

PROGRESS REPORT - Re-Igniting Online Communities at UNICEF

Report Goal. This report provides leadership with information from ten months of work specific to online communities and social collaboration that has been in-progress since January 2016. It should serve as a detailed supplement to other reports that are focused on the macro-issue of the UNICEF Digital Workplace.

Introduction. In January 2016, the UNICEF Knowledge Exchange (KE) team's Community Manager, Paola Storchi, and Corporate Social Strategist, Carrie Basham Young, began a concerted effort to first assess and then revitalize online communities with human-centric, storytelling-based practices across the entire network. Paola and Carrie saw a strategic opportunity to foster "community management" – e.g. the art and science of promoting strategic, thoughtful, engaging, goal-based participation inside a designated online space – within UNICEF's online forums. A strategy was required to 1) illustrate that online communities were valuable and 2) discover and employ a strategy for re-igniting online collaboration. Therefore, the team focused on identifying high-functioning informal networks of colleagues to help them shift existing collaborative behaviours (emails, phone calls, Skype messages, etc.) into the Yammer online community. The goal of this effort was to create a tangible model of successful collaboration where dialogue-based, living knowledge exchanges were valuable, appropriate and encouraged. The team hypothesized that by demonstrating successful online communities to UNICEF staff and leadership, more people would voluntarily participate.

Strategic Interventions, Education Activities, and Consultations. The most important activities undertaken by the KE Community Management team are listed below:

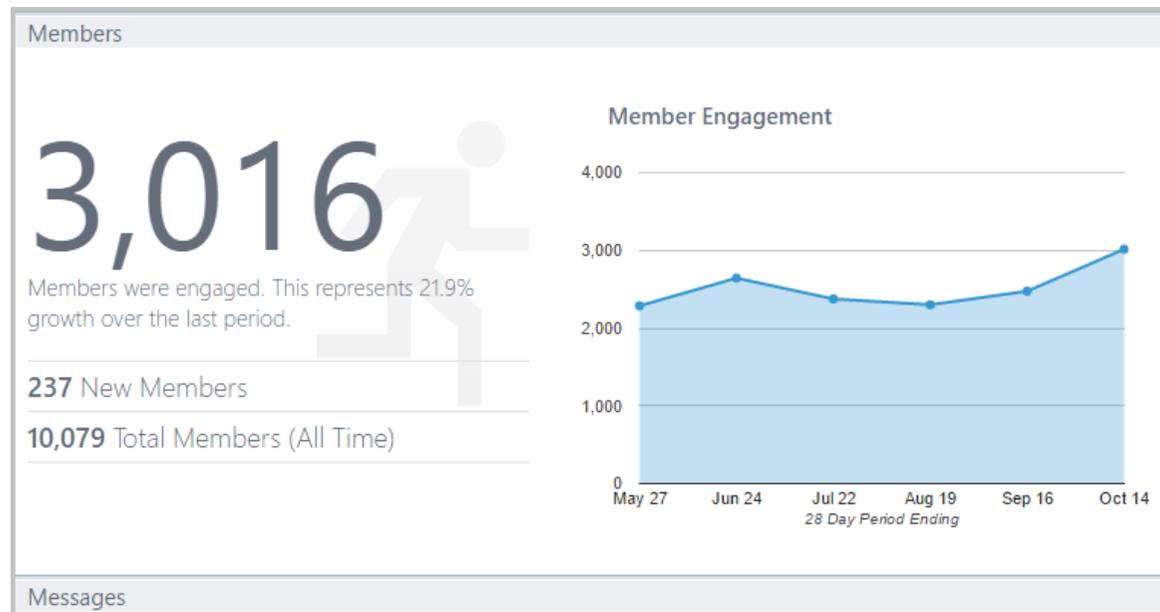
- **Personalized Educational Support and Consultations with Key Teams.** The KE team organized a series of monthly interactive webinars, more than 50 one-on-one Skype Calls, and three face-to face workshops in New York (February, May, July 2016) with key functional groups including WASH in Schools, inSight, Digital Labs, Climate Change, 70th Anniversary, Social Inclusion and others, to help bring their collaborative efforts online. Personalized consultations were provided to each of these groups (and others) to support facilitating the integration of Yammer (and, in some cases, SharePoint sites) into the specific daily workflows and communication programs for these established networks.
<https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/Communities/SitePages/Storytelling%20and%20Working%20Out%20Workshops.aspx>
- **Re-Branding with Simplicity – Crafting the "BUILD" Concept for Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration.** UNICEF staff reported being confused with the myriad tools available for collaboration at UNICEF. The problem was addressed by creating a more intuitive explanation of the distinct purposes for using Yammer, SharePoint, and the intranet. The KE team launched the "[BUILD](#)" program - an acronym encompassing all of these simplified building blocks of collaboration at UNICEF: B (illboard) UI (User Intent) L (ibrary) D (ialogue). Each of these building blocks helps staff store and share information depending on their audience and the level of interaction they expect - from documenting formal reports to encouraging "living knowledge" exchange. The letters U and I in the center of BUILD – quite literally "you and I" – remind group leaders to think about the user experience and the human relationships that glue their community together. Community-building training materials and online assets were rebranded with the BUILD visual identity and premise to focus on people first and technology second.

- A dedicated BUILD team site was developed and populated with resources to support communities. <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/Communities/SitePages/Home.aspx>
 - Specific KM and community support was given to WCARO, ESARO, Nepal, and Peru via focused webinars and community guidance <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/Communities/Shared%20Documents/Online%20Communities%20Guide%20Slidedoc.pdf>
 - Guidance on WHY use Yammer at UNICEF was crafted. <https://www.yammer.com/unicef.org/#/files/63044819>
- **90-Day Plans.** KE Community Managers directly engaged eight key communities/networks and their leaders to develop a 90-day plans to map out business value and community management activities to ensure alignment with short and long term strategic objectives. Each plan included member outreach tasks, core group participation expectations, methods for creating content, and topics for discussion, as well as the resources and actions required to build a vibrant community. <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/Communities/SitePages/Create%20your%20Community.aspx>
- **Network Clean Up.** The Yammer network required significant clean-up efforts to remove redundancy (clutter) that had been created over eight years. Nearly 450 groups had been created, yet less than one third of them were active by 2016; the result was that search results often produced inactive, duplicative or unmanaged groups. The team began a process of deleting more than 114 fully inactive groups after a notice period to users. An additional 100 + groups began a process of evaluation to determine next steps. The team also combined topic-based groups, merging eight groups about “collaboration” with each other and merging nearly 20 other Human Resources, ITCD and Operational groups together. The result is a simpler, better curated, and more valuable community that offers both higher quality content and more visibility to greater audiences. Additionally, all groups that were merged together were assigned community managers to ensure their active management. <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/Communities/Shared%20Documents/Roadmap%20-%20Reigniting%20the%20KEx%20-%20April%20Workshop%20Presentation.pptx>
- **Welcome Campaign.** As the team worked to mobilize Yammer community champions, one dozen volunteers received web-based training in effective ways to greet new Yammer members (who were identified in the “All Company” feed with the system-generated hashtag “#joined” upon account creation.) Champions provided personalized welcome messages and recommendations for content and relevant groups to all new users. However, unexpected changes to Yammer’s cloud-based software abruptly halted this program when Yammer removed the “#joined” hashtag feature in Spring 2016, in the middle of new member greeting campaign efforts. <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/teams/Communities/Shared%20Documents/Yammer%20Monthly%20Introduction%20Deck.pptx>

- **Measure Community/Network Impact - Develop 8 case Studies.** Social network expert Patti Anklam was hired in late July 2016 and has been developing a series of case studies that illustrate how communities contribute to UNICEF's work and good practices. To date, Patti has conducted 30 interviews with a select set of KM and community managers to explore the content in the Yammer groups and UNICEF intranet that represents the community knowledge – documents, meeting notices, and, most importantly, conversations. Community managers provide context for the community, its purpose and goals, and then connect Patti to community members who talk about how the community supports their daily work. The first two case studies will be available mid-October, and are focused on CATS Connect and Social Inclusion and Policy. These communities can serve as a model for building a global network of people who share a common mission and who actively share example project documents, so they can quickly build off what others are doing. Other networks being researched include Greening and Climate Change for Children, Digital Labs, Resources Mobilization, WASH in Schools, and inSight, Vision, and GSSC, and possibly innovation and design thinking.
- **Implement Global Survey on Community Building.** The team designed and conducted a survey to understand how it can best support communities of employees and experts that work together and communicate regularly on behalf of UNICEF. More than 700 people have responded to the survey so far. The global analysis will be made available by mid-November 2016.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/summary/Zrdmit46TTD04ni9aYAkZ_2Bgk02zMmWLHOwfK9sfD6x7JID3DBfhFjdQcdC7ZSxyM

Early Learnings, Results and Value. Several positive changes, both quantitative and qualitative, were noted in the UNICEF Yammer network during the months of February through October 2016:

- In January 2016, just over 1,000 users were engaged. By June, 2,656 users were engaged, representing an engagement rate of 28% of all UNICEF staff—more than double the rate from the beginning of the year. By October, 3,016 users were engaged, nearly tripling the rate of engagement due to effective community management activities.



- Nearly 1,000 inactive user accounts were identified during the spring, and more than 114 groups were deleted from Yammer, providing the opportunity to target re-engagement campaigns and remove unused accounts.
- At least 100 new users joined the network each month, with a high of 275 new members during the period of May 27 - June 24, 2016.
- Dozens of users volunteered their time to learn about community management and use cases for Yammer via web-based training, and about two dozen volunteered to re-engage groups around the topics of Innovation, Child Protection, Human Resources and ITCD Tools.
- The UNICEF Urban practice group, the UNICEF 70th Anniversary Campaign and the Results Based Management Network decided to expand their community availability to alumni, partners and supporters with a larger Yammer external groups/networks.
<https://www.yammer.com/resultsbasedmanagement/#/home>
- UNICEF ITSS staff built a Yammer dashboard via the Yammer API to provide self-service data extraction capabilities for more refined and targeted engagement campaigns; group leaders were given the opportunity to engage their group members via email with key content and information.
- Senior leadership praised the reported uptick in value based on anecdotal evidence, signalling the opportunity for deeper engagement with them in the future.

Community vs. Collaboration – a Key Difference. The results, interviews, and conversations from the past ten months identified a critical difference between the concepts of collaboration and community. At UNICEF, we must separate the two as we provide tools and programs to our users.

- Collaboration: When people work together on a document, to coordinate a project, to exchange formal learnings, and to conduct business.
- Community: When people network with each other, build relationships, share ideas and informal questions, and learn how to be a part of the greater UNICEF picture.

There is no single tool that allows UNICEF to facilitate both of these effectively, and therefore we must experiment with a variety of tools and methodologies that allow us to achieve both.

Current Steps – Our Activities through December 2016 Based on Learnings Thus Far.

Align Yammer Groups to the UNICEF Focus Areas. Yammer will serve as an ongoing collaboration vehicle for specific thematic, programmatic and operational areas of UNICEF. The team will work with key leaders and knowledge specialists to condense the network from several hundred groups into a few dozen highly targeted and official thematic groups. The goal of this program is to build a single online destination where “living knowledge” and explicit knowledge around officially sponsored topics can coexist, validating the importance of all types of knowledge.

Evolve Community Management Practices with Technology. As Yammer continues to be absorbed into Microsoft’s Office 365 product, UNICEF is exploring the option of deploying additional Office 365 features that will coexist with Yammer. Teams will continue to adopt their own tools for unique needs. The Community Management team will create best practices for harnessing a community and managing “living knowledge” that transcends particular tools, giving all knowledge workers the chance to embrace what works for them while ensuring knowledge transfer to other parts of the organization.

Pilot “Workplace” at UNICEF. As an innovative project, the Community Management team has initiated a relationship with Facebook and is piloting the newly launched online platform for business to create a “safe space” for sharing “living knowledge.” The intent is to pilot Workplace around specific priority areas at UNICEF. The team will continue to review Workplace and other modern tools not currently in use at UNICEF that offer simplicity and visual appeal, as well as individual and group messaging and call/video/streaming capabilities. At the same time, any new tool deployed will be coupled with a fresh and powerful community management program that focuses on shared business goals and individual value.

Co-author and present Harnessing the Power of “Living Knowledge” at UNICEF: “A Journey of Becoming a Networked Organization through Social Technology and Community Management” paper at the 8th International Conference on Innovation and Knowledge Management in Asia Pacific (IKMAP), Kobe, 23-24 October 2016. <https://ikmap2016.com/>

Recommendation for the Future of Successful Online Communities

UNICEF has the opportunity to better connect its staff and experts across the globe by providing simple, friendly means of communication and networking. Because most information at UNICEF lives in documents and presentations, it is imperative that a dedicated team of knowledge specialists and community managers help foster conversation – in addition to collaboration – to strengthen peoples' ability to find what they need to make an impact with their jobs. Technology alone cannot solve this challenge. Here are our recommendations after nearly a year of work solving the challenges of community at UNICEF:

- **Know and Understand that Technology is Changing Rapidly.** In 2016, the technology available to organizations worldwide for collaboration and communities changed dramatically. Microsoft, Salesforce, VMware and Facebook, along with Silicon Valley start-ups like Slack changed their products and marketing dramatically. The result was a proliferation of tools inside companies all over the globe and confusion about what to use, when and how. A focus on technology rather than the people dominated most publications and recommendations. UNICEF must not forget its people – especially those in the field who are not at a computer all day – and how they choose to communicate with each other.
- **Invest in a Community Manager.** The KE team showed significant success with its community management programming in 2016, but more must be done to create long term value for UNICEF's staff members. Significant research exists on the job description, best practices, and value that a community manager has. UNICEF should formalize ToR (s) for one or more Community Managers to facilitate the appropriate usage of all community technologies. Typically, Community Managers are long-time employees with significant social capital and an understanding of the inner-workings of an organization.
- **Formalize Leadership Support for Communities.** With senior leaders utilizing communities online, and with their ongoing participation and sponsorship, the communities will thrive.

Paola Storchi and the Community Management team

New York, 20 October 2016