Knowledge Solutions

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Crafting a Knowledge Management Results Framework

By Olivier Serrat

Managing for results requires a coherent framework for strategic planning, management, and communications based on continuous learning and accountability. Results frameworks improve management effectiveness by defining realistic expected results, monitoring progress toward their achievement, integrating lessons into decisions, and reporting on performance.

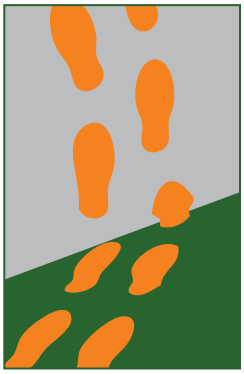
Background

On 4 May 2009, at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of ADB, Haruhiko Kuroda—ADB President and concurrent Chairperson of ADB's Board of Directors—stressed the importance of knowledge to that organization:

> *To be fully effective, we must also consciously and actively blend knowledge with financing. We will focus on developing, capturing, and sharing knowledge in all our work, ensuring that ADB serves an intermediary role for both financing and knowledge.*

Enhancing Knowledge Management under ADB's Strategy 2020

On 31 July 2009, President Kuroda then approved *Enhancing Knowledge Management under Strategy 2020: Plan of Action for 2009–2011*[1] to advance the knowledge management agenda under *Strategy 2020: The Long-Term Strategic Framework of the Asian Development Bank (2008–2020)*.[2] Four pillars support the plan of action: (i) sharpening the knowledge focus in ADB's operations—to add value at regional, country, and project levels, (ii) empowering the communities of practice to—collaborate for knowledge generation and sharing, (iii) strengthening external knowledge partnerships—to align and leverage external knowledge, and (iv) further enhancing staff learning and skills development–to enhance opportunities for staff to learn. The four pillars



[1] *Enhancing Knowledge Management under Strategy 2020: Plan of Action for 2009–2011* is reproduced in ADB. 2009. *Enhancing Knowledge Management Strategies*. Manila. Available: www.adb.org/documents/information/knowledge-solutions/enhancing-knowledge-management-strategies.pdf

[2] Available: www.adb.org/documents/policies/strategy2020/strategy2020.pdf

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are closely related: the set of actions/outputs that make up the first focuses on adding value to ADB's operations in its developing member countries; the other three sets deal with how that might be achieved.

ADB's plan of action for knowledge management connotes a pragmatic, step-by-step approach: the initial actions/outputs are for a 3-year time frame; in October 2009, measures for their implementation were incorporated into ADB's Work Program and Budget Framework (2010–2012); and progress is to be monitored and reviewed at the time of ADB's annual budget review by the Regional and Sustainable Development Department in ADB, in consultation with ADB's Budget, Personnel, and Management Systems Department and Strategy and Policy Department.

> *Bite off more than you can chew, then chew it.*
> —Ella Williams

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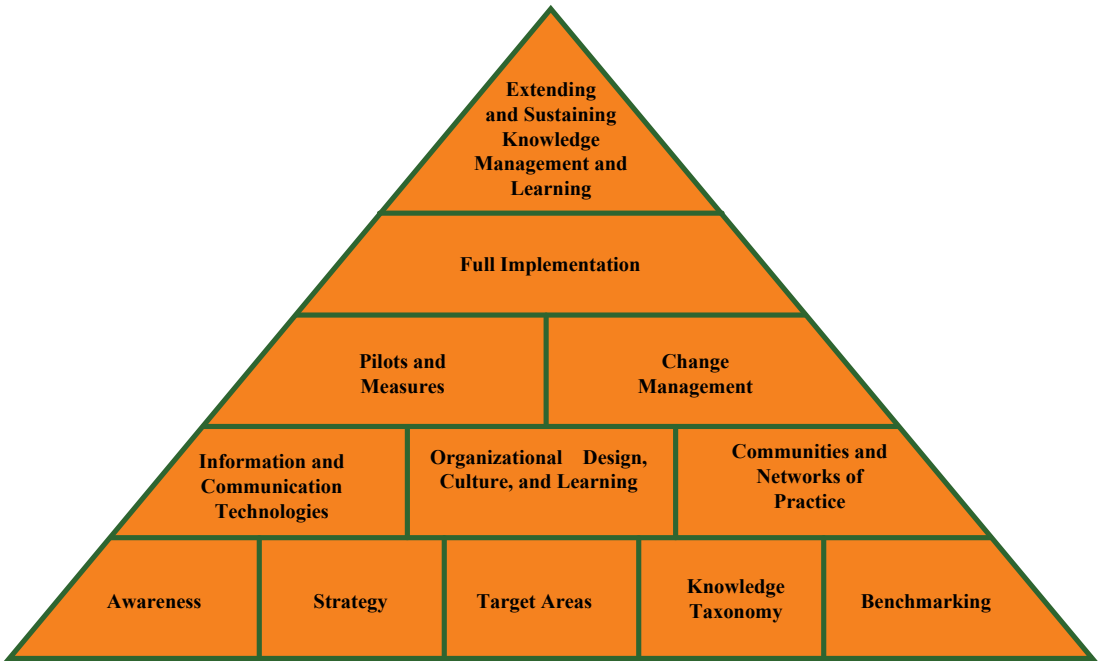
ADB's plan of action does not discuss but flags aspects that support and facilitate knowledge management practices, viz., budgetary allocations, business process improvements, and information technology. These *Knowledge Solutions* showcase the expected outcomes, useful results indicators, specific activity indicators, targets, and sources of verification that comprise the knowledge management results framework for ADB's plan of action. The framework was prepared after extensive internal consultations. It is an important instrument with which to assess and improve performance and help identify problems and their solutions. It is the basis for reporting. (These *Knowledge Solutions* also disclose the approach to progress reporting and what will condition ratings of progress in adoption.) The framework is expected to promote a stronger culture of results and performance for knowledge management in ADB.

> *When it comes to getting things done, we need fewer architects and more bricklayers.*
> —Colleen Barrett

Figure: Building a Knowledge-Centric Organization



Source: Olivier Serrat. 2010. *Learning to Manage with Knowledge*. Manila. ADB. Available: http://adb.org/documents/presentations/knowledge-management-and-learning/learning-to-manage-with-knowledge.pdf

Box 1: Enhancing Knowledge Management under Strategy 2020: Plan of Action for 2009–2011[3]—Knowledge Management Results Framework

Impact: The capacity of ADB and its DMCs to reduce poverty is enhanced.

Outcome	Monitoring Indicator	Target[4]	Source of Verification
First Pillar Statement: The Knowledge Focus in ADB's Operations is Sharpened			
At the regional level, ADB is increasingly recognized as a lead policy advisor, notably through the knowledge agenda that its TA for research and development advances.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• Number of staff assessing the commitment and maturity of ADB's knowledge management framework favorably. Baseline year: 2008	10% more every year	• Annual Knowledge Management Survey. RSDD-KM
	• The number and outreach of ADB stand-alone flagship publications, facilitated by enhanced marketing and dissemination efforts. Baseline year: 2008	10% more every year	• DER
	• The number of references to ADB knowledge products in research, press, and policy reports. Baseline year: 2008	5% more every year	• DER
	• Views of web pages and downloads of PDF files from knowledge and operations departments. Baseline year: 2009	10% more every year	• DER
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• An E-library hosting knowledge products that are indexed and searchable is launched.	Done: 2011	• DER
	• TA reports contain information on knowledge management and communication.	More, every year	• Special study by national consultant. RSDD-KM
	• Taxonomies, templates, and guidelines for branding and publishing, as well as use of metadata, are prepared or finalized, then disseminated through the knowledge management coordinators, for use by authors.	Done: 2010	• DER
	• A timetable for digitization of publications, e.g., books, significant papers, from 1966 is established and the process is launched, with care to add metadata to increase searchability, make intellectual patrimony more widely available, and enhance its intellectual equity.	Done: 2010	• DER
	• Channels for marketing and distribution of knowledge products are expanded, enhanced, and monitored to build additional relationships and help increase exposure among key stakeholders, opinion makers, and academic institutions.	More, every year	• DER
	• A world-class translation system is adopted and introduced with associated training to retool, upgrade, and expand current practices, with emphasis on flow management of journalistically written summaries that where possible coincide with book releases.	Done: 2011	• DER

[3] *Enhancing Knowledge Management under Strategy 2020: Plan of Action for 2009–2011* is reproduced in ADB. 2009. *Enhancing Knowledge Management Strategies*. Manila. Available: www.adb.org/documents/information/knowledge-solutions/enhancing-knowledge-management-strategies.pdf

[4] Baseline values are available in all instances. Their provision, and subsequent reporting on changes, is the responsibility of the source of verification identified.

At the country level, CPSs guide medium-term operational programming with a focus on results and development effectiveness.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• Number of instances on record when CPSs led to DMC studies that were used to support policy development and decision making. Baseline year: 2010	1 more every year	• Annual questionnaire to RMs. RSDD-KM
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• CPSs contain information on knowledge management and communication.	More, every year	• Special study by national consultant. RSDD-KM
	• CPSs state in which sector(s) ADB considers itself a key knowledge partner in the donor community.	More, every year	• Special study by national consultant. RSDD-KM
	• ADB assesses the strategic fit of the knowledge products and services extended by RMs and local demand for knowledge solutions.	Done: 2010	• Questionnaire to RMs. RSDD-KM
At the project or TA level, key documents embody quality, knowledge, and innovation.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• Downloads of TA reports from internal and external users. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• DER, ODs
	• The number of TA consultant reports posted on ADB.org. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• DER, ODs
	• The number of books, reports, journals, briefs, working papers, training and instructive materials, and awareness raising and multimedia materials posted on ADB.org. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• DER, ODs
	• The number of landing pages on ADB.org for ADB projects and studies. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• DER, ODs
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• RRPs contain information on knowledge management and communication.	More, every year	Special study by national consultant. RSDD-KM
	• TA reports contain information on knowledge management and communication.	More, every year	• Offices and departments
	• New sector peer review process implemented in ADB for the preparation of RRPs and TAs.	Done: 2010	• SPPI, RSDD

Second Pillar Statement: The Communities of Practice are Empowered			
	Useful Results Indicators		
	• CoPs are resourced with dedicated staff. Baseline year: 2009	Done: 2010–2011	• BPOD
	• The number of work plans and PDPs in which participation in CoPs is mentioned. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• BPHR
	• The number of meetings and events organized by CoPs. Baseline year: 2010	More, every year	• RSDD-KM, CoPs
	• The number of early informal peer reviews by CoP members, to help staff conceptualize projects and TA. Baseline year: 2010	More, every year	• Annual questionnaire to CoPs. RSDD-KM
CoPs become an integral part of ADB's business processes.	**Specific Activity Indicators**		
	• The capacity of CoPs in terms of staff positions in direct support of their operational and administrative activities. Baseline year: 2009	Done: 2010–2011	• BPOD
	• CoPs conduct regular self-assessments of effectiveness, including assessments of the CoP convenor, as part of annual sector and thematic reports. Baseline year: 2010	All, every year	• CoPs
	• A *Forum on Learning* and *ADB's CoPs: Learning, Sharing, and Doing Together* is held.	Every year	• RSOD, RSDD-KM
	• Sector and thematic websites are revamped and updated with links to relevant information in ADB.	Done: 2010–2011	• RSDD-KM
	• Supervisors are instructed and ensure that institutional initiatives in CoPs are assessed in PDPs and included in work planning.	Every year, at the start	• BPHR
	• Revised *Guidelines for Sector and Thematic Reporting* are prepared and approved.	Done: 2009	• RSDD-KM, RSOD

Output-based financing recognizes CoPs that generate and share useful and usable knowledge.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• The budgets of CoPs support expanding activities and are complemented through TAs.	Done: 2010	• BPBM, CoPs
	• Annual CoP work plans are based on triennial sector and thematic reports.	80% in 2010, 100% afterwards	• RSDD-KM
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• Budget allocations are devolved through relevant divisions to heads of CoPs responsible for managing funds.	Done: 2011	• BPBM, CoPs
	• A *CoP Accomplishment Report* is generated.	Every year, in September	• RSDD-KM
The CoPs engage more purposefully in external knowledge partnerships.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• The number of formal and informal knowledge partnerships with other organizations for knowledge generation and sharing. Baseline year: 2010	More, every year	• Annual questionnaire to CoPs. RSDD-KM
	• Knowledge networking and collaboration is recognized by ADB with mention of this in PDPs.	Done: 2010	• Offices and departments, BPHR
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• CoPs engage in formal and informal knowledge partnerships that result in joint activities. Baseline year: 2010	More, every year	• Annual questionnaire to CoPs. RSDD-KM
The contributions of the knowledge management coordinators in ADB are enhanced.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• The activities of the knowledge management coordinators are reviewed, harmonized, and managed for efficiency and effectiveness.	Done: 2010–2011	• RSDD-KM
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• Meetings, facilitated by RSDD-KM, are held with the knowledge management coordinators to structure their contributions and to identify and discuss opportunities to ramp these up. Baseline year: 2010	Every quarter	• RSDD-KM, DER
	• Meetings, facilitated by DER, are held with the knowledge management coordinators to identify and discuss marketing and dissemination opportunities to enhance knowledge products and increase their outreach with emphasis on relevance, accuracy, objectivity, and timeliness. Baseline year: 2010	Every quarter	• DER, RSDD-KM

Third Pillar Statement: External Knowledge Partnerships are Strengthened			
The design, implementation, and monitoring of external knowledge partnerships with global, regional, and national institutions is improved.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• The design, implementation, and monitoring of strategic partnerships in key sectors and themes is informed by the *Guidelines on Designing Knowledge Partnerships* to be finalized in 2010.	Done: 2010	• SPPI, RSDD-KM
	• A database of strategic partnerships affords greater transparency and synergies are achieved where institutions are involved in more than one strategic partnership arrangement with ADB.	Done: 2010	• SPPI, OIST, RSDD-KM
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• A resource document, *Guidelines on Designing Knowledge Partnerships*, is drafted that informs the design, implementation, and monitoring of knowledge components in strategic partnerships.	Done: 2010	• RSDD-KM, SPPI
	• Midterm review processes for memorandums of understanding with strategic partners are adapted to include review of knowledge generation and sharing components.	Done: 2010	• SPPI, RSDD-KM
	• A database of strategic partnerships for use across ADB, including resident missions, is established and managed continuously thereafter.	Done: 2010	• SPPI, OIST, RSDD-KM
External knowledge partnerships generate and share knowledge proactively.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• External stakeholders perceiving ADB as a source of knowledge on development issues. Baseline year: 2006	10% more	• ADB Stakeholder Perceptions Survey, 2009. DER
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• ADB.org offers improved information on knowledge partnerships and profiles their products and services.	Done: 2010	• DER
	• The dissemination and visibility of ADB's knowledge products are expanded and enhanced through ADB's depository library program and multi-donor public information center network.	More, every year	• DER

Fourth Pillar Statement: Staff Learning and Skills Development are Enhanced Further			
Staff skills in knowledge management and learning are developed and captured.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• Staff perceiving that ADB is becoming a learning organization that generates and shares knowledge better. Baseline year: 2008	10% more every year	• Annual KM Survey. RSDD-KM
	• Staff participation in learning and development activities for knowledge management and learning.	More, every year	• • RSDD-KM, BPDB
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• A training needs assessment is conducted to identify the learning programs CoPs need and their preferred learning modes, and recommend learning opportunities to support their activities in 2010–2011.	Done: 2010	• RSDD-KM, BPDB
	• RSDD-KM and BPMSD collaborate on the design and conduct of learning and development activities.	Done: 2010–2011	• RSDD-KM, BPDB
	• RSDD-KM holds awareness and capacity building sessions on knowledge management and learning. Start in 2010	Continuously, every year	• RSDD-KM, BPDB
	• The awareness, outreach, and impact of the *Knowledge Solutions* and *Knowledge Showcase* series is assessed in the baseline year and annually thereafter.	Done: 2010	• RSDD-KM
	• Expanded staff profile pages are developed in 2010 and made available externally in 2011.	Done: 2010	• OIST[5]
Staff pursue external learning opportunities	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• The number of staff who express interest in external learning opportunities and apply for competitive sabbatical leave increases. Baseline year: 2007	More, every year	• BPDB
	Specific Activity Indicators		
	• ADB encourages staff exchanges with strategic partners. Baseline year: 2007	Done: 2010	• BPDB
	• The budget for external training expands opportunities. Baseline year: 2007	Done: 2010	• BPDB

[5] OIST will play supportive roles, as required, in actions toward several other results, including those mentioned herein.

Research in priority areas of *Strategy 2020* is boosted.	**Useful Results Indicators**		
	• The number of senior researchers invited under the Eminent Speakers' Forum, Distinguished Speakers Program, and Distinguished Speaker Seminar Series. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• ADBI, ERD, RSDD-KM
	• Demand-driven studies are undertaken by senior and junior researchers. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• Knowledge Departments
	• Knowledge departments produce books, reports, journals, briefs, working papers, training and instructive materials, and awareness raising and multimedia materials. Baseline year: 2009	More, every year	• RSDD, Knowledge Departments
	Specific Activity Indicator		
	Knowledge departments seize opportunities to research priority areas of *Strategy 2020*. Baseline year: 2009	One per department, every year	• RSDD, Knowledge Departments
The tacit knowledge of departing staff is captured to drive organizational performance improvement.	**Useful Results Indicator**		
	• ADB retains critical knowledge from departing staff through exit interview summaries.	All departing staff, from 2010	• Offices and departments
	Specific Activity Indicator		
	• Exit interviews, initially for professional staff, are introduced in every department with assistance from RSDD-KM and mainstreamed from 2011.	Done: 2010	• RSDD-KM, BPHR, Offices and departments

Notes:

- The impact targeted is that indicated in *Knowledge Management in ADB*. Available: www.adb.org/documents/policies/knowledge-management/knowledge-management.pdf
- The primary outcomes, listed in *Knowledge Management in ADB*, that the plan of action supports are (i) an improved management system; (ii) improved business processes and information technology solutions for knowledge capture, enrichment, storage, and retrieval; (iii) improved organizational culture for knowledge sharing; (iv) well-functioning communities of practice; and (v) expanded knowledge sharing, learning, and dissemination through external relations and networking.
- From 2010, the annual knowledge management survey will be augmented by an annual survey gauging staff perceptions of competencies to learn for change in ADB.
- The annual *Forum on Learning* is expected to focus on CoPs—yet cut across the other three pillars—and focus on what was learned in the preceding year in practical ways with measurable outcomes that leverage multipliers.

Box 2: Enhancing Knowledge Management under Strategy 2020: Plan of Action for 2009–2011—Assumptions and Risks

Pillar Statement	Assumptions and Risks
First Pillar: The Knowledge Focus in ADB's Operations is Sharpened	(i) strong commitment by ADB's Senior Management Team; (ii) ADB values adjust in support of knowledge management and learning; (iii) close coordination among offices and departments; and (iv) availability of adequate resources.
Second Pillar: The Communities of Practice are Empowered	(i) strong commitment by ADB's Senior Management Team; (ii) availability of staff capabilities (experience, competencies, and technical and professional skills); (iii) staff attitudes (values and beliefs about innovation, commitment, and flexibility) adjust in support of knowledge management and learning; (iv) close coordination among offices and departments; and (v) availability of adequate resources.
Third Pillar: External Knowledge Partnerships are Strengthened	(i) strong commitment by ADB's Senior Management Team; (ii) close coordination among offices and departments; and (iii) availability of adequate resources.
Fourth Pillar: Staff Learning and Skills Development are Enhanced Further	(i) strong commitment by ADB's Senior Management Team; (ii) staff attitudes (values and beliefs about innovation, commitment, and flexibility) adjust in support of knowledge management and learning; (iii) staff behaviors (performance, productivity, teamwork, and cooperation) adjust in support of knowledge management and learning; and (iv) availability of adequate resources.

Box 3: Enhancing Knowledge Management under Strategy 2020: Plan of Action for 2009–2011—Progress Reports

Outcome	Target	Specific Activity Indicator	Rating of Progress in Adoption	RSDD Validation

Notes:

- Progress reports on *Enhancing Knowledge Management under Strategy 2020: Plan of Action for 2009–2011* will be drafted in 2010 and 2011.
- The following four ratings will present quantitative and qualitative assessments on action: (i) fully adopted; (ii) largely adopted; (iii) partly adopted; and (iv) not adopted.

Legend:

ADBI = Asian Development Bank Institute; BPBM = Budget and Management Services Division, BPMSD; BPDB = Staff Development and Benefits Division, BPMSD; BPHR = Human Resources Division, BPMSD; BPOD = Office of the Director General, BPMSD; BPMSD = Budget, Personnel, and Management Systems Department; CoP = community of practice; CPS = country partnership strategy; DER = Department of External Relations; DMC = developing member country; ERD = Economics and Research Department; OD = operations department; OIST = Office of Information Systems and Technology; PDF = portable document format; PDP = performance and development plan; RM = resident mission; RRP = report and recommendation of the President; RSDD = Regional and Sustainable Development Department; RSDD-KM = Knowledge Management Center, RSDD; RSOD = Office of the Director General, RSDD; SPD = Strategy and Policy Department; SPPI = Strategy, Policy, and Interagency Relations Division, SPD; TA = technical assistance.

Further Reading

ADB. 2009. *Enhancing Knowledge Management Strategies*. Manila. Available: www.adb.org/documents/information/knowledge-solutions/enhancing-knowledge-management-strategies.pdf

For further information

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Asian Development Bank

ADB's vision is an Asia and Pacific region free of poverty. Its mission is to help its developing member countries substantially reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people. Despite the region's many successes, it remains home to two thirds of the world's poor: 1.8 billion people who live on less than $2 a day, with 903 million struggling on less than $1.25 a day. ADB is committed to reducing poverty through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.

Based in Manila, ADB is owned by 67 members, including 48 from the region. Its main instruments for helping its developing member countries are policy dialogue, loans, equity investments, guarantees, grants, and technical assistance.

Knowledge Solutions are handy, quick reference guides to tools, methods, and approaches that propel development forward and enhance its effects. They are offered as resources to ADB staff. They may also appeal to the development community and people having interest in knowledge and learning.

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