

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

in cooperation with

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Regional Workshop for Knowledge hubs and Networks –Next Step

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Bangkok, Thailand

Group Discussions

Group I

Moderator: *Ms. Maria Teresa Magadia Camba*

APTN -- Roles and Responsibilities

- Expectations that members have from APTN (& Other International Agencies)
 - Fund raising
 - Knowledge Sharing
 - Linkages
 - Joint Projects
 - Advocacy
- Expected Contribution from members
 - Linkages
 - Knowledge Sharing
 - Managerial Skills/Expertise
- A Framework for APTN
 - SWOT

Role of Government / Community

- Sustaining Knowledge networks
 - Creating an Enabling Environment
 - Leading/Coordination
 - Leaving space for Private Sector / Civil Society-
 - Technology and Infrastructure Support- may include initiatives for low cost computers, partnerships with telcos and private sector
 - Public – Private Partnerships
 - Using Telecentres / KHs to reach the masses- Government should lead in the usage of telecentres in the delivery of its services to the people.
- Enabling Policy Environment & Legislations
 - Policy Reforms / Development of National Framework- That governments shall develop a national framework for its telecentre initiative and enacting policy reforms where needed.
 - Specific issues such as Gender / Disabled / children/ Climate Change / Disaster Management shall be integrated in the national development framework.

- Fiscal Incentives & Financing Options - Government shall also provide fiscal incentives such as tax incentives in support of telecentre projects. Government should finance digital inclusion efforts or come up with viable financing options for the same.
- Promotion- Government should lead the advocacy and promotion effort for telecentres and its usage.
- Monitoring/Evaluation/R&D – Government should not just implement telecentre initiatives but also monitor and evaluate its impact on regular basis

Creating Critical Mass of Telecentres/Users /Contents

- Critical mass important for Sustainability
- Effectively communicate through media campaigns in such a way that it is seen as open, friendly, learning hub for the poor
- Understanding and Tailoring to User needs
 - Demand Driven (CNA)- should consider the needs of the community
 - Targeting multiple segments- target as many users and sectors in the community
 - Promoting and Advocacy about how Telecentres can fulfill needs
- Appropriate technology and Delivery Systems
 - Government's support
 - Best practices
 - Off Line and On Line Delivery
- Contents
 - Using available resources- - explore available content in and out of the country
 - On-line delivery/using other technology means - consider other means of delivery of content example, SMS, through inform diaries
 - Sharing
 - Localizing- consider customizing and localizing content, example, translation to local language
 - Visuals more than text- consider the use of more pictures than text
- Role of APTN and Other International Agencies
 - Facilitation
 - Exchange programmes
 - Meetings

Training and Capacity Building

- Based on User needs
- Capacity Building & Training for users-
- Capacity Building for TC Operators
 - Using resources of Telecentre Academy - global curriculum for telecentre managers' training already under development by the academy. Consider using and localizing this, instead of developing new set
 - Sharing of available / existing curriculum- other countries, like Philippines, have already their training curriculum. These can be shared and used by others.
 - On line and off line training- consider delivery thru online means not just face to face method, to reach out to more participants
 - Localization of training materials – available training materials can be localized by country to suit their own peculiar requirements.
 - Inclusion of training on soft skills – this is also important as telecentre managers deal with people. Consider inclusion of gender sensitivity, communication, interpersonal relations and others in training curricula.
- Standardisation and Certification- providing certification to telecentre managers after completion of training should be considered.
 - Recognition

APTN Priorities

- Short term
 - Organisation Framework- include drafting of charter, guidelines for members
 - Focal persons - identify focal persons per country to facilitate communication between APTN and country representative/s and members
 - Mapping Tele centre initiatives- inventory of the telecentre initiatives in various countries; may include number, contacts, available content and services, models, policies etc
 - Creating Platform
 - For Sharing and Exchange
 - Creating and promoting ownership
 - Becoming relevant and meeting the needs of members
- Medium term
 - Assisting members in resource mobilization
 - Advocacy and Policy Influence
 - Creating a repository of experts and providing consultancy services

Group II

Moderator: *Mr. Basheerhamad Shadrach*

The role of networks and the way forward

The tasks ahead

- Establishment of telecentrepedia – a good idea; APTN and Eurasian network could assist telecentre.org Foundation and others to define the content structure for this. The APTN, Eurasia and other regional content facilitators can moderate the site; but, for populating, we should consider opening up
- 100 ideas for sustainable telecentres – we could ask the telecentre magazine folks to work on this book for release at the meeting in Manila on 3 March 2010. Each network present will contribute ideas; the ideas will be promoted for their worthiness, relevance, applicability and replicability. We can scout for donor funding in support of this activity.
- Asia Pacific Telecentre Review – a good idea; but a committee of experts to be appointed to come-up with a plan. The publication should speak to the policy-makers mainly as a pressure-building exercise for more investment at the national level for stimulating grassroots empowerment through telecentres
- Empirical research on telecentres – the Gates Foundation/IDRC research could help to promote the concept and initiate country level research projects
- Telecentre best practice case book – UN-ESCAP and others could help to develop telecentre primers (in the lines of what the World Bank or the APDIP did in the past) to promote best practices and to promote lessons learnt from bad practices as well. May be, APCICT could take a view on this.
- Mobility tool and technologies vis-à-vis telecentres – should be seen in a complimentary spirit rather than in a competitive spirit. Both have a role to play, the point about mobile phone being much more pervasive is to be noted.

The role of regional networks

- Create criteria for its membership and develop working relationship with national focal points; criteria for national focal points need to be agreed upon
 - Telecentres could become members of national networks
 - National networks would join the regional network
 - When there is no national network, the telecentres join a regional network

- Event participation fee to be introduced
- Need to mature enough to levy a membership fee – a long-term strategy beyond donor funding is needed
- Work towards knowledge sharing and knowledge fusion of successful and unsuccessful practices, share best practices with a pro-active approach
 - High Priority
- Facilitate consultancy work by retaining pool of experts in critical areas of expertise, develop database of experts in various areas that would be useful for national telecentre networks/ operators/ knowledge-hubs and poor and disadvantaged communities
- Database of experts – Need to have; but on demand – Medium Priority
- Facilitation of consultancy work – useful, again on demand – High Priority for APTN
- Develop its website/portal and act as, a repository of knowledge derived from Eurasia and the Asia-Pacific and other regions including accurate and updated database, tools and directories of resource for the benefit of national networks
- Yes, needed; High Priority
- Facilitate exchange visits and coordinates regional events while supporting national events
 - Exchange visit and study tours– High Priority (funding should be made available for this activity among and between networks)
 - National meeting – Eurasian network will want to see one meeting a year; Also, APTN
 - Regional event – theme-based linked to certain strategies for ensuring the growth of the movement – one a year for generic stuff; and another one (the least) on a focused strategic theme
- Work for telecentre system design/ business plan for every member network – include revenue generation, strengths weaknesses
 - National stakeholders should drive the process; but the regional network could help to bring best practices from the region; also, be of support to national level work as and when asked for. Building momentum is High Priority – rest follows
- Organize telecentre awareness campaigns including promotion of telecentres/knowledge-hubs, and organize an annual event in coordination with eAsia
 - Yes, partnership/ back-to-back event possibilities are welcome
- Develop partnership with those countries that do not currently have telecentres – create a model centre
 - For Pakistan it might be a priority; also, for nations like Afghanistan; for others this one is low priority
- Assist with creation of new national networks
 - Yes, but on demand
- Regional networks should facilitate periodic online chats and discussion lists with the help of anchors from national networks and experts
 - Yes – High Priority
- Promotion of online knowledge sharing mechanisms
 - Some ideas are on the table and are being considered for implementation
- Regional networks should also manage a website based on participatory design to help develop collaborative learning and content development
 - High Priority, and both the networks have plans
- Knowledge synthesis becomes key vis-à-vis simple knowledge sharing; hence strong linkages with the telecentre magazine is desired
 - Yes, it is desired; the regional networks and their members can be encouraged to contribute articles
- Regional network knowledge coordinator should play a crucial role in facilitating knowledge sharing, transfer and analysis
 - High Priority – funding is mandatory for this staff person

Additional suggestions

- Facilitation of meetings with emerging market groups (not necessarily confined to IT, but also other service sectors such as agro-business, finance, education, health)
- Capacity building among network leaders and telecentre specialists
- Develop a tool-kit for capacity building
- Monitoring and evaluation tool for telecentres, and telecentre networks for measuring effectiveness
- To encourage R&D function within the telecentre world
- Collaboration among networks; and developing revenue share mechanism for resource mobilised
- Lobbying with national governments

Group III

Moderator: *Ms. Dil Piyaratna*

We consider the meaning of telecentre and knowledge hub to be the same.

1. Dependence on subsidies & donor support

- **Knowledge hubs:** Start-up funds are needed; provide assistance with a sunset clause to reach sustainability. Support with content/services (local, regional, e-government, microfinance, taxation etc.) is needed for long term sustainability.
- **Knowledge networks:** Need to have a pool of fund/resources for special or innovative projects to support the needs of the knowledge hubs.
- Need to interact closely with knowledge hubs, national, regional and global networks for knowledge sharing and support.
- **Regional networks:** Need to have a pool of fund/resources for special or innovative projects to support the needs of the knowledge hubs.
- Need to interact closely with national, regional and global networks for knowledge sharing and support. Support from international donor agencies is needed. Multi country partnerships should be formed for information exchange.

2. Reaching the poor and disadvantaged communities: effectiveness of knowledge hubs and networks

- Knowledge hubs are a direct contact point in reaching marginalized communities due to their close proximity to the people and the region. Easy access to the centres, affordable services, programs specifically tailored to the poor and marginalized groups make these centres more effective.
- National and regional networks should replicate specialized projects for visually

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