GEMS4 Knowledge Management Strategy

GEMS4
Wholesale & Retail

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CPC	Consumer Protection Council
DFID	Department for International Development
GEMS4	Growth and Employment in States – Wholesale and Retail Sector
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KM	Knowledge management
M4P	Making Markets Work for the Poor
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAFDAC	National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control
SON	Standards Organisation of Nigeria
WRMS	Wholesale and Retail Market System
WBG	Wholesale Buying Groups
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Growth and Employment in States – Wholesale and Retail Sector (GEMS4) is a market development project in Nigeria. It is funded by DFID/UKaid and the World Bank and is being implemented in Lagos, Kano, Kaduna and Cross River states. The GEMS4 mandate is to stimulate market system changes that encourage growth and access; resulting in the creation of 10,000 new jobs and increased incomes for 500,000 people, especially for the poor and for women.

The GEMS4 strategic framework identifies nine underlying systemic constraints being addressed via several initiatives. These constraints have been categorised into three core groups - Business Fundamentals; Business Essentials and Business Enablers.

The project uses a Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P) approach and its initiatives facilitate entry into markets; provide technical support for the adoption of innovations and new business models and leverage investments for the development of key market facilities to support optimal business performance.

The GEMS4 Knowledge Management Strategy provides a framework that provides guidance on the tools and initiatives GEMS4 will use to **create, store, transfer, share and apply knowledge** in order to optimise activities that address systemic constraints and result in a better functioning market system. The Strategy identifies key **knowledge processes and activities within the project, which will be strengthened** in order to accelerate the delivery of project results.

The focus of this strategy is on fostering a learning organisation that is skilled in responding to the realities in the wholesale/retail market; one that utilises knowledge to innovate and modify activities to reflect new knowledge and insights. It is also focused on the internal sharing of knowledge between initiatives and external sharing with partners, market actors, the public sector, and other donor-funded projects and with DFID.

This strategy complements the GEMS4 Communication Strategy and its objectives, which is based on the objectives of the overall project. Based on the message and the targeted audience or client, the knowledge is either gathered or mapped, stored or synthesised, simplified or amplified. The GEMS4 knowledge management strategy takes these factors into account in order to ensure that the right information is treated in the right way. This will enable communications to contribute to the achievements of the team and ultimately the project objectives.

2 Purpose

Knowledge is a critical asset which enables GEMS4 to learn, inform, influence, guide, challenge and support its partners. Knowledge management strengthens these knowledge assets and functions, allowing GEMS4 to have greater leverage over its resources to achieve team and project objectives. A number of key benefits of knowledge management for GEMS4 can be identified:

Support an Adaptive and Dynamic Team	Knowledge management requires continual, systematised processes to gather new information and help apply existing knowledge to new situations. These processes will support GEMS4 in responding to new challenges, demands and opportunities, providing the tools to make GEMS4 an adaptive and dynamic team.
Improved Decision-making	Enabling better and faster decision making due to facilitated access to expertise and knowledge sharing. Collaboration internally and externally brings the wisdom of the crowd, diverse viewpoints, and varied experience to bear when decisions need to be made. The reuse of knowledge in repositories allows decisions to be based on actual experience, and practical lessons learned.
Increase Efficiency and Effectiveness	Proactive management of knowledge ensures that the necessary knowledge is accessible when it is needed. Reusing ideas, documents, and expertise by reducing cases of "reinventing the wheel" and avoiding redundant effort. The team will have more time for innovation and creativity, which allows the team to achieve the greatest impact and acceleration of delivery of results.
Communicate Results	A knowledge management strategy anticipates GEMS4's communication needs. It creates a framework for information on the project's impact and 'repackage' the information to ensure that GEMS4 will have the capacity to effectively communicate its results to a range of stakeholders.
Stimulate Innovation	Stimulating innovation in the delivery of project results and also to encourage growth as the market improves and competition increases. Creating new knowledge through effective knowledge sharing, collaboration, and information delivery can stimulate innovation and create value for enterprises.
Promote Learning	Knowledge management will promote learning within GEMS4, as new relevant information is systematically gathered, stored, mapped and shared with internal and external partners. It will demonstrate to partners how knowledge is can create competitive advantages, facilitating a better functioning wholesale and retail market systems (WRMS).
Reduce Loss of Knowledge	Reducing loss of knowledge when team members leave the project by capturing explicit and tacit knowledge. This ensures continuity of the initiatives and delivery of project results.

An investment in knowledge management is necessary to respond to the changing GEMS4 context and the increased knowledge demands of team members. However, the benefits of an investment in knowledge management extend further – enhancing the quality of GEMS4's activities and enabling the team to expand in new directions. The project will enhance the integration of knowledge management within the project and place greater emphasis on embedding learning in all of GEMS4 activities from pilot to evaluation. This is the purpose of the GEMS4 Knowledge Management Strategy.

3 Current Situation

3.1 Knowledge management - Current Situation

In the first two years of implementing GEMS4, the project acquired and adapted knowledge relevant to specific development needs in the Nigerian wholesale and retail sector. Some of this knowledge has been made explicit in the form of study reports, market system analyses, and technical documents and in monthly/quarterly/consultant reports.

GEMS4 principal knowledge, which derives from its core activities - are its technical ability to identify market constraints/opportunities, and then respond by designing and implementing activities to address constraints and take advantage of these opportunities. In implementing core activities, the team both utilises current knowledge and generates new knowledge from interactions with diverse market actors, project monitoring, research and analysis.

Since 2014, following an assessment and review of the project, a KM Strategy was developed, providing a framework for the KM processes have been implemented. So far the following have been the focus of KM in GEMS4:

KM Training

The project has provided training on Communication and Knowledge Management for all project staff, encouraging a shared understanding of the GEMS4 KM tools and individual roles in practicing KM in GEMS4.

GEMS4 Website

Developed a new interactive website with blogging capability to widely share the results from the delivery of project initiatives and providing a medium for interaction with market actors.

Social media engagement

In response to the need for increased visibility, the project is now active on social media. A Facebook fan page, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts have launched where the project engages with various audiences. This will continue to be used to expand the projects reach, garner followership and drive traffic to the GEMS4 website.

Communication products

Initiative profiles, fact sheets, leaflets and banners have been developed to promote an understanding of each initiative and to promote market initiatives. Numerous case studies and success stories have been developed and shared demonstrating and encouraging project learning before, during and after major activities.

Email newsletter

Pestle + the GEMS4 email newsletter is regularly shared with project partners to facilitate knowledge flows internally and externally

Media dissemination

The project has leveraged partnerships and relationships to use National dailies (Business day, The Guardian, The Nation and Daily Trust) and Radio talk shows (Nigeria Info) to disseminate information on project activities and market opportunities.

4 Knowledge Management Framework

4.1 Knowledge Management Strategic areas

The GEMS4 knowledge management framework provides a methodology with which the project activities will be strengthened by utilising the current knowledge assets. The framework indicates the four knowledge management strategic components, which will support the project to manage knowledge processes and embed learning in all of GEMS4 activities, from pilot to evaluation, in order to accelerate the delivery of project results.
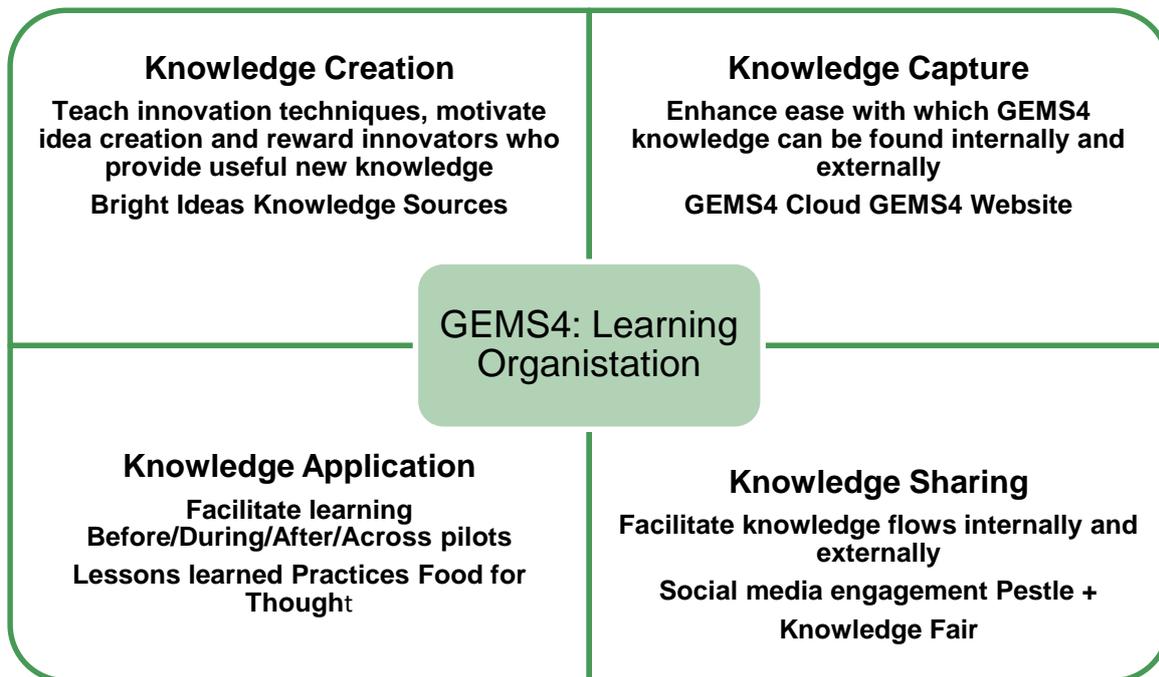
Knowledge Creation – GEMS4 will establish an Ideas Creation process that fosters the creation of new knowledge and encourages the use of innovative solutions to design, change or scale up initiative strategy. A priority will be to provide leadership and incentives to motivate people to collaborate, brainstorm, innovate, learn and share.

Knowledge Capture – Enhance the ease with which GEMS4 knowledge can be found internally and externally on existing technologies – Cloud and GEMS4 website. Encourage a culture of codifying, storing and retrieval of knowledge on the Cloud and providing training to ensure taxonomy allows for easy retrieval.

Knowledge Sharing – Strengthening knowledge sharing and learning processes, infrastructure and culture to ensure the right knowledge is available at the right time when and where it is needed. Fostering partnerships for broader knowledge sharing and learning on in a systematic way internally and externally.

Knowledge Application - Encouraging a culture of highlighting useful insights and acting on knowledge as core to identifying and addressing market failures. GEMS4 will utilise lessons learned processes to promote learning and application of new knowledge before, during, across and after initiative pilots and major activities.

Figure 1: GEMS4 Knowledge Management Framework

Knowledge Creation
Teach innovation techniques, motivate idea creation and reward innovators who provide useful new knowledge
Bright Ideas Knowledge Sources

Knowledge Capture
Enhance ease with which GEMS4 knowledge can be found internally and externally
GEMS4 Cloud GEMS4 Website

GEMS4: Learning Organistation

Knowledge Application
Facilitate learning Before/During/After/Across pilots
Lessons learned Practices Food for Thought

Knowledge Sharing
Facilitate knowledge flows internally and externally
Social media engagement Pestle +
Knowledge Fair

Information identified for knowledge sharing

Eight types of information have been identified as information GEMS4 needs to communicate to knowledge partners and target audiences:

Quantitative and qualitative evidence of M4P in the WRS need	This includes both numbers and stories or case studies that demonstrate the need for and importance of making the wholesale and retail market system work for the poor.
M4P technical information	General M4P information and approaches
Intelligence on WRS actors and expertise	A comprehensive overview of the wholesale and retail sector, networking knowledge of WRS actors and organisations, including areas of expertise, personal contacts, and history of partnerships.
DFID best practices and lessons learned	Knowledge on DFID's experience in M4P in Nigeria and in the sector that includes both tacit and explicit knowledge that can facilitate projects learning.
Wholesale and retail sector environment and trends	Information on current wholesale and retail sector environments and trends in Nigeria and in Africa, as well as beyond derived from data and experts.
Quantitative and qualitative evidence of GEMS4 impact	Numbers and stories or case studies that demonstrate the impact that GEMS4 has in Nigeria.
Record of current WRS activities in Nigeria	An inventory of market development activities in the wholesale and retail sector being conducted by DFID, other donors or government in Nigeria, which can form a basis for collaboration.

5 Measures to reach the expected results

The below outputs will be implemented to meet the information demands, improve the team's performance and communicate GEMS4's results to a range of audiences.

Encouraging knowledge sharing for each individual on GEMS4

- Incorporating knowledge management in the Performance Assessment System – The management holds a key role in encouraging a knowledge sharing culture and to encourage and support staff to devote time to KM. Incorporating knowledge management in the performance assessment system will ensure that staff dedicated to KM are rewarded and recognised for their achievements.

- Incorporate knowledge management in staff personal development plan – When setting the yearly personal development, a concrete knowledge sharing objective should be incorporated, this could be to consult and identify others outside GEMS4 working in similar areas, sharing experience and knowledge in the development sector.

- Encourage one-to-one knowledge transfer between junior and more senior staff. Encouraging mentoring and for junior staff to engage with more than the direct line manager, giving an invaluable opportunity individual learning.

- Ensuring inductions and handovers takes place in a structured manner:

    o The structure of induction is described in the Project Manual and ensures an overview of the knowledge management approach on GEMS4. However, the induction will also be a two-way learning process, where GEMS4 more systematic tap the knowledge and expertise of those joining the project. This knowledge will be captured in the induction meeting with the Knowledge Management and Communication Specialist (KMCS) and shared.

    o The current handover structure leaves room for improvement, which can lead to loss of momentum, intelligence and key contacts. A structure handover process will be put in place based on capturing lessons learned and including a handover checklist. This will be followed by an exit meeting with the Operations Manager to capture organisational learning and improve the retention of staff.

Clarifying who will do what and why

- A culture of learning and sharing knowledge requires alignment of management systems and policies, GEMS4 project management structures will encourage collective and systematic learning across the programme. This means that roles and responsibilities to ensure KM activities are addressed will be clear and consistent across the team. Unless responsibilities are clearly identified and related to performance measurement, it will be difficult to get accountability.

- The aim of knowledge management is not for staff to populate documents and website for the sake of it, it needs to be clear that the knowledge shared are information that is important for the project to meet its objectives. It needs to be clear how we present and how we share knowledge and information and what we with our colleagues, partners and client. The KMCS is a dedicated role to provide guidance on this and to monitor the capturing and using of knowledge.

Sharing experience and knowledge beyond GEMS4

- Encouraging the building and support of knowledge sharing networks – there are several networks connect to DFID Nigeria, for example, in the areas of communications, operations and gender. This is a great way of exchanging experience and knowledge with the other project staff with similar roles and should always been be encourage by management to participate in. Where a network is not currently established, but would be deemed beneficial, the management should encourage and support the staff member wishing to build a network.

- Our objective is to influence decision making of our partners, though expert advice, research and good practice and knowledge management has a key role in the way we share knowledge and give the

opportunity for others to engage and share knowledge with us. Knowledge sharing activities will be undertaken to support the project objectives and enhance our engagement with stakeholders.

- o The KMCS support the development of the GEMS4 website to better respond to the information needs of its stakeholders. It will share not only updates from our project, but also reports, research and other information captured in the project activities. It also link to other publication with sector relevant information. This will make the GEMS4 website a place to track industry trends and developments.

- Identify a wider stakeholder group with potential interest in an activity deliverable - GEMS4 undertakes numerous assignments on with the aim of overcoming underlying constraints of the market for different stakeholders. As a part of the ToR for these assignments, a section will specifically include details of how the deliverables will benefit a wider stakeholder group and how the results will be disseminated to reach them.

6 Risks and Risk Mitigation Measures

Risk Identification	Risk Qualification	Risk Mitigation Measures
Understanding: An unclear definition of KM		• Regular KM training
Expectations: What can KM deliver?		• Clarify scope of KM initiatives and • result expectations
Implementation: Who does KM?		• Clarify ownership of specific initiative, knowledge owners and ownership of the dissemination channel • Emphasize the collaborative nature of KM
Result Measurement: Has KM succeeded?		• Set metrics for KM success • Qualitative metrics are metrics • Regularly share successes and learning

7 Roles and Responsibilities

Team Leader

The GEMS4 Team Leader holds overall responsibility for the implementation of the GEMS4 KM Strategy. The Team leader will provide high-level oversight and articulate a clear and compelling vision on the importance of and an imperative for managing knowledge processes in GEMS4.

Knowledge Management and Communication Specialist (KMCS)

The KMCS will provide day to oversight and will be responsible for implementation of the KM work plan that derives from this strategy. While the KM specialist will champion the collective benefit of KM, KM cannot be undertaken by the KMCS on behalf of the project. The KMCS will work with initiative teams and encourage engagement and understanding of the value of KM and provide support on KM initiative implementation. The KMCS will identify new KM initiatives and ensure implementation of current ones and will work with the M&E team to measure effectiveness of KM activities.

Intervention Managers and Business Development Coordinators

The initiative teams – IMs and BDCs are responsible for the planning and implementation of their respective initiatives and utilising KM tools and processes that optimise their work. KM processes will increasingly be embedded into the daily activities of teams. Teams are required to utilise established KM processes and contribute to knowledge creation, capture, sharing and application initiatives. IMs and BDCs are also encouraged to identify opportunities for knowledge sharing, application and utilisation.

Planning and Results Team

The PRT and the KMCS will share tools and processes to capture data for stories that provide evidence of change and results. They will also collaborate to extract "lessons" that are useful and transferrable to other contexts and to identify metrics to measure KM effectiveness.

Annex: Knowledge assets and dissemination plan

The GEMS4 knowledge repository - the Cloud - is an online database where staff store, organise and categorise project information. The KM unit will play an oversight function to promote the use of the Cloud and ensure staff are aware of how to categorise files for ease of retrieval.

Knowledge Sources - To build internal knowledge and amass an information base required to develop project presentations, studies and pipeline interventions, intervention teams collate research of useful articles, statistics, data, current developments and opportunities which are archived for easy retrieval on the cloud.

Bright Ideas – An innovation generation process to encourage brainstorming and generation of ideas to address market constraints. The Bright idea process facilitates business development to identify new initiatives for the GEMS4 initiative pipeline.

"Food for thought" – A one hour, informally structured, group learning session held over lunch (Generically called "Brown bag lunches"). This session is an opportunity for the team to share ideas, lessons, successes, and brainstorm and suggest solutions. It will be held in a relaxed environment, possibly outside the office environment. "Food for thought" will take place on a quarterly basis and will be scheduled by the KM unit in collaboration with senior management.

GEMS4 Knowledge fair – A face to face interactive event where each intervention and its partners will set up stands/booths/displays to showcase their work and successes as well as market opportunities for partnerships and collaboration. The objective is to share knowledge, increase visibility and to network. It will hold annually.

GEMS4 Website – GEMS4 will use the website to disseminate learning and new knowledge on interventions and best practices identified across GEMS4 interventions/units. It will be updated at least monthly and as the need arises.

Social Media sites – GEMS4 Facebook fan page, Instagram account, Twitter account and LinkedIn page will be used to engage followers, share learning, create buzz around activities and share knowledge on interventions. We will share photos, tips, updates regularly and in a less formal style than on the website. It will be updated weekly.

Pestle + Email Newsletter – This is an internal email newsletter that provides a general review of several macro-economic, market specific information and developments in the aid industry. Pestle + will be a 1st point of call for programme staff to retrieve credible information around Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental, Donor specific and Women's economic developments that are of relevance to GEMS4.It will serve as an internal knowledge base that staff contribute to and utilise to develop pipelines, new approaches and daily activities.

A range of leaflets - to communicate lessons learned, results, stories of change and fact sheets. The project will produce one of each per intervention and Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE), they will showcase market opportunities, best practice, results and project progress.

Mini videos –Five to ten minute videos depicting beneficiaries' stories of change and project staff explaining processes, successes and results. The videos will be shared primarily with DFID and Coffey and will be available on the Project website, social media pages and on the Cloud.

GEMS4 Knowledge dissemination plan	
Stakeholders	**Product and frequency**
GEMS4 and project partners	"Food for thought" - Quarterly - Website – Updated routinely - Social media – Updated daily - Email newsletter – Circulated monthly - Knowledge Fair – Hosted annually
DFID	In addition to formal reports: - A range of leaflets that communicate lessons learned, results, stories of change. 5-10 minute videos (5 per year) - Website - Social media - Knowledge fair – Hosted annually
Government agencies, regulatory bodies, policymakers	- Leaflets, Initiative profiles - Briefing sessions, meetings, workshops - Website - Social media - Knowledge fair – Hosted annually
Project partners and other projects	- Leaflets - Briefing sessions, one-on-one meetings, workshops - Participation during planning meetings - Website - Social media - Knowledge fair – Hosted annually

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