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UNECE Work Session on the Communication of Statistics
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- (v) Internal communication and training

IMPROVING INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AT STATISTICS SWEDEN

Submitted by Statistics Sweden¹

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In January 2008 a new organisation of Statistics Sweden was launched. The responsibility for internal and external information (including publishing and marketing) was more centralised and the Communication Department was born. At the same time the rest of the organisation was rearranged to serve the statistics production process.
2. For a number of years, employee surveys had shown a discontent with the way information was handled in the organisation, but criticism had become more severe. There were higher demands on information coming from unit heads and management. To work more strategically with internal communication, the Communication Department hired a specialist who started working in July 2009.

II. MAPPING

3. We started with a study of the present situation at Statistics Sweden. A number of department and unit heads, employees and the Director General were interviewed.
4. The purpose of the discussions was to find out how these people communicate, how they receive and pass on information themselves, what kinds of meetings and other information channels they have and what they think about the intranet.
5. The findings were that:
 - Information is handled in different ways within the organisation. This often depends on how the department is structured and what kinds of meetings and other channels are available.
 - There is a lack of time for discussions at meetings; they tend to be information meetings only.
 - When decisions are presented, the background and consequences are often missing; as a result, decisions are not fully accepted by the organisation.
 - Unit heads are not trained in communication.

¹ Prepared by Uhrlander Lindbom, christine.uhrlanderlindbom@scb.se.

- A lot of written information is spread by e-mail and on the intranet; as a result there is no dialogue.
 - The nearest manager is the most important channel. Verbal information from and access to this person is vital.
 - There is a lack of tools to help managers with their communication.
 - The intranet is slow and unstructured; consequently, it is difficult to find information. A lot of information is not updated and there is no clear purpose on what should be communicated on the intranet.
6. There is no communication strategy for the management team on what should be communicated, when and how. This is done from case to case.

III. OUTCOME

7. During May 2010 we will finish a strategy for internal communication. The strategy will support the vision of Statistics Sweden to be of world class standard in refining data to statistical information, adapted to the customers' needs.
8. The Communication Policy at Statistics Sweden states that the goals of internal communication are:
- All employees have access to and are able to find the information they need to perform their job well
 - It contributes to a good work environment and strengthens the feeling of a united Statistics Sweden which in turn results in a sense of belonging, interaction and increased efficiency.
9. The strategy for internal communication will also support these goals
10. Documents and actions to support the strategy are
- The Communication Policy
 - A new leadership policy
 - Different guidelines for writing, for the publishing on the intranet etc
 - A communication plan for projects and events was presented in March this year
 - Tool for communication planning
 - Developing a new improved intranet. During 2010 a new first page for the intranet will be launched with improved functionality for news articles, for showing how Statistics Sweden is portrayed in media and blogs and with an integrated calendar that shows what management is doing, gives information on seminars, etc.
 - Training of unit and department heads
 - Supporting the management in communication