

Pennsylvania State University
Indigenous Knowledges – Transforming the Institution

Engaging and Transforming Institutions

Learning From Local Communities

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Overview

- **Introduction**
- **Indigenous Knowledge in Development**
- **Mainstreaming IK**

Questions

- *In what way is indigenous knowledge relevant to the education, research and development agendas of The World Bank?*
- *How does the Bank learn from local knowledge communities?*

The work of the World Bank

- **lending of \$15-20 billion a year**
- **184 member states**
- **profits of around \$1 billion a year**
- **financial and knowledge services**
- **“reconstruction”**
- **financing development**
- **knowledge as a “currency”**

World Bank mission statement

To fight poverty with **passion** and professionalism for lasting results

To help people help themselves and their environment, by providing resources, ***sharing knowledge...***

However...

The Bank is not a storehouse of universally applicable knowledge just waiting to be transferred.

That is why it is striving to:

- **empower** its clients to tap knowledge sources,
- **connect** clients to one another and to other sources of experience, and
- **learn** with them what works in a given setting & facilitate adaptation with modern technology

Indigenous knowledge is...

- ❖ **unique** to a given community or culture
- ❖ **embedded** in practices and institutions
- ❖ **basis for local decision making** pertaining to food security, human and animal health, education, natural-resource management, etc.
- ❖ **key asset of the poor**

Why consider Indigenous Knowledge?

- **Normative Case**

- Knowledge of some 3 - 4 billion people
- Endangered and underused resource

- **Political Case**

- Client governments and civil society demand it
- Building on IK helps empower local communities

- **Business Case**

- IK helps adapt global solutions to local context
- IK contributes to better results on the ground

Normative Case

- **Loss of a Language = Loss of Culture**
 - >2000 African languages, each representing a set of IK
 - With culture loss, knowledge and values disappear
- **Loss of Knowledge**
 - Biodiversity, health, land management
 - Means to exchange knowledge, and to resolve conflict
- **Saving the Knowledge?**
 - Documentation, protection, sharing
 - Use, challenge and develop

The Political Case

- **Equity (Global - Local)**

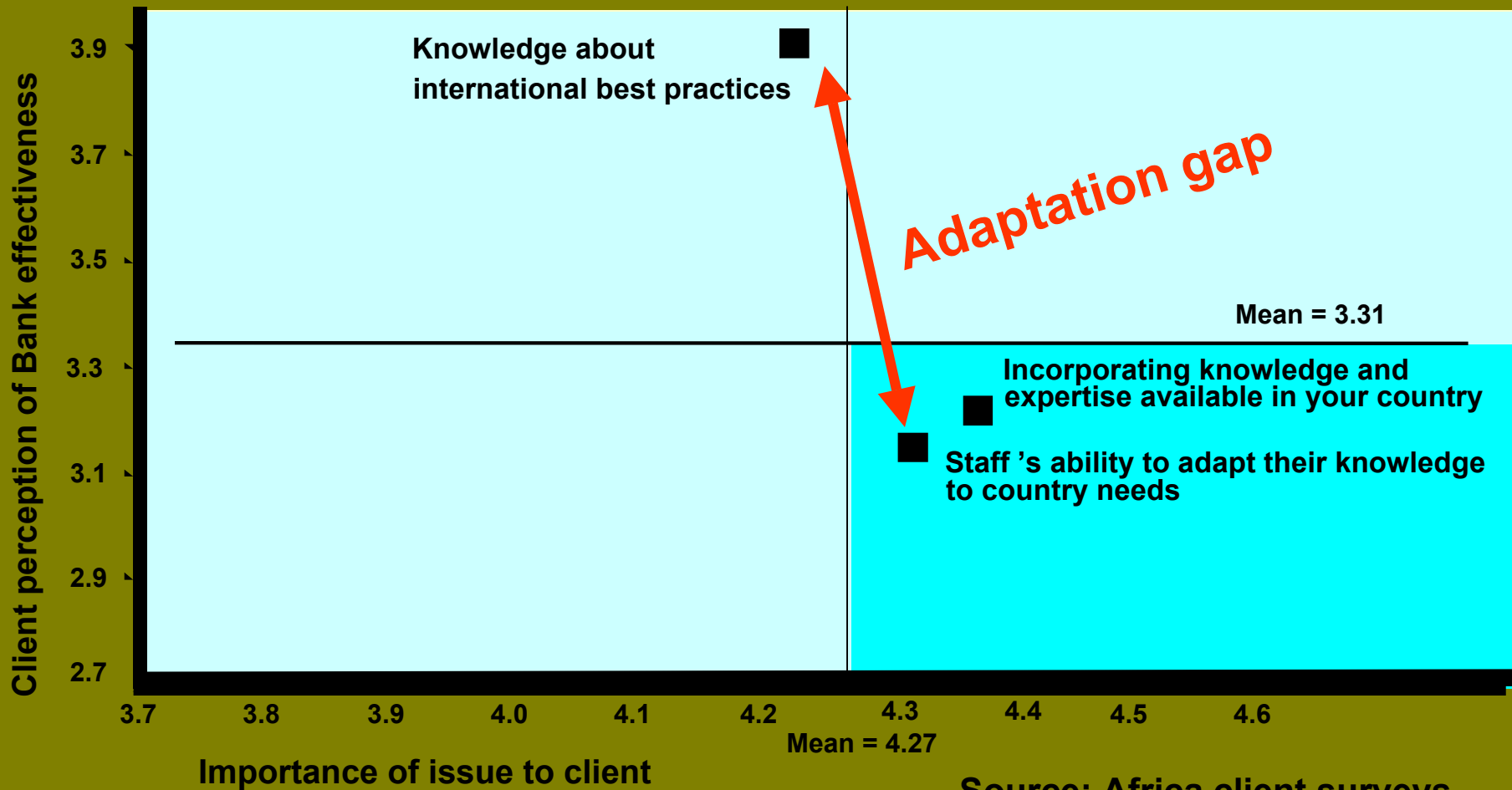
- Standards
- Networks
- Exchange

- **Enable, and thus empower**

- Building on local knowledge
- Valuing local knowledge

(this includes )

The Business Case - Client's view: Knowledge adaptation



Source: Africa client surveys

The Business Case - Bank's view:

Indigenous knowledge helps to increase...

- **efficiency**
 - IK is cost effective
 - IK uses appropriate technology
- **effectiveness**
 - IK is locally managed
 - IK reaches the poor
- **sustainability**
 - IK provides for mutual **adaptation & learning**
 - IK **empowers** local communities

... in the Development Process

Indigenous knowledge can contribute to:

- **Raising agricultural production**
- **Increasing value of education systems**
- **Improving quality of health care**
- **Good governance**

Senegal

Empowerment

After adult education course by NGO Tostan

- Women apply literacy to solve a community problem
- Lead local movement to end practice of FGM

Use traditional institutions to effect change

- Involve male spiritual leaders as agents of change
- Exchange experiences with neighbor communities

Impact

- > 16 communities abolish practice within 18 months
- Senegal officially abolishes practice in December 1998
- Movement expands to outside communities by 2001

Burkina Faso

Education

- **Literacy in local languages**
 - 4,000 literacy centers vs. 3,000 formal schools using French
 - 15,000 learners in Gulmancema language (41% women)
 - 52% of successful literacy center students were women
- **Impact**
 - > 50% of 72,000 literacy center students declared literate
 - Newly literate women use local language to develop accounting, management systems to run cooperative

Nepal

Governance

Using local standards

- Food for Work Program uses containers ⇔ high leakage
- Community proposes local transport means and bagging

Impact

- Quantities delivered are public knowledge ⇔ transparency
- Reduced leakage
- Additional income for local communities
- Other WFP programs in the country adopt this approach

The Response

- **Awareness Raising**
- **Mainstreaming**
- **Capacity Building**

How we promote IK ...

1. Raising awareness

- ✓ IK data base (~ 300 cases)
- ✓ 69 “IK Notes” IK narratives and Website

2. Building capacity

- ✓ Develop national IK strategies
- ✓ IK centers and “Community- Exchanges”

3. Mainstreaming

- ✓ “Knowledge Packs” guidelines and check lists
- ✓ IK Integration (over a dozen projects)

Capacity Building through sharing of IK

- **Kenya**

 - Maasai Village museum**

- **South Africa**

 - Community based technology transfer**

- **South Asia - East Africa**

 - National Strategy to utilize IK**

 - Development of medicinal plants**

 - Early Child Hood Development**

Mainstreaming in Africa: Selected Bank Supported Projects

Country	Project	Activities	Outcome
Malawi	Social Action Fund	Stakeholder analysis, national WS; appraisal	Integration of IK food security practices component of project
Kenya	PRSP/ CAS Process	Institutional analysis of local level institutions	Increased community participation in PRSP/CAS process
Uganda	Social Action Fund	Appraisal	Recognition of IK in conflict prevention and resolution
Eritrea	Early Childhood Development	Mapping of IK; pilot studies; community exchanges	IK dissemination; regional exchange, Database; IK track in int. ECD-conference
Ethiopia	Women's Development Initiative	Mapping of IK; community exchanges	Project sub-component under preparation
Guinea	Multi-Sectoral AIDS Project (MAP)	Advise on community involvement in design of project component	Integration of traditional healers in the prevention of HIV/AIDS
Ghana	N-Savannah Biodiversity Conservation	ESW	Medicinal plant components in health projects and NRM

Scaling up IK: Selected Examples

Country	Bank Role	Result
Uganda	Capacity Building (IDF)	Integrating IK into the Poverty Eradication Action Plan
Eritrea Kenya Uganda Tanzania	Facilitation Capacity Building (ECDVU)	Systematic research on traditional ECD practices for validation and initiation of dialogue on national integration of IK practices
Ethiopia Kenya Uganda	Capacity building/ Facilitation	Recognition of role of traditional practitioners providers in health service provision; systematic validation of traditional practices Regional partnership between E-Africa and S-Asia
Burkina Faso	Capacity Building Facilitation	Integration of traditional water harvesting method into community development programs
India	Brokerage	Kerala State adopts traditional practices in health, agriculture and natural resource management into five-year-plan

Mainstreaming: Uganda → Ethiopia

Linking modern & traditional knowledge systems

- High maternal mortality rate in Iganga District
- Health services partner with traditional birth attendants
- Link attendants to health units thru 'walkie-talkies'
- Transport capacity of health units improved
- Attendants serve as referral points

Local Impact

- Health services reach more pregnant women 'just in time'
- Maternal deaths decline by 50% in 3 years

Transfer

- ICT assisted development project in preparation proposes to utilize Iganga experience

Lessons Learned

“Best Practice”



Adapted practice

Building capacity



Creating opportunities

Documentation



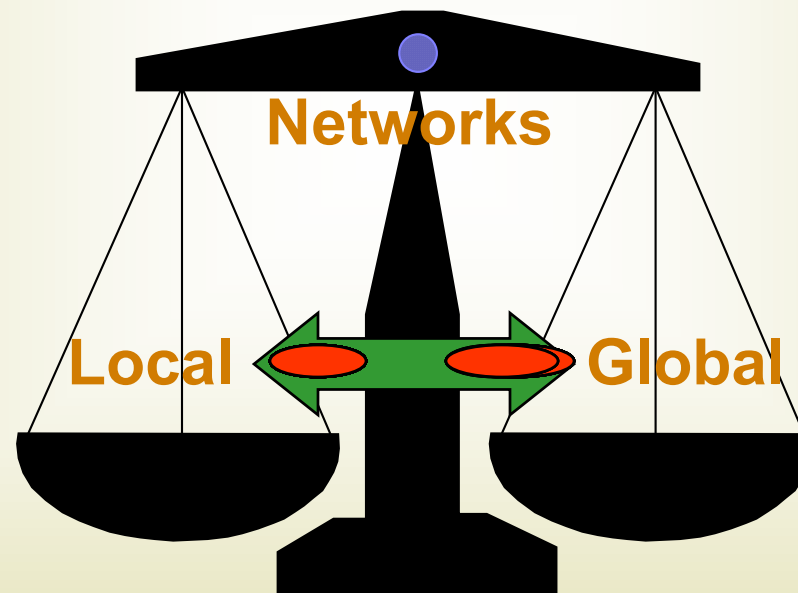
Application

Externally driven



Community driven

Balanced Flow of Knowledge



Challenges / Issues

Validation/ Verification

Link knowledge communities

Develop local standards and constituencies

Intellectual Property Rights

Strengthen protection mechanisms

Tacit Knowledge

Strengthen “Communities of Practice”

Concluding Remarks

- **IK is a critical factor in sustainable development**
- **Empowerment & enablement of local communities is a key to integrating IK into the development process**
- **Helping promote networks of traditional practitioners & community-to-community exchanges is a way to better disseminate good practices in IK**
- **Innovative mechanisms to protect and develop IK**
- **A regional approach is likely to be most cost effective**
- **Partnerships help to advance this agenda**

