

Indigenous Knowledge Systems and the Need for Policy and Institutional Reforms

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ABSTRACT Recent studies have provided valuable insights into how people use their own locally generated knowledge to change and to improve their communities. These studies further reveal that development interventions have failed to induce people to participate because of the absence of instruments and mechanisms that enable them to use their own knowledge. However, there are no simple technical Western solutions that can be easily diffused and adopted by people on the margins. Greater efforts therefore should be made to strengthen the capacity of local people to develop their own knowledge base and to develop methodologies to promote activities at the interface of scientific disciplines and indigenous knowledge. Efforts in this direction would yield the needed results if conscious attempts are made to protect Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) through policy and institutional reforms. This paper examines the importance of IKS and the need to effectively promote and manage policy and institutional reforms in the sector.