

A knowledge work¹ strategy and implementation plan for The Valley Trust

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Introduction.

The Valley Trust has, since 2001, talked about the need to embrace knowledge work as a key dimension of its practice; currently, this is expressed in our first and seventh strategic priorities for the period 2008 - 2012: *to monitor, evaluate and research our work in a participatory way to enhance effectiveness and contribute to knowledge creation and sharing, and to enhance our effectiveness by working as a learning organization.*

Various attempts have been made to institutionalize this intention, including the establishment of a "research office" in 2001, which was incorporated into the newly-formed Organizational Development Department. The organization also strengthened its monitoring, evaluation and research (M, E & R) capacity at one level by employing staff skilled in quantitative data gathering and capture, GIS methodology, and statistics. However, the work was never fully and consciously integrated into The Valley Trust's evolving² practice.

More recently (April 2008), the M, E & R Division was established as part of The Valley Trust's restructuring process. This Division has taken up the responsibility for coordinating and facilitating knowledge work across the organization, but at this point it must be emphasized that knowledge work must increasingly become an integral part of a seamless Valley Trust practice, and as such should not be viewed as the sole responsibility of the M, E & R Division.

What is driving the knowledge work initiative at The Valley Trust? The NGO sector enjoys a reputation for effectiveness, but there is a growing body of literature which challenges this view. For example, Edwards and Hulme (1996 p. 5) note that *"...there is increasing evidence that NGOs and GROs³ do not perform as effectively as had been assumed in terms of poverty reach, cost-effectiveness, sustainability, popular participation (including*

¹ The term "knowledge work" is used here in preference to "knowledge management" to include all those activities related to the creation and sharing of knowledge which so often get neglected in the work of an NPO: regular data gathering, data analysis, monitoring, documentation, evaluation, conversations, action learning, research, etc. Please refer to Appendix 1 for an extended discussion of the term "knowledge work".

² It was only in April 2005 that The Valley Trust started to explore its practice in a coherent way through the Practice Development Programme.

³ Grass Root Organizations.

gender), flexibility, and innovation"; Pieterse (1998 p. 13) states that "In real terms, the contributions and role of NGOs are relatively inconsequential to the everyday existence of the 53 percent of the South African population (approximately 20 million people) below the poverty line"; and Smit (2007 p. 1) comments that

Notwithstanding over 50 years' experience in development co-operation, the urgency for development NGOs to improve their effectiveness, efficiency and impact is enormous. A wealth of experience has been built up over the years. Some of the innovative approaches of yesterday are now common practice - and some of yesterday's mistakes and dilemmas have hardly changed. Do we learn from our own and others' experiences in order to improve our effectiveness, efficiency and impact? And, if the answer is yes, do we recognize what we have learned, and how?

(Quagiotto, 2005) highlights the potential of knowledge work for NGOs by stating that *Perhaps the main factor that accounts for the enduring appeal of knowledge management in development organizations is the stronger motivation for development practitioners - when compared with their counterparts in private companies - to analyse and eventually overcome barriers to knowledge sharing across organizations, communities or even governments in order to maximize their impact on the ground....Another element that may explain the continued interest in knowledge management in the development context - this time externally driven - is the increased call for transparency and accountability within this sector. Rightly, development organizations face increasing demands from donors and the general public to provide detailed information on how effectively they spend their funds and what mechanisms they put in place to avoid repeating mistakes that can often have a high cost not only in financial but also in humanitarian terms.*

Thus, for us at The Valley Trust, three imperatives are driving this knowledge work process:

- (i) The striving for greater effectiveness as an NPO;
- (ii) Accountability (to the clients with whom we work, to our donors, to society in a broader sense - we are, after all, part of civil society - and to ourselves);
and
- (iii) The sharing of knowledge as a contribution to the broader discourse around health and development.

This strategy and implementation plan therefore draws on our own experience and learnings, as well as on the writings of others working in various fields of knowledge creation and sharing, to present a way of institutionalizing knowledge work across The Valley Trust, with a pilot phase running from April 2009 to March 2012.

Key elements of the strategy.

1. It should be piloted over a period of time that allows a reasonable chance for it to succeed, from 1st April 2009 to March 2012.
2. It should be appropriate to the identity⁴ of The Valley Trust. Historically, the organization has probably viewed knowledge more as "thing" than "flow" (Snowden, 2002), and has probably privileged hard knowledge over soft knowledge (Hildreth & Kimble, 2002). However, it is emphasized here that an approach which incorporates the strengths of different knowledge paradigms should be adopted so as to offer a broad range of methodological options. The complex nature of developmental work (Bopp & Bopp, 2004) should also be acknowledged, and it should be accepted that our knowledge work will require more than a "cutting and pasting" of private sector approaches (although these may at times prove helpful). In general, the emphasis is likely to be on process rather than product, although the importance of knowledge-related outputs such as reports and other forms of documentation such as videos, should not be underestimated. With regard to process, Conlin and Stirrat (2008) state that "*Whilst there will remain space for positivist approaches in certain sectors of the (development) industry, it is increasingly likely that other approaches will become more dominant*".
3. Given our identity, our knowledge work should be an integral part of our practice (ie. should not be an "add-on"); it should be useful (Patton, 1997), and it should be participatory (Reason, 1998).
4. The strategy must build on what is already in place at TVT and the progress that has already been made. It will draw on the work which has been done by the Cooperative Inquiry Group (CIG) at TVT, as documented in six knowledge work writings over the past two years; in our Annual Reports; and in various other reports. It will also draw on the existing processes across the organization, and will seek to strengthen existing *ba*⁵, such as All Staff meetings, the Quality Assurance Committee, divisional teams, etc. It will draw on existing organizational knowledge, both tacit and explicit, and it will take into account methods and tools which have already been introduced to The Valley Trust's work, such as the EvaluLead framework (Grove, Kibel, & Haas, 2005).

⁴ Our vision is *communities in which people take responsibility for improving their own health and quality of life within a democratic society*. Our first strategic priority states that we wish to *monitor, evaluate and research our work in a participatory way to enhance effectiveness and contribute to knowledge creation and sharing*. Our purpose is to *enable people to initiate and sustain their own developmental change processes*. Two of the processes which we use in our work are *action learning* and *action research*. And we commit to core values of *human dignity, integrity, enablement, sustainability, and proactivity*.

⁵ *Ba* is a Japanese term implying a "*shared context in which knowledge is shared, created and utilized*" (Nonaka, Toyama, & Konno, 2000)

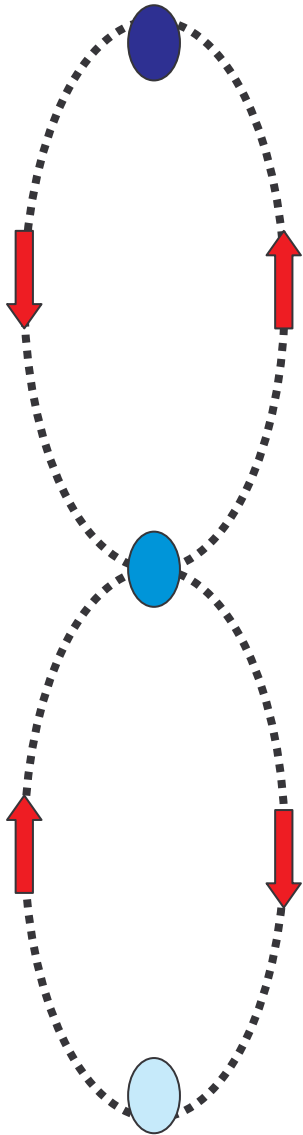
5. Staff capacity will need to be built for knowledge work across the organization; this will need to be done sensitively and appropriately, at a pace which takes into account organizational processes and rhythms, and in a manner which is thoroughly grounded in our practice. Such capacity building will include, for example, the strengthening of documentation skills, and the development of the ability to "read" developmental processes.
6. Knowledge work processes will require skilled facilitation, probably by members of the M, E & R Division, although management as a whole will have a significant part to play. The requirement for M, E & R's facilitation role may decrease as the capacity for knowledge work strengthens across the organization, or the nature of the facilitation may change (for example, the mentoring role of the M, E & R Division may increase).
7. Given the identity of the organization and its expressed intention to work in a participatory way to create and share knowledge, there will be a need for creative forms in which knowledge can be "documented" and shared, eg. Patton (2002), Richardson⁶ (2000), and Springgay *et al* (2005).
8. When knowledge work is undertaken in partnerships, there will be a special need to proceed with caution. Partnerships may bring together different paradigms of knowledge, which could either introduce a positive creative tension or a negative struggle for dominance.
9. Given the need to integrate knowledge work into our practice, the role of leadership and management in actively and positively supporting the implementation process will be critical.
10. Progress towards the integration of knowledge work into the organization's practice should itself be monitored and evaluated, although as Hellström and Jacob (2003 p. 57) point out,
When evaluating KM [knowledge management] programmes we are...trying to hit a moving target, because when we advance, the goals change due to what is learnt in the process - indeed if they do not change we may not be advancing at all.

Implementation plan.

The details of the implementation plan can be represented in various ways. This document draws on several sources to do so: the "figure of eight" diagram⁷, the work of Ben Ramalingam (2005, 2006), and the writings of Hildreth and Kimble (2002), and Snowden (2002).

⁶ Richardson has proposed five criteria (p. 937) for what she calls "creative analytic practices": substantive contribution; aesthetic merit; reflexivity; impact; and expression of a reality.

⁷ See the table on page 5. Refer to Appendix 2 for an explanation of this diagram.



	Knowledge work	Support required	Responsibilities and timeframes
(i)	Sharing of knowledge outside the organization.	(i) Preparation for conferences, workshops, publications, engagement with government and other stakeholders	(i) M, E & R Div assists colleagues across TVT (<i>ongoing, increasing with time</i>).
(ii)	Feeding new learnings back into TVT	(ii) Report writing and dissemination throughout TVT	(ii) As above
(iii)	Engagement in various forms with students and faculty of higher education institutions	(iii) Design of programmes, ideally in partnership with higher education	(iii) M, E & R Div assists colleagues where necessary
(i)	Organization-wide sharing of knowledge.	(i) Audit of existing knowledge resources. Development of knowledge sharing tools and technologies.	(i) M, E & R Div (<i>in 2010</i>) with leadership and management support
(ii)	"Meta-evaluations" to draw out common learnings for documentation and sharing.	(ii) Documentation of learnings.	(ii) M, E & R Div (<i>ongoing</i>)
(iii)	Incorporation of learnings into (a) organizational practice; and (b) reports and proposals.	(iii) (a) Practice development programme and (b) QA for report and proposal writing	(iii) (a) Practice development team and (b) QA committee (<i>ongoing</i>), both with Leadership and management support
(i)	Baseline of resources and skills available	(i) Audit of resources and knowledge skills	(i) M, E & R Div (<i>2010</i>)
(ii)	Monitoring at project level (appropriate data gathering, recording, storage, analysis, documentation and application).	(ii) Capacity building for monitoring and associated activities	(ii) Coordinators and facilitators with support from M, E & R
(iii)	Evaluation & research at project level.	(iii) Capacity building for E & R, and conducting E & R.	(iii) M, E & R Div (<i>ongoing</i>). with int & ext support
(iv)	Mutual learning with clients.	(iv) Facilitated reflection.	(iv) M, E & R Div supports colleagues (<i>ongoing</i>)
(v)	Action learning	(v) Incorporation of learnings into practice, plans, etc	(v) Leadership and management
(vi)	Quality assurance.	(vi) Monitoring of quality	(vi) QA com and other staff

Implementation processes.

It is emphasized at this point that knowledge work should, wherever possible, be supported, facilitated, and nurtured rather than imposed. However, given that it is an agreed organizational priority, and given that several previous initiatives to institutionalize knowledge work have met with limited success, there is now a requirement that processes (and a very limited number of procedures) be introduced to ensure that knowledge work takes its intended place as an integral part of our practice. This requires the cooperation of all staff, but especially of leadership and management.

The following details expand on what has already been presented in this document:

1. Gaining an understanding of what is already in place. Mention has been made of historical and current initiatives. In 2010, two audits will be undertaken to establish (a) what has been documented in terms of knowledge at The Valley Trust, and (b) what skills are available within the organization and amongst our partners. These audits will be documented in appropriate forms: (a) documents will be entered into the Library data base, and will be retrievable via a key word search. The search facility is available for installation on any staff member's computer. Key documents will also be made available electronically on the network, for which an appropriate taxonomy is currently being developed; (b) knowledge skills will be documented as part of the organization's ongoing personal development processes, and will need to interface with other skills audits, performance appraisals, and the workplace skills plan.
2. Creating appropriate space-time (*ba*) for knowledge work. It is envisaged that, with time, knowledge work will become an accepted part of the daily work of every staff member, and to reach this point, a structured process designed by the Leadership Team will be adopted to create the time required for knowledge work processes to be undertaken. The principal *ba* for sharing reflections will be the home week, and again, the appropriate structuring of home week will be determined by the Leadership Team. At present, home week is held once every two months, but this frequency may need to be reviewed. It is also suggested that home week be extended by one day.

Following each home week, the knowledge which has been "collected"⁸ will be processed by the M, E & R Division, and then made available in the following ways:

⁸ Here it is important to note that much of the knowledge that may be shared through these home week processes will be tacit in nature, and as such will resist "capture" in the conventional sense. However, knowledge shared in this way should influence practice, and managers and coordinators will be encouraged to look for and document, changes in practice.

- (i) Written documents and photographs will be made available on the network. From here they may be accessed for use in report writing, proposal development, and as a resource for workshops, conferences, training events, etc.
 - (ii) Written and photographic material will be shared through the Newsletter.
 - (iii) Written, photographic, and video material will also be shared via the website.
 - (iv) Material of any form can be requested from M, E & R. Support will be available for hard copy, electronic, or video/DVD formatting.
3. Capacity building for M, E & R. Depending on what decisions are taken about home week, a considerable amount of capacity building could occur during the days of home week. However, other forms of capacity building will also be implemented:
- a. After the first home week of 2009, every staff member engaged in programme work (and this may be extended to staff in other sections), will be expected to keep a diary/journal in which they record the details of their daily activities. This will provide a valuable record of the basic data required for monitoring and reporting.
 - b. In addition, appropriate tools will be developed for data gathering with the assistance of the M, E & R Division⁹. A wide range of tools is already available, and these may be adopted or modified according to need.
 - c. Assistance will also be provided by the M, E & R Division for the orderly and ethically acceptable storage of data.
 - d. Using the data available, and drawing on a growing discipline of personal reflection, staff will be encouraged to write two-monthly reports¹⁰ for submission to their coordinators/managers/senior managers. These reports could, in time, form the foundation of preparations for home weeks, and will also be valuable for the compilation of donor reports. The writing of two-monthly reports will also develop sound documentation skills. It will be essential, however, that coordinators/managers/senior managers provide adequate feedback to colleagues on their reports.
 - e. The M, E & R Division will also work with colleagues to provide project-specific support for monitoring and evaluation of projects.
4. Undertaking evaluations. The M, E & R Division will undertake evaluations where they have the capacity and expertise to do so. In the event that they are unable to undertake this work, suitable outside resources will be located. In contemplating the need for evaluations, the wisdom of Michael Patton (1999) should guide the organization: he maintains that a project should never be evaluated until it is "proud".

⁹ This process may require that tools developed by donors be taken into consideration, eg. JHHESA's on-line data capture tools.

¹⁰ Examples of monthly reports are available from the Senior Manager: M, E & R. The frequency of reporting also needs further discussion by Leadership and Management.

In other words, do not be too hasty to evaluate a project that has not had adequate time to make a difference.

5. Undertaking "meta-evaluations". The M, E & R Division will, with the participation of colleagues, attempt to draw organizationally-relevant learnings from a range of reports and other documents, so as to inform organizational practice and proposal development.
6. Developing service learning projects. The M, E & R Division will assist colleagues who wish to engage with students, to develop appropriate curricula and support materials. This work will need to be undertaken in close partnership with institutions of higher education, and will depend on available staff capacity.
7. Incorporation of learnings into practice, into reports, and into proposals. While the M, E & R Division can be expected to guide, facilitate, support, and in some cases to implement, it is the responsibility of all staff, and especially of leadership and management, to ensure that learnings are *used*. This means that:
 - a. The team responsible for whatever form the organization's ongoing practice development programme may take, incorporate emergent learnings into the practice development programme to ensure greater effectiveness;
 - b. Staff members responsible for writing reports include learnings as part of those reports;
 - c. Staff members responsible for developing proposals incorporate learnings and innovations into proposals;
 - d. Staff who participate in conferences, workshops and seminars incorporate learnings into their presentations;
 - e. Staff who write for publication draw on the learnings to inform their writings;
 - f. Staff working with students incorporate the learnings into their facilitation.
8. Research. While research has not been highlighted in this strategy, it must be emphasized that as knowledge work becomes more accepted within the organization, the interest in research will increase. It is anticipated that the desire to inquire more deeply into the *meaning* of our work will stimulate a variety of research questions which can be addressed either as an ongoing part of our work, or form the basis of specific research projects which may be undertaken with outside assistance, eg. with Master's or Doctoral students.

Assessment of staff's participation in organizational knowledge work.

As noted on page 6, knowledge work should ideally not be imposed, as this has the potential to undermine the process. However, in order to ensure the growth and development of knowledge work as an integral part of the organization's practice, the contribution of staff

to knowledge work should remain a part of performance appraisals. The existing performance appraisal format takes into account many aspects of knowledge work, and this can provide an opportunity to monitor and guide the performance of staff in relation to knowledge work. Where references to knowledge work are missing from job descriptions, it will be necessary to include these requirements¹¹, and this should be included to any revisions to job descriptions currently under way. In particular, the job descriptions and performance appraisals of Leadership and Management will need to set examples in terms of the advancement of knowledge work.

Evaluation of the strategy.

As noted on page 4, the evaluation of knowledge work is by no means a simple undertaking. However, this strategy already lays the foundation for its own monitoring and evaluation. The following list is by no means exhaustive, and will be developed further with input from colleagues.

1. Outputs. There are a range of outputs associated with the strategy:
 - a. A knowledge resource audit.
 - b. A knowledge skills audit.
 - c. Various documents which will emerge from each home week, including the Newsletter.
 - d. Regular progress reports (the quality of these should be monitored).
 - e. Improved donor reports and proposals (the role that more easily-accessible information and knowledge plays in the development of these should be monitored).
 - f. Conference and workshop participation.
 - g. The website.

2. Outcomes. The critical outcome is greater effectiveness, and there are a wide range of options for evaluating this, depending on the context.
 - a. The organization's contribution to significant change (Willettts & Crawford, 2007) at community level.
 - b. A deepening understanding amongst staff members of the organization's practice and their contributions to that practice.
 - c. A growing comfort amongst staff with knowledge work processes, such as reflection, writing, and "reading" developmental situations.

¹¹ Such details are likely to be job specific, so no generic guidelines are provided here. However, there are likely to be broadly applicable requirements such as evidence for appropriate reading, writing, learning activities, etc. the M, E & R Division can assist with developing this aspect of job descriptions.

- d. Increased donor interest related to our demonstrated ability to learn and innovate.
3. Process. This would include:
- a. The perceived benefit of home week by staff.
 - b. Increased desire for personal development, including reading, mentoring, and relevant study.
 - c. Improved integration amongst teams within divisions and amongst divisions themselves.
 - d. Enhanced quality of, and participation in, organizational conversations.

An especially valuable tool would be the "five competencies matrix" recommended by Ramalingam (2006 p. 12), which would provide us with a baseline for many aspects of organizational knowledge work, and would also enable us to monitor change with time.

Budget.

A draft budget is available for the work of the M, E & R Division over the next three years. However, agreement will need to be reached on where the cost of organizational processes is located. It may be possible to seek "contributions in kind" from other divisions, such as free venues from Organizational Support. Of course, *all* divisions will be contributing through the very real costs associated with attending home week. However, again it is important to state that the costs associated with knowledge work should not be perceived as "extra" costs, but as an essential component of our operational budget. Here, reference can be made to Ramalingam's (2005) seventh question: *How does an organization measure the costs and benefits of learning and not learning?* It may be relatively easy, in financial terms, to measure the costs of learning; however, the costs of *not* learning, while less immediately obvious, may even extend to the decline and eventual demise of the organization.

Appendix 1: Toward an understanding of the term "knowledge work"

As noted on page 1, the term "knowledge work" has been used in this document in preference to the term "knowledge management", to include the many and varied activities which are associated with knowledge creation and sharing, terms such as data "capture", data analysis, documentation, monitoring, evaluation, research, reflection, and learning. In the past, these terms have often been used in isolation at The Valley Trust, and sometimes associated with the work of a particular department or even an individual staff member. This led to a perception that the activities themselves are isolated and disconnected, and implied that documentation was, say, "the work of the OD Department", or that evaluation is something "added on" at the end of a project. However, the approach which we are now striving to follow is one of integration across the organization, and as such, the creation and sharing of knowledge in all its many facets will increasingly become part of a seamless organizational practice. This means that the creation and sharing of knowledge will become a conscious part of our *work*.

Another reason for preferring the term "knowledge work" is that the term "knowledge management" has many of its origins in the corporate sector, and while there is much that we can learn from this sector, we also need to heed the caution expressed by Ramalingam (2005 p. 8) that "...*'knowledge for development' faces a distinct, perhaps more complex, set of challenges*" than those existing in the corporate sector. We also assume that the development sector, at least the NGO part of it, has a genuine desire to create and share knowledge for what Reason and Bradbury (2001 p. 1) have termed "*a world worthy of human aspiration*", rather than for attaining a corporate "competitive edge" or "competitive advantage". This means that the *management* of knowledge (in corporate terms) is less important to us than *working* with knowledge in a free, open, participatory, and transparent way.

This may seem like an unnecessarily subtle distinction, but the language of knowledge work is fraught with paradoxes and specialist terms. For example, Hildreth and Kimble (2002) have pointed out that knowledge is both "hard" and "soft", and Snowden (2002), in his influential paper, has described knowledge as both "thing" and "flow". Eisner (1997) has noted that "*Knowledge as process, a temporary state, is scary to many*". Thus, while it may be possible to manage hard knowledge (as a "thing"), it is much more challenging to manage soft knowledge which flows and which lives in relationship. This challenge has given rise to attempts to find ways of "converting" soft/tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge which can be "captured" (see for example the work of Nonaka *et al* (2000)), but such approaches are viewed with skepticism in some quarters (D'Eredita & Barreto, 2006). Such difficulties have led to a growth in the use of metaphors (eg. "knowledge as love") to describe knowledge work (Andriessen, 2007). Indeed, the use of the term "knowledge management" has been questioned by Wilson (2002), who notes (p. 1) that "...*'knowledge management' is an umbrella term for a variety of organizational activities, none of which are concerned with*

the management of knowledge". And Zeleny (1996) has pointed out (p. 1) that "Although information is an enhanced form of data, knowledge is not an enhanced form of information". So while we may manage data, and perhaps to a lesser extent information, knowledge is very different: we may not be able to *manage* it, but we can certainly *work* with it.

Thus we have chosen the term "knowledge work" in an attempt to (i) promote the understanding that the varied aspects of knowledge creation and sharing are an integral part of our work; (ii) demystify the terminology; (iii) adopt a term which reflects the special and complex nature of the challenges associated with knowledge creation and sharing in the development sector; and (iv) promote various "ways of knowing" which enhance perspectives rather than strive for certainty.

These ideas will be further developed as the strategy is implemented over the next three years.

Appendix 2: The "figure of eight" diagram

A version of this diagram first appeared in The Valley Trust's 1999/2000 Annual Report (p. 4), where it was used to illustrate the growing understanding within the then Appropriate



Technology Department about the systemic nature of our work. The diagram has since been developed, and used as a way to understand different aspects of The Valley Trust's knowledge work. The version pictured on the left was discussed at some length during the organization's 2006 strategic planning, and has been used in reports to donors and in the writings about the work of the Cooperative Inquiry Group at The Valley Trust. In a recent (December 2008) report, the diagram is described as follows:

The lower loop represents our "learning in and from action" - that learning which emerges from the interweaving of action and reflection. For example, some of the recent planning sessions in the Programmes Division have demonstrated a definite willingness amongst staff to engage at a much deeper level with questions about our

work: What are we really trying to change? (as opposed to a previous focus on what are we setting out to do?); What strategies will we employ to bring about these changes? What

evidence will we look for to indicate that the desired changes are indeed happening? This indicates a shift in the thinking of many colleagues, from an activity focus to a results focus.

Moving to the centre of the lemniscate, we come to the "cross over point"¹², that point which we see as the "organizational level" of the flow of learning and knowledge creation. It is out of this organizational level that we might be able to say that "In the experience of The Valley Trust..." and know that that experience has been discussed, shared, argued, agreed, and perhaps documented, by a majority of staff members. (It is interesting to note that in some cases, this organizational level has been bypassed by colleagues in their work. For example, the work of the former Integrated Technology Department - who did, and still do, as part of the new Programmes Division, really innovative work - was shared through writing articles, advocating, and networking without the rest of the organization necessarily being aware of their learnings). It is at this point (or level) that we find a number of coordinating structures and processes forming or settling in: firstly, there is the relatively newly-formed Leadership Team, made up of the Executive Director and three Senior Managers, one of whose tasks at this level is to integrate the work of the organization. Secondly, there is the work of the Quality Assurance Committee (at the moment made up of three members of the CIG), whose task is to review reports and make recommendations for improvements so that there is a common standard for all reports leaving the organization. And then thirdly, there has been (and at present it is inactive and awaiting a restructuring), the Skills Development Committee, which supports the formal studies of staff members and ideally helps to relate these to both the career path of individuals and the knowledge and skills needs of the organization. So at this strategic level there is an increasing focus on integration, quality, evidence-based reporting, and knowledge and skills development.

The upper loop is perhaps the least understood at this time, possibly due to the fact that the activities and processes associated with this level have historically been the preserve of very few staff members: writing for publication; presenting at conferences; reporting to donors; advocating; engaging with students and faculty. This is the level that will require us to ask ourselves: how can we best represent our work, and the results of our work, to others? How creative can we be? Here it must be emphasized that it is not a case of being creative for the sake of being creative! Participation in, for example, a government-convened committee may present an excellent opportunity for sharing our learnings, but may require very conventional representations of what we do and how we do it.

¹² The term "point" is used loosely here. It is not viewed as a fixed point, but rather as an opportunity in space and time for breathing, making connections, and coordinating. Something more like T S Eliot's (1963) "...still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless/Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is...".

The figure of eight diagram is thus an attempt to represent something of the *flow* of knowledge at The Valley Trust, and something of the way in which our work can be visualized as a whole. It is a representation that has grown out of ongoing reflection on our work, and as such should be seen as a "representation in progress". It will be interesting to see how it evolves over the next few years.

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