating knowledge and learning within the World Bank, and Karin Millett (director, global knowledge and learning, the World Bank Institute), who is responsible for leading World Bank Institute’s efforts in catalyzing the knowledge bank. There are also a number of champions within each vice president’s office and a community of people responsible for knowledge sharing.

One of the most supportive champions of KM at the World Bank is its president, Jim Wolfenson. He articulated the vision for a knowledge bank in 1996; much of what KM has meant to the World Bank and its work has originated from his original vision.

The World Bank follows a very decentralized process for the allocation of resources to KM initiatives. All the vice presidents’ offices, in particular the networks, the thematic part of the World Bank, allocate

resources for KM. Sector boards (for each of the 16 to 17 sectors) allocate resources for KM to the various thematic groups and advisory services. They are contracted to deliver a number of outputs by the sector boards. The World Bank Institute does not allocate funds to others; it has a budget to coordinate KM activities across the organization.

Integration of Customers, Vendors, and Partners Into the Knowledge-sharing Processes

The nature of the work performed by the World Bank demands the involvement of its customers and partners. For example, a team in the Africa Region, supported by the World Bank's innovation marketplace, launched the Indigenous Knowledge for Development Initiative to integrate client knowledge into the development process. The team leader for a Uganda agricultural project learned about the initiative and partnered with the Uganda National Agricultural Research Organization to redesign the project in ways that would identify, document, validate, and eventually use indigenous knowledge in agricultural research and extension. He also received some funds from the initiative to identify potential uses of indigenous knowledge in the project. This spurred interest among other civil society groups in Uganda. Responding to a request from the Council for Science and Technology, the initiative provided seed money to establish a future indigenous knowledge center and prepare for a national workshop to develop a road map for a national indigenous knowledge strategy.

ADVANCING LEARNING AND TRAINING FUNCTIONS

The World Bank Institute creates learning opportunities for countries, World Bank staff and clients, and people committed to poverty reduction and sustainable development. The Institute's work program includes training, policy consultations, and the creation and support of knowledge networks related to international economic and social development.

The World Bank Institute was created to help share the World Bank's expertise and that of its member countries with policymakers and decision makers throughout the developing world. As the learning arm of the World Bank, the World Bank Institute designs and delivers courses and seminars aimed at reducing poverty and promoting economic opportunity and growth. World Bank Institute technology initiatives, like the Global Development Learning Network, link training centers around the world and promote the exchange of cutting-edge information. The institute also trains staff and clients together, which allows the two groups to exchange information and experience.

Using satellite technology and the Internet, as well as traditional methods, the World Bank Institute delivered 587 training activities, amounting to 210,000 training days, in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2001. Government officials, academics, business leaders, journalists, and other interested parties in 149 countries took part in courses on such issues as HIV/AIDS, pollution, corruption, pension reform, and water use. WBI works with its partners at the World Bank, multilateral organizations, and in the private sector to expand services to meet increasing client demand.

Multiple-sector Team Learning

At the World Bank, there is a growing realization that development is complex and interdependent, that participation of all sectors of society is crucial to its success, that "one size does not fit all," and that

learning-by-doing is key. Teams must work together and be tightly connected together to achieve common goals and objectives. They must also be agile, flexible, and include clients.

In 2000 the World Bank created a learning board to oversee all learning at the World Bank and moved from a single sector to multiple-sector team learning (MTL). The objectives of the multiple-sector team learning program are to help World Bank teams build both their own and client capacity to address key cross-sector challenges, such as HIV/AIDS. The focus is to improve both team accomplishment (immediate performance) and mastery (performance over time). By helping each team to integrate learning into its work, the program enables continuous improvement and innovation. Supported by the learning board, the MTL program started with 30 teams in all the regions in fiscal year 2002 and plans to expand to 60 teams in fiscal year 2003.

MTL helps operational teams to fight poverty by transforming the way they work and learn together. Knowledge, or sector, packs are key to this effort. The knowledge packs provide users with quick access to country-specific cases of indigenous/traditional practices, in-country sources of knowledge, and World Bank-supported projects related to indigenous knowledge issues. However, knowledge packs alone are not enough. Teams also need process and administrative knowledge, combined with behavioral skills, in order to successfully achieve their goals.

Currently, the World Bank supports 60 multiple-sector teams. Each team receives full support from team learning coaches. There are about 30 coaches. The coaches work with team leaders to identify team composition and develop a learning plan around team building and knowledge gaps. The World Bank also provides online support and help desk support to all operational teams. The World Bank plans to expand to 1,000 teams in the near future.

Innovation in these teams occurs continuously from the formation of the team onward. The teams focus on learning before, during, and after projects and use project milestones and After-Action Reviews to capture lessons and feed them back into the process (Figure 19).

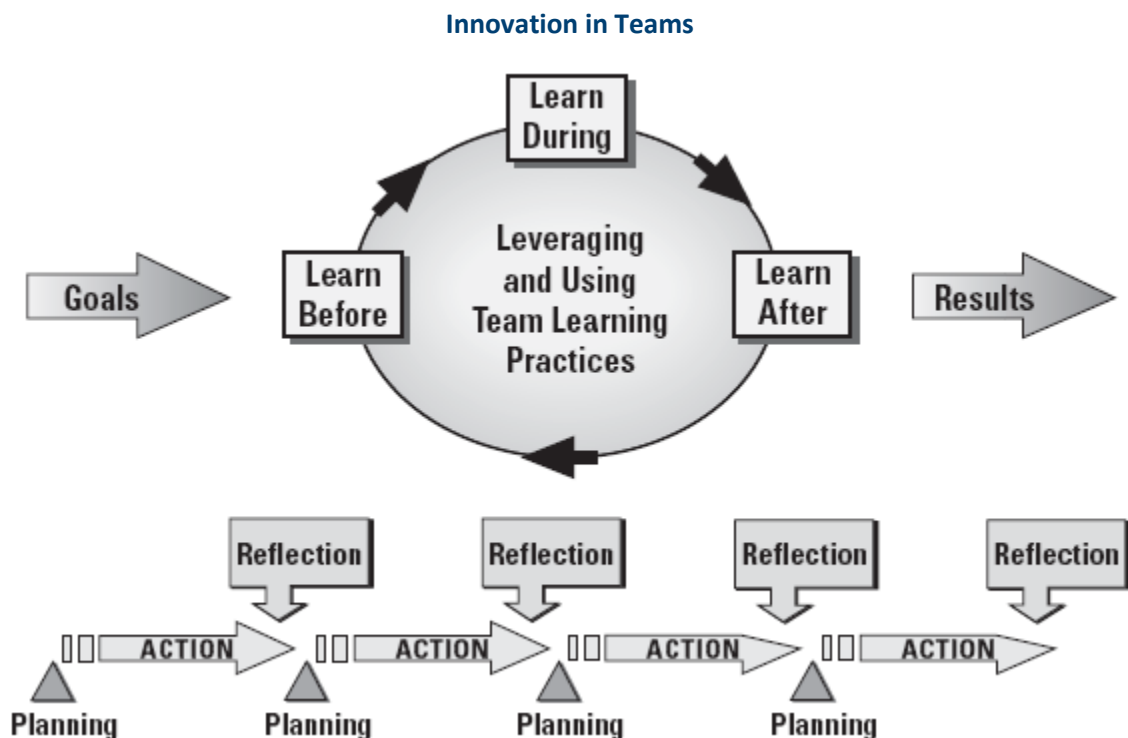


Figure 19

Innovation not only occurs within the teams, but also among them as well. By providing the team with knowledge from the appropriate thematic group(s) at the time they are formed, the teams have a knowledge advantage going into their local projects. Using reflection periods to gather insights, lessons learned, and to plan allows teams to gather what they've learned during their projects and apply it forward. And finally, the collective knowledge of the teams is disseminated and utilized across the organization. Preliminary feedback collected from the teams illustrates that:

- teams are better integrated around sectors and demonstrate improved communications;
- teams have received technical support from other teams, which provides what they might not have otherwise learned about; and
- the World Bank and clients have engaged in a program of team development that has improved the overall achievements of project goals.

Knowledge Intern Program

The knowledge intern program of the World Bank is offered to undergraduate and graduate students of the member countries as an opportunity to acquire practical, hands-on knowledge management skills.

Students must be enrolled in a full-time university program. More than 100 knowledge interns are placed each year at various units, thereby providing substantial assistance to staff in their knowledge-sharing efforts.

The knowledge intern program is ongoing and year-round. Students work together with staff in a mutual learning and knowledge-sharing environment. Typically, students earn course credits for their work and do not receive financial compensation.

A new knowledge intern recruiting system has been put in place that allows students to create their personal profile, update them whenever needed, follow up on their application status, and apply to various employment programs without re-entering their information multiple times.

EXAMINING INDICATORS OF SUCCESS AND CHANGE

The World Bank has monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of its KM processes almost from the start in 1996. Inputs, activities, outputs, and even outcomes have been measured. Measures include:

- monitoring and tracking outputs and utilization of resources, database usage statistics, and the number of unique visitors to the intranet portal site;
- the number of innovation grants and loans and the tracking of learning and tuition loans (each project is measured separately and has its own set of indicators); and
- an annual KM survey to understand how KM is contributing to the success of the World Bank and its profitability.

The World Bank measures the inputs into KM, such as how much is being spent and the number of programs. It also measures the outputs, which involve the number of best practices, new tools, knowledge nuggets, resources added, or processes put in place. The third aspect of measurement is the utilization of knowledge products and services, such as the number of unique visitors to a Web site, the number of queries on an information and statistics system, or the number of requests for services from advisory services. The World Bank also conducts internal client surveys. Each of the sector boards surveys the community concerning the knowledge products that are most effective and how frequently they are used, as well as the respondent's contribution in the last year.

The World Bank also uses an overall staff survey for the organization, which asks a range of questions, including some focused on KM. These questions focus on "the extent to which people feel they have access to knowledge to do their work" and "the extent to which global knowledge is perceived to be available to clients." Additionally, a number of external surveys have been conducted within the Africa region by going to main counterparts in government project offices and asking about improvement in access to the World Bank's knowledge and how well the World Bank adapts global knowledge to local conditions. People responded positively to the first but less so to the second, which indicates that the World Bank still has room to improve in knowledge adaptation.

The World Bank Institute has helped various units use surveys to identify best practices in measuring output and impact and ways in which to share that across the organization. The role of the World Bank Institute is to help provide the tools, but the work is done within the various units. There is an evaluation unit that traditionally performs project evaluations at the World Bank.

Success Stories

Story telling has long been a vehicle for conveying success in the World Bank, to the extent that is firmly embedded in its culture. The following is a success story from the artisan community that emphasizes collaboration and innovation.

The origin of this artisan community lays in a series of grassroots management training workshops conducted in West Africa, India, and Peru since the 1990s. The focal point of the workshops was indigenous women entrepreneurs who often hold the key to a unique type of development: combining the pursuit of their economic potential and choosing a sustainable livelihood that offers numerous benefits to rural areas, including one often overlooked: preserving their cultural heritage. The program emphasized enhancing skills, according to the needs of participants, and greater community participation in local economic development. Over time, a community was formed, as workshop participants coalesced informally and as artisan enterprise was recognized increasingly as a vehicle with enormous potential to empower local communities.

According to the World Bank, the artisan community's greatest accomplishment has been the links—those between North and South, between policy makers and grassroots activists, between crafts people and buyers/donors—that it has established and sustained. For example, the community serves as an ongoing forum that addresses critical challenges faced by artisans all over the world. These issues include raising investment, adapting products for the global market, resolving tax issues, business planning, utilizing new technologies, and finding a balance among economic development, cultural heritage, and environmental concerns.

The community has also been a springboard and laboratory for innovation. New project proposals have been developed based on specific artisan needs and the ideas that have emerged from the ongoing dialogue. For example, in January of 2002 the World Bank-sponsored development marketplace awarded a grant for a project to build creative communities in Mali, which is firmly rooted in the artisan community. The grant will help replicate, on a broader scale, the extremely inventive concept of using cultural artifacts (which are eventually displayed in a village museum) as collateral for supplying credit to local entrepreneurs.

The community also learned that learning is multidirectional; it involves knowledge sharing among different groups and disciplines. The focus is not simply on training or capacity building. Instead, the artisan community emphasizes the value of learning from members in developing countries. In fact, it has brought together artisans and field workers to the World Bank in order to instruct development professionals about the local impact of different development strategies. This type of rich learning environment is also evident in how innovative ideas from developing countries have provoked thought on how they can be applied or replicated in developed countries.

The artisan community has incorporated complementary activities and tools to encourage and stimulate dialogue, innovation, and learning. They include handmade development seminars, which are attended by crafts people, financial supporters, museum professionals, social scientists, and staff of nongovernmental organizations and federal government agencies. Attendees meet regularly to discuss innovation in culturally based enterprise development in rural villages.

The community also uses online discussions to foster communication and innovation. Electronic mailing lists have been an essential tool in keeping the groups in the community connected and promoting ongoing learning in face-to-face events. A network of women entrepreneurs in rural Peru has even set up a mailing list to discuss common issues.

Much of the artisan community's success and innovative quality can be attributed to its ongoing partnerships. As part of the institute's community empowerment and social inclusion learning program, it represents one aspect of the World Bank's new emphasis on community-driven development and, therefore, has access to the networks, resources, and ideas of a larger programmatic framework. Just as importantly, the community works with artisan networks in developing countries, such as the Self-Employed Women's Association in India; international craft organizations, such as the World Crafts Council; and organizations in the North, such as the Craft Organization Directors Association and the D.C.-based Crafts Center in the United States. It is currently organizing a program on "Building Creative Economies: The Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Development," in partnership with a coalition of agencies led by the U.S. National Endowment for the Arts, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Kenan Institutes for the Arts and Private Enterprise to explore promising practices in the use of local cultural resources for poverty reduction and economic development.

During the course of its development, the community has collected several lessons learned.

- Learning and applying knowledge—The overall learning process within the community emphasizes practical knowledge that is valuable to most members on a daily basis.
- Linking innovation to needs—Addressing a fundamental development problem often requires using an imaginative approach. The connection among rural development, community empowerment, and culture and the arts was not obvious to everyone in the development community, and has made the community even stronger.
- Diversity is critical in community building—A rigorous understanding of the challenges faced by clients has been achieved through ongoing dialogue among members representing a broad and diverse range of disciplines and perspectives.
- Community building is an ongoing process and challenge—Communities are difficult to establish and even harder to sustain. Time, resources, active members, coordination, and solid objectives are all crucial factors.

LESSONS LEARNED

The World Bank shared seven lessons it has learned regarding knowledge sharing since 1996.

3. Leadership—It is essential to have a top executive as a sponsor for knowledge sharing activities and programs.
4. Organization—Communities are the heart and soul of knowledge sharing at the World Bank.
5. Culture—It is important to combine formal and informal incentives for knowledge sharing.
6. Measurement—It is important to demonstrate the value of knowledge sharing to the front lines to ensure the continued participation in and success of those activities and programs.
7. Communication—It should be relentless and inspiring and stimulate both awareness and advocacy.
8. Management—Creativity is key to managing knowledge-sharing programs and activities, but so is accountability. Someone has to be responsible.
9. Innovation—Innovation is both an integral part of and result of the knowledge sharing journey. Without innovation, programs stagnate and activities become inactive.

ABOUT APQC

For over 30 years, APQC has been on the leading edge of improving performance and fostering innovation around the world. APQC works with organizations across all industries to find practical, cost-effective solutions to drive productivity and quality improvement. We are a member-based nonprofit currently serving more than 500 organizations in all sectors of business, education, and government.

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