Develop a Research Hub for the Research and Analysis team at 350.org

IPSS Project 2018

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Introduction:

Due to the expansion of 350 work in different regions, the duties and the tasks of the Research and Analysis team (R&A) have increased. Moreover, when it comes to 350.org different teams have different needs depending on the nature of their work. Therefore, the R&A team decide to create a database/research, which contains primary resources related to 350.org working areas to help and to be used by the different teams in 350.

Based on the outcomes of several interviews and meetings with different teams in 350, the R&A team decided to identify the main research areas that concerned 350 teams and develop a research hub that can be used internally by the R&A team to respond to the needs of 350 teams.

The Research Hub (RH) will be divided into different categories based on the working areas of 350. In each category, a list of primary resources will be in place and will be updated on a weekly basis by the R&A team. When the team receives any request from 350 teams, they will use the research hub to find the matching resources for the request.

The Project context

350.org works on grassroots campaigns across the globe in the following areas opposing coal plants and mega-pipelines, to building renewable energy solutions and cutting financial ties of the fossil fuel industry. Now 350’s network extends to 188 countries, and the scope of the different teams at 350.org is growing every day. Moreover, 350.org aims to build its work on facts based science. Therefore, and for active and the efficient response to 350.org teams, the R&A
team will develop a tool to collect and label all the primary resources that are related to 350 work.

Goals and objectives:

- The project will identify the main categories that the 350.org teams need to cover in their work.
- The project will identify the central questions that the teams in 350, ask during the preparation of their new area of work.
- The project will find the primary resources to respond to the teams' needs and questions.
- The project will develop an easy tool to be used internally by the R&A team to respond to the research needs of 350 teams effectively and efficiently.

Project design:

**Key question:**

i. The Overarching question that the project is trying to answer
   How can the research hub of the R&A team respond effectively to the 350 research needs?

ii. Sub-questions can help answer the overarching question

- What are the primary research needs of 350 teams?
- What are the main areas that 350 focus on in their researches?
- What are the current tools that the R&A team use in responding to 350 research needs?
- What are the commonalities/ differences between the different teams?
- What are the main questions that the 350 team ask during the preparation of their work
- What are the best tools to be used to present the database from the campaigners' point of view
The story of developing the Research Hub

Why the R&A did not implement the RH before?

The research and analysis team is one person, the coordinator of the team who is responsible for responding to the research needs of 350 different teams. From the beginning of my internship with 350, the coordinator of the research and analysis team identified the tools as the solution of the research needs for 350 teams in different region, especially the campaigns team. This solution is based on the fact that 350 teams need to build their work based on scientific facts and accurate data. Because jumping to the solution is not the right approach to solve any problem, the coordinator and I started to set up meeting and interviews to ask different teams about their research needs.

The primary outcomes of these interviews are the following:

- The time limitation in the campaigns and other regional teams to research the area of their work, especially with new topics.
- The problem of forming a term of reference, and asking the right question to get the right answer
- The communication system between the R&A departments and other teams in 350. It is not clear how the R&A can help the other teams,
- The lack of human resources at the R&A: the coordinator of the R&A was the only person who is responsible for the research work at 350

Who will use RH?

After receiving the mentioned outcomes from different teams at 350, the coordinator of the R&A decided to change the users of the RH from the larger teams of 350 to the internal usage of the R&A team. The logic behind this decision is:

- To minimize the workload of 350 teams: 350 teams will send research request to the R&A team who will send back the required resources by using the RH as a first step
To experiment the by the R&A team to develop the tool and make it users friendly

What does the RH look like?

The RH become two components:

- The database:

  The database will be a simple excel google sheet, to provide a list of primary sources from trusted sites. The database categories are the following (Picture 1):

  - The resource subject: the database will focus on three subjects which are lined with 350 area of work: Energy, Finance, and Justice.
  - The title of the resources and the hyperlink to the PDF file or the website where the resource is published
  - The year of the publication of the resource
  - The Frequency of updating the resource: For example, if the resource is an annual report, in this category we can indicate the frequency of updating this report.
  - The geographical Scope: this category will help the team to know the area that the resource cover.
  - The source type: If it is a research, report, a row data ...etc
  - Summary: Write the main summary of the resource
  - How 350 teams can use this resource: Here the link between the resources and 350 areas of work
  - What are the questions that the source answer:
  - Tags/words/codes: This category can help for developing a search engine in the future based on this database.
The research request form

The research request form is a tool to collect the research needs from different teams at 350. The form will be sent on a weekly basis for all staff, and all the requests will be received by the R&A team to respond to the request. The R&A team will look up for the required resources from the RH, and send it back to the requester based on the urgency of the request.

In picture 2, the request from details:
Why the RH will help the team?

The RH will help 350 in two ways:

- Saving the team’s time and resources by centralizing the search process in one tool that can provide the main primary and updated resources about Climate change, and from reliable references
- Keeping the team updated about the main researches related to their area of work
Future Steps

The development of the RH is ongoing process, and its timeline will be different from the IPSS project timeline. The following are the future planned steps:

- The first of August: Presentation about how to use the RH and the Research request Form and feedback from 350 teams
- End of August: Engage the training team at 350 to develop the RH to be used directly by different teams at 350