

***Harnessing African indigenous knowledge for
competitive advantage in the global economy:
Some grey areas and moral concerns***

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Outline

- What is indigenous knowledge
- Global political economy and the distribution of information
- IK and the global political economy (white, grey & black)
- How can IK make a contribution to the global body of knowledge
- Justice as a moral tool
- Conclusion

Indigenous knowledge

Definition

Indigenous knowledge is local knowledge

IK is unique to every culture and society

IK is the basis for local-level decision making in: agriculture, health care, food preparation etc

IK provides problem solving strategies for communities

IK is commonly held by communities rather than individuals

IK is tacit knowledge and therefore difficult to codify, it is imbedded in community practices

IK is embedded in institutions, relationships and rituals - World Bank

Political-economy

No private ownership;

goods produce for use value;

substance goal;

no concept of economic growth;

barter system-concrete value,

collective production;

humans seen as part of nature (Mander, 1994)



Global political economy of the distribution of information



Free market

Demand and supply

Intellectual property

Commodity



Common good

education

health info

Basic rights

Large scale production

Monopolies

Externalities

Participation

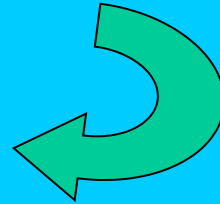
private property; goods produced for sale – not personal use; surplus production
economic growth; currency system: competition, nature reviewed as resource



Global political economy of the distribution of information



Free market
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“The mind industry has become the key industry of the twentieth century”

“(Enzensberger, 1976)

“...intellectual property is hot property... society now recognizes that information is quickly becoming the basis for the new economy, and intellectual property is the new economy strongest currency”

(Harris, 1997)

Where does IK fit in??

Global political economy of the distribution of information



Free market

Demand and supply

Intellectual property
Competition



Common good

education health info Basic rights

Large scale production
Monopolies
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Participation

Private property; goods produced for sale - not personal use; surplus production; economic growth; currency system; competition, nature reviewed as resource

Main reasons?



Private ownership; goods produce for use value; substance goal; no concern for economic growth; barter system-concrete value, collective production; human respect of nature

Incompatible



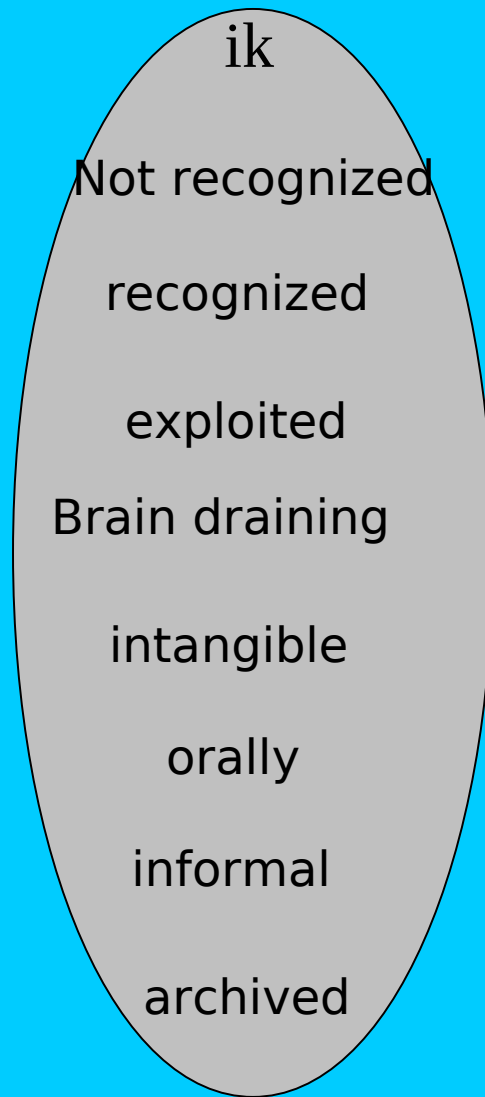
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Current situation regarding IK in the global marketplace

Global political economy of the distribution of information



Free market
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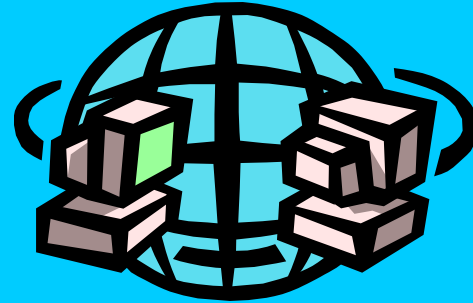
Common good

education health info Basic rights

Large scale production
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ogenous knowledge as:

**ngible knowledge
literature
al literature**



ontribute much more to the global body of knowledge

How ?

1. Paradigm shift



Indigenous people

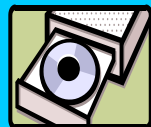
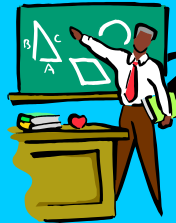


First world perception



Law makers

2. Education



3. Distribution



Result



World body of knowledge



Commodity:

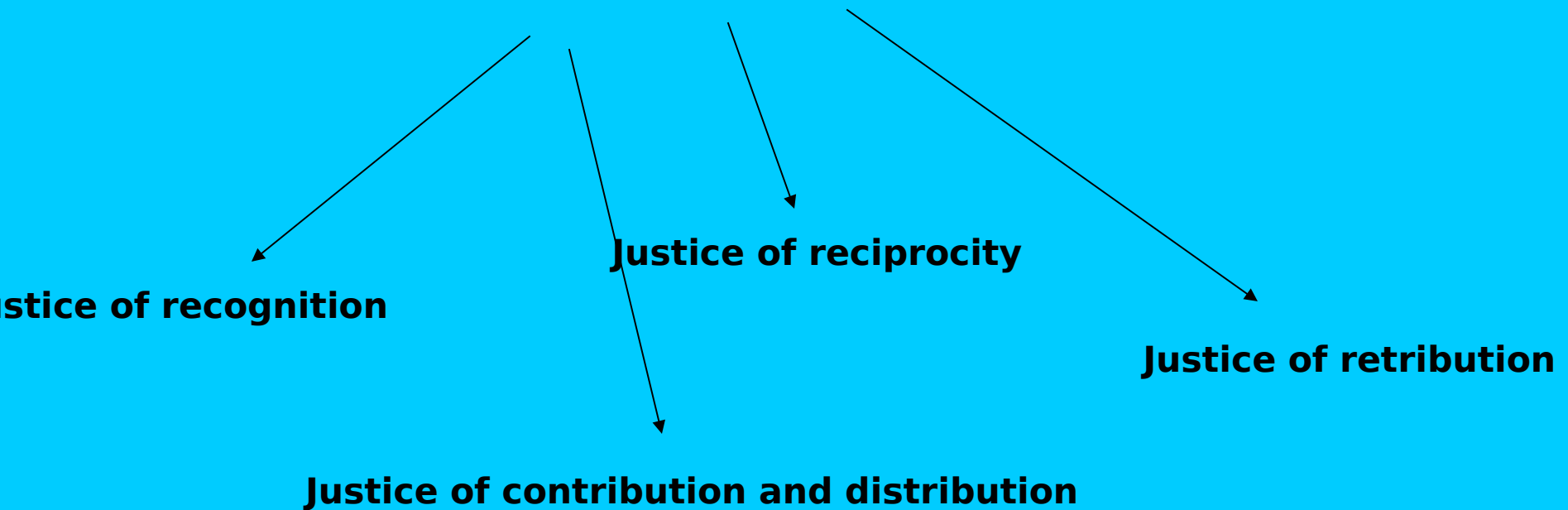
- Export product
- Create wealth

Common good:

- Mutual understanding
- Development & Sustainability



Guided by justice



Conclusion

can make a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge in the world

Currently: white, grey, black

Change: paradigm shift, education, distribution

Guided by justice

Thank you!

