

Learning to manage with knowledge:

A United Nations forum, 8-9 July 2008

**The Office of Information and Communications Technology and
the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Lectures and Conversation Series**

Background

During the collaborative planning process for the development of an information and communications (ICT) strategy for the United Nations Secretariat (A/62/793), knowledge sharing and collaboration were identified as one of the key institutional drivers. Knowledge management has been acknowledged as being a significant part of organizational change and therefore an important component in the UN's management reform process.

Knowledge management – creating value from the UN's intangible assets- encompasses three essential processes that are intricately linked:

- Organizational learning
- Information management, and
- Information technology.

Knowledge management is reliant on continuous communication, and the sharing of expertise and ideas. The key to effecting change is to focus on concrete, tangible outputs. This forum intends to do just that – focus on achievable outputs within the scope of a knowledge management strategy that can facilitate innovation and change in the UN.

Objectives

The main objectives of this forum are to share the practical lessons from within the UN system on existing knowledge management initiatives; to understand how knowledge management can help the UN and its specialized agencies to meet their mandates; and to identify concrete steps to implement successful knowledge management initiatives with the UN.

The forum will provide an opportunity to determine which knowledge management approaches would and would not work within specific environments and to identify, based on actual experiences, effective methods to share knowledge and move specific initiatives forward.

Participation

The forum will involve the participation of senior management and staff who are responsible for knowledge management initiatives in the UN system, knowledge management experts and others involved in work on these issues.

Facilitation

The forum will be chaired by Choi Soon-hong, Chief Information Technology Officer; Linda Stoddart, Deputy Director for Knowledge Sharing and Networking, Outreach Division of the Department of Public Information, will coordinate and facilitate the interactive sessions.

Methodology

A combination of presentation, panel discussions and participatory learning techniques will be used as well as a “peer assist process” that will be used to facilitate discussion in groups. This will involve staff from other organizations, sharing their experience, insights and knowledge with staff from other organizations or departments who have requested assistance on launching or developing a knowledge management initiative.

Venue

The forum will be held in the Woodrow Wilson Reading Room of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and Knowledge Sharing Centre. The room will be set up to encourage a combination of discussion of the entire group (approximately 30 participants) and work in groups.