

Engaging with the NWP

An NGO perspective on
knowledge management for
adaptation

Rachel Berger | September 2010 |



Who are we?

- Development NGO, focused on reducing poverty through enabling access to appropriate technologies.
- Our founder, radical economist Fritz Schumacher, said:
"The best aid to give is intellectual aid, a gift of useful knowledge. A gift of knowledge is infinitely preferable to a gift of material things. There are many reasons for this....
The gift of material goods makes people dependent, but the gift of knowledge makes them free "

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Our credentials

- 20 years experience acting as a hub for technical information relevant to people developing their way out of poverty
- working for more than 40 years with people who live in areas of climatic extremes and high climate variability
- we understand about what will be needed to help people adapt to climate change

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Why did we engage with NWP?

- We are one of the leading organisations working on programmes for adaptation at the local level
- We have seen the NWP as a vehicle for sharing what we do
- It has been valuable to hear about the work of the UN organisations, and to speak to developing country governments

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What we have done

- Attended workshops
- Contributed material to the database on adaptation technologies and practices
- Helped compile material for the report on Action Pledges
- Made submissions on risk reduction and on the recent review of the NWP
- Attended focal point forums

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Perceived benefits of engagement

It has enabled us to:

- share our resources on technologies and practices of adaptation more widely
- reach a new audience - governments of developing countries
- raise awareness with a wider range of organisations about our experience of adaptation at the local level

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Our pledges

- Documenting and publishing our experience on community-based adaptation in South Asia, including audio-visual material
- Using participatory video to facilitate capture of local knowledge by communities to share with others
- Developing good practice in community based adaptation through action research
- Developing an analytical framework to guide planning and analysis of adaptation.

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Further pledges

- Contributed to NWP publication "Action Pledges: Making a difference on the ground. A synthesis of outcomes, good practices, lessons learned, and future challenges and opportunities"
 - Understanding climate risk
 - Scaling up community-based adaptation actions

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Benefits to NWP of our pledges

- Having made pledges, we did more knowledge sharing than we might otherwise have
- We have produced new knowledge outputs and research relevant to the policy-making audience
- We have acted as a champion for NWP in our NGO network, leading other organisations to get involved

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Some weaknesses of the NWP

- Budget was small
- Workshops as currently framed do not really build capacity
 - Lacking in depth
 - The right people don't attend
- The website is not inviting
- Many gaps in the 'knowledge objects'
- The knowledge is not in accessible formats
- Who uses the materials?

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Key challenges for a more effective programme

- Building capacity of the relevant people in central and local government
- Pulling together relevant information
- Disseminating it in a format relevant to the particular audience

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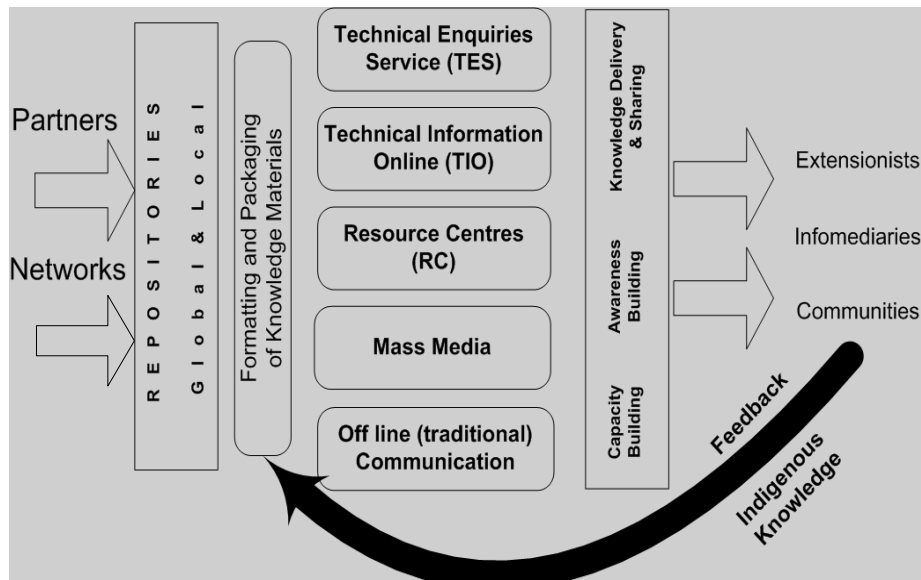
An alternative model

- **Practical Answers:** knowledge management to support adaptation
- **Aim:** to assist all people, who could benefit from technical knowledge to adapt their livelihoods in the face of climate change, have access to local and global knowledge resources in appropriate formats and languages
<http://practicalaction.org/practicalanswers>

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PRACTICAL ANSWERS – Operational Model



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Reaching out to local people



Technical Information Online

Websites: UK (English), Peru (Spanish), Sri Lanka (English, Sinhalese, Tamil)

April 2009 – March 2010 1,045,710 downloads (technical briefs and other materials)

Estimated number of beneficiaries of this services declared by people downloading knowledge materials is over 3,000,000



Making Bitter Gourd in Sri Lanka
A Practical Answers 'Knowledge Object' showing how rural communities in Sri Lanka can make dehydrated bitter gourd for market. Made by the Practical Answers team in Sri Lanka. Language: Sinhala.



Making Breadfruit in Sri Lanka
A Practical Answers 'Knowledge Object' showing how to make Breadfruit as a product for market. Made by the Practical Answers team in Sri Lanka. Language: Sinhala.



Making Dried Curry Leaves
A Practical Answers 'Knowledge Object' showing how rural communities in Sri Lanka can make dried curry leaves for market, a way of sustaining livelihoods. Made by the Practical answers team in Sri Lanka. Language: Sinhala.



Making Groundnut Sweets in Sudan
A Practical Answers 'Knowledge Object' showing how to make the popular groundnut sweets in Sudan. In arabic, made by the Practical answers Sudan office, working with the very poorest in Sudanese society.

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Diversity of Knowledge Materials



Technical Brief



Multimedia Document



Arabic



Swahili

Story (Voice)



Video: Vegetable Drying and Preservation
Zimbabwe

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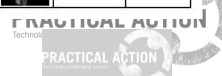
Multimedia: Hibiscus Cultivation
Sudan



Formats to suit many clients

| Format User | Technical Brief | Research Report | Database | Video film | Multimedia Presentation | Live demo | Face-to- Face | Email | Voice email / Phone | Radio TV |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|------------|----------------------------|--------------|------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Nomadic or Tribal Community | | | | | | | | | | |
| Farmer (educated) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Farmer (uneducated) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Policy maker | | | | | | | | | | |
| Government official | | | | | | | | | | |
| NGO staff | | | | | | | | | | |
| Extension worker | | | | | | | | | | |
| Community-based org. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Academic | | | | | | | | | | |
| Development Agency | | | | | | | | | | |

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Challenges for NWP

- **Partnership** with many stakeholders to identify demand and access diverse sources of knowledge
- Effective linking** to networks of knowledge nodes at local level, via national and global level
- **Sustainability**: long-term support by donors and national governments

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Challenges for governments

- Willingness to recognise their responsibility to support their most vulnerable communities
- Capacity building at government level to reach people they don't normally engage with
- Transforming technical and scientific knowledge into appropriate media for local use

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