



REAL KM
Evidence based.
Practical results.



Proposing new text for Action 35 of the Pact for the Future (Rev.3) to support the critical role of multiple knowledges in achieving the SDGs, with supporting evidence

RealKM Cooperative Limited (RealKM), the Knowledge Management for Development Community (KM4Dev), Knowledge for Development Partnership (K4DP), and *Knowledge Management for Development Journal* call on the United Nations, its member states, and all actors to:

- acknowledge the critical role of **multiple knowledges** (encompassing local, tacit, experiential, community, and Indigenous knowledge) in achieving Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- embed and recognize the contributions of **multiple knowledges** in sustainable development through the formal adoption of the knowledge-based goals of the *Agenda Knowledge for Development* (new 4th edition in preparation, 3rd edition in the interim); and
- recognize the role of past colonialism in current patterns of inequality in the world today and commit to the decolonization of knowledge, dismantling patterns of knowledge creation and distribution with their roots in the colonial past.

Why are multiple knowledges so important?

“Ultimately, the SDGs will not be achieved by the UN or its Member States. Rather, the SDGs will – or won’t – be achieved by the billions of individual people across the world who need to be able to integrate the SDGs into their daily lives. But every one of those billions of people has different realities: different needs, different values, different goals, different work circumstances, different family situations, different community and cultural contexts, and so on. This manifests as a diverse array of knowledge – “multiple knowledges” – that must be part of the decision-making if the SDGs are to be achieved.”

(Source: ‘Why the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will fail without a multiple knowledges approach’ <https://realkm.com/2024/06/04/why-the-un-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-will-fail-without-a-multiple-knowledges-approach/>).

Knowledge Management for Development (KM4Dev) community, RealKM Cooperative Limited, and Knowledge for Development Partnership (K4DP)

Why is Rev.3 of the Pact for the Future Action 35 still inadequate?

RealKM, KM4Dev, and K4DP welcome the updated 'Action 35. We will protect, build on and complement Indigenous, traditional and local knowledge' in Rev.3 of the Pact for the Future (<https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact-for-the-future-rev.3.pdf>).

However, Action 35 remains top-down and neglects the full range of multiple knowledges and their complexity. This is inadequate because:

- solving the complex problems of sustainable development requires all knowledges, particularly local and Indigenous knowledges, from the bottom up;
- listening to the voices of marginalised communities, women, and youth is a key part of epistemic justice, fundamental to social justice; and
- a decolonial approach is needed, dismantling unequal patterns of knowledge production and exchange with their roots in the colonial past.

(Source: Editorial in *Knowledge Management for Development Journal*, 'We urgently need multiple knowledges to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals' <https://km4djournal.org/index.php/km4dj/article/view/560>).

Proposing a new Action 35 and associated paragraph 59

We, therefore, respectfully propose a new text for Action 35 and the associated paragraph 59:

Action 35. We will build on and complement multiple knowledges.

59. We recognize the need for multiple knowledges – encompassing local, tacit, experiential, community, and Indigenous knowledge – in sustainable development. We agree to:

(a) Engage multiple knowledges – including local (personal, institutional, and organisational), Indigenous, traditional, and Afro-descendant knowledge and capacities – in the complex decision-making needed for sustainable development.

(b) Foster synergies between science, technology, innovation and multiple knowledges, while putting in place measures to identify and mitigate potential associated risks.

Supporting information

1. 'Why the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will fail without a multiple knowledges approach' <https://realkm.com/2024/06/04/why-the-un-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-will-fail-without-a-multiple-knowledges-approach/>
2. 'Open letter to United Nations and world governments in regard to Summit of the Future and Pact for the Future,' signed by more than 130 leading knowledge management for development experts and advocates from around the world <https://realkm.com/2024/02/20/open-letter-to-united-nations-and-world-governments-in-regard-to-summit-of-the-future-and-pact-for-the-future/>

3. Editorial in *Knowledge Management for Development Journal*, 'We urgently need multiple knowledges to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals'
<https://km4djournal.org/index.php/km4dj/article/view/560>
4. *Agenda Knowledge for Development* <https://k4dp.org/agenda/>
5. Boyes, B., Cummings, S., Habtemariam, F. T., & Kemboi, G. (2023). 'We have a dream': proposing decolonization of knowledge as a sixth generation of knowledge management for sustainable development. *Knowledge Management for Development Journal*, 17(1/2), 17-41. <https://km4djournal.org/index.php/km4dj/article/view/548/673>

Prepared by:

Bruce Boyes, RealKM Cooperative Limited, Knowledge Management for Development (KM4Dev), & Knowledge Management for Development Journal,
realkm@knowquestion.com.au

Dr Sarah Cummings, Knowledge Management for Development (KM4Dev), Knowledge for Development Partnership (K4DP), & Knowledge Management for Development Journal,
sarahcummingswork@gmail.com

Representing:

RealKM Cooperative Limited

RealKM Cooperative Limited promotes and supports evidence-based knowledge management by publishing articles sharing high-value research and case studies. It has more than 8,000 subscribers and followers, published over 2,000 articles, and received more than two million article views. realkm.com

Knowledge Management for Development (KM4Dev)

The KM4Dev community of practice has 5000+ members working as practitioners, policy makers and researchers in knowledge and its management in international development. It has been in existence since the year 2000. It is run by a core group of 20 rotating members. km4dev.org

Knowledge for Development Partnership (K4DP)

K4DP is an international non-government organization, based in Vienna, Austria. With partners from all over the world, K4DP aims to localize and implement the global *Agenda Knowledge for Development*. k4dp.org

Knowledge Management for Development Journal

The open access *KM4D Journal* offers peer-reviewed practice-based cases, analysis and research concerning the role of knowledge in development processes, and provides a forum for debate and exchange of ideas among practitioners, policy makers academics and activists world-wide. km4djournal.org