UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT G🔵ALS

eio

independent evaluation

Strategic Evaluation of Knowledge Management (KM) in UNIDO

March 2024

OBJECTIVES

ASSESS
current state of KM in UNIDO

ADDRESS
gaps, challenges and opportunities

IDENTIFY
good practices and success stories

IMPROVE
UNIDO's KM practices

SCOPE

This formative evaluation assesses UNIDO's current internal knowledge management initiatives and approaches, identifies gaps and challenges, and explores avenues for improvement.

METHODOLOGY

DESK REVIEW
of documents dated to 2007

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS:
48 Vienna & field personnel

SURVEY to all ~2000 UNIDO personnel: 217 respondents

WEB METRICS and **ONLINE DATA**

OBSERVATION OF UNIDO's ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

CONTENT INVENTORY

DISTRIBUTION of SURVEY RESPONDENTS (%)

HQ 59
Field 41

Female 48
Male 51
Prefer not to say 1

ISA holder 61
Other 1
G 16
P 22

KEY FINDINGS
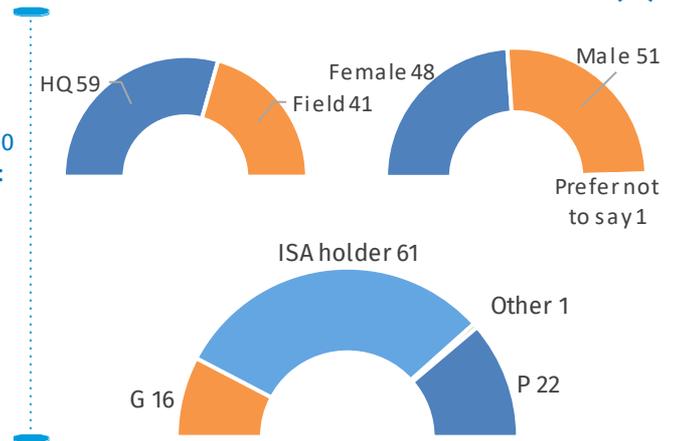
Contribution to Institutional Sustainability of UNIDO's KM initiatives and approaches (%)

	HQ Staff	HQ Consultants	Field Staff	Field Consultants
Do not know	11	21	7	17
Strongly disagree	34	23	21	5
Disagree	34	28	14	24
Agree	20	23	57	39
Strongly agree	1	5		15

Clear, operational and established KM framework (%)

10, 8, 34, 25, 24
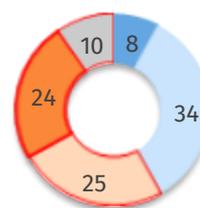
Incentives for UNIDO personnel to use KM (%)

10, 8, 24, 38, 22
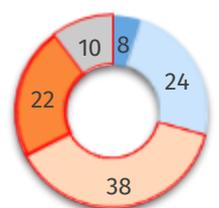
Contribution of KM to UNIDO's results (%)

11, 5, 32, 26, 25
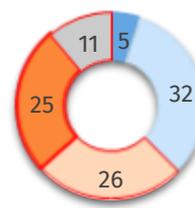
Contribution of KM to UNIDO's efficiency (%)
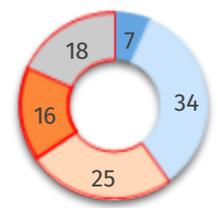
18, 7, 34, 25, 16

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Do not know

SWOT Analysis of UNIDO's KM System:

STRENGTHS

- Knowledge management implicitly embedded in UNIDO's Medium-term programme framework
- Proven knowledge sharing and learning experience e.g., Knowledge Hub, IAP, Legal Office, etc.
- Technical knowledge and special services, e.g., industrial statistics, detailed technical reports, guidelines, training tools, etc.
- On-going emergence of KM solutions in response to business needs, e.g., Viva Engage

WEAKNESSES

- No corporate KM strategy with a clear vision, target architecture, governance, etc.
- No corporate KM Policy framework, guidance, tools, metrics, etc.
- No shared understanding of KM and lack of coordinated approach
- Functional silos prevent teams from taking advantage of each other's knowledge
- Knowledge is difficult to retrieve, i.e., not shared, documented, and institutionalized
- Loss of knowledge with reassignment of staff to roles in which they have limited knowledge
- Job descriptions, objectives, and performance appraisals do not concretely formalize knowledge management
- Scarce capacities and resources for KM
- Loss of knowledge due to lifetime of many KM ad-hoc initiatives closely linked to Projects

OPPORTUNITIES

- Change management can provide new thrust to KM
- Learning and Development Services in Corporate Services and Operations establishing network of KM focal points
- Use of Knowledge and learning platforms could increase impact of UNIDO's interventions
- Properly managed knowledge platforms could increase UNIDO's relevance and visibility
- Demand driven approach could increase quality of content and knowledge platforms
- Harmonization of knowledge platforms, learning tools, taxonomy and metadata standards could improve quality and efficiency

THREATS

- Knowledge may be perceived as competitive advantage preventing widespread sharing
- Externalization of programme implementation to field consultants may "deskill" technical staff
- Limited KM standards and methodologies
- Scarce resources to support KM and multiple IT systems as a foundational threat to effective knowledge capture, reuse and retention
- Without appropriate quality assurance, lower quality/value of some reports may undermine UNIDO's position and pose a reputational risk
- Lack of coordination may lead to reduced impact and quality

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.
UNIDO should develop a Knowledge Management strategy and set consistent priorities for KM:
- Assess KM needs of UNIDO personnel.
- Mainstream KM in job descriptions, annual objectives and appraisal of personnel.
- Provide KM with adequate leadership and management support, governance structure, staffing capacity, and funding.
- Clarify the corporate ownership and governance structure of KM, for example, by adding "Knowledge Management" responsibilities to a division or unit.

2.
UNIDO should establish a KM policy framework, procedures and guidelines to trigger a knowledge culture:
- Revive the already initiated Programme Service Modules.
- Strengthen the support and recognition provided to the Viva Engage networks.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and institutionalization across the project cycle.
- Promote the inclusion of KM across the organization.
- Streamline and tailor IT systems to enhance end-user acceptance and uptake.