Knowledge Management for Development: Domains, Strategies and Technologies for Developing Countries: Volume 35 of Integrated Series in Information Systems

by Kweku-Muata Osei-Bryson, Gunjan Mansingh, Lila Rao

Knowledge management developed from the philosophy of researchers and innovators such as Peter Drucker in the 1970s, Karl-Erik Sveiby in the late 1980s and Nonaka and Takeuchi in the 1990s. During that time, economic, social and technological changes were renovating the way companies worked. Globalization emerged and brought new prospects and amplified competition. Companies reacted by downsizing, merging, acquiring, reengineering and outsourcing. Many modernized their workforce and increased their productivity by using advances in computer and network technology. However, their accomplishments in doing so came with a price. Many lost company knowledge as they grew smaller. And many lost company knowledge as they grew bigger – they no longer "knew what they knew".

By the early 1990s, a growing body of academics and consultants were talking about knowledge management as "the" new business practice, and it began to appear in more and more business journals and on conference agendas. By the mid-1990s, it became extensively acknowledged that the competitive advantage of some of the world's leading companies was being carved out from those companies' knowledge assets, such as competencies, customer relationships and innovations. Managing knowledge, therefore, suddenly became a mainstream business objective, as other companies sought to follow the market leaders.

Many of these companies took the approach of implementing "knowledge management solutions", concentrating almost entirely on knowledge management technologies. However, they met with partial success and so questions began to be asked about whether knowledge management wasn't simply another fad that looked great on paper, but in reality did not deliver. Today, we know that it was not a fad and the importance of effective knowledge management is critical for organizational success and, indirectly, national success. In short, knowledge management programs can yield impressive benefits to individuals and organizations if they are purposeful, concrete and action-oriented.

This backdrop, together with the fact that today's world is getting increasingly digital, makes this book a must-read for anyone who is dealing with information. In today's world, data are readily available and the challenge is to convert these data into information and information into knowledge, to facilitate efficient decision-making. The better an organization can do that, the more sustainable it will be. Therefore, it is critical for developing countries to build knowledge management capabilities. This is where this book can be very helpful.

Knowledge management in developing countries is in its infancy and as we explore how information and communication technologies and knowledge management can be used for development, this book facilitates our exploration by using interesting case examples; we can

benefit from the insights, provided in the case studies, on strategies and technologies relevant to several sectors, including health care, agriculture and education. This book can help us in successful knowledge management implementation which may result in fewer mistakes, less redundancy, quicker problem-solving, better decision-making, reduced research development costs, increased worker independence, enhanced customer and stakeholder relations, improved services, enhanced decision-making and organizational productivity.

The book uses various interesting cases from Africa, Jamaica, India and Indonesia to help the readers in developing a good understanding of how knowledge management systems are applied in developing countries. What I particularly liked in this book was its clarity in suggesting how many of the developing countries have similar problems that have affected their growth; if we can address those highlighted issues, we can see huge economic development. This book can help us in identifying, what knowledge management initiatives are possible, how they can improve our economic conditions and what is needed to implement them. This book also highlights the opportunities in various sectors and provides suggestions as to how any developing nation should go about understanding, building and adopting the relevant knowledge management strategies and technologies.

This book contains the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Understanding and Applying Knowledge Management and Knowledge Management Systems in Developing Countries: Some Conceptual Foundations.
*Author*s: Kweku-Muata Osei-Bryson, Gungan Mansingh and Lila Rao.
Chapter 2: Towards a Community-Centered Knowledge Management Architecture for Disaster Management in Sub-Saharan Africa.
Authors: Babajide Osatuyi and Francis Kofi Andoh-Baidoo.
Chapter 3: Managing Expert Knowledge to Assist in the Management of Coffee Pests and Diseases in Jamaica.
Authors: Gunjan Mansingh, Han Reichgelt and Kweku-Muata Osei-Bryson.
Chapter 4: Implementation of a Multi-Agent Supervisory System for an Agricultural Products Sourcing Network.
Authors: Virgilio Lopez-Morales and Yacine Ouzrout.
Chapter 5: Progressive Usage of Business and Spatial Intelligence for Decision Support in the Delivery of Educational Services in Developing Countries.
Author: Patricia E. Nalwoga Lutu.
Chapter 6: Migrating MIS to KMS: A Case of Social Welfare Systems.
Authors: Ricardo Anderson and Gunjan Mansingh.
Chapter 7: Addressing a Knowledge Externality Schism in Public Policy in the English Speaking Caribbean.
Author: Koen Rossel-Cambier.
Chapter 8: A Methodology for Developing High Quality Ontologies for Knowledge Management.
Authors: Lila Rao, Han Reichgelt and Kweku-Muata Osei-Bryson.
Chapter 9: The Role of Ontologies in Developing Knowledge Technologies.
Authors: Gunjan Mansingh and Lila Rao.
Chapter 10: Knowledge Sharing in Repository-Based KM Systems: A Study in the IT Services Enterprises in India.
Authors: Rajendra K. Bandi and Vikas Mehra.
Chapter 11: Ability to Share Knowledge of Doctors in Teaching Hospital in Indonesia.
Authors: Oktri Mohammad Firdaus, Kadarsah Suryadi, Rajesri Govindaraju and T.M.A. Ari Samadhi.

Chapter 12: Knowledge Sharing in the Health Sector in Jamaica: The Barriers and the Enablers.
Authors: Gunjan Mansingh, Kweku-Muata Osei-Bryson and Han Reichgelt.
Chapter 13: The Ulwazi Programme: A Case Study in Community-Focused Indigenous Knowledge Management.
Author: Niall McNulty.
Chapter 14: Knowledge Management for Programs on Information and Communications Technologies for Development (ICT4D) in South Africa.
Author: Sue Conger.

The quality of the contribution this book makes is remarkable and is as beneficial for practitioners as for students, academics and organizations working on managing knowledge in developing countries.

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