A Journey Through a Community of Practice (COP)
What is a CoP?

A CoP is a gathering of individuals motivated by the desire:

• To share and learn from one another - either face-to-face or virtually;

• To exchange experiences, insights, problems, and tools on a specific topic.

• To cross organizational (unit) boundaries;

• To build a body of actionable knowledge through collaboration.
What does a CoP contribute to?

A CoP contributes to

- KNOWLEDGE SHARING
- COLLABORATION
KNOWLEDGE SHARING
By involving members from different disciplines and geographic areas, a CoP:

- multiplies knowledge flows
- fosters partnerships
- creates new solutions
How does a CoP benefit you?

Through a CoP you can:

CONNECT

EXCHANGE

COLLABORATE
Difference between a CoP and other types of communities

A CoP is different from:

- Network
- Work Team
- Other Communities
...in the sense that a CoP:

- Focuses on a **substantive topic** and is not just a set of relationships.

- The **shared interest and vision** of its members keep it together.

- Exists because **participation** has value to its members.

- Its members are more likely to share a **common profession** or **work situation**.
Critical building blocks of a CoP

Although every CoP is unique in how it creates a sense of community among its members...

...all CoPs share essential traits:

- Topic focus
- Clear target audience
- Leader/coordinators
- Resources (e.g. technology, logistics...)
- Critical mass of active members
Why are COPs important?

CoPs are important because:

They serve as an ongoing learning forum for development practitioners;
Why are COPs important?

CoPs are important because:

- They serve as an ongoing learning forum for development practitioners;
- They influence development outcomes by promoting greater and better informed dialogue;
- They develop and transfer best practices on specific topics;
- They promote innovative approaches to address specific development challenges.
"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn"

- Benjamin Franklin -
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