

Opportunities for Rationalizing the Capacity Development Knowledge Architecture

Scoping Study

Prepared for the World Bank Institute
in collaboration with the
Learning Network for Capacity Development

**This paper is a working document.
It expresses the views of the consultant
and does not imply an endorsement by WBI or LenCD.**

Comments are welcome !

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Executive Summary

Capacity Development related knowledge is expanding rapidly. Increased recognition of the strategic importance of capacity development has led donor and development agencies to increase the documentation of effective practices, production of training modules, publication of research, and the creation of professional communities of practice. These diverse collections of information and expertise represent the growing *knowledge base* on capacity development. There is a great amount of knowledge available from an expanding list of web sites, yet the main challenge limiting our individual and collective impact is that these web sites are still relatively fragmented and lacking significant connection to each other.

Research and Consultations

The research explored and identified how the rapidly evolving opportunities of the internet might be feasibly applied within the community of capacity development learning platforms and web sites—enabling a more rational and interconnected capacity development *commons*.

A second objective of the research was to explore the potential connections between recommended options and the proposed Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development.

Twenty-one people were consulted to gather their perspectives and recommendations on the opportunity for improving connections of the CD knowledge architecture. This group included 12 capacity development thought leaders / platform coordinators and 9 technology / internet subject matter experts. (see complete list in the annex)

Recommendations

Over the two month period of May-June 2010, the consultative process identified actionable opportunities for improving an imperfect, fragmented architecture that will generate greater value and impact. Five related recommendations are proposed:

- 1) Build momentum with quick wins
- 2) Establish a Capacity Development Content Aggregator
- 3) Bring people together within an expanding capacity development “commons”
- 4) Expand the capacity of the human network
- 5) Integrate to the extent possible with the Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development

There are many indications that this is an opportune moment to advance actions that will strengthen the connections among the primary international and regional sources of capacity development knowledge. At the same time, it is important to build new relationships with Connectors that provide inroads into thematic / sector specific networks that also produce and demand quality capacity development content.

Starting something, albeit modestly with the “low hanging fruit” of easily identifiable sources, and with largely free tools, will enable this somewhat abstract concept to come into clearer view for a more critical analysis of its validity and potential demand. The energy and enthusiasm mobilized by the creation of the Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development provide a very compelling opportunity to unite this proposal to move this agenda forward during the second half of 2010. There is a golden opportunity that should not be missed.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Capacity Development related knowledge is expanding rapidly. Increased recognition of the strategic importance of capacity development has led donor and development agencies to increase the documentation of effective practices, production of training modules, publication of research, and the creation of professional communities of practice. These diverse collections of information and expertise represent the growing *knowledge base*¹ on capacity development. There is a great amount of knowledge available from an expanding list of web sites,² yet the main challenge limiting our individual and collective impact is that these web sites are still relatively fragmented and lacking significant connection to each other.

But there are opportunities for improvement:

- A growing list of relevant internet tools are now accessible at relatively low cost, such as customized [search engines](#), [web crawlers](#), [RSS feeds](#), [social bookmarking](#), [Open API](#), [Twitter](#) and [Creative Commons](#) licenses which can enable more systemic connections
- New partnership models for the knowledge economy are demonstrating successful institutional arrangements, roles and incentives required to strengthen systemic information exchange. [Eldis](#) and the [Development Gateway](#) provide examples for the international development community.
- A significant number of development organizations are in the process of either launching their first web platform, or are re-building old sites to incorporate new Web 2.0 tools. The opportunity exists to explore open standards and shared technology before this wave of development passes (likely the next 12 - 24 months).

1.1 Objectives of this Research

The objective of this investigation is to explore how the rapidly evolving opportunities of the internet might be feasibly applied within the community of capacity development learning platforms and web sites—enabling a more rational and interconnected capacity development *commons*³. It will identify actionable opportunities for improving an imperfect, fragmented architecture that can generate greater value and impact.

1.2 The Process

During the period May through June, 2010, the Impact Alliance and LenCD, with the World Bank Institute conducted an initial exploration involving the following activities:

- Mapped and analyzed existing capacity development web sites and learning platforms (see Annex 2)
- Engaged CD platform leaders and internet experts to identify actionable ideas and options (see Annex 1)

The results of this initial research process are summarized in this report. The report and its recommendations are intended to spark additional discussion among a growing group of interested organizations—and articulate a few actionable recommendations for moving forward.

¹ A *knowledge base* refers to a collection of information and expertise—it can facilitate the collection, organization and retrieval of knowledge.

² See the Annex for an initial mapping of capacity development focused, English language websites.

³ The **tragedy of the commons** refers to a dilemma described in an influential article written by [Garrett Hardin](#). The article describes a situation in which multiple individuals, acting independently and solely and rationally consulting their own self-interest, will ultimately deplete a shared limited resource even when it is clear that it is not in anyone's long-term interest for this to happen.

1.3 Visions of the Future

Imagine... You *only* have 15 minutes to go online during a busy day. You visit your favorite capacity development web site and on the main page you immediately see a window with the latest updates (feeds) from dozens of capacity development web sites—an issue of Capacity.org was just published, the African Capacity Building Foundation shared a new training manual, NEPAD announced a new compilation of case studies, the UNDP released a summary report of its CD conference. Within minutes you’ve scanned what’s new, reviewed the ACBF training manual and “shared” it with several hundred additional people via your Facebook network by clicking on an icon on the ACBF web page.

Imagine... You want to quickly locate institutional assessment methodologies for your community project, but need more focused results than what a general Google search will deliver. You visit your favorite CD website, where they feature a Custom Google Search that pulls results from not only their site, but dozens of capacity development sites. You immediately get a more manageable, contextually relevant list of results pulled from the UNDP, MfDR network, Capacity4dev.eu, and others. The custom search box is easily shared, and a growing number of health organizations are installing it on their web sites, dramatically expanding the number of people linking to CD resources. Finding the resources was so easy that you could make more things possible for your community, not limiting yourself to institutional assessment methodologies, but branching out to other areas, such as information sharing.

Imagine... You are the coordinator of a community of practice on agricultural development innovation in Africa. You know that capacity development is an important topic within your community, but don't have the time to continually scan the web for trusted resources to bring back to your network. You join the new capacity content aggregation service and get direct access to view capacity development content compiled from a range of sources, and their help desk assists you to find relevant content regarding association strengthening and other topics of particular relevance. You added online your most recent case story compilation on strengthening agricultural innovation systems, and it was picked up by people in other sectors seeking this approach to strengthen systems for innovation.

These are just a few scenarios illustrating what is within reach. From this research, even more technological tools were found that can be utilized to make information sharing and knowledge management much easier for all. We have an unprecedented opportunity to begin to rationalize the knowledge architecture through applying more systemic management to the commons that we share, and the *architecture* (the human, institutional and technological bridges) that can improve connections among these valuable knowledge bases.

In a perfect world, we would all have instant access to all of the latest and best news, technical materials, audio and video related to our lives passions and projects – in this case tracking capacity development innovations, effective practices and learning opportunities. In the real world the Internet has become so cluttered and unwieldy that information saturation and immobilization is real and happening. The state of the net for development professionals is no less cluttered and unorganized. Fortunately a number of the web 2.0 and social networking innovations – until now largely used by kids, journalists and business PR – provide a new broadcasting channel well suited for pushing desired information where it is wanted.

What is needed is systematized short-term and long-term information regarding documents, videos, innovations and resource materials carefully screened by a small network of connected people committed to the art of capacity development from diverse points of view, and building capacity to share resources more intentionally and systematically within a capacity development *commons*. Using “push” rather than traditional “pull” means to move information based upon already known subscriber information to various syndications, into and out of the commons. It helps immensely to have even one small team providing this digital road map of what is out there on the net in regarding capacity development knowledge; and navigate easily to newly emerging capacity development material. The technology at their disposal sounds arcane but is powerful

(particularly when combined): RSS/XML data exchange and services, custom search engines, enterprise SQL databases for business logic and well-known social networks as communication channels.

Using what is known regarding network science (See Annex 3) and complexity theory, it has been shown that the more links in a network the better, and that there are natural groups of larger hubs that tie together the continuity of a thematic community. Basically, they provide the structure to find and receive knowledge objects. Thus what is provided is a link rich central aggregation that identifies the best news and thought on capacity development. Such aggregation of high link density is particularly well served to building *sense*, or knowledge. Once the means of gathering and holding the data are established, it becomes a matter of being able to package the data in various manners for targeted information flows by the coordinators closest to their member networks— i.e. leadership development for health systems.

1.4 Potential Benefits—what is there to gain from improved connections?

- Find and share information more simply across related CD knowledge platforms—extending the impact of initial investments
- Reuse and re-apply existing knowledge--reducing unnecessary duplication of effort
- Accelerate innovation and collaboration as people connect more frequently with other practitioners and practices that inspire them (especially promoting South - South knowledge exchange)
- Expand the impact of CD within sector specific networks (like health or Agriculture) by lowering the barriers for people to access what they need
- Enlarge the interface with CD knowledge sites—generating greater mutual value for all participating

1.5 Mapping the Landscape of Capacity Development Online

The rapid mapping conducted during this research identified 38 websites that focus on capacity development. These websites have different takes on capacity development, some focusing on training, facilitation, publishing journals, or professional communities—reflecting the diversity inherent under the umbrella concept of *capacity development*. The geographic focus varies among these websites from an international and regional to national and local. The audience for these websites is just as diverse, ranging from governmental organizations and large international development agencies, to NGOS and local practitioners.

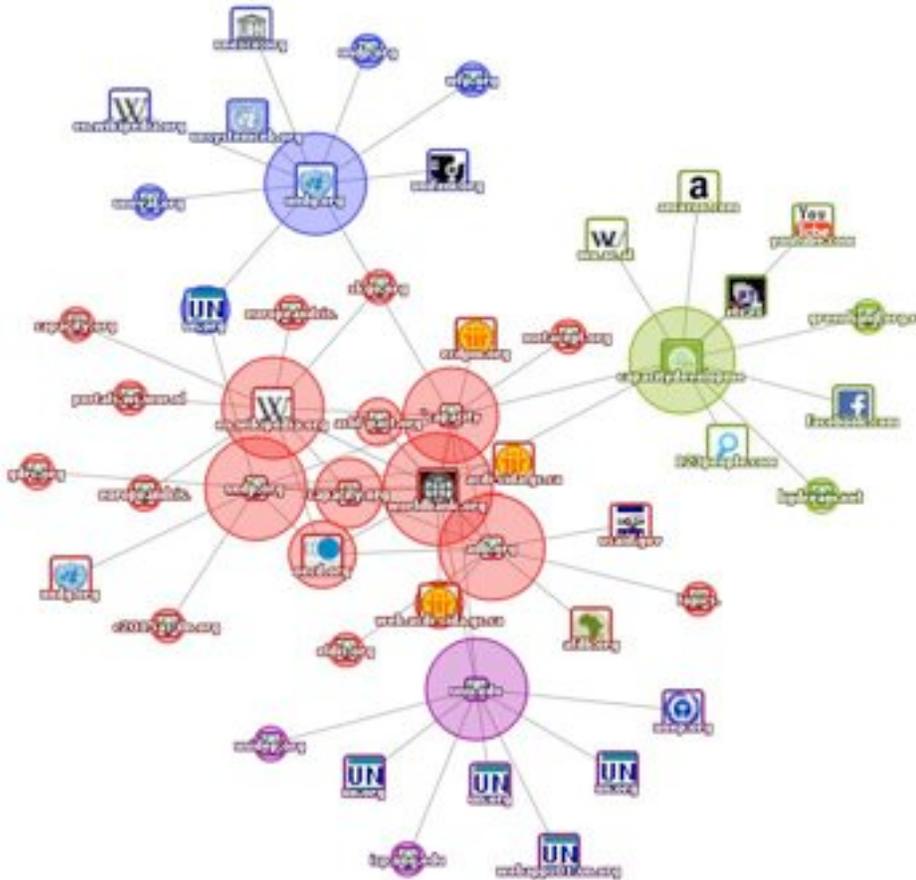
Many of the capacity development web sites utilize different technological tools to engage their constituents. Of the sites that distribute content to their constituents, the majority send newsletters. Another tool being used by a minority of websites are RSS feeds (see Annex 7.5). Social media is rarely utilized to spread information to an audience, and allow that audience to share the information further with others. Social bookmarks provide a way to tag documents, so that they can be more easily found on websites. The abovementioned technological tools can be added quickly to a website. The sites reflect different perspectives about capacity development, focus on diverse geographic areas, and utilize different ways to engage their audiences. Some summary characteristics of the sites include:

- Language: 38 of the sites are in English, 5 have the option of being in other languages, primarily French, while one site offers over 20 different languages
- RSS Feeds: 11 sites have RSS feeds on their site
- Newsletters: 15 sites send newsletters to their constituents
- Social Media: 3 sites feature connections to social media tools such as Facebook or Twitter
- Social Bookmark: 3 sites utilize social bookmarking
- Participant Option: 16 sites offer opportunities for members to join and participate online

- Combining Technological Tools: 13 sites combine more than one approach to distributing content (RSS, newsletters, social media, social bookmarks, and/or participation options)

1.6 Relationships between Popular CD Websites

The image below highlights the network of connectivity between popular capacity development websites, as reported by Google's database of related sites and visualized in seconds using TouchGraph.com to graph the results for “capacity development”. In this rather incomplete visualization, one can see how organizational websites interrelate within the capacity development ecosystem. Assuming the recommendations of this report are implemented, measurable increases in the number of sites showing up on the map, an increase in their circle size (indicating greater traffic and hub status) and more linkages between sites and clusters would likely result. Run this visualization tool with your website, the connections may surprise you.



2. Important Issues

The consultations with thought leaders during this research process identified a variety of important issues that merit consideration as any work on this topic proceeds forward. These issues each merit consideration as efforts to rationalize the knowledge base proceed.

Complexity of Capacity Development

Capacity Development is a variegated field that defies universally shared definitions. The concept of CD is not the same for everyone; it is expressed in different sectors, themes, and words and is increasingly woven into sectoral and thematic networks that make easy identification/location a challenge. Because of this complexity it is not feasible nor necessarily desirable to pull all CD knowledge together at the global, generic level. To do so would likely create a massive flood of

information that may produce more noise than action—and not resonate closely to practitioners more contextually rooted interests.

Information Overload—Need for Filtering

Several of the people consulted for this research indicated that their users are not necessarily seeking more information, but rather better information. Finding and networking around the gems of knowledge is becoming a top priority, rather than merely increasing the flow of unfiltered information and adding more noise to an already overwhelming system. There is no substitute for human beings with thematic expertise and the ability to apply their insight to filter and determine the best resources to share.

Vested Interests

Vested interests were cited as a primary obstacle to improving connections to CD knowledge. Many high level decision makers within large development organizations are hesitant to openly share their data and knowledge, perhaps in order to preserve a sense of organizational power. Capacity Development community needs a to focus on common goals and the shared sense of belonging to a commons, rather than focusing on institutional differences and competition. In order to improve connections of the knowledge base, a common agenda and openness to sharing freely is necessary.

Ownership ---Concerns over Intellectual Property

Sharing information can be a sensitive issue. Institutional policies and entrenched attitudes can constrain open sharing of content, often fearing the loss of ownership of intellectual property. However, in-roads have been made cultivating confidence and sharing among organizations. Creative Commons licensing, or similar protocol stimulating greater openness through assurances of acknowledged origins may be useful to promote within the capacity development community.

Culture

A few people consulted cited cultural constraints within their member networks as potential limiting factors to changes proposed. There is commonly a resistance to search for information, to share information, or simply to read. Among some communities there is a real resistance to a stream of new tools and features on a web site. They are comfortable with the basics and are turned off by something that feels to full-featured and beyond what they are familiar with. There is a need to respond to the cultural realities of one's audience, but at the same time recognizing that there may be a silent and growing minority that embrace new tools and open access.

Diverse Audiences

Understanding the diversity inherent within each CD network or CoP, let alone across all is extremely important. Network leaders or Communities of Practice coordinators are best placed to know their audiences and how best to connect with their interests and assessments of audience behavior should be examined from the beginning to learn what may be the trends on what information they want to see and how they prefer it being displayed.. There are affordable analysis websites such as rapleaf.com that assesses audience activity in membership related websites like Facebook. Assessing the current patterns of the diverse CD audiences will allow us to be part of their current work flow and understand their receptiveness to different technologies, making it easier to motivate people on the use of new technology or tools within a given network. Also, more diverse formats of content should be embraced such as videos, photo documentaries, among other formats that have impact.

Incentives

The interviews made clear that understanding incentives is critical to stimulating participation in an expanded knowledge sharing commons. CD platforms and communities of practice are typically oriented around a relatively narrow set of objectives and members. It isn't their priority to advance the capacity development "commons". The results measurement system is typically designed to measure (and value) that which they can directly influence. Creating a sense of shared identity, ownership and common purpose may be enough for some, while increased recognition, business and prestige may be what others seek. One cannot assume that incentives are clearly present in the system, and in many cases they are not. Thus this effort must pay special attention to identifying and demonstrating (and documenting) the benefits generated by those participating in the new approaches advocated in this report. Cross-linking information in a more networked effort provides incentives to individuals and organizations as they disseminate their content finding value in displaying their information more visibly throughout the CD community.

Budgets

Financial resources need to be considered carefully, keeping in mind that for some organizations it may be harder to allocate financial resources to participate in a more connected CD architecture. Staff time or basic costs to add RSS, explore new social media tools or participate in greater filtering of CD content may simply not be a feasible given budgetary constraints. Some of the CD platform leaders when interviewed said that it is important to keep in mind that infrastructure limitations still exist in Africa and elsewhere.

Balance Centralization / Decentralization

One of the most important issue to the success of advancing connections of CD knowledge is getting the right balance between the need to have some centralized content aggregation features, while recognizing the real reach and impact will come only through decentralized capacity and action—led by the coordinators of autonomous CD web sites and communities of practice.

Limited web-based knowledge

The majority of CD knowledge remains held within people heads or in offline documents. Leading regional and national development organizations catalyzing capacity development have yet to bring their knowledge base online. Often what is presented online is just the tip of the iceberg of the knowledge present within that system. Special assistance to help organizations bridge this divide to connect more knowledge online may accelerate progress. Human connectors who can effectively facilitate knowledge exchange offline while connecting their communities to online content sharing may also be very important areas to focus resources and support.

3. Recommendations

There are five related recommendations made based on the research:

- 1) Build momentum with quick wins
- 2) Establish a Capacity Development Content Aggregator
- 3) Bring people together within an expanding capacity development "commons"
- 4) Expand the capacity of the human network
- 5) Integrate to the extent possible with the Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development

3.1 Build Momentum with “Quick Wins”

The momentum generated through conducting this consultative process, coupled with the prior design process for the Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development, creates a unique opportunity to accelerate mobilization and action that should not be missed. In the case of the development of a more interconnected knowledge base on capacity development, there is no need to wait months or years for global consensus to form or for an elaborately engineered and costly system to be implemented. There are immediate actions that can be done over the next six months that will produce concrete examples of what aggregated CD content looks like, and identifying the value and potential demand for increased aggregation and exchange of capacity development content.

Start small—and fast, testing low cost options, identifying what works. Rather than architecting a big system complete with premature hardware investments, MOUs, standards, definitions---get something up and working to quickly pull together willing participants and accessible capacity development content sources.

Actions:

- Identify someone willing to champion this initial trial period who is capable of providing continuity to the vision building process, while quickly putting ideas into action
- Continue the mapping process initiated with this study to identify further capacity development platforms, CoPs, blogs, etc., and pull together a contact list of all interested coordinators of these initiatives to disseminate and “socialize” the findings of this report—opening a electronic forum for expanded comment and discussion
- Initiate a shared view of aggregated capacity development content from this growing list of available sources. Use a free and shareable RSS Feed Reader, such as NetVibes (See annex 5.)
- Assist interested web site coordinators to add RSS feeds on their existing sites and provide advice on simple tactics to improve the quality of the content they share
- Tap free social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter (see annex) to begin pulling together content from organizations and practitioners that seek to converge around a shared capacity development commons
- Refine the vision, recommendations, and funding commitments via a face-to-face meeting with key stakeholders and/or virtual conference if funding is not available
- Begin reviewing existing technical capacity, mission alignment, and social/organizational dimensions to identify a candidate to host more robust content aggregation service
- See Annex 5 for a comprehensive listing of relevant technology options and examples identified through this consultative process

Requirements: This set of initial actions are relatively low-cost and can be implemented almost immediately, e.g. within a matter of weeks and certainly over an initial four month period. The costs to carry out these initial actions would likely range between USD\$25,000 to \$50,000.

3.2 Establish a Capacity Development Content Aggregator

There is a wide range of tools and options that can be wielded manually and inexpensively to enable immediate action towards validating the concept. Moving beyond the “quick wins” that can rapidly improve relationships, visibility, and information flows between CD knowledge sources, the results of this consultative process indicate that a more substantial step forward would be to implement a carefully scoped capacity development-focused search space and social network. This shared space with massive automated and manually gathered meta-data about Internet data holdings can be networked automatically through new social communication channels. This could include multiple databases with RSS input/output capabilities as desired.

The tools that exist to gather, edit and re-network knowledge products are unprecedented. By tying the power of relational databases to social networks, one may actually start to cultivate a more visible and interconnected capacity development knowledge *commons* by building and wielding the ability to keep a finger on the pulse of large quantities of data, make queries of latest additions, and pump out feeds of quality latest news with and through a loosely affiliated network of capacity development *Connectors*. These *Connectors* coordinate and facilitate capacity development related web sites, CoPs and learning platforms—and who in turn will be more capable to connect content to and from their unique audiences/member network.

The real power of this approach results from the combination of an expanding human network of capacity development connectors with roots in their unique regional/local constituencies. Reinforced by the establishment of a server with SQL enterprise data functionality, upon which business logic can be programmed to move information into and out of a series of databases, designed to track and foster flows of information.

Actions:

- Set up modest Internet server(s) and a small staff to serve as Internet scouts, collaborators, archivists, database expertise, and social networkers including RSS newsfeeds
- Establish multi-direction information flows between an expanding network of CD *connectors* that can assess whether an appreciable increase in the reach and reported level of usefulness of existing web content is achieved. Feedback loops should be implemented to send this information back to the providers
- See Annex 4 for a detailed list of implementation recommendations

Requirements: Estimated costs of the proposed content aggregation hub would likely be around USD\$50,000 to establish (variable based on pre-existing capacity of the host organization) and \$75K to \$150K annually to operate (variable based on the location and related personnel salaries).

3.3 Bring people together within an expanding capacity development “commons”

While it may be effective to create a capacity development content aggregation function operating namelessly within a broader initiative such as the Africa Learning Platform, or other initiative, there may be high value in actually naming the shared “commons” that is being cultivated. In the world of the internet, and in life off-line, creating something that people can rally around and easily identify with often encourages broader participation and deeper commitment. [Drupal](#), the open source content management platform serves as a great example of this model of a visible, shared endeavor. This sense of shared ownership, recognition and pride in participation will likely be an important factor for the capacity development content aggregation process to take off. A second dimension of this recommendation is the strategic importance to expand the number (and diversity) of people connecting with capacity development content who don’t tend to show up on our capacity development site maps. Many of these potential participants reside within thematic networks and sector specific communities of practice.

Actions:

- Create a visible and shared identity of the capacity development “commons” to stimulate broader and deeper participation. A relatively fresh and neutral identity such as the *Capacity Development Commons* may capture the spirit of the effort. Create a graphic badge for visual identification, such as a button embedded on member web sites, to help generate a sense of shared identity and ownership

- Avoid allowing this to be an effort wholly “owned” inside of a single organization—but rather something that harnesses leadership and contributions from specific actors while maintaining a neutral, shared and open identity
- Establish strong connections with “vertical” and “horizontal” communities of practice and Networks—such as public sector, health or agricultural development communities. Expand the outreach where CD expertise/knowledge increasingly resides but remains hidden from general view. The effort must go beyond initial linking among easily identified CD sites to exchange CD content with an expanded network of *connectors* within more diverse sector specific networks / CoPs (This is consistent with those proposed by the AfLP in the African context—and replicated in other regions.)
- Encourage donors and others to expect that their capacity development partners demonstrate that their investments are contributing to the growing global commons by connecting to this effort, which is part of a commitment to greater Aid Effectiveness
- Identify those developing new platforms and connect planners and/or web developers with each other to look for potential shared development opportunities to enhance interconnecting knowledge resources

3.4 Expand the Capacity of the Human Network

The ultimate success of this effort will not come from building a highly centralized hub with a small core team working alone to aggregate the world’s capacity development knowledge. While an effective coordination team is vital to catalyzing new aggregation services and cannot be underestimated, the real opportunity to expand connections and impact across a diverse capacity development knowledge landscape will come through the development of new capabilities within a growing professional network of capacity development *Connectors*—the web site coordinators and knowledge facilitators embedded within communities of practice and learning platforms. These are the human bridges connecting people to their peers and to an increasingly vibrant mosaic of accessible information and actionable knowledge. There are new skill sets that must be developed in order to leverage what technology is now enabling us to do—decentralizing, filtering, and contextually relevant human facilitation have never been more important.

Actions:

- Establish a technical support help desk and training capacity within the coordination unit of the CD content aggregation team. This may be a single person who facilitates formal and informal peer-exchange and online learning
- Organize a small community of practice to accelerate training and peer-exchange to advance improved practices and shared standards across participating networks and CoPs. Basic issues such as building better RSS feeds, optimizing the use of social networking tools, leading to more complex issues such as common content tagging (See Annex 5.), and content filtering strategies to improve the quality of information being brought to their members as well as what they are publishing to the network
- Advance discussion on open data sharing standards, audience analysis, platform development strategies—ideally leading to greater pooling of resources and shared technical infrastructure
- Strengthen shared training and support of Knowledge Facilitation skill sets among *Connectors*, so that people working with offline communities are increasingly adept at bridging face-to-face, offline interaction, with online content creation and sharing

3.5 Integrate to the extent possible with the Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development

The proposed African Learning Platform on Capacity Development (AfLP) presents a vision that is entirely consistent with what has been discovered and articulated through this research process towards improving connections of the capacity development knowledge architecture. While the AfLP vision is much more expansive in what it proposes to achieve in terms of regional facilitation, peer networking and face-to-face knowledge exchange, there are a sub-set of proposed features, products and services that are extremely consistent with those identified in this report, including:

- Make CD knowledge and practice in Africa more transparent and accessible
- Connect Africa internationally to bring the international good practices on CD
- Facilitate the codification, exchange and dissemination of CD-related knowledge

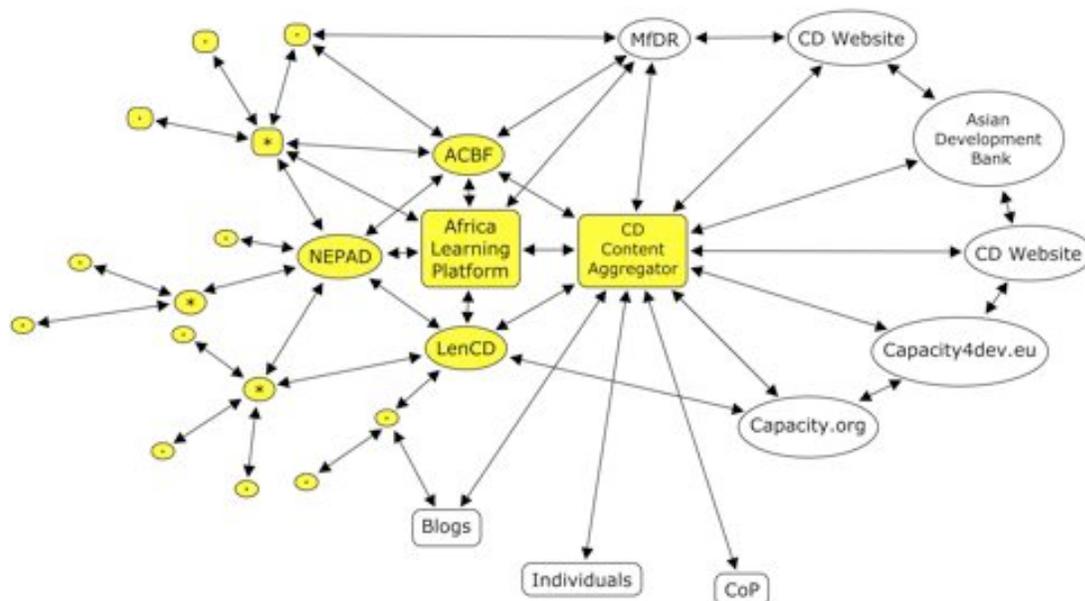
Some of the proposed AfLP products and services are also very consistent with the proposed capacity development content aggregator function. These include:

- Capacity Development Monitor
- Capacity Development Resource Corners

There is exciting potential to both strengthen the knowledge-based products and services of the AfLP, while ensuring that the proposed capacity development content aggregation work proposed here are actually more closely anchored to “on the ground” contextual realities and demand. One of the primary risks of the proposed CD content aggregation if done simply on an abstract, global level will be that it is so contextually removed and generalized that it may not meet the needs of specific priority communities. The affiliation or integration of these functions with the AfLP would decrease the risk of this detached abstraction—connecting more direct demand to the products and services proposed.

Actions:

- Schedule a working session (before September 30th, 2010) with AfLP stakeholders (NEPAD, AFCB, LenCD) to explore options for operational alignment and integration
- Prepare a more harmonized proposal for this work, specifically Recommendations 2, 3, and 4, that can be integrated into the AfLP proposal and implementation plan



4. A Vision for Improved Connections between Capacity Development Knowledge

Based on the consultations conducted during this research, and in connection with the evolving vision of the Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development, a complementary vision for a new type of content aggregating system is proposed, with technological and organizational recommendations, to feed into regional capacity building efforts in Africa and internationally. We propose the establishment of a dedicated Capacity Development Content Aggregator whose primary role will be identifying and leveraging the best existing web materials – to integrate, tag and network – while increasing the information flows between capacity building practitioners and critical “connectors” within sector and topic specific communities of practice.

In response to the stated challenges of fragmentation, the aggregator will pull things together, feeding back to people, in effect amplifying particularly good capacity development thought and practice. But there needs to be further work done on filtering and sense making. The aggregation hub will connect to others and pass information in and out from numerous databases regarding capacity development knowledge resources.

There are several innovative uses of IT and the Internet that we believe have not been adequately assessed much less implemented for the capacity development community. There are now “push” technologies which automatically brings content to which you subscribe directly to some sort of intermediary aggregator display form. This is rather different than the typical historical “pull” use of the Internet where people manually sought out and found content, but in the process missed a lot of what was out there.

This proposed aggregation service will not become a new mega-portal on capacity development, which would be an overly abstract overreach. The intent is to provide aggregated news streams of what new is happening in the field, and network this using numerous Internet-mediated communication processes. This spans from building search databases, to building networks, optimizing free social media tools and development of tools to make this sort of work easier.

It is recommended to build a thematic aggregating hub that can carry out custom searches of reviewed best content; establish an enterprise database to store various types of news, video, link, report, audio objects; develop the business logic through computer programming to automate information flows to and from the node using RSS/XML; and to ultimately automate the posting of such materials to a large audience on Twitter, Facebook and social bookmarking sites.

5. Roles and Processes within the CD Content Aggregator

The level of effort for this proposal is relatively modest given its potential to increase the inter-networking of sustainable capacity materials. An effective CD Content Aggregator service with the search, tagging, data basing and networking functions requires a small team with at least one full-time professional at its core. The aggregator manager will need to be well versed in both capacity development and IT – and committed to gathering, reviewing, archiving, indexing and distributing innovations in capacity development. The job of the aggregating team is specifically to filter and direct awareness regarding useful content. Part scout, part librarian, a lot of the prospects for success of an aggregation service as proposed here will depend upon getting the right mix of evangelist, manager and innovator for this position.

A three person staff could easily meet most of the needs identified. A capacity development subject area expert would lead the substantial content filtering work, coupled with an IT server admin guru, and at least one trainer to work with others to develop their capacity to use social networks and information aggregator tools. This staff would use such innovations as social networks, RSS/XML newsfeeds, and customized search and archiving to serve the community.

These functions are not to replace anything that is already happening, but to facilitate getting the best information products to a wider audience, while building network flows of information on the subject of capacity development, and finally carrying out trainings to advance the scale of adaptation of these new practices.

When the subject matter specialists identifies a new knowledge object – be it a report, web site, map, chart, video, audio. Its presence – title, url, summary, contact, link status (between hub and the identified resource) is data-based, perhaps editorialized or otherwise placed in context, and then made fully searchable with other such content. Numerous established RSS feeds by geography, tags and content can be constantly updated. Postings to Twitter and Facebook can be automated. So all this happens by entering in one database.

As items are added to the database using custom tools to aid the aggregator’s efficiency, posts can be sent off via RSS to Twitter and Facebook automatically. Information can be added into the databases either by importing RSS, and then having tools to edit and review, or manually using a standard html form.

Such a Capacity Development Content Aggregator web site would review and make indexed the best web information and current news of what is known on the topic and available on the internet. Most importantly, this is a tool used by the aggregator as well as node managers to find new items and build the manual databases (as separate from the search crawler unstructured database construction). Thus other node (CD web site) coordinators could choose to embrace the methodology of tagging, and then RSS feeds back and forth can occur plus widgets for any site interested in displaying current happenings in capacity development.

Nodes participating in the broader network (CD commons) may also avail themselves of the aggregators expertise and tools. When the nodes are interconnected, shared services through widgets and restless xml can be provided for developers to build upon for their own purposes. Ideally, they would be generating and consuming content as part of their regular business practices. Developing the capacity of the affiliated content coordinators is essential, to see the new ways to share and receive knowledge.

Potential functions of could include:

- daily tracking and frequent updating of news articles on capacity development
- an archive of the Internet’s nonpermanent capacity development news content
- email commentary, press releases and other original writing regarding reviewed “best” capacity development coming from various specialists / sites
- a hierarchical link collection of reviewed best capacity development information sources
- a search engine which allows full text searches of the reviewed linked sites

6. A Way Forward

There are many indications that this is an opportune moment to advance actions that will strengthen the connections among the primary international and regional sources of capacity development knowledge. At the same time, it is important to build new relationships with Connectors that provide inroads into thematic / sector specific networks that also produce and demand quality capacity development content.

Starting something, albeit modestly with the “low hanging fruit” of easily identifiable sources, and with largely free tools, will enable this somewhat abstract concept to come into clearer view for a more critical analysis of its validity and potential demand. The energy and enthusiasm mobilized by the creation of the Africa Learning Platform on Capacity Development provide a very compelling opportunity to unite this proposal to move this agenda forward during the second half of 2010. There is a golden opportunity that should not be missed.

Annex 7.1: Interview List

CD Platform Leaders	
Name	Organization affiliation
Samer Hacem	African Development Bank
Anna Bertele	EuroAid
Heinz Greijn	Capacity.org
Wangu Mwangi	Capacity.org
Peter Clarke	Capacity collective
Cristoforos Korakas	Capacity4dev.eu
Nils Boesen	Capacity4dev.eu
Tamira Yacob	MfDR CoP
Bankole Odeoye	NEPAD
Florence Nazare	NEPAD
Jayne Masumba	UNDP
Thomas Theisohn	LenCD
Technology specialists	
Eric Gunderson	Development Seed
Glen Barry	Ecological Internet
Dave Witzel	Environmental Defense Fund
Christian Kreutz	Independent Consultant
Louise Clark	Independent Consultant
Vahid Masrouf	Independent Consultant
Martin Kearns	Netcentric Campaigns
Greg Schnipple	QED
An-Min Kuo	The Blue Factor

Annex 7.2: CD Websites Mapping

Name	RSS	Newsletter	Social Media	Social Bookmark	Participation Options
African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)					
African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)		X			
Alliance for Nonprofit Management					X
ASTD (American Society for Training & Development)	X				X
Capacity Collective				X	
Asian Development Bank Capacity Development					
Capacity Development - DAC Initiative					
Capacity Development (learning network)					X
Capacity Development Resource Center from the World Bank	X				
Capacity is Development					
Capacity.org		X			
Capacity4dev.eu					X
Civil Society Partnership Programme (CSPP)		X			
Community Empowerment		X			
Eldis (topic-based knowledge research)	X	X			X
European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)	X	X			
Evidence-Based Policy in Development Network (EBPDN)	X	X			X
Global Development Network		X		X	X
Governance and Social Development Resource Centre	X	X	X		
Impact Alliance		X			X
International Association of Facilitators	X	X			X
International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC)		X			
Inwent – Capacity Building	X				
Joint Africa Institute (JAI)					
LenCD - Learning Network on Capacity Development					
Managing for development results (MfDR)					
MSP Resource Portal					
NGO Connect		X			X
Participatory Planning Monitoring & Evaluation					
South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)		X	X	X	X
The Capacity Project	X				
The Change Alliance	X				X
The Change Management Toolkit					X
The International Development Research Centre (IDRC)		X	X		
Train4dev.net	X				X
United Nations Development Programme Capacity Development					
Virtual Center for Leadership and Management					X
Wiki page on Capacity Development					X
Total 38	11	15	3	3	16

Annex 7.3: Network Science

A network is a collection of nodes connected to each other through links. The pattern in which nodes are linked determines network structure, composition, and function. The study of networks is a sub-discipline of complex systems theory, a rapidly growing field of academic inquiry. The study of complex networks is occurring across many scientific fields. Networks are critically important for understanding and defining many different kinds of systems. All networks have a common structure, and serve as conduits for energy, materials, or information. Networks also display dynamics, based on the making and breaking of network ties. Network dynamics have been applied to disparate phenomenon including epidemics, power failures, and computer virus transmission. Ecosystems, the Internet, the economy, and living cells can all be represented as networks. Given the vastness of the web, search engines are an important and frequently used manner to find information. Search engines and other database driven web content has allowed the pull model of dynamic, interactive, targeted and filtered information exchange and retrieval.

The Internet is a decentralized, self-organized commons with the guaranteed right to innovate, and this has had great importance in its development. The right to innovate has resulted from its non-hierarchical management and lack of a single coercive authority to dictate acceptable use. Though human made, the Internet is not centrally designed. Structurally, the Internet is closer to an ecosystem than to a Swiss watch. There are a number of difficulties that arise when trying to index the geographically distributed and ephemeral computers and content that composes the Internet. Some 23% of pages were found to change daily, and the half-life of pages was found to be some 10 days which is hard for logarithms to keep up with. This highlights the importance of archiving initiatives to make permanently available within the Internet's global search. Capacity development news and information would be temporary in nature if not archived, and would mostly be lost from the public domain - not able to be used again.

More consensus-based approaches have the potential to build “virtual communities” of practitioners that agree upon a common fact-base. “Virtual communities are social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on ... public discussions long enough, with sufficient feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace. The nature of the Internet – decentralized, multi-node with alternative routes between points – lends itself to information exchange in manners that allow small groups of individuals to more effectively influence policy-making and individual behavior. Traditionally, there have existed insiders – government officials, multi-lateral organizations, academia and others – that by virtue of having privileged access to certain kinds of knowledge have neglected to accept sources of information not created by themselves. The Internet is an equalizing mechanism” (Rheingold, H., 1998. *The Virtual Community*, @ www.rhengold.com/vc/book/ accessed on 6/28/2010) between less empowered members of civil society on one side, and national governments, large corporations, and powerful institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, WTO and others on the other side.

Most nodes in complex networks are not randomly connected. The clustering coefficient measures the degree to which a node is linked to the rest of the system. Systems with high clustering coefficients are highly-interconnected. Many complex networks contain clustered areas of linkage with nearby nodes (smaller link distance as measured by number of steps to traverse network from one node to another) and many fewer weak

links that are relatively longer and are thus important for long distance message transmission. By analogy, strong links are like strong ties between family members or good friends. Weak links are like the weak ties between people who are just acquaintances. This has been called the “smallworld” concept by network scientists. This pattern of small world networks is one that reemerges repeatedly in the study of networks, and is largely due to this clustering of local strong links and a few long distance weak links.

The importance of weak links is providing bridges between worlds, dramatically lowering the number of links necessary to traverse a network. These are referred to as social bridges. “Bridges *are almost always formed from weak links*... These are the social ‘shortcuts’ that if eliminated, would cause the network to fall to pieces” (Buchanan, M., 2002. Nexus: small worlds and the groundbreaking science of networks, @ <http://books.google.com> accessed on 6/28/2010). In studies of social coordination and social network analysis, weak ties in social networks between acquaintances are often extremely important. Information spreading along weak ties has a better chance to reach a large number of people... Without weak ties, a community would be fragmented into a number of isolated cliques.

Annex 7.4: Detailed Steps for Establishing the Capacity Content Aggregator

- Select a location, ideally but not necessarily in Africa. Location should be selected based on both political but also technical characteristics. Wherever it is located, it needs ultra-fast fiber optics straight to the servers, available at a reasonable cost.
- Establish presence of aggregated content on known news aggregator such as Netvibes
- As soon as possible and desired, setup Facebook page(s) and Twitter account(s), and begin manually exchanging information while building a community of others interested in joining.
- Establish Internet Servers (3) – one for crawler, one for databases, and one for web site. Utilize existing servers or buy new top level servers for approximately USD \$30,000. These should be co-located at a server warehouse. Co-location costs some \$500/month or more.
- Purchase (or use existing) staff computers (3) and project laptops (2). Further provision with top level network equipment in the office. Estimated at USD\$10,000
- Setup the servers – after decision on Linux or Windows. Configure as web server; and then install custom search, enterprise database, virus, and security protection.
- Choose a content management system to interact with and manage databases. License or develop in house aggregator tools to receive, edit, combine, serve, and network through RSS/XML
- Establish these known databases relating to capacity development. For example, 1) news articles, 2) links to reviewed sites, which is fed into, 3) crawler search engine.
- Begin process of identifying other mash-up and re-networking possibilities.
- Establish training & technical support, starting with a simple course on social networking, leading to tagging and building better RSS.
- Build custom search for the search section of the common African capacity development space with identified websites.
- Through coding of the database and programming of business knowledge, identify several preset RSS feeds cutting the assembled data geographically, thematically (i.e. training, policy, aid effectiveness, etc.), and with any other desired cuts.
- Program or acquire existing program able to return crawler custom search results as RSS/XML.
- Identify further databases and aggregations that will serve the community; and build databases, data input forms, RSS feeds, and XML services for others to use the information. Encourage further mash-ups built upon these aggregated syndications.
- Develop meta-tag system to tag multi-media objects and include as enclosures in RSS feeds.
- Develop in-house editorial commenting, blogging, and other forms of integrating content; synthesizing what has been databased, archived, made searchable, and networked.
- Carry out extensive training and orientation about the product throughout.
- Aggressively advertise via regional partners, connectors to key networks, Communities of Practice, and through social media outlets such as Facebook.
- Establish an internal network for members and set up a system to inform them when something new matches their past or expressed interests.

Annex 7.5 - Analysis on some Technological Tool Options

SOCIAL MEDIA



What is it?

Twitter is a social networking and microblogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as *tweets*. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page and delivered to the author's subscribers who are known as *followers*. Messages can be transmitted via a twitter page, email, or cell phone text messages. Entries can also be batched together and create a list that can be embedded on your website, so constituents can see a list of all your updates.

Why is it important?

- By using twitter you can easily spread information about capacity development to your constituents or any follower interested in international capacity development. This would allow your tweets to reach the friends of your followers not just your immediate network.
- Great way to let an audience know about any events, new resources, or updates.
- Information can be fed into twitter using RSS Newsfeeds, and similarly can be pulled from twitter for use elsewhere. This means the information can be entered once and appear in multiple places such as your website, your followers website, or other social media tools. Thus, allowing anyone to quickly see any new postings on capacity development on twitter in one easy step.
- The search box on twitter can be used to search feeds on a certain topic.

Key Considerations

- Before setting up an account it is important to have a person within the organization be assigned the task of sending twitter messages. This will ensure a constant up to date flow of information shared with your followers.
- Policies and procedures should also be in order to ensure that messages have an organizational voice and are pertinent to the audience.
- Free to use, very user friendly, requires few minutes to set up a twitter account. There is an optional tutorial as well.

Example Searching “capacity development” on twitter

When doing a search of the term “capacity development” on twitter, a list of latest tweets related to the topic show up.



tweets are displayed in chronological order showing the most recent at the top, ranging in topic from links to studies to actual job postings

**What is it?**

Facebook is a social media site that connects users to friends, interest groups, and organizations. Currently, Facebook is being utilized by 175 million users daily.

Why is this important?

-Users are able to set up “groups” around a topic of interest, for example a group could be created for Capacity Development where individuals and organizations can become members to foster group discussion around the topic.

-Different Capacity Development organizations can create their own facebook page to broadcast information to their own network of fans, and can also join the Capacity Development group. This gives a bigger visibility to your organization, having your work reaching new audiences some of whom may be interested in other subthemes of capacity development but may find value on your work that otherwise they would of not known about.

-If you are an international organization with different country offices or with regional representation, you can create a page on facebook for each that reflect the local work and speak to a more local, specific audience, and link each country or regional page to the organization’s international page on facebook.

Key Considerations

- Before setting up an account it is important to have a person within the organization be assigned the task of maintaining the Facebook group or page. This will ensure that you engage your audience as they receive status updates and new information, allowing you to interact with them more directly.

- Policies and procedures should also be in order to ensure that postings have an organizational voice and are pertinent to the audience.

- Free, very user friendly, requires few minutes to set up a Facebook account.

- There is no Capacity Development group on Facebook and the only Capacity Development page does not reflect the international capacity development community, with only 27 members it leaves a big space to create a comprehensive Capacity Development group on facebook.

Example Doctors Without Borders/ Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) page on facebook

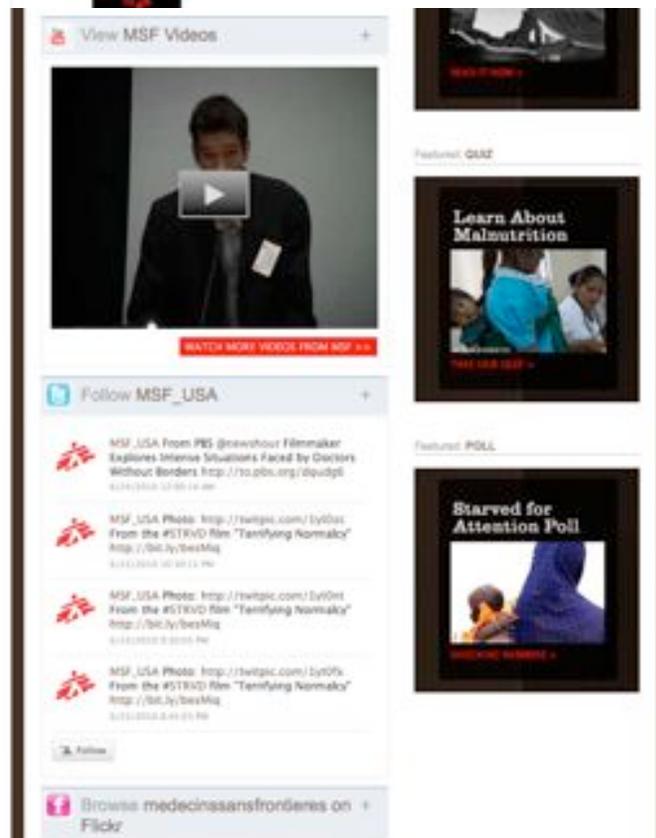


The MSF international page on facebook links to MSF country related pages on facebook. This example can be translated into how an International Capacity Development group can be created, and different Capacity Development Organizations' with diverse subthemes and audiences can link their pages on facebook with the group by becoming members of the group. Also, this example shows how international capacity development organizations can create their international and country or region specific pages and be connected to each other.

YouTube

Twitter

Flickr



Links to documents, articles, images and videos are posted. The MSF page also shows how it is possible to integrate different social media tools like twitter, youtube, flickr together with facebook.

AGGREGATED CALENDAR

What is it?

An Aggregated Calendar pulls events or activities from different calendars, and then combines all of them into one shared calendar.

Why is this important?

With this calendar, the major capacity development websites could have one common calendar on each of their websites displaying every major capacity development event or activity around the world.

Key Considerations

- An individual from each organization will need to manage the what events and activities from its organization or network are shared in the common calendar.
- Free, requires some time to install this application, to ensure the mechanism for organizations to submit their calendars, and to remind people about submitting their calendars.

Example Falls Church Times Events

The screenshot shows the 'Falls Church Times' website. At the top, it says 'Falls Church City's Online Community Newspaper'. There is a search bar and a date 'THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2010'. Below the navigation bar, there are links for 'Home', 'About', 'Calendar', 'City Budget', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area is titled 'Calendar' and includes a sub-header 'In & Around City of Falls Church'. It explains that the calendar is an aggregation of events from various sources and provides instructions on how to contribute. The calendar itself shows events for Thursday, June 24, 2010, and Friday, June 25, 2010. For Thursday, there are events in the 'Afternoon' (8:00 PM) and 'Evening' (7:00 PM and 8:00 PM). For Friday, there are events in the 'Evening' (7:00 PM and 8:00 PM) and 'Night' (7:00 PM). A calendar widget for June 2010 is also visible, highlighting the current date, June 24th.

What is it?

Customized search tool focused on websites that you determine. Google custom search also allows you to choose the sites that are of interest for inclusion in a personalized search engine.

Why is it important?

Google Custom Search would allow an individual to search for something on your website and also search across various capacity development sites that you help determine. You can also provide an option for others to add their website to your customized google search and for them to embed your google custom search into their own website.

Key Considerations

- This search tool can help widen your organizations' reach by adding your website to the custom search.
- You can choose from a Standard edition which is free where ads are required to appear on the results page or a Google Site Search that starts at \$100 per year and has no ads on results pages.
- Very user friendly because google provides easy to follow steps.
- Easy to set up and to maintain. It requires creating a google custom search account and a website to support the search function. You can rapidly customize your search tool box and embed it into your website, and also update the list of websites as many times as you want with minimum effort.

Example Eldis Google Custom Search of over 4000 development focused websites

What is it?

RSS (Really Simple Syndication or Rich Site Summary) is a way for websites to summarize their content, such as news articles, blog entries, audio, and video while delivering headlines, descriptions, and links for easy, clutter-free access to the information you want. The information is delivered through a "feed." The feeds are collected by a RSS newsreader application. These feeds can be added to a website, intranet or desktop. This enables the website user to get automated content updates.

Why is it important?

RSS Feeds allow for each website to have the most up-to-date information. All the Capacity Development websites can have news, events, latest resources, and published material on each site easily accessible to constituents by providing the RSS Feed option. Feeds from various sources can be aggregated following a thematic tracking from multiple sources into one single place.

Key Considerations

- RSS feeds only work if they are added to a website and provide quality feeds. At the moment, only 11 out of 38 Capacity Development websites that were mapped in this report have feeds, and few have quality feeds.
- Free, user friendly, requires installation on a website.
- Facebook and Twitter allow sharing of information to and from their sites using RSS.
- RSS Feeds can be easily exchanged in a number of formats, into and out of databases, and to a wide variety of locations, all while appearing to be local to the site where it is displayed.

Examples

Feeds from different sources about a common topic aggregated into a window at the organization's homepage

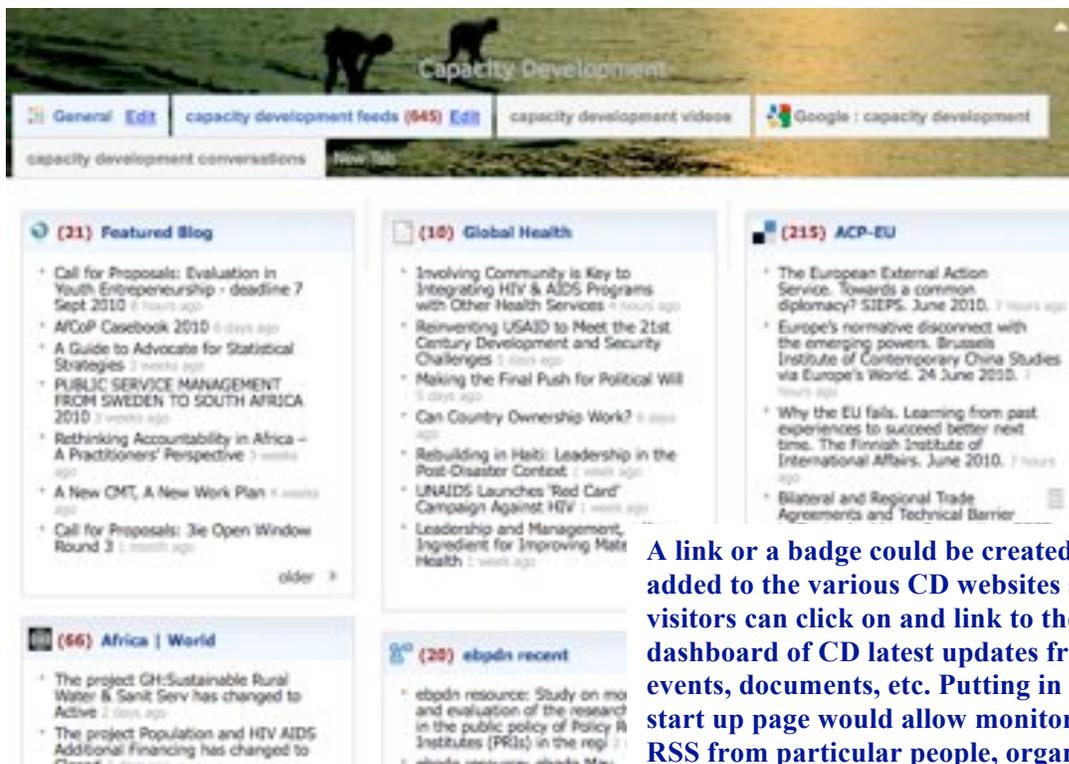


The screenshot shows the Climate Ark website homepage. At the top, there's a yellow header with the logo and title "Climate Ark Climate Change and Global Warming Portal". Below the header is a search bar and navigation links. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Climate Change News Feed:** A list of news items with headlines and brief descriptions, such as "2196 - Gulf presents water crisis further on oil leak" and "2194 - From Gulf, a cloudy picture for oil and gas".
- Climate Change Blog:** A featured article titled "ALERT! Protest Madagascar's Breaking of Moratorium on Illegal Rosewood Log Exports from Protected Rainforests" with a "TAKE ACTION!" call to action.
- My EcoEarth Info:** A section for social media and user information, including a "Climate Change Social Network" login form and "Climate Alerts".
- Write for EE:** A section for writing climate essays and guest blogs.
- Climate Overview:** A section for graphics and presentations on climate change science.
- Lincoln Plan:** A section for a carbon tax proposal.
- Subscribe:** A section for newsletters and news feeds.
- About/Contact:** A section for general information and contact details.

An RSS Newsfeed icon  in your website allows for others to add your content to their website, intranet or desktop with simple clicks. Content from the source site appears on your own website or in your "newsreader" (software that allows you to pick up and organize RSS content). When the content on the source site is updated, it is also automatically updated on your website or in your newsreader.

An example of how rss feeds from different sources can all be put together in one single page, displaying a dashboard of capacity development rss feeds is [Netvibes](#). Netvibes is a multi-lingual personalized [start page](#)- dashboard or personal [web portal](#) much like [iGoogle](#), [My Yahoo!](#), [Alltop](#) and [Microsoft Live](#). It is organized into tabs, with each tab containing user-defined modules. Customized tabs, feeds and modules can be shared with others individually or posted on your blog or web portal.



A link or a badge could be created to be added to the various CD websites so that visitors can click on and link to the dashboard of CD latest updates from news, events, documents, etc. Putting in place a start up page would allow monitoring of RSS from particular people, organizations or sources on CD.

SOCIAL BOOKMARKING



What is it?

Delicious is one of the most popular social bookmarking services, allowing users to share, organize, search and manage bookmarks of web resources by saving links to web pages. Descriptions may be added to these bookmarks so that other users may understand the content of the resource without first needing to download it for themselves. People can usually view these bookmarks chronologically, by category or tags, or via a search engine. The tagging pioneer makes it easy to have a single set of bookmarks kept in sync between all of your computers- you can share and discover bookmarks on the web. By 2008, there were 5.3 million users and 180 million unique URLs bookmarked.

Why is it important?

- Delicious can help identify content on capacity development under common tags in a rapid and effective way. A crowd sourced link list can be started on delicious by defining a common tag and embedding the list (through RSS). Giving the opportunity for a joint capacity development list that everyone can embed.
- You can add bookmarks and tags to your website or blog through linkrolls, tagrolls, network badges, blog posting and can also add badges that encourage people to bookmark your website or blog.
- The search in delicious allows you to not only search your own bookmarks, but virtually any context.
- Additionally you can use the Subscriptions and Network features to keep track of the Delicious tags and users you find most interesting within Capacity Development.

Key considerations

- Useful as a way to access a consolidated set of bookmarks from various computers, organize large number of bookmarks, and share bookmarks with contacts
- Success depends on a manual process. It is difficult to get the right tags and bookmarking as there is no standard set of keywords. Typically the right tags and the bookmarking is far from what you want.
- Because feeds reside in one common space, there should be clear incentives for bookmarking, tagging and sharing content
- Free, yahoo account required, setup takes less than an hour and requires installing of bookmark buttons. Some training required on how to bookmark and tag information, and manage the page where the feeds display

Example Searching for capacity development bookmarks and tags on delicious

The screenshot shows the Delicious website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Home', 'Bookmarks', 'People', and 'Tags'. A search bar contains the text 'capacity development' with a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there are several suggestions for related terms: 'community capacity development office', 'human capacity development', 'african institute for capacity development', 'capacity development plan', 'evaluating capacity development', and 'capacity development program'. To the right of these suggestions is a 'Filter by Tag' section with checkboxes for 'development', 'performance', 'scalability', 'web', and 'Double-click to add a tag'. Further right is a line graph titled 'Everybody's Bookmarks Saved From: other bookmark to save' with a Y-axis ranging from 0 to 100 and an X-axis showing dates from 2010 to 2011. Below the search bar, there are two checkboxes: 'My bookmarks (2)' and 'Everybody's bookmarks (1000+)'. The main search results area shows 'No results from My bookmarks' and 'Also try searching My Network's bookmarks'. Below this, there is a search bar for 'Everybody's bookmarks' with '2,002 results - show all'. The results list includes: 'High Scalability | Building bigger, faster, more reliable websites.' (5646 results, tags: scalability, architecture, performance, web, optimization), 'Best Practices for Speeding Up Your Web Site' (8196 results, tags: performance, web, optimization, javascript, development), 'Home - Capacity.org' (79 results, tags: capacity_building, capacity_development, training, capacity, development), 'AJAX Libraries API - Google Code' (3545 results, tags: ajax, google, javascript, api, jquery), 'memcached: a distributed memory object caching system' (8276 results, tags: cache, database, memcached, programming, caching), and 'INTRAC: Home' (88 results). On the right side, there are 'Sponsored Results' for 'We Found Development Capacity', 'Compare Products at Smarter.com', 'Investment Capacity', and 'Rural Development Institute'.



What is it?

Diigo (Digest of Internet Information, Groups and Other Stuff) is a social bookmarking website which allows signed-up users to bookmark, tag (even multi-word tags), and archive (upload and capture as snapshot) web pages. It allows users to highlight (multicolored) any part of a webpage and add sticky notes to specific highlights or to a whole page. These annotations can be kept private or shared with a group within Diigo or a special link can be forwarded to someone else.

Why is it important?

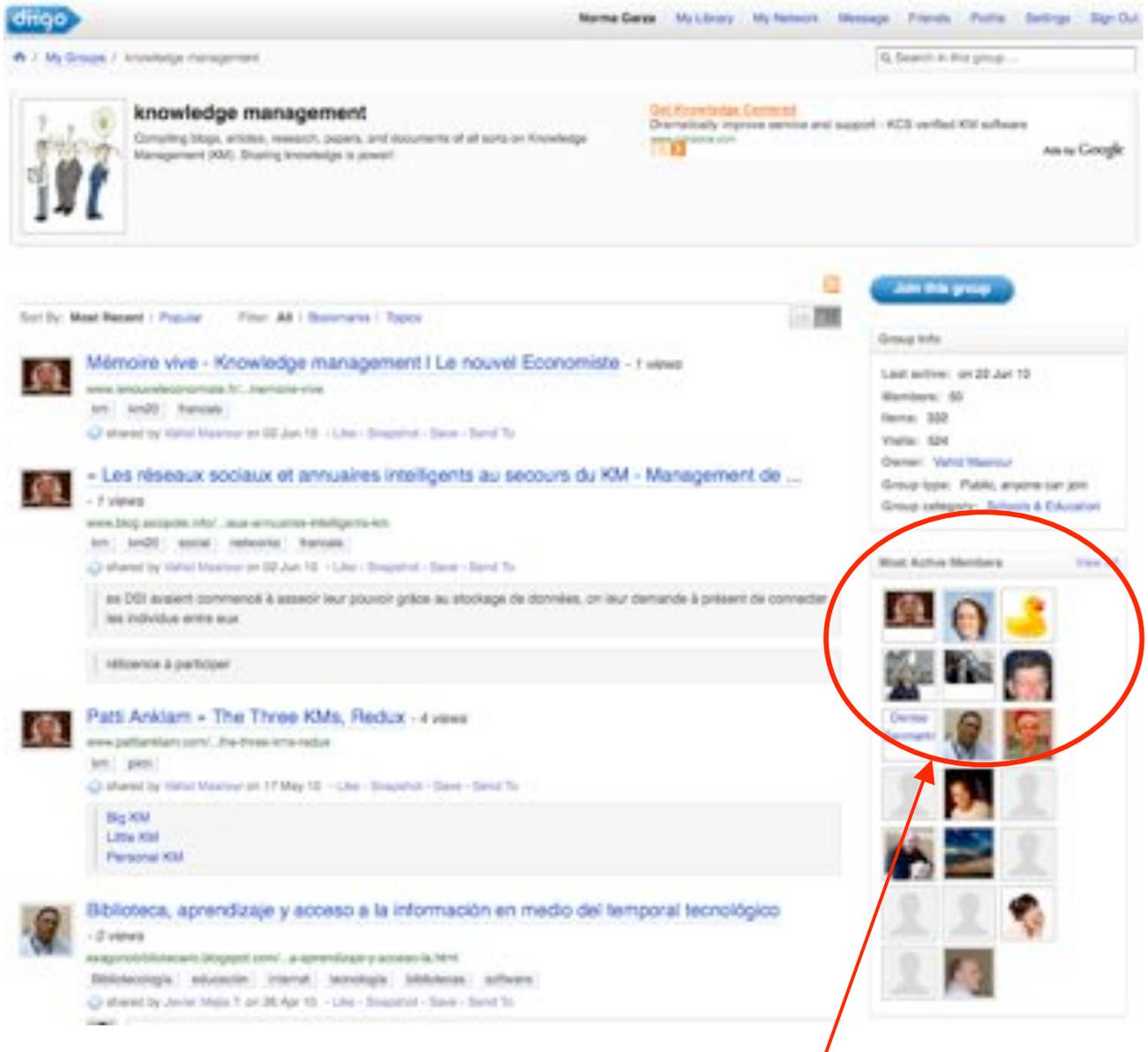
- It's a powerful research tool and knowledge-sharing community.
- Its not only bookmarking or tagging, it allows you to interact with others on content and even create a private or public group where you can share findings and interact on the web pages that have been identified within the group like one specifically on capacity development.
- You can search your entire library including archived items on any topic or specifically on capacity development.
- Information is more decentralized and everyone can contribute as they wish.

Key considerations:

- Outside the website, Diigo's graphical user interface includes an optional bookmarklet, or a customizable toolbar, with various search capabilities.

- Diigo is free, with different display modes to satisfy diverse users' needs and preferences
- Diigo beta was listed as one of the top ten research tools by [CNET](#) in 2006

Example Knowledge Management group on diigo



Diigo shows a more decentralized model for sharing content, individuals and organizations may join a group on a topic of interest (e.g. knowledge management, capacity development, etc) and share their bookmarks and tags on the topic. This also allows for comments and discussions on a given document or post with the option of highlighting content and adding sticky notes as tools to discuss a given post. Most active users within the group are featured, adding visibility to individuals / organizations.