

# Experience Capitalization Process

## 1. DEFINITION of Experience Capitalization

***“Capitalize is to transform the experience into shareable knowledge”***

(Pierre de Zutter, Des histoires, des savoirs, des hommes : l'expérience est un capital, FPH, Paris, 1994, p. 36)

Through its Knowledge Management programme KNOW-HOW3000, HORIZONT3000 aims to provide a platform (space) for its partner organisations, employees and Member Organisations to learn from their own and others relevant experiences in order to increase the effectiveness and impact of its own and its partners' work.

**Experience** is the tacit knowledge that our employees, project teams and organisations gather when doing their work. Experiences are hidden treasures in organisations and are not always explicitly shared within teams and with others.

By systematically reflecting on their experiences, learning from their positive and negative practice as well as getting access to other experiences, HORIZONT3000 fosters **organisational learning** and assumes that partner organisations adapt their practice/ methods and improve their services for their target groups.

In order to share learnings from experiences, capitalization and documentation of experiences is helpful. Capitalizing experiences means to collectively reconstruct and document what has happened, reflect on it and draw lessons learnt.

HORIZONT3000 tries to promote participatory ways of experience capitalization as learning from experience is enriched if more points of views are integrated. **Participatory Experience Capitalization** means that representatives of stakeholders involved in an action/ experience are integrated in the capitalization process. The method “Systematization of experiences” is one participatory method that HORIZONT3000 promotes within its KNOW-HOW3000 experience capitalization process. Further methods are described attached.

## 2. CATEGORIES of Experiences

The following categories are defined and supported within HORIZONT3000's knowledge management system in order to achieve know-how sharing and mutual learning. All experiences capitalized and shared within KNOW-HOW3000 should be **relevant experiences**<sup>1</sup> and imply the **potential to learn from it** – both for the organization who has made the experience as for other organizations in similar fields.

- **Category: GOOD PRACTICE**

A “Good Practice” is a relevant **positive** experience. Documenting and sharing what has been successful is key to avoid that others need to start from scratch or re-invent the wheel.

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<sup>1</sup> A relevant experience must be considered relevant for the own work of the organization and potentially relevant for other organizations in a similar working field.

- **Category: LEARNING FROM FAILURE**

A “Learning from Failure” experience is a relevant **negative** experience. HORIZONT3000 believes that failures or negative experiences can teach organizations a lot. Focusing on what has been learnt out of a failure rather than evaluating who has done something wrong implies a huge potential to learn.

### **3. THE PROCESS: How to start a sharing and learning process within your organization, project, or team**

The process with which partner organisations and HORIZONT3000 capitalize experiences follows 4 steps. In every step, different stakeholders can be involved and several methods of documentation and dissemination are used. It begins with identifying potential experiences and ends with finally reintegrating the learnings from experience capitalization into the daily work.<sup>2</sup>

#### **1) Identification and Assessment**

- A partner organization, technical advisor and/or HORIZONT3000 employee (from a regional office or from headquarter in Vienna) suggests a relevant topic/ an experience to either the sector coordinators or knowledge management desk at HORIZONT3000.
- Knowledge Management team, Country and/ or Regional Offices screen learning needs of partner organisations and call/ search for experiences, e.g. via KNOWLYMPICS or by contacting directly organisations that have experience in a certain field

#### **2) Documentation and Capitalization**

- If the experience is not yet capitalized and documented, the partner organization and/ or Technical Advisor and/ or HORIZONT3000 proposes a method on how to capitalize the experience, if possible in a participatory way.
- HORIZONT3000 and partner organization decide on the method how to capitalize the experience and how to finance this process.<sup>3</sup>
- The “Questionnaire for experience capitalization<sup>4</sup>” is completed, which serves as a summary for a possible/future sharing of this experience; support for this step is offered by HORIZONT3000.
- The experience description sheet (“Experience in Detail”) and a one-pager (“Experience at a Glance”) is prepared by HORIZONT3000.

#### **3) Sharing Knowledge**

- The experience is shared via the KNOW-HOW3000 Internet Platform or partners’ homepages, via regional or international sharing events (conferences, exchange visits, “EoE”, etc.), e-mail, or any other way.

#### **4) Adoption, Adaptation and Application**

- Partner organizations, Technical Advisors and HORIZONT3000 apply learnings from failure and good practices in their project/ programs
- HORIZONT3000 monitors, if experiences and good practices have been adopted by other (partner) organizations, and, if they had been adapted and applied. This is necessary in order to learn from the whole learning and sharing process.

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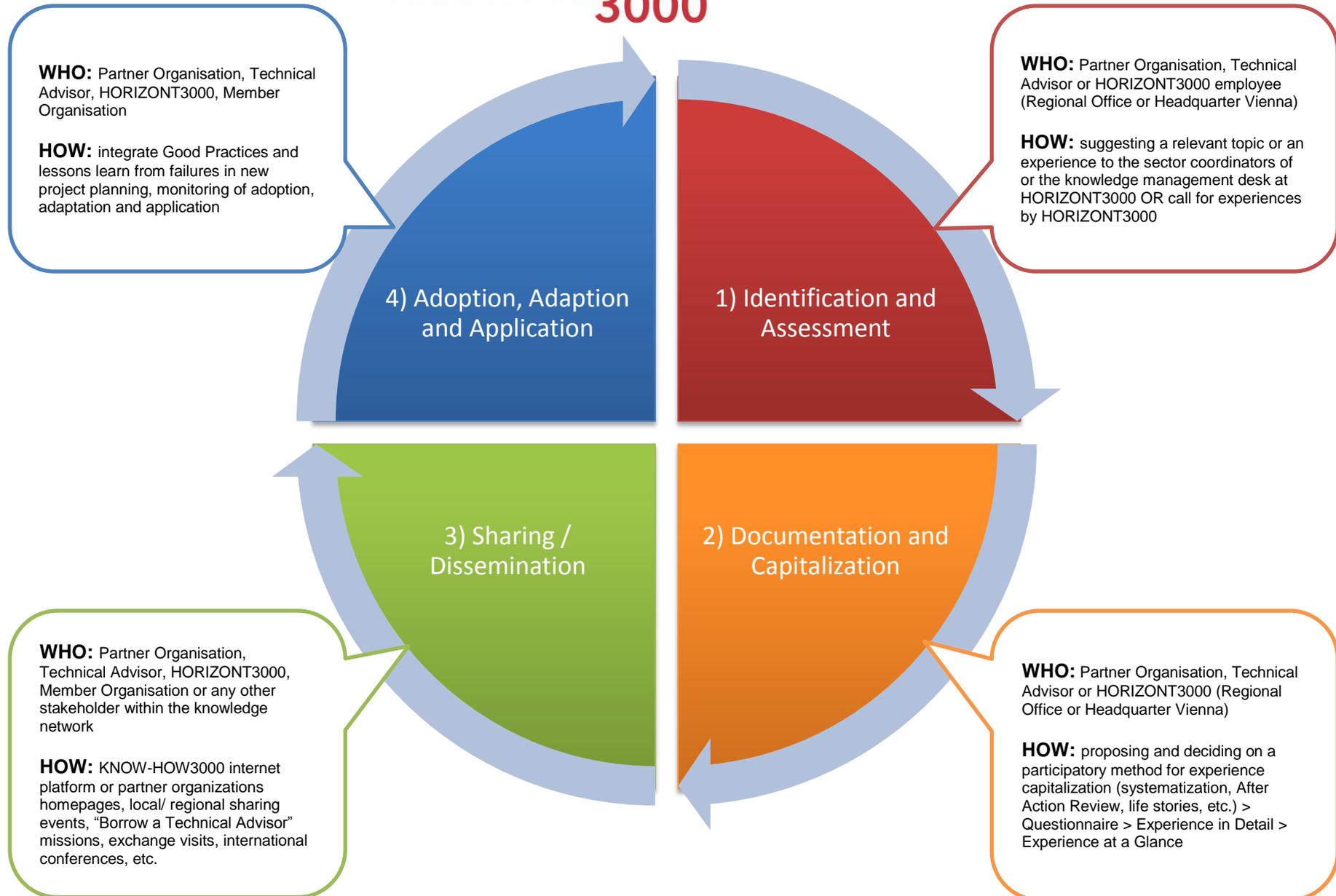
<sup>2</sup> Also see: FAO (2013): Good practices at FAO: Experience Capitalization for continuous learning. URL: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/ap784e/ap784e.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> If there is no time and resources for a methodologically founded capitalization process, these two steps can be left out and only the questionnaire for experience capitalization is filled in.

<sup>4</sup> Questionnaires can be downloaded here: <http://www.knowhow3000.org/en/files/questionnaires-experience-capitalization-ra/>

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## 4. ANNEX 1: Participatory Methods for Experience Capitalization

Partner Organisations, who want to share their experiences with other organisations within the knowledge network of HORIZONT3000, can use a participatory method before filling in the Questionnaire for Experience Capitalization. The following methods can be helpful in order to capitalize experiences in a participatory way.

- **Systematisation** is a participatory method to capture and document experiences/ practical know-how.  
Further Information [http://www.knowhow3000.org/es/?wpfb\\_dl=255381](http://www.knowhow3000.org/es/?wpfb_dl=255381)
- **Storytelling** is the use of stories or narratives as a communication tool to value, share, and capitalize the knowledge and know-how of individuals.  
Further Information  
<http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27637/storytelling.pdf> or  
[https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Learning-and-Networking/sdc\\_km\\_tools/Documents/Storytelling.pdf](https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Learning-and-Networking/sdc_km_tools/Documents/Storytelling.pdf)
- **After Action Review** is a tool to facilitate assessments by bringing together a team to discuss an activity or project openly and honestly.  
Further Information  
<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27570/conducting-after-action-reviews.pdf> or  
[https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Learning-and-Networking/sdc\\_km\\_tools/Documents/After%20Action%20Review.pdf](https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Learning-and-Networking/sdc_km_tools/Documents/After%20Action%20Review.pdf)
- **Appreciative Inquiry** is a method to facilitate positive change in organizations. Its basic assumption is uncomplicated: every organization has something that works well.  
Further Information  
<http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27558/appreciative-inquiry.pdf> or  
[https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Learning-and-Networking/sdc\\_km\\_tools/Documents/Appreciative%20Inquiry.pdf](https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Learning-and-Networking/sdc_km_tools/Documents/Appreciative%20Inquiry.pdf)
- **Focus Group Discussion** is a method to gather people from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest/ a specific experience.  
Further Information  
<http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7074.pdf>