

Asia Pacific Rights and Justice Initiative (AP-A2J)



**Community of Practice Learning and Training
Workshop
Colombo, 23-26 January 2006**

Presentation Overview

- AP-A2J Background and Achievements
- AP-A2J Lessons Learned
- Facilitator's Role and Challenges
- Thoughts for Future Development



AP-A2J – BACKGROUND



Development Problem:

- Justice sector reform projects not sufficiently linked to poverty reduction an HRBA based
- UNDP supports Govt. in many countries, but not sufficient exchange of knowledge

UNDP Response:

- 1. Community of practitioners as organizational approach**
 - “Scan globally – reinvent locally” (Stiglitz): systematic screening and “deconstruction” of project experiences
 - Knowledge codification – “by practitioners for practitioners”
- 2. Human Rights-based approach to justice reform**
 - Human rights standards and principles as guidance for strategic pro-poor and pro- vulnerable group interventions



AP-A2J Timeline (August 2002- Now)

- AP-A2J can be divided into six distinct stages since its launch in August 2002:
- the preparatory stage;
- the visioning workshop (April 2003);
- the research and compilation phase;
- the 2nd(validation) workshop (November. 2003);
- the codification and tool development phase ;
- the sharing and partnering phase

Preparatory Phase

- a methodology for a time bound, results-based network on HRBA and access to justice was identified through a small number of committed practitioners (see AP-A2J process note);
- a network and webpage was set up;
- network members were engaged in relatively “time-light” activities (such as the sharing of existing documents);
- a management structure was established.
- a full-time facilitator was (recognizing that meaningful knowledge codification was much more time consuming than expected)



Visioning Workshop- April 2003 Katmandu

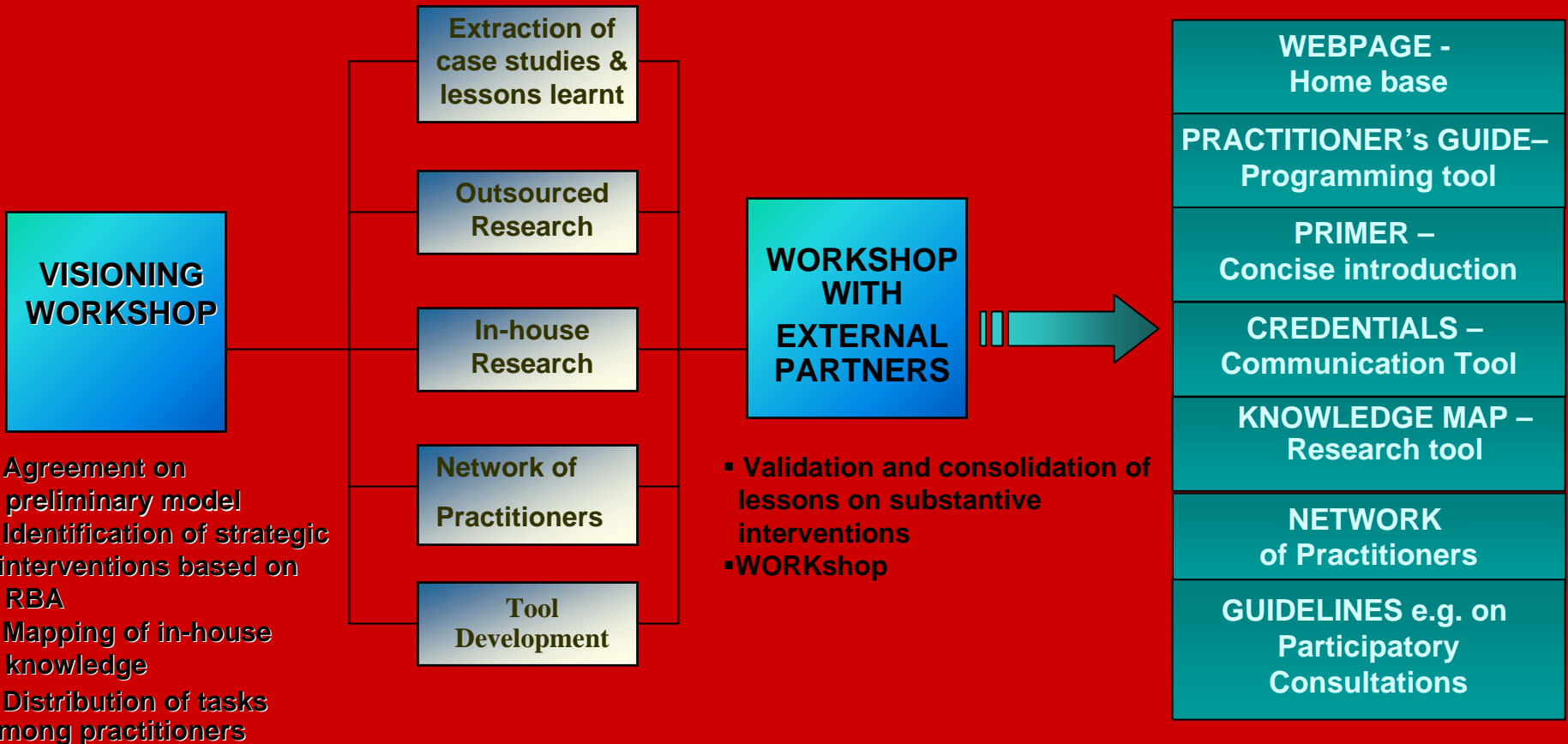
- With the facilitation of the Kathmandu and Bangkok SURFs, practitioners from a **core group** of 11 country offices defined knowledge needs;
- Set the substantive scope of the access to justice framework and established a work plan for practice development;
- Screened the general field of access to justice and identified the areas where lessons could be and needed to be extracted;
- Mapped UNDP's activities in this regard;
- Committed to provide specific lessons depending on each country's experience;



Research and Compilation Phase April- October 2003

Process

Results



EVOLUTION OF SUBSTANTIVE UNDERSTANDING (LEARNING)

The Second Validation Workshop – Sri Lanka - November 2003



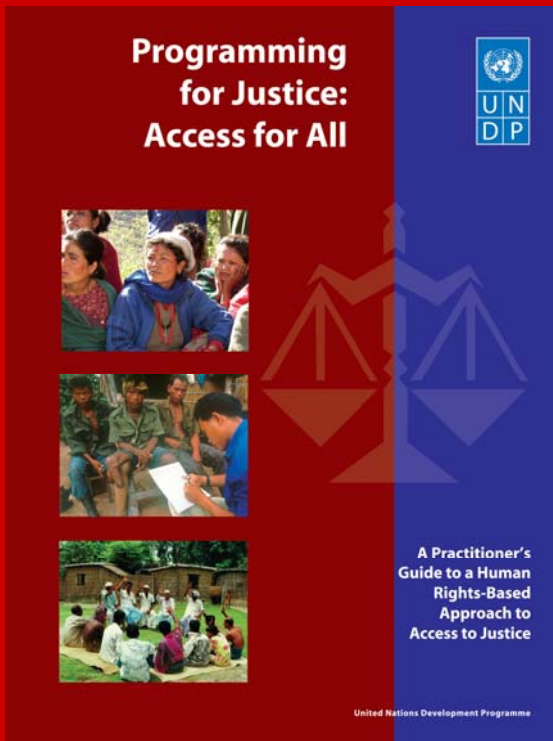
- Attended by 15 COs and 17 external partners;
- Objectives: (a) Discuss and validate the lessons compiled in the meantime (gave a focus and timeline to the initiative);
(b) to serve as a learning event in areas of limited in-house expertise;
- Lessons: CO case studies, outsourced studies and in-house research;

Codification and Tool Development (Launch September 2005)

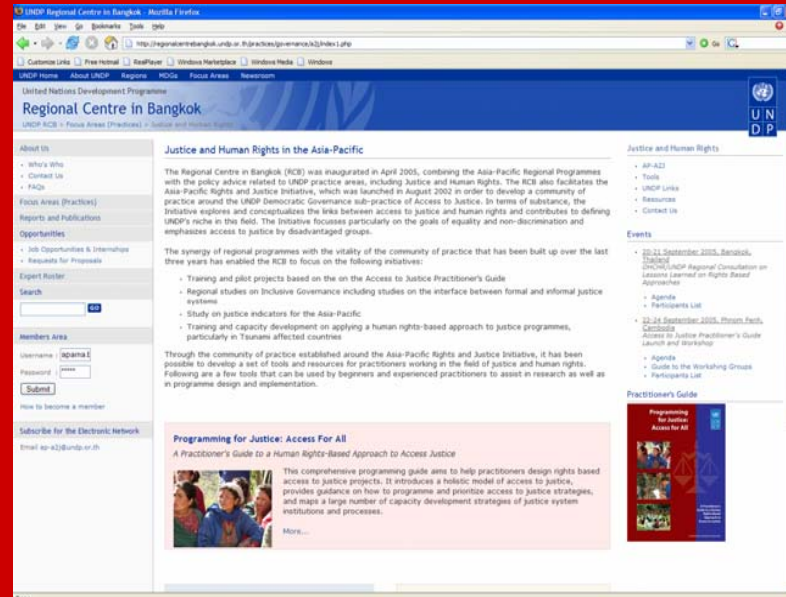


- Distillation and packaging of the plethora of identified lessons into a selected number of tools;
- Goal: to make the various experiences transferable for better and more targeted programming;
- Note: Tool development occurred throughout the initiative. While some tools are necessary to gather lessons and collect information, phase 5 concentrated on knowledge codification tools;

Tools:



The Practitioner's Guide



Website



Guidelines & Background Papers, Case Studies

AP-A2J Today: Sharing and Partnering



- Main knowledge tools-outputs achieved;
- Guide and website launched in September 2005;
- In workshop with 18 AP country offices, HQ, Bratislava, and external partners to promote knowledge of UNDP A2J initiative and foster partnerships;
- COs have started pilot projects and studies on a2j following this methodology: (Afghanistan), Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam;
- AP-A2J + tools presented in other fora e.g. Asia Pacific Judicial Reform Network;
- Linkages being made to regional and national institutions;
- Issues to consider: sustainability, resources needed, institutional support, how to maintain interest of COs counterparts; CoP v. CoI; relationship with regional programming and other regional initiatives or sub regional initiatives;

AP-A2J CoP Results



- Knowledge codification and production of tools tailored to UNDP's needs;
- Capacity development of UNDP practitioners;
- Increased staff satisfaction and motivation;
- Global policy development and credibility and visibility of UNDP in HRBA-A2J- Justice Reform;
- Organizational learning in terms of operationalizing a regional bottom-up practice approach

OUTPUTS

OUTCOMES

IMPACT

Community of 25 practitioners from 18 COs participating in:

- workshops
- Extraction of lessons learned
- tool development
- MSIs

Tools (Developed So Far):

- Case study guidelines
- Guidelines for participatory consultations
- Primer on a HRBA
- Practitioners' Guide + Website

Codification of lessons learned

Reports and presentations for dissemination of knowledge

Contributions to global discussions: A2J, A2I, Development effectiveness

POLICY ALIGNMENT:

- increased number of UNDP Cos applying an “HRBA/A2J” framework (e.g. Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Bangladesh)
- increased number of UNDP justice programmes including civil society and targeting disadvantaged groups

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:

- increased capacity of COs to understand the practical implications of a HRBA and to programme on A2J
- Strengthened networking and knowledge exchange among COs and COs and partners;
- Increased Satisfaction and motivation

GLOBAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT:

- Strengthened UNDP knowledge and tools on HRBA and definition of an “A2J” model for UNDP
- Organizational learning in terms of operationalizing a regional bottom-up

Helped UNDP to move consistently into new areas that were also pioneer reforms at the national level (e.g. Police reform, traditional justice systems)

Helped UNDP gain credibility and visibility at national, regional and global level in HRBA, Access to Justice and Justice Reform



AP-A2J Members

- **A “community of practitioners” to guide and produce the knowledge in AP-A2J Initiative;**
- **Initially mainly UNDP CO practitioners from Asia Pacific.**
- **Presently involving approximately over 30 UNDP staff from 18 Country Offices in the region, and supported by an electronic network of more than 100 members globally (partners, Other UN agencies, HQ, other network facilitators, other UNDP regional centres). Membership can be requested through web site;**
- **This approach significantly influenced the quality and type of results of the initiative (closely knitted CoP, Trust, workshop and facilitation style etc.)**
- **One of the outputs outlined in the visioning workshop was an expansion of the CoP to relevant institutions, academia and civil society outside of UNDP Cos;**
- **Currently plan to outsource CoP to regional institution for sustainability being considered**

Building a Community of Practice





Lessons Learned by AP-A2J

- Results-oriented communities of practice are a powerful approach to knowledge development;
- *Relevant* (i.e. applied) knowledge is difficult to find and develop;
- Practice building is more resource-intensive than anticipated time and resources: e.g. AP-A2J a significant undertaking in both human (total of 3 and a half years) and financial resource terms (USD 570,000 approx.) by September 2005;
- Funding is necessary, but not always from the beginning;

Lessons Learned (Cntd.)

- Sub-practice as unit of analysis is useful;
- Results-oriented regional networks can complement the global networks;
- Results-oriented networks need a clear conceptual framework;
- Strong dedicated facilitation is needed (It is unrealistic to expect that the facilitation of a complex process such as AP-A2J (especially if the outputs include the production of distilled tools) can be done as a side job.



Lessons Learned (Cntd.)

- Human to human bonding is important for a thriving CoP (Trust building)
- Ownership is necessary (facilitation rather than expert approach)
- Knowledge development needs a delivery mechanism (e.g. practitioners- Knowledge is shared not shelved);
- Knowledge needs need to be assessed before codifying ((a) define what knowledge is needed, b) to identify whether it is available within the organisation, c) to identify how it can be provided);
- Knowledge codification should take into account external lessons



Lessons Learned (Cntd.)

- Not only experts can contribute;
- Substantive capacity needs to be complemented by other skills (e.g. facilitation, presentation and general communication skills);
- Research support is necessary. Research support needs should be realistically assessed from the beginning and ideally be provided throughout the process;
- In several cases AP-A2J offered short fellowships to practitioners, during which they visited the SURF and conducted research on specific topics under close guidance (under MSI modality). With very positive results. COs practitioners felt more involvement and ownership and had a plunge into substance and the practitioners provided critical research inputs for the Initiative;
- Technical support with updates to the website is also necessary

SUB-PRACTICE PROCESS COMPONENTS

KEY LESSONS LEARNED FROM A2J

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUB-PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT¹

Idea Conception and Formulation

A strategy should be developed by and for the practitioners, bottom-up and rights-based.
A conceptual framework is important for ensuring a common understanding and guiding practitioners

Organisation Facilitation and Leadership

A full term task facilitator is highly desirable, and should be a UNDP practitioner.
SURF has played a key role in facilitation.
Tasks should be voluntarily delineated between members.
The conceptual framework was very useful for organisation
Support from senior management is often sub-optimal

Knowledge Acquisition Dissemination

Knowledge acquisition and generation should be codified in adequate and effective development tools.
A clear conceptual framework articulated the knowledge needed, how this would be generated and disseminated & why.
When and how external experts are incorporated should not undermine the ownership of the initiative or possibilities for generating knowledge internally.
MSI important for generating knowledge internally (SURF).

Participation

Core group are field officers, partnership are useful for identifying complimentary activities.
Momentum for participation and success is dependent on periodic face-to-face activities.

Monitoring

External partners should be used for monitoring.
It is useful for the process and results to be monitored as they are inter-linked.

Impact

At this stage its only possible to measure the acquisition of knowledge and only limited applications of this knowledge.
Impact needs to be measured on individual, country, and regional level, internal to UNDP and development t outcomes

- Ensure a bottom-up approach
- Identify limited tangible, realistic core outputs.
- Establish the CoP around a Conceptual Framework
- Ensure that practitioners are pre-disposed to learning and practice development.
- Effective coordination and facilitation demands time and capacity, of a key individual.
- Promote *strategic* incorporation of external partners
- Promote face to face knowledge sharing activities
- Be aware of institutional and organisational constraints
- Ensure that SURFs have mandate to continue vital work supporting sub-practices.

Lessons from Electronic Network

Participation in the e-network is not always regular:

- **Not sufficient incentives for sustained contributions – management support from COs, learning opportunities, availability of time to contribute to networks**
- **The Network was used as a feedback and communication mechanism, but did not have a constant agenda to discuss specific topics (workshops were used instead). The discussions that were successful centred around specific outputs – case studies, chapters of the Practitioner’s Guide**
- **Although electronic discussions formed an original part in the work plan, facilitators were always burdened with other tasks;**
- **Lesson: e-networks may be efficient for queries and dissemination of information, but are possibly not adequate for the production of knowledge. For this purpose it may be better to use very small virtual teams or workshops backed up by strong incentives. The larger network was more successful in sharing and disseminating information.**

Facilitation and Management of AP-A2J



- Active facilitation was needed to ensure participation of COs and output based CoP (dedicated full time facilitator until August 2005);
- It is unrealistic to expect that the facilitation of an output oriented CoP can be done as a side job. Need strong support from Manager/ Policy advisor and a full time facilitator that has (a) relevant experience within UNDP, particularly in the field, and (b) a thorough understanding about the substance;
- In the distillation and compilation phase the facilitator will likely to be overburdened, because knowledge codification and sharing is often an activity on top of all other activities by CO practioners. Need to actively facilitate and build ownership and incentives (capacity development, face to face interactions, acknowledgements, MSIs, involvement of CO and regional Management etc);

Facilitation and Management of AP-A2J (Ctnd)



- Amount of time needed to facilitate meaningfully + work on workshops, tools etc always underestimated so electronic network exchanges have been variable in quantity and quality;
- Currently Regional Centre Bangkok in charge of network;
- Positive to have funds through Regional Programme;
- However, harder to develop necessary understanding of time needed for management and facilitation of the initiative as full time job
- Also necessary to ensure understanding by management of the importance of knowledge development and codification along with the delivery of regional programme output
- In light of expansion: different to facilitate an Output based CoP than a Community of Interest – necessary to brainstorm on how to move forward with a larger network

AP-A2J Issues to Consider for the Future:



- Sustainability and resource needed (outsourcing, partnering with institutions);
- Institutional Support and “Space”;
- Knowledge Building vs. Information Sharing (Col);
- How to maintain interest of COs counterparts when network expands (lesson is that a network of a limited number of practitioners that know each other increases the likelihood of individual contributions, especially if these contributions are significant in terms of time investment);
- Relationship with regional programming and other regional initiatives;
- Use of IT solutions to engage (text updates through wikipedia style contributions; blogs etc.);

Conclusion

- Practice development works (tailored and relevant tools and capacity to apply knowledge);
- It is a complex and time-consuming process;
- A practice approach is critical to ensure that knowledge produced is “shared” rather than “shelved”.



<http://regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th/practices/governance/a2j>

Thank you!

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