

Online Dialogues to Strengthen Global Development Knowledge

From **IDS Knowledge Services**
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Bringing people & ideas together without costing the earth

Fighting global poverty and inequality requires the combined knowledge, expertise and experience of many. IDS Knowledge Services deliver exciting online dialogues for projects that need to get the right people together at the right time to create and share new knowledge.

Preparation, hosting, and facilitation:

Since 2010 IDS Knowledge Services has helped over 25 projects enrich their learning through online dialogues. Examples include research programmes, stakeholder consultations and knowledge networks.

A typical dialogue

- An intensive event lasting a fixed number of days
- 30-100 invited stakeholders from around the globe
- Hassle-free entry to a dedicated forum
- Multiple discussion threads to explore key issues
- Exchange of perspectives via email / the web Expert facilitator commentary to guide the process



How could an online dialogue help your initiative?

Harnessing IDS KS expertise & experience

Through our own experience we have learned how to build commitment among target participants before each event, so that interaction flows readily once it starts. We'll bring our knowledge of this and other aspects into your project so that you can keep focused on the dialogue itself.

We also can extend our support to include a range of research update, intermediary and knowledge brokering activities - drawing on our experience of over 15 years of experience working with development knowledge.

What others say about us

"It would have been impossible to hold this discussion face-to-face; the e-discussion allowed for a big conceptual jump forward in a short period of time"

David Kelleher, Senior Associate, Gender at Work, Feb 2013

"I have never encountered this level of commitment to the substance of the process from the technical teams of other discussion forums, who interpret their roles rather more narrowly, and rarely share a belief in the larger purpose for which the online space is a means"

Srilatha Batliwala, Scholar Associate, AWID, Aug 2012

Eldis Communities: our platform of choice

We have experience convening online events using range of platforms and are happy to discuss working with your own tools. However, we generally suggest projects use the Eldis Communities platform - which we manage ourselves - as we know the technology works and can adapt it to suit your situation.

Benefits over a face-to-face event:

- Significantly less expensive
- Instant record of the discussions
- Participants contribute at their leisure
- Fewer logistical arrangements
- Lower carbon footprint
- Economies of scale for multiple events

In contrast to a webinar:

- Participation unaffected by time-zone
- Post-by-email eases connectivity barriers
- More scope for in-depth contributions
- No reliance on VoIP telephone systems
- No need for audio equipment

The platform itself lets us set-up safe, private and bespoke spaces for you, into which we silently bring in participants intuitively and without hassle. And unlike many other platforms with Eldis Communities individuals can contribute by email as well as via the web.

Furthermore, Eldis Communities provides a ready-made audience of 12,000 members with whom your project and team can engage. Find out more about the platform at: community.eldis.org

Tailoring our support for you

As each event is unique we work closely with partners to devise the most appropriate package of advice, support and services for your needs. We advise on decisions such as timing and duration during the scoping out of a new project that fit with its budget and ambition levels.

Please turn over to see examples of the kinds of packages we offer and their indicative prices.

Support for Southern Partners

Our aim is to offer IDS staff resources for a limited number of partner-led events each year, at our discretion and subject to resource availability.

To find out more about these opportunities email:

a.bannister@ids.ac.uk



Typical Packages

Level 1: Platform Provision and Technical Support

A limited service for projects who have previous experience of working with us to manage online dialogues

The BRIDGE Cutting Edge Programme on Gender and Social Movements has convened four online dialogues on Eldis Communities, since 2011.

Through previous support packages they have developed their own capacity and only required platform-related support to host their events. So in the most recent events we provided a Level 1 package and BRIDGE provided convenor, facilitator, and project support roles.

In total, these multi-day events have generated over 400 contributions and helped to shape the strategic direction and content of the BRIDGE Cutting Edge Pack on the topic (forthcoming 2013).



A 3 day event at this level would be priced indicatively at: GBP £1,700 + VAT

Level 2: Project Team Capacity Support

A step-by-step guide for projects who have limited or no previous experience but have their own capacity to resource the project team roles

Having participated in a previous event, members of Voices for Change, a DfID funded programme administered by GRM International consultants to address Gender Inequality in Nigeria approached IDS KS to provide capacity-support for an event to feed into their formative study 'Analysis of the Structural and Systemic Causes of Gender Inequality in Nigeria'.

In addition to the platform and technical support IDS KS also guided the programme convenor and their team through the planning and preparation phases. We shared designs for the communications outputs required, and managed the on-boarding of the 66 participants involved.

During the event itself we gave facilitation advice to the project team, who successfully stimulated over 200 contributions over five days.



A 3 day event at this level would be priced indicatively at: GBP £3,550 + VAT

Level 3: Collaborative Delivery

A jointly managed approach for projects which can provide some project team roles themselves but need extra capacity

The Irish Aid / IDS Programme Partnership on Hunger Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation had strong research interests and facilitation skills but lacked the internal capacity required to realise online dialogues.

In collaboration with IDS researchers IDS KS convened an event in the immediate wake of the Rio+20 Summit (June 2012) to explore the implications in Ethiopian and Malawian contexts. We provided support for the platform and contributed convening and project management roles.

The event stimulated nearly 50 contributions, from which we produced a synthesis report to help Irish Aid consider its own programmatic priorities. In working collaboratively we successfully combined our different expertise areas, and strengthened the funder's understanding of their focal countries.



A 3 day event at this level would be priced indicatively at: GBP £9,000 + VAT

Level 4: Comprehensive Event Management

A premium service for projects which required an external team to deliver a high quality dialogue on their behalf

In November 2012, IDS KS were invited to support a process to surface real-world examples of the experiences of key stakeholders in six countries around the global initiative 'Scaling Up Nutrition' (SUN).

In addition to hosting, supporting and convening a week-long event, the IDS team delivered a comprehensive package commensurate with the reputational risks involved. It included: full project management, multi-faceted approaches to maximise commitment building and participation levels, extra facilitation / moderation resources, and extended technical support.

The 84 participants of the group generated 180 contributions to the week-long event – which informed an IDS / IFPRI authored article in the Lancet Nutrition Series 2013 (forthcoming).



A 3 day event at this level would be priced indicatively at: GBP £18,350 + VAT

Partners we've also worked with



Past successes in numbers

Check-out our infographic that captures facts & figures from a selection of past events:
<http://bit.ly/ECinfographic>

Sharing our learning

Find out more about the lessons we've learned by reading our blog & top-tips document at:
<http://bit.ly/e-discussions>