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Organización
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Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Knowledge and the Capacity-Building Function

UNESCO and Knowledge Sharing (2) : The Capacity-Building Function

The first of this four-part series of meetings examines two case studies, from ED and CI Sectors, to explore key concepts and issues connected with capacity-building.

Case Study: The Open Training Platform (CI/INF)

In March 2007, UNESCO launched the Open Training Platform, a website for sharing and accessing English-language capacity-building resources for development.

Objective: The Platform aims to support better provision of knowledge and skills to meet local people's needs in developing countries through a collaborative effort involving the UN and other development partners.

Question: How did awareness of this knowledge gap emerge and how was consensus achieved on how to tackle it?

The Process: It involves identifying, gathering and organizing free and open source training materials (currently, 1,820 learning resources in English) from development partners worldwide (630, including UNESCO Sectors and Field offices, other UN agencies, NGOs and Foundations) involved in capacity-building in domains contributing to development, such as agriculture, health, entrepreneurship and gender. Once validated, described and organized into categories by a back office team, the materials are made available for trainers, local development actors or learners.

Questions: Are these formal, structured partnerships or loose, self-selecting communities of practice?

Does the web option create "digital divide" access problems and, if so, how can this be mitigated?

Two roles: In offering this service, UNESCO acts both as a knowledge broker and as an information manager for capacity-building:

1/ Knowledge-broker:

The Open Training Platform mediates between *sources* of knowledge (producers of open learning resources) and *users* of knowledge (trainers and learners). It promotes open license materials. Development stakeholders support this effort informally by web posting or through formal partnerships, while trainers and learners

benefit from free, guided consultation and use of relevant materials. By encouraging trainers and learners to contact producers for additional language versions and/or localised content, it encourages communities of practice and the production of new knowledge.

Questions: Can and should UNESCO expand its role to lead or structure these emerging additional knowledge activities (knowledge production, communities...)? Can and should UNESCO itself provide multilingual versions of materials?

2/ Information management

The Platform uses IT tools to collect, process and organise information on training materials production. This enables more efficient management by development actors of their learning resource activities, as they can consult the Platform when planning learning projects, to avoid duplication and so fill gaps in resource development. Partners can work together in a process of collective knowledge creation, evaluation and learning from successes and failures. Finally, the Platform facilitates dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders with common aims regarding knowledge transfer in specific areas.

Question: How is this experience being captured and shared within UNESCO? Did it build on previous projects and does it feed into other projects?

Evaluation The first assessment of how the Platform is being used will take place in March 2008 on the basis of key performance indicators, on-line feedback and surveys of target user groups.

Questions: What are the main obstacles to be overcome in this activity? What are the lessons learned from UNESCO's knowledge-broker role and what is its added value?

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Link :

<http://www.opentrainingplatform.org>

Case Study: Knowledge-sharing to Support Comprehensive Education Sector Responses to HIV and AIDS (ED/UNP/HIV)

Objective: These activities aim to help Member States move towards provision of universal access to HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support. The importance of knowledge-sharing cuts across all core action areas that provide the strategic focus of UNESCO's Strategy for Responding to HIV and AIDS:

- Advocacy and support for evidence-informed policies and practices
- Policy and programmatic guidance
- Technical support and capacity enhancement
- Coordination and harmonization
- Monitoring, assessing and evaluating progress

The following are examples of knowledge-sharing for capacity building through which knowledge is captured and shared with different audiences to build commitment and capacity to develop and implement comprehensive Education Sector responses to the epidemic.

Questions: What kinds of partnerships underpin these activities? What is UNESCO's particular niche in knowledge sharing on HIV and AIDS?

Good Policy and Practice in HIV & AIDS and Education series - Intended for a wide audience, this publication series addresses key themes in HIV & AIDS and education in booklets drawing on knowledge and programming experience to highlight issues and lessons learned and suggest policy and programming strategies and actions in developing countries. Upcoming booklets focus on effective learning and partnerships in practice.

Questions: How are the information needs of the target audience identified? Is the information regularly updated and is it indexed? Which parts of the process

involve partners (providing information on HIV?) and which involve UNESCO expertise (tailoring information to needs?)

Technical consultations on key issues –

The consultation process brings together a range of stakeholders with different perspectives to engage in an in-depth examination of a particular issue in order to advance knowledge and capacity to act. Recent consultations have addressed the issues facing HIV-positive teachers in East and Southern Africa, and the role of schools as centres of care and support. **Questions: How do Field Offices, Sector and Institutes interact in this activity? How does the “new knowledge” generated feed into capacity for action? How is it captured and shared with others?**

EDUCAIDS capacity-building workshops

– Language-specific capacity-building workshops with UNESCO staff, ministry counterparts, UNAIDS cosponsors and civil society representatives aim to strengthen capacity and teamwork among UNESCO and its partners in the HIV and AIDS response at country level. **Questions: Do communities of practice emerge to continue knowledge-sharing after the workshop? How do you handle rapidly evolving knowledge requirements? How do you feed knowledge created within other activities (e.g. the two above) into the workshops? How do you measure workshop impact and effectiveness?**

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Links: HIV and AIDS portal:

www.unesco.org/aids

UNESCO's Strategy for Responding to HIV and AIDS

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=33533&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Good Policy and Practice in HIV & AIDS and Education Series

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35444&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html