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British Council
PRINCE2®:2009 Pilot Case Study

By Sarah Chambers,
Head of Programme Management,
Global Information Systems

Executive Summary

- The Global Information Systems Programme Management team at the British Council has used PRINCE2:2009 to help deliver technical change in many countries around the world. Communication and sharing of information between the UK and other countries is very important to the organisation and they need the robust structure offered by PRINCE2 to help deliver projects in a challenging environment.

- The new Directing manual is very useful for project governance – it gives a good starting point and checklist for each project, and defines areas of responsibility very clearly. There is also clear practical advice on the impact of following good practice in running project boards.

- PRINCE2 gives the Programme Management team the confidence of a reliable authority because it is used widely in the public sector and is recognised as Best Practice. This saves discussion about the best way of managing projects and moves the discussion on to the best way of applying good practice to the particular project being delivered.

- The updated guidance is now more practical with useful examples, using terminology the whole organisation can understand. The new guidelines on benefits management and links between programme and project management have been useful in putting project management in a business context.

Context and background about the British Council

Celebrating 75 years in 2009, the British Council is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. The British Council works in over 100 countries worldwide to build engagement and trust for the UK through the exchange of knowledge and ideas between people. Areas of work include the arts, education, science, sport and governance and in 2009 over 128 million people were involved in these areas of work. The British Council is a non-political organisation which operates at arm's length from government. Total turnover in 2007/8 was £565 million, of which grant-in-aid from the British government was £197 million.

Sarah Chambers manages the Global Information Systems Programme Management team which delivers change programmes and projects to support the work of the British Council. Communication and information sharing between the UK and other countries and regions is very important in an organisation whose mission is to facilitate long term cultural relationships. The British Council has over 250 offices including a number of small offices in developing countries, some large offices with English Teaching centres as well as a suite of online communities.

More information on PRINCE2:2009 at www.best-management-practice.com