



Developmental Sustainability: Indigenous Knowledge and Practices for Sustainable Development

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DESCRIPTION

Indigenous knowledge is an essential element in sustainable development. Empowering local communities is a prerequisite for integrating indigenous knowledge into the development process. The integration of appropriate indigenous knowledge systems into development programs has contributed to improving efficiency, effectiveness and impact on sustainable development. Indigenous knowledge, like any other, needs to be continually used, questioned and further adapted to changing local contexts. Supporting local and regional networks of traditional practitioners and community exchanges can help disseminate relevant indigenous knowledge and enable communities to more actively participate in the development process. While innovative mechanisms for the protection of indigenous intellectual property rights need to be developed, many indigenous knowledge practices can simultaneously be integrated into local, national, regional, and regional development efforts. Regional or global however, experience has shown that this cannot be done on its own. Partnerships are needed between community organizations, NGOs, academia, the private sector, research institutions, governments and donors to increase the use of Indigenous knowledge for development. The World Bank's Indigenous Knowledge for Development Program will continue to advocate for indigenous knowledge and join others in efforts to harness indigenous knowledge for development in a process Continuous learning from local communities.

Indigenous knowledge (IK) is used by local communities as a basis for decisions food security, human and animal health, education, natural resource management and other important aspects Activities. Traditional knowledge is a key element of the social capital of the poor and their main asset in their quest for self-reliance. For these reasons, IK's potential contribution to locally manage profitable and sustainable survival strategies should be promoted during development in 1998. This document reflects the program's experience over the past three years and steps that can be taken to further assist communities

and governments to integrate indigenous knowledge into the development process.

The potential development impact of indigenous knowledge systems can be gauged by a few examples of what IK has already achieved. After fifteen years of civil war, community leaders in Mozambique reportedly managed about 500,000 informal "land transactions" and helped in the settlement of about 5 million refugees and displaced persons in two years. Most significantly, they achieved this without direct external help from donors or central government. How did this happen? Traditional, local authorities relied on indigenous, customary laws to resolve potential conflicts arising from competing claims to land by returning refugees and those who had settled the lands during the civil war. The result is, Smallholder farmers were able to resettle quickly and revive agriculture and contribute to growth of agricultural production.

People in different regions have unique cultural traditions and histories, which severely shape their views on the environment, livelihood choices, health and disease, social behaviour, etc. Indigenous knowledge research seeks to further integrate these perspectives into development. The term, especially the native part, has been the subject of politically correct debate ("how can indigenous be defined in the modern cosmological world?") and several choices. Alternatives have been proposed, including i.e., traditional knowledge, folk knowledge, Citizen Science and knowledge, to name a few. We use vernacular as a widely used term in development discourse and, as acronyms abound, I cannot avoid the IK shortcut.

Indigenous knowledge is often contrasted with, and was, until recently, underestimated compared to international scientific knowledge. This can hinder cooperation between scientists work in local and development communities. Indigenous knowledge related to while science has universal theoretical aspirations. Indigenous practice more inductive, with a "weak" model of world (most often unknown to development abroad), while practicing more science Inferred, with a "robust" and agreed upon model investigation method. We cannot assume that that the two will be congruent, we have instead Look for contrasts

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and similarities. We must reconcile IK, a broad and everyday understanding, with scientific knowledge, includes a narrow and specialized understanding, in seek to promote intercultural knowledge research on development issues.

In a food for work program in Nepal, indigenous knowledge is a more effective agent develop more modern technology. A donor-supported food distribution program has caused significant food losses along the distribution line. Project managers have moved

to local community to find solutions. They jointly determined that the use of local equipment (e.g. bullock cart), dispensers, and community supervision would be the most appropriate means. Food distribution in the local context rent a local tram instead of the covered vans provided by the companies in town revenue to rural communities and improves the transparency of the distribution process.