

A repository of knowledge on water related issues



Photo credit: Jung Hoon Kim (pixabay.com)

In today's interconnected world, the interaction between knowledge, communication and action is more vital than ever before, access to the right information is crucial in understanding and solving the many issues globally. Communication is a fundamental aspect to maintaining healthy social systems in our societies, continual communication, helps bridge gaps in knowledge exchange, ameliorating existing misconceptions and misunderstandings in communities. The virtual exchange of knowledge is used to augment and/or follow up on face to face encounters globally. Now, how does this relation 'knowledge-communication-action' play out in the water sector?

The water related issues that exist in a particular area, can be experienced in a different geographical region, with similar hydro-climatic conditions. The challenges to a particular water related issue are solved in one region, yet a region with a similar issue grapples with it unsuccessfully, for instance how to determine the best environmental flow regimes in dams to ecosystems downstream. There is often disconnect when it comes to sharing knowledge or information between regions, on managing or solving these issues.

Knowledge portals are one way of actively sharing information –they often are comprised of organized information, knowledge networks and communities, discussion forums and collaborative work-spaces, to better encourage and transfer a more spontaneous exchange of tacit knowledge. The Flood and Drought Portal (<http://www.flooddroughtmonitor.com>) provides a set of online tools to better integrate climate information into planning across scales. The portal is a key output of the Flood and Drought Management Tools (FDMT) project (<http://fdmt.iwlearn.org/en>). The Knowledge Exchange Portal, which supports the Flood and Drought portal, helps answer questions and exchange information through a virtual space. It is helping to bridge this gap, by becoming an avenue to exchange knowledge on water related challenges. It is a portal, where experts and other stakeholders in the water sector can come together, and learn as

well as exchange ideas on solving issues. The potential of the Knowledge Exchange Portal to connect the water world is greater because, it boasts of different categories that virtually encompass important facets of water management namely; data and information, risk and impact assessment, planning and reporting. The water sector, can be made more aware of The Knowledge Exchange Portal which is only as good as users make it, through awareness creation by different water stakeholders through their communication channels and workshops.

The Knowledge Exchange Portal

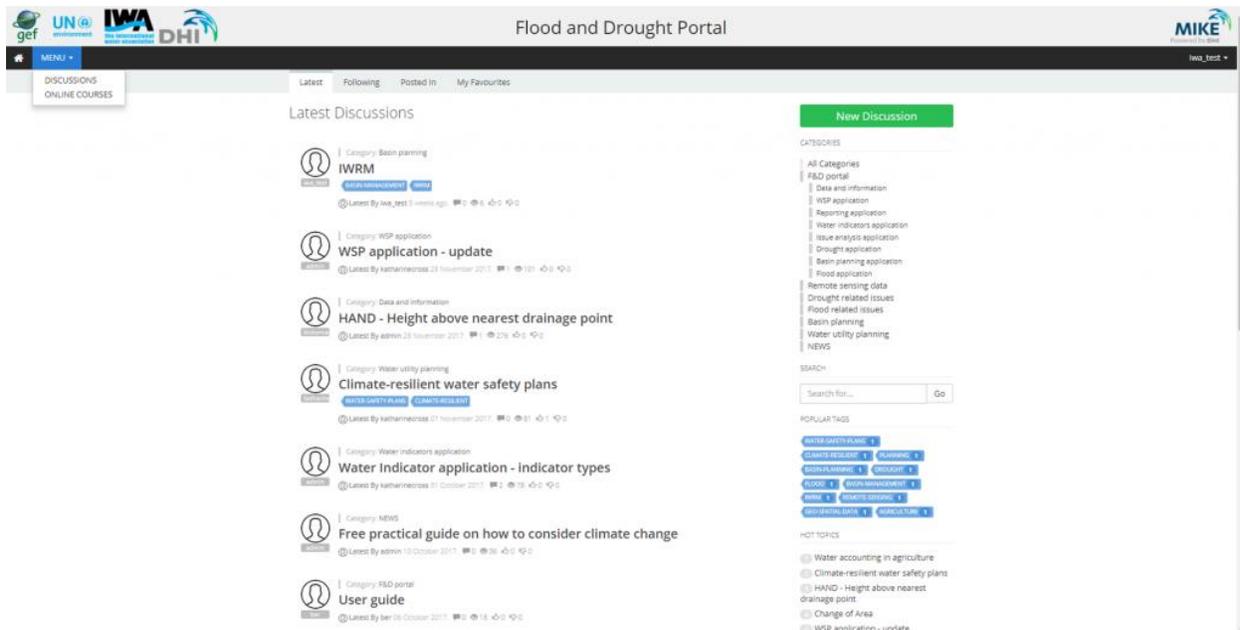


Figure 1. Knowledge Portal home page

The growing concept of community of practice, is revolutionising the world in many areas, currently, [IWA Connect](#) and [SuSanA](#), which are very interactive, are platforms to draw inspiration from. In the water sector, it's a growing prominence bringing together people who share the same passion for water to engage and exchange information, experience and knowledge in solving water related issues. Different stakeholders in the water sector are employing the concept to help solve many of the rising water issues. Seamlessly connecting these water stakeholders through an online platform, was the motivation behind The Flood and Drought Management Tools Project's desire to tap into the vast knowledge basin stakeholders have and create a virtual connection amongst them. Apart from the exchange of knowledge, the portal offers online courses on various water related topics, which users can follow and acquire more knowledge and training. The portal has the potential with users to provide an avenue of knowledge exchange and also an avenue to help acquire additional training for stakeholders within transboundary basins.

People in different parts of the world can exchange ideas and help address water problems around specific topics through the Knowledge and Exchange Portal. Information is virtually one touch away, thanks to the portal, a repository of answers to water related issues.

The Knowledge Exchange Portal can be accessed at <http://www.flooddroughtmonitor.com/knowledgeportal/>, and a video tutorial showing how to use the

Knowledge Portal can be found [here](#). For more information please visit the Flood and Drought Portal (<http://www.flooddroughtmonitor.com/>).

About the Flood and Drought Management Tools project

The Flood and Drought Management Tools (FDMT) project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) International Waters (IW) and implemented by UN Environment (UNEP), with DHI and the International Water Association (IWA) as the executing agencies. The project is developing online technical applications to support planning from the transboundary basin to water utility level by including better information on floods and droughts. The project is being implemented from 2014 – 2018, with 3 pilot basins (Volta, Lake Victoria and Chao Phraya) participating in development and testing of the methodology and technical applications.

For more information on the Flood and Drought Management Tools project, visit: <http://fdmt.iwlearn.org/>.