The opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department for International Development
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
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Section One  Introduction

This document describes the strategic approach of the Knowledge Management (KM) work stream within the State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) Programme. Section Two sets out how KM approaches can be applied so that they support and contribute to overall SPARC objectives, leading to a working definition of KM within the SPARC context. It builds upon earlier strategic thinking, and a record of those processes, consultations and contributory drafts can be found in the KM 'work stream innovation diary'.

It goes on to outline in Section Three the five strategic Dimensions of the KM work stream; their content, methodology and working assumptions, leading to outcomes for work plans which are fully elaborated in the SPARC annual work plans. Section Four describes how the KM work stream unit is to be structured and resourced and the Annex outlines our KM Communications Strategy in more detail.

This document is strategic; in that it:

- Deals with relatively high level issues and approaches, and locates the KM work within SPARC overall objectives;
- Sets out choices that have been made; what will (and will not) be pursued, and what the boundaries to KM work may be;
- Describes the KM work in the context of other SPARC work streams and other State Level Programmes (SLPs), and the linkages and overlaps between them;
- Aims to cover the long term; whilst the focus and detail will inevitably be sharper in the short term, it should provide a framework for longer-term planning, and will include exit-strategy considerations where possible;

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1 This is a revised and updated version of the original strategic plan produced in March 2009 and subsequently approved by the Department for International Development (DFID). This revised version follows the same broad principles as the original plan, but has been updated in light of the experience of the Programme’s inception period and first year of implementation. In that time there have also been two reviews by DFID (an Inception Review and a 2010 Output-to-Purpose Review) which have made recommendations on the KM work stream, and this revision is also in response to these recommendations.

2 A ‘work stream innovation diary’ is a simple tool for keeping a continuous real-time record of key events within the evolution of a programme. As well as providing useful evidence of, for example, levels of participation and consultation, and supporting audit trails for transparent disclosure, it can be extremely useful in ex-post evaluations of reasons for success or failure, particularly where ‘process’ figures highly in the knowledge acquired. Human memory is unreliable when trying to re-construct history through hindsight.

3 SPARC work streams are sub-divided into Dimensions and described in the Annual Work Plan submissions to DFID found in selected Quarterly Progress Reports and available on the SPARC intranet.
- Is intended to be relatively durable, compared to work plans which will change and adapt continually in the light of experience and demand. However, it is not sacrosanct, and will be modified without hesitation when necessary.
Section Two  

Knowledge Management within SPARC

How Knowledge Management supports SPARC objectives

Knowledge management is the basis for learning and improvement leading to sustainable reform, and as such underpins SPARC’s basic aim of improving public sector performance management. KM is a fundamental and necessary function, but is not sufficient on its own to guarantee improvement, which is why it is not a stand-alone activity but is integrated (mainstreamed⁴) within all SPARC work streams, and is why it will operate in a demand-led manner – flexibly and responsively. SPARC’s KM strategy therefore focuses on the processes that assemble information, analyse the lessons to produce useful knowledge, and the ways in which knowledge can be accessed by those who need it and will benefit from it. It will also support the communication of those benefits as a way of engaging with potential partners within both lead- and non-lead states.

The SPARC KM strategy therefore contains the conventional KM aims:

- That explicit information, knowledge and experience is captured, kept and made accessible;
- That tacit knowledge (which often contains a deeper understanding of what works in practice) is also captured so that it can be accessed and utilised;
- That lessons are abstracted, in ways that capture ‘useful’ knowledge which is transferrable and potentially applicable to other settings.

It then goes further in order to ensure:

- That there is analysis leading to understanding of the ways in which useful knowledge is incorporated into different applications and settings. (And here we move beyond “dissemination” with its connotations of supply-push, to a more nuanced approach that looks at how knowledge supports innovation⁵ in a complex institutional setting.);
- That KM supports change processes, through informing and influencing policy-makers, and reinforcing evidence-based policy making.

⁴ KM indicators have been developed for each Programme Output in the Logical Framework, which is available on the SPARC intranet (the fountain).

⁵ By innovation we mean the adoption of a policy, process (or technology) in a place, or by a group of people, in which this has not happened before; this can involve the introduction of ‘new’ knowledge or the importation of successful experience gained elsewhere.
To do this, the KM strategy will engage with SPARC’s range of stakeholder groups:

- The SPARC management and implementation teams; and, through them,
- The Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the lead States\(^6\) and at Federal level.

And also:

- The other SLPs (to ensure coordination with their own engagement with MDAs);
- Other potential recipients in non-lead States;
- The wider national and international community of practitioners.

SPARC stakeholder groups are shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: SPARC Stakeholder Groups**

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\(^6\) This may include some LGAs and/or MoLG if identified during SPARC’s support to state governments.
Knowledge Management defined in the SPARC context

The strategic role of knowledge management in the SPARC context is defined by the support it provides to the Programme. It is, primarily, aimed at enabling innovation in the governance processes within the lead States, and facilitating wider adoption and replication in non-lead States and through support to selected Federal institutions. It will also apply KM principles to support the efficient management of the SPARC Programme itself, and to the coordination with other SLPs. Thus:

Knowledge Management is the process of managing information flows to extract, capture and communicate useful knowledge in order to support innovation in governance processes.

The main focus of effort is to support the SPARC technical work streams and their engagement with MDAs at the State level. KM work will take its lead and entry points from the change agendas that were developed from the States’ self assessment process conducted in 2009.

Other SLPs may be sources and consumers of knowledge, but the State Accountability Voice Initiative (SAVI) Programme is likely to be of particularly high relevance in view of its interest in identifying external (to government) markets for information and their relationship to associated drivers and incentives for reform of KM in the MDAs.

The long-term vision for the KM work stream is that it can help achieve significant reforms in State service delivery; but in doing so it will also improve the understanding, capacities, enabling conditions and incentives which create much more open and mobile exchanges of knowledge and information. It is these conditions which contribute to sustainable reform and which will in due course allow an exit strategy to be developed within these plans.
SPARC Knowledge Management strategic Dimensions

All the SPARC work streams are centrally concerned with knowledge management; the KM work stream will support them through the following five Dimensions of activities:

- Support to KM initiatives within the work streams of lead State work programmes (40%);
- Enabling wider replication and adoption in non-lead States (20%);
- Coordinating with other SLPs (5%);
- Knowledge sharing to support the efficient management of SPARC (15%); and,
- Support to the Federal component (20%).

The percentages indicate the relative proportional allocation of ‘effort’ that it is judged will be applied to these Dimensions. It is an initial strategic view, and will translate into resource allocation in rather different terms in due course.

Implications and guiding principles

There are some broad implications which underlie or arise from this strategic outline.

- The KM work stream is demand led and responsive. Its full work plan responds to the change agendas arising from the State governments’ self assessment processes which have been analysed, and beyond that, the engagement with State MDAs will define more accurately the demands on KM support. This will be an iterative process, with KM providing specialist support to refine diagnoses and to help specify intervention plans. The early stages of the KM work plan therefore focussed on assembling capacity and access to specialist resources, and setting up the processes and collaborative mechanisms which will be needed to identify the cases for KM support and engagement.

- Whilst the self assessment process identified opportunities for engagement with a KM agenda, a further refinement and specialist analysis will be needed to confirm the viability and content of any intervention. KM processes depend considerably upon human factors as well as technical. The degree of support, the existence of enthusiastic ‘champions’, the identification of current instances of good practice, the opportunity for demonstrating rapid – even if limited – gains are all important factors for success, and a high priority should be given to such opportunities. The demonstration effect of such early gains can assist subsequent interventions.

- KM interventions inevitably concern themselves with the tools and technologies and processes that can support efficient and effective flows of knowledge, and indeed modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) options can now hold out some extremely attractive prospects for managing knowledge in ways that were impossible until recently. But there are two important caveats:
  - First, any change programmes have to be firmly rooted in the realities. At a broad level, the state of the ‘knowledge economy’ will...
inform the possibilities for technical innovations, and where the constraints will lie. At an organisational level, a real appraisal of its current capacities and ability to change needs to be made before targets can be set and decisions made about technology options.

- Second, even when such choices have been made, experience tells us that the cultural, human, organisational and management aspects are more important factors (than the technology aspects) in determining whether KM strategies can be effectively implemented, and these factors make proportionately higher demands on resources and effort, even in settings where ICT infrastructure and skill levels are high.

- As a consequence, access to ‘softer’ skills of organisation development and change management skills will be as important as ‘harder’ technical skills of ICT and other information and knowledge management technologies. These skills will need to be present within both the KM work stream itself, but also throughout the SPARC Programme teams.

- The implementation of the SPARC Programme will in itself result in strengthened capacity in MDAs. Consideration will also need to be given to whether there needs to be extended capacity development of KM capabilities in States to equip them for the future.

- It will be important to understand the incentives (and disincentives) to reform of KM processes within the state government sector. In many civil service situations, there will be an ingrained reluctance to share information and knowledge, for many reasons; knowledge is seen as proprietary, it is also seen as power; it may cause uncomfortable exposure of performance; and, not least, it may just not be very easy to do. Reform programmes may be able to build in incentive structures for performance management; KM functions should be taken account of in such structures. The demand-side pressures for disclosure of information, perhaps through assemblies and other representative bodies that have a government/civil society interface, may also provide such incentives (adding emphasis to the importance of linkages with SAVI).

- It is also not possible to predict in advance the depth of engagement that will be required from the KM function; at one level it may be restricted to developing KM plans for the state-level work streams; it may equally be required to engage in more depth with specific MDA implementation activities. Again, the strategic response is to assemble a database of capability and expertise (both national and international) that can be deployed in response.

- Whilst the task of embedding ‘basic’ KM processes of information acquisition, storage and sharing into state programmes can be relatively straightforward, the challenge of extracting lessons, that is, information that is likely to be useful and transferrable to other contexts, is a more elusive task. It involves being able to distinguish ‘what we did’ from ‘how we did it’. There will need to be analytical capability resident within the KM work stream team that can exercise a degree of quality control in this area, and to provide direct support and capacity strengthening where required.

- The KM work stream will also develop a set of useful tools and techniques that can be applied to KM diagnosis and implementation. This will include many organisation development tools, to reflect the importance of the organisational culture and capability as the context within which KM programmes are set.

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institutions, rules, and procedures that affect how it acquires, creates, disseminates, and uses knowledge.
Knowledge management and **communications** are tightly interconnected disciplines. Communication functions appear at all levels throughout the SPARC KM strategy as the means by which information and knowledge can be transmitted and shared. There is a strong relationship to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in the choices of the appropriate ways to conduct reporting and the communication of performance improvement. Within this framework, it is envisaged that the character of SPARC's communications work will change over time, moving from 'straightforward' delivery of messages and information to rather more nuanced informing and influencing (advocacy) campaigns. To describe the communications work more fully, and to give more detailed guidance to communications activities, there is a separate Annex setting out the KM communications approach.

The work of the KM work stream will also be guided by the following **general principles**:

- Technical answers will be defined by a realistic appraisal of the situation, particularly the 'knowledge economy' assessment. It will not be a solution-led approach;
- Both explicit and tacit knowledge is utilised to inform SPARC stakeholders, to influence decision makers, to facilitate and leverage change, to promote sustainability and to inform Programme development and implementation within the state;
- SPARC KM strategies should strengthen and support existing Nigerian-owned processes wherever possible;
- The KM work stream will encourage innovation which tests and uses new solutions where conventional approaches cannot offer adequate solutions.
Section Three Knowledge Management Dimensions

This Section describes in outline the strategic KM Dimensions; their content, methodology and working assumptions. The listed outcomes under each Dimension become the output areas for Annual Plans.

Support to Knowledge Management initiatives within the work streams of lead state work programmes

This Dimension is the major focus of KM support. The five lead states have undertaken a process of self assessment using the State Evaluation and Assessment Tool (SEAT) process in the three main work streams:

- **Policy and strategy** (including monitoring and evaluation) – assessing the quality of policy and strategy documents and processes, including the extent to which research and evidence are used to inform policy and strategy decision-making;
- **Public financial management** – assessing the quality of the management of public resources by supporting aggregate fiscal discipline, strategic allocation of resources and efficient service delivery;
- **Public service reform** – assessing the need for public service reform, which encompasses reforms across the *machinery* (policies, rules, procedures, systems, organisational structures, personnel, etc.) funded by the state budget, and the *management* of the whole set of government activities (dealing with the application of laws, regulations and policies of the government and the provision of public services).

During the inception period and first year of implementation the topics for engagement that have emerged include stakeholder information (access to information by state public servants, access to information by the general public, mechanisms for sharing information), using knowledge to inform and influence policy makers, and leading through to informing Programme development and implementation, leveraging change, promoting sustainability, and a focus on how lessons learnt can be shared more widely.

In early 2010, it was decided to decentralise this support from a Programme wide managed Dimension to become integrated within the state portfolio of work. Thus,

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8 In March 2009, the KM strategic plan envisaged four Dimensions as highlighted in the previous section. Whilst these still hold there have been some changes, both in response to the emerging state work programmes, and to recommendations made by DFID reviews. This strategic plan revision describes the proposed activities for each of the four original Dimensions, together with a new, fifth Dimension, and describes how this has changed over the last 18 months.
from August 2010 each state has its own cross-cutting KM Dimension and whilst they vary from state to state in response to specific demands, most of the portfolios include the following outcomes:

- Innovative governance reforms are tracked and lessons captured;
- Central ministries (including Ministries of Information) are supported to create coordinated communication strategies;
- Key messages and awareness raising campaigns are developed (support to public financial management and public service management Dimensions) and a range of products for knowledge and lessons for replication across lead and non lead states are produced;
- Policy digests, statistical digests, manuals/guidelines, development of websites (support to developing policy and strategy and M&E and other Dimensions) are prepared;
- Innovative governance reforms are promoted through short documentaries, case studies and knowledge sharing;
- Emerging "Communities of Practice” are facilitated and provided with mentoring support;
- Increasing value is placed by State governments on SPARC initiatives and successes;
- SPARC successes and experiences are shared freely around the SPARC states, both proactively and in response to requests from partners.

**Enabling wider replication and adoption in non-lead states**

During the inception period and first year of implementation work included documentation of innovations that have been successfully replicated in Nigeria, to identify the key elements required for wider replication and adoption beyond SPARC states, with a view to promoting SPARC reforms, possibly based upon 'commercial' marketing principles. This period also saw the development of tools to capture and disseminate information as relevant to specific states.

To promote replication of successful governance reforms, technical support and capacity strengthening for sharing information across identified state and Federal interfaces will continue. The aim is to ensure an enabling environment for open exchange of knowledge between work streams, lead states, non-lead states and SLPs. Work will also begin to identify the level of demand by non-lead states to access information generated by SPARC.

Outcomes of this Dimension will include:

- Capacity strengthening initiatives for learning and sharing between key identified Federal and state interfaces are supported;
- Policy makers are provided with relevant tailored/packaged information;
- Case studies of successful innovations are analysed, documented and packaged, and successful SPARC processes communicated for wider dissemination;
- Non-lead states become interested in SPARC’s work;
- Other states and SLPs are sharing information and lessons with each other.

**Coordinating with other State Level Programmes**

The design of the four interlocking SLPs represents an innovative approach in a country that has seen many stand alone programmes. Knowledge sharing, including the sharing of best practice, is a critical part of the design of the SLPs. Whilst each of the four programmes will need to focus on how lessons can be shared more widely,
there will also need to be an effort to coordinate knowledge sharing across the programmes. SPARC has identified this as a key concern, and it is therefore treated as a separate Dimension.

Collaboration between the SLPs has been consolidated through the Knowledge Management Working Group (KMWG) to share information on the programmes’ approaches, intranets and websites, to create linkages between the latter and to finalise a Structured Approach Paper (SAP). Terms of Reference (ToRs) have now been adopted for the KMWG.

Each SLP is committed to differential dissemination reflecting the interests, needs, culture, language and accessibility to various media. A key element of the work of this Dimension will be the monitoring of the availability and use of information as a right, to strengthen partnerships, demonstrate transparency, strengthen accountability, enhance planning and contribute to policy development. We will continue to analyse, synthesise and share lessons and approaches across the programmes.

KM work stream outcomes under this Dimension include:

- KM approaches across the SLPs are analysed and synthesised, to include coordination and alignment of strategies, work programmes and identification of joint initiatives;
- SPARC successes and experiences are shared freely around the SLPs, both proactively and in response to requests from partners;
- SLPs share lessons and processes that have led to governance innovations;
- SLPs participate in joint activities at state and Federal levels;
- Common methodologies are developed for research into policy influence (or other relevant themes).

**Knowledge sharing to support the efficient management of SPARC**

Knowledge generation and sharing is fundamental to the success of SPARC itself. KM activities will support the SPARC management and implementation team to access information and promote collaborative working. If successful in this, we will provide lessons and processes that can be adapted by our partners as part of our exit/transfer strategy. By so doing, the Programme will leave behind functioning knowledge management systems, whereby users and suppliers are linked through better information flows – in essence a functioning 'knowledge market'.

Much of the experience that is generated within the SPARC KM work will potentially be of interest to international practitioners and a valuable contribution to KM interventions in a wide range of similar settings. For it to do so, it should be guided by high standards of academic rigour, which would help ensure the quality of the programmes of work, but also ensure that the lessons generated 'stand up' in a wider context.

KM outcomes in support of SPARC performance will include:

- A range of knowledge products and lessons learnt arising out of SPARC's work are produced and are freely available across the Programme;
- A culture of collaborative working, sharing knowledge and learning is promoted in all SPARC offices;
- Communications activities across the Programme are coordinated;
- A database of KM advisory and capacity strengthening resources is maintained;
- A SPARC Intranet is developed and regularly upgraded;
- A SPARC public website is developed and updated;
- All SPARC staff know where to access Programme information;
SPARC’s communicates effectively with DFID;
Case study material on evidence based policy making is assembled and made widely available;
Linkages are formed with the international development community either through participation in selected global networks dedicated to KM in development (for example the World Bank Institute’s Global Development Network) or through alliance with an academic research body.

Knowledge Management support to the Federal component

Following a recommendation in the 2010 OPR, a new Dimension has been created to support the work of the Federal component (Output 4). The key aim of the Federal component of SPARC is to strengthen the Federal Government’s support and incentives to states and will focus on strengthening the interface between Federal and state bodies.

Working with the organisations that have been identified, KM will help them to develop their own KM and communication strategies and plans, and help design tools and capacity strengthening initiatives that will enable them to share information more freely. Through this work the Programme will be able to strengthen existing Nigeria-owned processes and networks, with the ultimate aim of making SPARC lessons and experiences freely available to new audiences.

KM outcomes in support of the Federal component will include:
- A Strategic framework for NGF KM and communication is developed, and a content management system to support the State Peer Review Mechanism is designed and launched;
- MDG countdown strategy is edited and formatted;
- Engagement with key inter-governmental fora increases;
- MDG office is supported to develop its own communication strategy;
- Best practices are identified and promoted;
- MDG office, NGF and other specific institutions come to value key SPARC initiatives and successes.
Section Four Organisation and Management Arrangements

The KM work stream is one of five major work streams in SPARC, yet it operates on a relatively small resource allocation in support of the main technical work streams. Resource allocations are captured in Quarterly Progress Reports submitted to DFID. The KM work stream (together with the M&E work stream) is distinguished from the technical work streams by being a cross-cutting function. There are some important implications for operating in this manner.

The SPARC KM team consists of the Abuja-based KM staff; KM Officers in state offices (who may have a full or part-time responsibility for KM); and a range of consultants and service providers acting in support.

The Abuja-based KM staff are responsible for the overall strategic direction of the work stream, support to the Federal component, promoting lessons to non-lead states, and for the coordination of KM activities across the lead states. The Abuja office is also responsible for developing a KM Communications Strategy and maintaining tools for information sharing (such as the intranet and website).

The state KM Officers are the front line of KM work in the states. They depend upon good working relationships with the state office and technical teams, so that they have a good and up-to-date awareness of what is happening, and can identify significant opportunities for deeper KM involvement.

The KM Officers will have an additional complexity in that they are located and line managed in a state office team, yet functionally accountable to the KM management in Abuja. This situation, a matrix management arrangement, relies upon all parties having a clear understanding of how responsibilities are divided between line and functional management, and it is doubly important when the KM Officer role is only a part of an individual’s portfolio.

All KM staff have detailed job descriptions and/or ToRs and these will be reviewed, assessed and updated on an annual basis.

The KM work stream, like the rest of SPARC, will be delivering its outputs with the help of a number of external consultants working at a range of levels from discrete tasks, to extensive technical inputs, to specialist advisory roles. The quality of the outputs will depend in turn upon the appropriate choice and quality of consultant, and in turn how effectively they are inducted into, and deployed by, the Programme. One of the long-term goals of the SPARC Programme is to leave behind an enhanced capacity within Nigeria for continued improvement to public sector performance. The expansion of the skills and experience of local consultants is clearly a contribution to that goal.
In addition to specialists consultants, the Programme will identify and maintain a databases of specialist services providers (e.g. writers/editors, printers, designers, website designers etc.).

The relationship of the different actors contributing to KM and other work streams in support of national partners is depicted in the diagram below.

During the first year of implementation an intranet (‘the fountain’) and a website were designed and launched. Both these tools are designed to be decentralised and will be updated by all of SPARC’s six offices. Maintenance contracts have been set up with third parties and these will be maintained throughout the course of the Programme. Both systems will be secured by locating information on remote servers, with a regular back-up routine. Documentation and quality assurance of information generated by SPARC is of critical importance and protocols\(^9\) will be established during the inception phase of the Programme. Procedures will be put into place and these will be reviewed and updated throughout the Programme as necessary to ensure standards are maintained and improved.

\(^9\) These are set out in the Programme Manual (section 4a2) and are available on the intranet for all SPARC staff and consultants to access.
Annex One KM Communications Strategy

Above all else, successful communication benefits from the use of clear, consistent messages, designed to gain the attention of specific audiences. It therefore requires coordination, specialist skills, quality control, and the application of disciplined approaches.

Objectives

The objective of the KM Communications Strategy is to set the overall direction for all SPARC communications by:

- Setting communications goals and associated sets of key messages which will support the strategic objectives of the Programme with its various audiences;
- Providing a framework and methodology for analysing, designing and implementing communications activities which support the KM Dimensions;
- Identifying assistance and access to resources for MDA communication activities within the SPARC state work programmes to build on support for reform in key constituencies;
- Maintaining a coherent style and ‘feel’ to all SPARC KM communications outputs, of high quality and consistently applied;
- Developing a set of protocols for external communications which assure the content, direction and approval of external messages;
- Enabling coordination and consistency with other communication strategies (in other SLPs and elsewhere).

Architecture and Methodology

This KM Communications Strategy sets the overall directions for communications work within the KM Strategy. It includes strategic communications goals, key over-arching messages for the Programme, and a classification (segmentation) of the audiences that SPARC will have to target to ensure that its voices and opinions are heard and acted upon.

Deriving from this strategic plan, there will be KM Communications Annual Plans, both for the state and central offices, which will lay out the pathways to be used to deliver the goals set out in the KM Strategy, will propose indicators of performance, and will outline key opportunities and events for communication each year, along with some generic tools for staff to use. The identified opportunities should be used to promote the messages and achieve the goals outlined in this communications strategy.

For each opportunity identified, a short implementation plan will be produced (a KM Communications Activity Implementation Plan for <named opportunity>).
Communications activities will be planned in line with a 4-step methodical approach:

1. Establish purpose: Communications goals and key messages. (What needs to be communicated and why?)
2. Define audiences: Analyse and segment audiences. (To whom?)
3. Implementation: Select appropriate communication products and channels of communication. (How and when?)
4. Monitor results. Have the messages gone home?

Note that opportunities can be either internally generated (for example, by SPARC deciding to launch a report) or can be external events (for example a civil servants’ week) where the audience will be largely predetermined. In either case, the same stepwise approach should be used to plan the communications activities.

**Step 1: Communications Goals and Key Messages**

Communications activities are driven by high-level communications goals, directly linked to the strategic KM Dimensions, and to the broad audience categories implicit in those Dimensions. These have been translated into a number of key messages, developed through consultation within SPARC, and which present a clear, consistent narrative to underpin all communications. (See the table below.)

The goals have been identified as the major thrusts for SPARC’s communications activities, and define what we want to achieve with the communications resources. The high-level communications goals are intended to be relatively durable, but they will be reviewed and refreshed (along with the overall KM Strategy) as required. Increasingly, as the Programme matures, they will incorporate an exit/transfer strategy.

Key messages are short, snappy explanations that gain interest, and open the way for more information and elaboration. For them to be effective, the key messages need to be reiterated repeatedly, weaving them into communications for specific audiences using an appropriate tone, format and language, as well as using channels that the audience trusts.

The messages can and should be used again and again — on the covers of policy briefs, reports and more information-heavy documents, at the bottom of e-mails, etc. Once teams have these messages on the tips of their tongues, and take every opportunity to put them across, they collectively present a clear, consistent narrative which quickly boosts the impact of their communications.

These goals and messages are not all the goals and messages that SPARC staff and offices will communicate as part of their everyday work. Instead, they are broad goals and general messages that have been developed through consultation within SPARC and will be conscientiously and continuously promoted to ensure that SPARC’s limited communication resources have as much of an impact as possible. States will also need to produce their own set of messages specific to their work.
### Architecture: Communications goals and their key messages

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<th>KNM</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Communications goal</th>
<th>Key messages</th>
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| 1   | Support to KM initiatives within lead States | (Lead) state governments come to value key SPARC initiatives and successes. | • SPARC is working with State governments and providing technical expertise to help them to develop better policies.  
• SPARC provides “technical know-how” to help State governments find ways to better manage public finances and improve service delivery.  
• SPARC provides State governments with access to international expertise and processes.  
• SPARC is promoting better understanding of the importance of realistic State budgets to service delivery.  
 SPARC successes and experiences are shared freely around the SPARC states, both proactively and in reaction to requests from partners | • SPARC gathers lessons from other states, and gives you easy access to new tools and better ways of doing things.  
• SPARC staff need to make the effort to actively distribute SPARC’s communications materials to other states and programmes. |
| 2   | Enabling wider replication and adoption in non-lead states | Non-lead states become interested in SPARC’s work. | • States not directly covered by SPARC can still benefit from the Programme’s expertise, tools and proven results.  
• SPARC is committed to sharing information and lessons, and SPARC staff need to ensure that non-lead states know this.  
• If you’re part of a National network, SPARC’s work can help you improve your planning, budgeting and service delivery. |
| 3   | KM coordination with other SLPs | SPARC successes and experiences are shared freely around the SLPs, both proactively and in reaction to requests from partners | • SPARC’s work is highly relevant to the work being done by ESSPIN, PATHS2, SAVI and GEMS, and we’re keen to share any useful information those programmes need. |
| 4   | Knowledge sharing to support the efficient management of SPARC | All SPARC staff know where to access Programme information, and follow a culture of knowledge sharing | • SPARC’s intranet (the Fountain) should be your first port of call for access to documents and other information.  
• SPARC’s website is available in high- and low-bandwidth versions. Staff should encourage people to access the information it provides.  
• Staff are encouraged to present and explain their work to colleagues in other technical streams as often as possible.  
• Cross-stream communication encourages innovation.  
 SPARC’s communication with DFID Nigeria and DFID UK improves and increases support for SPARC’s work | • SPARC is working successfully with key partners in the Nigerian government.  
• Lack of government money is not the problem in Nigeria. SPARC provides the expertise needed to help Nigeria learn how to plan.  
• SPARC is helping different parts of Nigeria’s government talk to each other and exchange new information and ideas.  
• SPARC is developing new tools like the self-assessment process that partners can use to improve governance. |
| 5   | Support to Federal institutions | Federal government (specific institutions?) comes to value key SPARC initiatives and successes. | |
**Step 2: Audience segmentation**

A high-level classification of the different categories of audiences for SPARC reflects the different groups of partners:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUDIENCE</th>
<th>KNM AREA</th>
<th>NEEDS</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Partner states | 1 | ○ Building high level support for reform  
○ Understanding of the SPARC and SLP strategies (step approach etc) within the leadership and civil service  
○ Diffusion of what works across the states  
○ Understanding by external reform actors of SPARC’s aims and the opportunities it creates (through SAVI)  
○ Information to enable accountability of SPARC |
| Other states | 2 and 5 | ○ Communication of the benefits of reform  
○ Transmission of knowledge on what works  
○ Support to implementation of reform packages (within limits)  
○ Information to support to external reform actors (through SAVI and with tight targeting) |
| Other SLPs | 3 | ○ The enabling of coordination and synergy between approaches and work streams  
○ Access to knowledge on what works and can support those practices  
○ Understand progress across streams towards the steps. |
| DFID (Nigeria and external) | 4 | ○ Information to enable accountability of SPARC  
○ Appropriate information to support DFID communication requirements |
| Federal Govt | 5 | ○ Information to enable coordination and synergy with Federal reform programmes  
○ Knowledge on what works to satisfy its plans to support states  
○ Information to enable accountability of SPARC |
| SPARC (Abuja Mgmt, SPMs, PDG, Consultants and M&E) | 4 | ○ Coordination of work streams and identification of synergies  
○ Processes/guidance/formats to streamline communication within SPARC  
○ Information on what works  
○ Identification of inputs to implement what works  
○ Understanding progress across streams towards the steps. |
| International community | 4 | ○ Share lessons with other KM practitioners  
○ Contribute to development community more generally |
Within these broad areas, more closely defined audience groupings can be identified for specific purposes. Equally, audience segmentation can be conducted along different lines; for example by geography or by professional category. The tailoring of messages and the choice of communications channel will be determined by the audience type.

For some critical external audience segments (for example senior policy makers or government members) a sign-off process will be put in place to approve communications directed at them.

Note that internal audiences (SPARC staff) are included in this analysis reflecting the fact that they also deserve clear and consistent communication, and the same approaches and disciplines should be used equally for internal communications material as for external. Indeed, communication outputs often begin as internal material before they are directed to external audiences.

Step 3: Implementation

- For each key opportunity identified (such as an important meeting), the Knowledge Management team will then help in the production of a short Implementation Plan. This will set out who will lead on this work, when planning and work will begin, and what audience segments are to be targeted and what media to use to ensure that the messages are appropriately tailored.

- **Choice of media** channels. Communications can make use of all available media; documentation, print media, broadcast media, electronic media (web, web 2.0, mobile communications). Whilst each has its own characteristics (and requires specialist skills), it is important to maintain an integrated approach and to ensure consistency of messages. (A politician will read newspapers as well as policy briefs!)

- Communications initiatives need to be **audience-driven**, and arrangements will be necessary to sample opinion before designing proposed communications initiatives, and to sample and assess their effectiveness in practice. For example, communications work to provide tools and campaigns to influence policy makers in SPARC states would, at the very least, need to be based on focus groups with Nigerian staff to identify what they feel would be effective drivers of change.

- Appropriate **staff members** should be selected to lead or front specific communications activities. They should be the people who are well-matched to the audiences in question, be enthusiastic communicators or ‘champions’ of the issue as well as having direct knowledge of the subject matter.

It is important to note that this KM Communications Strategy does not just help in the advance planning of forseen events; it is also an important tool for the reactive communications that make up a large part of everyday communication – responding to internal SPARC requests, requests for information from state government partners, other programmes and consultants, as well as writing briefs and so on.

You should familiarise yourself with the contents of the plan so that when you are asked to provide information or communicate in some way, you can feed back the general messages contained here as well as your own state-specific messages. This will help you weave clear and consistent messages into all these kinds of communications. Reiterating and reinforcing these messages will have a strong cumulative effect when informing and influencing key individuals.

Step 4: Monitoring and Evaluation

It is important to measure the effectiveness of any communication activity in order to judge whether it has reached the right audiences, whether the messages have been absorbed, and ultimately whether they have had the anticipated impact. Communication, especially to mass audiences, can be expensive, and so it is also
important to measure value for money. Given the wide range of communications channels and audiences, the appropriate choice of monitoring method can vary widely; from simple feedback questionnaires to large market surveys. In some cases specialist help will be needed to conduct the studies.