

Knowledge Management Case Study: National Water Resources Institute (NWRI), Nigeria

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Organisational setting 1

Mission

- To coordinate CB, applied research and information dissemination for the water sector in Nigeria

Vision

- To be the foremost CB institution for the water sector in Nigeria and the West African sub-region



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Organisational setting 1

Goals

NWRI was set up to:

- provide skill-oriented manpower training,
- conduct applied research,
- document and disseminate information,
- develop and maintain partnerships and networking, and
- provide technical services in water resources

Strategy

- NWRI organises its activities in three (3) main areas; training, research & technical services



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Organisational setting 2

- NWRI is a government owned institution
- Located in Kaduna (north-central Nigeria)
- Led by a director, supported by 3 deputies
- 185 staff (38 core, 146 support). Core group (32 males and 6 females) mainly from engineering background, with few in the sciences



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The KM workshop

When

- 15th to 19th August 2005
- In Kaduna, Nigeria

Who

- 30 participants from all departments and units
- Including the 4 management committee members



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KM plan 1

Rendering efficient and effective resource centre services

- Develop an inventory of staff skills, attitudes and experiences (**Nov. 05**)
- Develop the skills of the staff (**On going**)
- Establish QA mechanisms (**Jan. 06**)
- Collaborate with other RCs to support initiatives (**On going**)
- Develop funding strategies (**Jan 06**)
- Provide relevant ICT facilities (**Jan 06**)



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KM plan 2

Documentation Services

- Establish and inaugurate Publication Committee (**Jan 06**)
- Re-activate and strengthen Publication Unit (**Jan 06**)
- Produce fact sheets, briefing notes, books and brochures (**Jan 07**)
- Re-activate publications of journals and bulletins (**Sep 06**)
- Initiate the NWRI Newsletter (**June 06**)
- Publish extension materials based on best practices (**Jan 07**)



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Before / after KM intervention

- Before:
 - Not much aware of KM
 - Took it to be training and, to certain extent, individual staff development
- After:
 - Organising knowledge in utilizable forms
 - Knowledge sharing is central
 - documentation and dissemination of knowledge to various stakeholders



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Organisational change 1

- NWRI has decided to transform from a training institution to a resource centre
- Knowledge sharing is now top priority
 - Monthly internal seminars
 - Adoption of committee system
 - Increased participation in sector activities
 - Documenting experiences from sector activities
 - Increased involvement in partnerships and network



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Organisational change 2

- Institutionalizing enquiry services to the WES stakeholders in Nigeria
- Developing strategies to re-activate and strengthen documentation and dissemination services.
- Expanding outreach training system to other sectors.
- Re-organizing Consultancy Unit and processing for its incorporation



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Lessons from the KM pioneers

1. Enthusiastic champions are needed and to be located (**R & TS, Training depts.**)
2. Build KM initiative(s) on existing core competence (**enthusiastic core staff**)
3. Address with KM initiative an urgent strategic imperative (**institutional review: CBI to RC**)
4. Firm commitment from the top is needed for successful KM initiative/intervention (**Yes**)
5. Early quick wins in KM initiatives neutralise the nay-Sayers (**+ve response from FMWR, UNICEF**)



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Story 1

- 4 committees set up to develop strategies and action plan for institutional review.
- Committees have submitted draft reports.
- Institute wide seminar planned for 3rd week of November 2005
- A retreat for expanded management committee scheduled for 3rd week of January 2006.
- Institutional review plan to be presented to the sector stakeholders at the 1st NWSF, scheduled for March 2006



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Story 2

- Increasing relevance and Improving partnership with key stakeholders
 - FMWR (KM workshop, fact sheets, trainings, NWSF)
 - UNICEF (IA, website, internet, research, NWSF)
 - WaterAid (training tools, NGO forum)



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Challenges / questions to discuss

- Staff apprehension for the unknown
- Hybrid nature of NWRI (both academic and civil service oriented)
- Low level of ICT in the country
- Low capacity in and attention to software component of WES
- Inadequate attention and budgets to data and information acquisition and dissemination in the sector



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