



# Internet-based Knowledge Sharing Approaches for Web-based Knowledge Networks



by Nadejda Loumbeva

## Overview

- A question ... and some answers ...
- The nature of knowledge and knowledge management
- The FAO approach as one example
  - FAO Knowledge Networks (TKNs)
  - Knowledge Network platforms (e-ag, FSN)
- **Need for a Social Context**
  - What does 'social context' mean ...
  - How can we make it happen ...



## Let me start with a Question ...

- What is the purpose of ESCORENA ...?
- Why is ESCORENA important to you ...?
- How would ESCORENA optimize what you are already doing in your networks ...?



- SHARE perspectives
- REVERT to this throughout our work during the workshop

# The Challenge of Knowledge Management - From Information to Knowledge

## Two types of knowledge:

- Explicit knowledge is “captured” in documents, databases, web sites
- Tacit knowledge is not “captured” and exists in people’s heads and is reflected as insight, judgment, craftsmanship, and creativity.

80% of an organization’s knowledge is tacit :

effective knowledge management taps into tacit knowledge by supporting communication between people.

tacit knowledge is *the glue* of explicit knowledge.



And so ...

- Knowledge Management can not happen unless you manage both explicit and tacit
- Knowledge Management goes a step further than Information Management



## The FAO Approach – an aim to be a knowledge-based organization in the information age



### Knowledge sharing:

Effective knowledge organizations support free flow and sharing of knowledge and information in all activities.

through

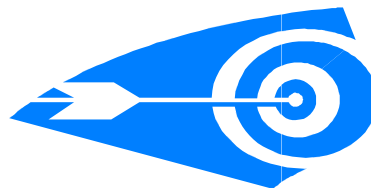
Knowledge Networks and communities of practice – promote partnership, teamwork, with the free exchange of knowledge and best practices between the organization and Member States and international agencies.

A new way of working

A new understanding about information

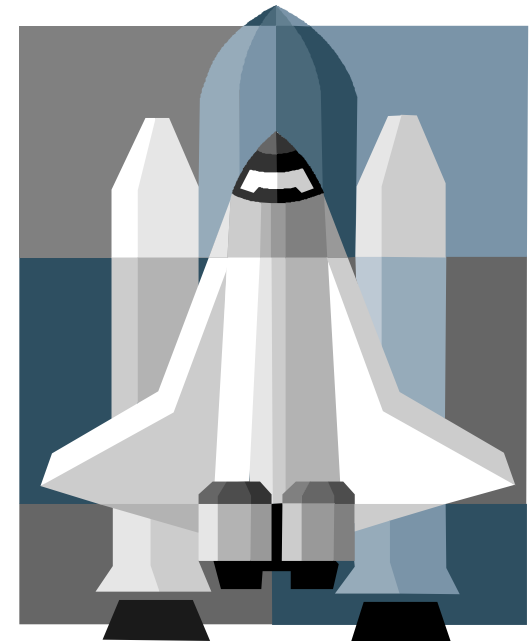
# FAO Thematic Knowledge Networks

- Strengthen links within communities of practice
- Allow individuals to gather and gain access to information
- Build on information by facilitating sharing and exchange of knowledge and resources
- Organize and create knowledge in flexible ways
- And ... use technological platforms to support this



## The need for a Social Context ...

- Within which to embed the technologies
- A move beyond portals of information ...
- Where the creation of the content is outsourced to the members of the community ...
- And where there is freedom to innovate the ways in which we share information ...





# Thematic Knowledge Networks Functions

- Share
- Store / Retrieve
- Collaborate / Interact
- Decide
- Learn
- Notify
- Support
- Monitor
- ... .. Allow for innovation



## TKN Pilots in FAO

- Bio-energy
- Avian Influenza
- Plant protection
- Food security
- E-agriculture
- Right to Food
- Urban forestry
- OCD – FAORs

Membership from HQ &  
Decentralized offices

# FAO Thematic Knowledge Networks

- Definitions
  - Problem
  - Purpose
  - Benefits
- Guidelines
  - Categories
  - Functions
  - Resources e.g. TKN Support Group
- Corporate Workplan
  - Tools and methodologies
  - Pilot network selection
  - Training
  - Implementation and analysis
  - Upscaling
- **INNOVATION ...?**

# Thank you!!

- Questions ???



## Summary of ESCORENA Networks' Purpose Checklists

- Purpose
- Communication

## Group Session: Network S, W, O and C

April 10th

???

- Working Groups Session 1:
- Participants work in three groups with facilitators, with inputs from individual participants to be discussed within the groups.
- Topic: current activities of ESCORENA networks – strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and constraints.
- Facilitators: Michal and Nadia
- 15mins Summary of purpose checklists (Nadia)
- 30mins Participants break into 3 groups to discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints of the ESCORENA networks
  - What are the strengths ...?
  - What are we weak on ...?
  - What could we improve ...? For example, experiences with funding sources and organizations – good practices.
  - What is or would be stopping us...?
- 20mins The three groups present their conclusions
- 20mins Discussion

## Knowledge Sharing/Brainstorming Session on Opportunities in Network Coordination

April 10<sup>th</sup>

???

- 15:30-16:45---Knowledge-sharing session: Participants to consider ESCORENA network roles and capacities of coordinators/leaders; discussion of feedback in plenary.
- Chair: N. Loumbeva
- 15.30 – 16.00 Participants get together in new sets of groups (depending on numbers). Each group has one or two laptops to share. They discuss the capacities and roles of networks leaders among themselves and consider any constraints that there are currently. They summarize their discussion on a flip chart.
  - They MAY start by: What does network coordination consist of for you, currently ...??
  - ... .. What is lacking, how do we improve the coordination??
- 16.00 – 16.30 Each group goes over an on-line lesson on knowledge network facilitation, to consider perspectives they have not so far considered. Heavy involvement of the facilitators is needed.
- 16.30 – 16.45 The perspectives of the on-line lesson are integrated with perspectives gained during the previous discussion.
- 10 min coffee break
- 16:55-17:40---Working Groups report outcomes in Plenary and Discussion. Each group has 10 mins to report plus 5 mins for Q and A.

## ESCORENA NETWORK WORKSHOP: Network Purpose Checklists

- Which networks? CENTAUR, COTTON Research network, FAO/CIHEAM Inter-Regional Cooperative Research and Development Network on Pastures and Fodder Crops, Olive, Nut,
- Purpose: defined very clearly perhaps because of the long years of existence of each network; research-focused
- Membership and Motivation: from 60 to 1500 – a certain fractions of those is the active one; subgroups in some but not all; network mostly as part of their jobs – formal component but not all (RAMIRAN)
- Member Interactions: Most networks publish newsletters and thus aim to reach out to bigger audiences as well as be visible to all members; they are not sure about what the members want: ‘we will have to ask them’; face-to-face meetings but ... rarely; interactions between meetings – no, at least not sponsored from within the network. Conference proceedings.
- MAIN PROBLEM: ONE-WAY diffusion of information ... dissemination ... a step further???
- Web-based interaction space: Most of the networks have a website; no interactivity component per se but ongoing discussion seems to be going on over email in at least a few of the cases; in one case, no website and no demand for such were indicated.