

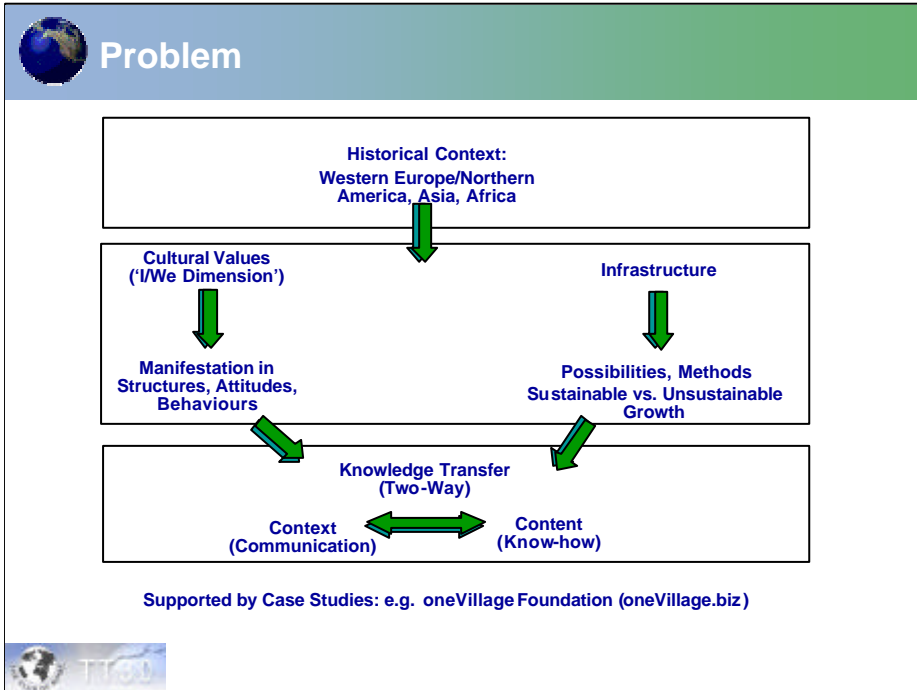
*tt30-project*

## Knowledge Transfer across Cultures

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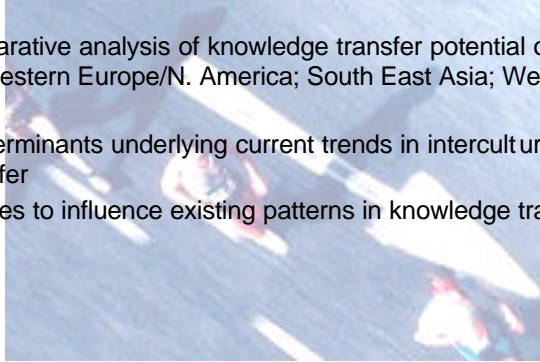
The tt30 project on knowledge transfer (KT) systems (*intercontinental, intercultural and intracultural knowledge transfer*) started in September 2003 and aims to review the methods and mechanisms by which knowledge is transferred between and within cultures, with a specific focus on how this impacts upon development trends in three regions: West Europe/North America, South-East Asia and Sub-Saharan West Africa



## Knowledge Transfer across Cultures

### Primary Objectives

- ◆ Identify key indicators of indigenous knowledge transfer in various cultures
- ◆ Prepare a comparative analysis of knowledge transfer potential of the three regions: Western Europe/N. America; South East Asia; West Africa
- ◆ Indicate key determinants underlying current trends in intercultural knowledge transfer
- ◆ Suggest measures to influence existing patterns in knowledge transfer



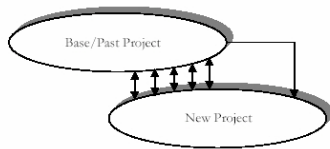
- Tacit knowledge is not transferable without communication between individuals
- In order to share knowledge, trust and understanding are important factors



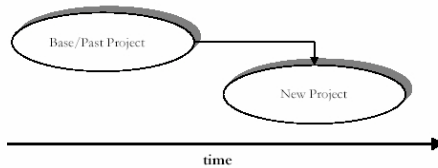
# Inter-project Knowledge Transfer

## Modes of Inter-project Learning\*

(1) concurrent transfer mode



(2) sequential transfer mode



*Knowledge transfer* involves the movement of knowledge from one location to another and its subsequent absorption.



[\*Adapted from Nobeoka, K. (1995), Inter-Project Learning in New Product Development, *Academy of Management Journal*, p.432]

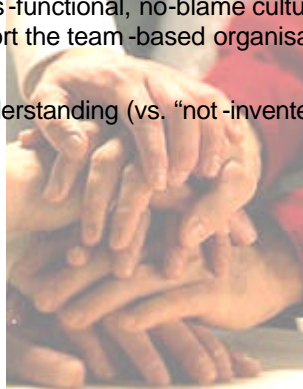
Significance of human capital development and danger of IT-driven knowledge management



## Inter-project Knowledge Transfer

### Parameters for Knowledge Transfer

- ◆ Total employee involvement: developing an aligned, trained, empowered work force; a cross-functional, no-blame culture, and appropriate structures to support the team-based organisation
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ Culture based on trust and understanding (vs. “not-invented-here” attitude)
- ◆ Altruism



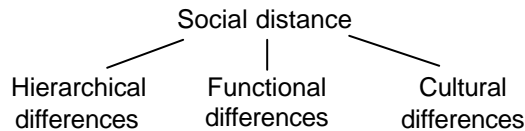
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# Inter-project Knowledge Transfer

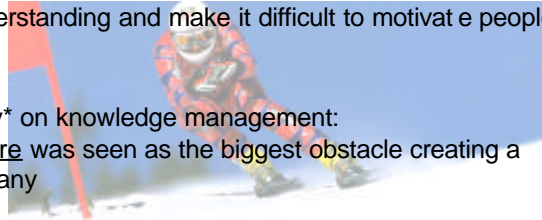
## Barriers to Knowledge Sharing

- ◆ Social Distance
- ◆ Temporal Distance
- ◆ Physical Distance



→ constrain shared understanding and make it difficult to motivate people to share knowledge

Best Practice Club study\* on knowledge management:  
The organizational culture was seen as the biggest obstacle creating a knowledge-based company



[\*Chase, R. (1998), *Creating a Knowledge Management Business Strategy*. The Knowledge Management Report Series, Management Trends International. p.51]

Best Practice Club study\* on knowledge management: Eighty percent of the respondents reported that their organization's culture either actively or passively hindered the development and introduction of knowledge management strategies and programs. [\*Chase, R. (1998), *Creating a Knowledge Management Business Strategy*. The Knowledge Management Report Series, Management Trends International. p.51]

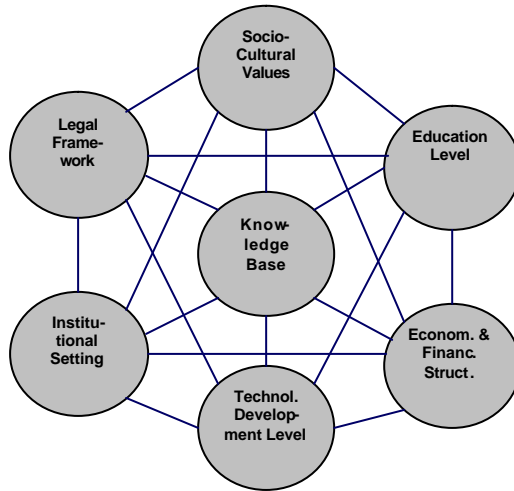
The ambiguity of knowledge is about how differently people interpret information, depending on their personal frame of reference. [\*Davenport, T. (1997), *Information Ecology: Mastering the Information and Knowledge Environment*. Oxford University Press, Oxford]

According to the infological equation, information perceived (I) depends on the interpretation (i) of the data (D) and the person's frame of reference (F). Additionally, the time (t) during which the recipient has to do the actual interpretation and the time during which he has to process the received information after the exposure affect the interpretation.



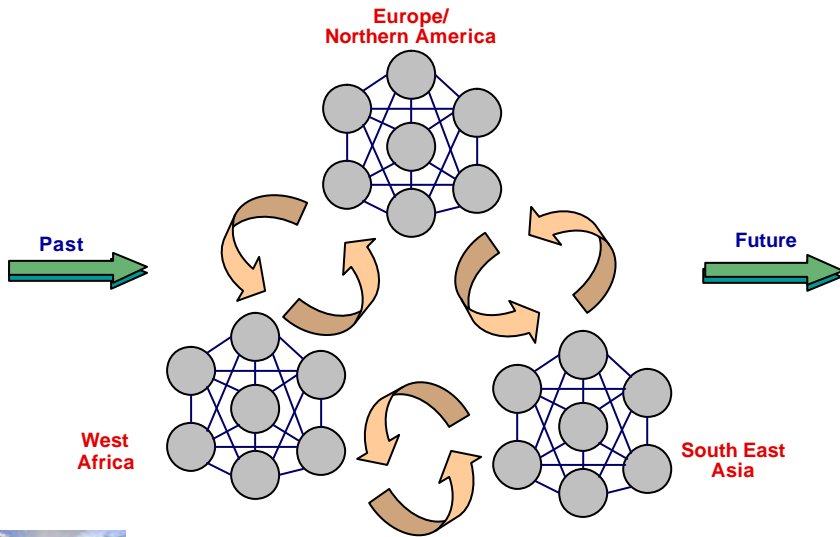
## Intracultural Dynamics (internal)

### Knowledge Transfer Capacity





# Intercultural Dynamics (external)







**oneVillage Foundation**

fundraising the way and transformation of the global village

**Knowledge transfer in colonial times based on assumptions – quality of intellect. Assumptions that are made by western countries do not effectively explain the African experience.**

**Eg, what is profit? Any knowledge transfer among cultures for it to be successful must include a respect for each other's cultures. There is great distance between more indigenous cultures and the modern world in relation to the idea of profit. Akiworo says profit is more than financial. In fact he says Yoruba have five kinds of profit.**

**Money, Bearing children, Good health, Living long, Overcoming obstacles**  
**For the Africans at least from the perspective of their culture the concept of a global exchange or knowledge transfer must be mutually beneficial to all parties involved in the exchange.**

**Key to understanding how to create a successful transfer of information between cultures is to see it from a perspective that promotes development among parties.**



## Case Studies

### **Interview with Ernest C.A. Ndukwe, CEO, Nigerian Communications Commission, Nigeria**

- ◆ Bottom-up approach: empowerment of people
- ◆ “Development starts from within” vs. foreign direct aid
- ◆ Colonisation changed psyche of people in Africa (compared to nations in Asia)
- ◆ New trend: new leadership in Africa

