

KNOWLEDGE Management



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

WHAT THE SNAP CRISIS REVEALS ABOUT KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT DURING GLOBAL CRISES

The disruption of SNAP benefits during the government shutdown showed how fragile public programs can become when information and coordination fall apart. Over 40 million Americans rely on SNAP, and when payments stopped, confusion spread. The USDA said it could not use its 4.65 billion dollar contingency fund since it was meant for emergencies, until two federal courts ruled it must be used. Benefits resumed, but only at about half the normal amount.

What followed was a messy rollout. Each state has to interpret new federal guidance and update its own system. Some will handle the change fast, while others warned of long delays. The lack of shared direction turned an administrative challenge into a national crisis. Families are still left waiting and uncertain, not because help was unavailable, but because information was scattered and slow to move.

At the center of this issue was a failure to manage knowledge. Legal rules, funding procedures, and emergency plans existed but were not connected or accessible when needed. Institutional memory was spread across agencies, forcing courts to use knowledge that should have guided decisions from the start. Without systems that organize and share critical information, these agencies lose the ability to make quick, coordinated choices.

The SNAP delay proved that many crises start as knowledge problems, not financial ones. A stronger flow of accurate, shared information could have prevented confusion and delays. When knowledge is organized and applied effectively, essential programs like SNAP can remain stable even in times of government disruption.



CONNECTION TO KM

This event reflects Knowledge Management during Global Crises. The USDA response showed weak preparation, unclear communication, and limited learning after the shutdown. Effective KM systems that capture and share knowledge across agencies are essential for consistent decisions, reliable communication, and stable public services during emergencies.



Nile Love

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When the USDA couldn't access its own contingency plan, millions of Americans paid the price. The SNAP shutdown wasn't just a funding issue. It was a failure to manage knowledge in a crisis. #KM #SNAP #CrisisResponse #Leadership

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