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Proposing new text for Items 14 and 25 of the Declaration on Future Generations (REV3) to support the decolonization of knowledge 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 is the decolonization of knowledge so important?

“the identifying concept of the new sixth generation of KM4SD [knowledge management for sustainable development] is the ‘decolonization of knowledge ... Decolonization of knowledge focuses on dismantling fundamental inequities of the knowledge system in which coloniality and past colonization interact with neo-liberal economics to exclude knowledge and knowledge holders from multiple peripheries. These peripheries have geographical and social categories: the Global South; First Nations, indigenous, ‘racialized’ and local communities; Eastern Europe; women; and youth. In this discussion, coloniality refers to ‘long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism”

(Source: Landmark paper in *Knowledge Management for Development Journal* Special Issue, “We have a dream’: proposing decolonization of knowledge as a sixth generation of knowledge management for sustainable development’

<https://km4djournal.org/index.php/km4dj/article/view/548/673>).

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

Why is REV3 of the Declaration on Future Generations still inadequate?

The Declaration on Future Generations (<https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-declaration-on-future-generations-rev3.pdf>) will form one of the outcomes of the Summit of the Future in September 2024, along with the Pact for the Future. RealKM, KM4Dev, and K4DP consider that both the Pact of the Future and the Declaration on Future Generations ignore the historical role of colonialism. Many of the current global problems have their roots in the colonial past. We consider that colonialism represents the ‘elephant in the room’ which is not receiving any attention.

Proposing new text for Items 14 and 25

We, therefore, respectfully propose the following new text for Items 14 and 25 of the Declaration on Future Generations (shown in bold capitals). Item 25 is closest to a decolonization of knowledge perspective, and Item 14 addresses the intergenerational transmission of global problems, many of which have their roots in the colonial past.

14. The opportunity for future generations to thrive in prosperity and achieve sustainable development must be ensured, including by eliminating the intergenerational transmission of poverty and hunger, inequality and injustice, **COLONIALISM AND COLONIALITY**, and acknowledging the special challenges faced by the most vulnerable countries, in particular African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States,

25. Eliminate all forms of persistent historical and structural inequalities, including by acknowledging, addressing and remedying past **COLONIAL** tragedies and their consequences, and eradicate all forms of discrimination,

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. Landmark paper in *Knowledge Management for Development Journal* Special Issue, ‘We have a dream’: proposing decolonization of knowledge as a sixth generation of knowledge

management for sustainable development'

<https://km4djournal.org/index.php/km4dj/article/view/548/673>

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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