IKME Fourth Evaluation Paper

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'We should admit rather that power produces knowledge…that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.' Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 1977, London: Penguin.

'…if you want to understand what a science is, you should look in the first instance not at its theories or its findings, and certainly not at what its apologists say about it; you should look at what the practitioners of it do.' Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures,* 1973, New York: Basic Books.

Executive summary

Introduction

This report is the fourth, and most substantive report in a series of evaluative reports commenting on the development of the Information and Knowledge Management Emergent (IKME) research programme. It has been completed at least 18 months before the end of the programme and is intended as a contribution to thinking for programme participants.

Chris Mowles of Red Kite Partners Ltd was commissioned after a competitive tendering process in the first year of the research programme, as an evaluator and was joined in year three by Anita Gurumurthy of IT for Change, as the second evaluator. It was intended from the beginning that the evaluators would contribute to the development of the programme at the same time as helping participants form judgements of value about what they were doing. They were invited to undertake a developmental evaluation, a term we explore in the report.

IKME is a five year research programme, which brings together a loose coalition of IKM practitioners, academics and activists to carry out research to develop a critique of and a challenge to some of the dominant ways of conceptualising, producing and using knowledge. It has done so by focusing on three key areas of the IKM domain: the creation and content of knowledge, the tools and processes through which content is handled, and the organisational context in which it is managed, discussed and used. It is around these three areas that three Working Groups have coalesced and have developed programmes of work. However, as the programme has progressed, new and different themes have arisen and been pursued. Many of these pertain to very nascent areas in the KM4D domain which might nevertheless herald significant changes in the development knowledge domain in the coming years. Identifying and engaging with threads of inquiry which are still emerging have brought value to the body of work in the IKME programme

On Method

In the methodology section, the evaluators explain how they undertook the developmental evaluation and how it evolved over time as they engaged with programme participants, and latterly and in the last stages, with the programme directors over the drafts of the report. This last iteration of negotiation has been a very good example of the dialectical production of knowledge between engaged parties, the importance of which the evaluators have tried to draw attention to throughout the history of their involvement with the programme.

The evaluators undertake a critical appraisal of the ways of working of the three working groups, and the programmes broader intellectual output, by starting with the original objectives set out in the inception documents. However, given that the

programme has undertaken a considerable amount of work which was never foreseen by the inception documents, the evaluators have tried to continue engaging critically with what the programme has produced, and to try and be explicit about their assumptions in doing so.

The Working Groups
Working Group 1 (WG1) was concerned with the production of local knowledge, and undertook three case studies in Brazil, Costa Rica and Sri Lanka. Each case study produces generalisable insights into the contextual, emergent and temporal production of knowledge in their own way and the group has made a significant contribution to discussions about method. The working group has also elaborated the important concept of traducture, how paying attention the ways and means of translation can make more visible local knowledges. The premature collapse of the working group in year 3 also provides relevant insights into the importance of power, affect and questions of identity in local knowledge production.

WG2 has experimented through a variety of technology-based methods to privilege Southern knowledge: by developing technological platforms which index and sort information to bring up Southern produced knowledge first; by visualising Southern data, by reflecting upon the emerging digitally mediated knowledge ecologies and their gatekeepers and by bringing together information workers and knowledge experts in the South to better share and articulate what was important to them. These initiatives are serious examples of programme participants being encouraged to address knowledge and technology asymmetries which were identified in the programme's inception documents. What is generalisable from the work of participants in WG2 is that it is possible to develop different technological tools, platforms and ways of working, which recognise the architectures of power in the new knowledge spaces and give greater voice to Southern perspectives. Owing to the essentially technical nature of some of these initiatives, their connection to the overall goals of the programme was not clear to every member of the group. Also, the experimental nature of the work of this group – getting technology to work for development - did give rise to a feeling of lack of follow through and project drift among some project holders in the group who felt inter alia, that it was indeed difficult to impact mainstream technology structures and practices, especially within the constraints of limited time and resources.

WG3, responsible for reviewing the way that knowledge is currently managed, disseminated and evaluated in INGOs, commissioned a number of working papers, and the programme director responsible for this working group was also in charge of the programme's communication strategy and products, which we take to mean the workshops, blog posts, events and newsletters co-written with the other programme director. The papers produced are rich and diverse, and many of them of substance. WG3 members were the most harmonious and ably demonstrated the importance of bringing together academics and practitioners, North and South, experienced and less experienced. Their achievements include setting up a conference in Namibia, a francophone forum for the discussion of KM4D, and the

funding of the practitioner journal KM4Dev, which enabled the production of two special editions highlighting the ideas of IKME.

The evaluators have undertaken a critical assessment of the IKME Working Papers taken as a whole, those commissioned or written by WG3 and those emerging from elsewhere. Since programme coherence has become a theme for the evaluators, the assessment of the working papers is undertaken to gauge the extent to which the working papers themselves constitute a coherent statement about IKME ideas.

Governance and Management
The report assesses the governance and management arrangements for the programme and concludes that IKME has recruited a substantive group of people onto its Steering Committee who have contributed to a highly reflective and discussive environment in broad support of the themes of the programme. It would be hard to stress enough the original and unusual nature of this achievement given how common it is for trustee groups to get lost in the detail, and to understand what they are doing solely in disciplinary terms. In engaging EADI as the contract holder with the Dutch government, the programme found an efficient and professional organisation to administer the projects. The programme directors have engaged with EADI consistently and professionally to manage a complex set of contracting arrangements. Ways of commissioning the work have allowed for novelty to arise within a discussive and negotiated engagement with people inside and outside the programme. At the same time working this way, combined with the ambitious diversity of projects provokes strong questions of identity among the programme participants, of who 'we' are and what 'we' are trying to achieve together in any group of people, no matter how temporary.

The management of IKME has had the unenviable task of aggregating and synthesising the whole from the disparate parts of the programme. This task has been undertaken through various methods – meetings, workshops, newsletters, blogs etc – the difficulties of geography, resources and individual niches and styles of work may have inhibited the degree to which project holders experienced this sense of 'we' Despite a shared understanding of the overarching focus on the multiplicity of knowledges, not all project holders were tuned into the rich diversity of the collective and its interdependencies. This last lap of the programme seeks to focus its energies to address some of these issues investing in documentation and generation of written material for reinterpreting the meaning of the programme as it has evolved.

Conclusions
In conclusion, the evaluators consider the programme to be uniquely imaginative, bold and creative, both in content and process. It has persisted with ways of working which are reflective and discussive to an unusual degree and has modelled the very subject of the programme's research – that development emerges through the contestation and negotiation between critically engaged participants.

The programme has reversed the polarity of many development initiatives, being a

coherent programme in search of funding, rather than proscribed funding which is in search of hired hands. The quality of relationships between a committed group of people, who have nonetheless been able to engage other people in productive relationships, has been central to the programme's achievements.

These achievements arise from good planning, but also in being responsive to emerging possibilities and being prepared to work through the 'mess' of negotiating about what we mean by what we say. Some of the reflexive and reflective methods modelled in the programme and some of the products are of extremely high quality.

In remaining adaptive, the programme directors have often been able to identify and engage with what may be significant early technological developments and to begin to frame them critically.

Programme participants have produced a wide range of products, both tangible and intangible, which are widely viewed by participants in the programme, and many outside, to be influential and persuasive. The programme is likely to continue to influence the sector with the varied threads of its alternative discourse whether it continues in a phase II or not.

At the same time these unique ways of working have thrown up their own problems. The programme directors have adopted a decentred approach to leading the programme, partly through choice and partly through necessity, since they have been keen to keep management costs appropriately low. In such a diverse group, and because of the nature of the engagement with many project holders being very short term, there is bound to be a varied commitment to and understanding of, the programme's broader objectives. Some programme participants have sometimes found it difficult to locate themselves and their contribution in relation to the programme's mission, and the programme's mission may have suffered as a consequence. As discussed earlier, for many, it has been hard to know what their peers in the programme are doing and how to influence the programme's development.

Perhaps, in addition to the newsletters, resource allocation for more regular collective meetings, even for parts of the collective, to enable participants to struggle with questions of meaning which are central to experiencing oneself as part of a community engaged in a common task may have helped. How the community of projects adds up to multiple knowledges and emergence needs therefore to be more clearly laid out in the remaining period through a variety of means which the programme directors are already undertaking. Further, some of the generative programme tensions are relatively unexplored, such as that between academics and practitioners in NGOs and some other predictable divides, leaving the rich resource of the community of enquirers as its own local knowledge community, underdeveloped.

The programme directors have planned to engage directly with some of the programme's lacunae in the remaining months: to enable more exchange and

dialogue across activities, to generate more documentation, to appraise critically some of the many achievements of the programme and to disseminate them widely, to seek institutional partners for taking forward some of the ideas and to articulate more clearly some of the management challenges of supporting what is itself a local knowledge community. The evaluators do not underestimate the difficulty of doing this: in a development domain which favours highly abstract, reductive and generalised accounts of 'best practice', making an alternative case that is contextual, nuanced, political and contested is not easy. This is partly because many prominent development actors are not looking for, and may fail to recognise, what the programme has to say. However, to produce an alternative narrative of knowledge for development means, to paraphrase the pragmatic philosopher Richard Bernstein, developing an alternative in the name of something – how can those inside and outside the programme more fully grasp and engage with that something, a more coherent articulation of what the IKME research community is becoming?

The evaluators conclude with some reflections on what it has been like to try to maintain, paradoxically, involved detachment as evaluators of the programme.

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IKME Evaluation Report

1   Introduction

This is the fourth report of the evaluators of the Information and Knowledge Management Emergent (IKME) research programme written at the end of the fourth year of the programme's operation. It is being termed a 'final' report only in the sense that it is the last of four reports which have been commissioned, rather than because it has anything final to say about IKME, which has a further 18 months to run. This does not mean that the report will avoid making some judgements, but that these judgements will be provisional and partial, and based on the evaluators' work and experience of the programme to date. The point of commissioning this report at this stage is that it might support the continuous process of thinking and action in the final phase of the programme. Each iteration of the evaluation, from the evaluators' participation in IKME meetings through to our written submissions, has been an influence on the programme, alongside all the other influences that arise from programme participants and the environment in which the programme is taking place, and we consider this a further, though more thorough iteration in the sense that it develops from previous observations and reflections. For many projects and programmes undertaken in the development sector this would be considered to be a highly unusual way of proceeding and we will explore the methodological implications of our evaluative position in what follows and in the method section below. Interestingly, and reflexively, the programme has also commissioned conceptual work on the evaluation of knowledge management programmes. This evaluation, then, has experimental and formative value for the programme and it behoves the evaluators to comment on the process of evaluation as well as offering a critique of the programme's own work on evaluation (which in turn may include a critique of this evaluation).

The nature of the evaluation
The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the IKMEmergent programme argue for the importance of contracting with the evaluators early on in the project's development as a means of influencing the programme as well as shaping the evaluation process at the same time. That is to say that the evaluation was never assumed to be simply a realist undertaking: the programme managers and Steering Committee had already problematised the idea that an evaluator could take up an 'objective' position late on in the programme and describe what they consider to be the 'real' conditions of the programme's operation and form judgements about whether it had successfully fulfilled its objectives or not. The evaluators will have something to say about the programme's original objectives, and about how they understand objectivity, but there was a shared assumption between the evaluators and the contractors about the importance of an interpretative, co-created method which would help to inform the programme as it developed. This understanding of what the evaluators were there to do leads to other methodological difficulties and problems, which we will discuss below in the methods section.

The structure of this report
In this report we will reprise some of the key assumptions of IKME, will discuss critically

the methods used in the evaluation to date, will reconsider how the programme has been structured, managed and governed. Thereafter we will reiterate some of the evaluative findings expressed in previous evaluation reports and consider what has changed since our earlier observations. We will then move to some temporary conclusions, temporary in the sense that the programme has not yet finished, nor has the task of evaluating it.

2   An overview of IKME

IKME is an ambitious programme configured over five years, and spending E2.5 million which seeks to bring together a coalition of IKM practitioners, academics and activists around a broad agenda of carrying out research to mount a critique of and a challenge to dominant ways of conceptualising, producing and using knowledge. More than 200 contracts have been let to a variety of institutions, groups and individuals by the hosting organisation EADI in pursuance of the work.

In the words of one of the inception documents[1], the programme intends:

- raising awareness of the strategic relevance, potential contribution and contested nature of knowledge to development work;

- creating new channels and an environment for innovation, supported by research on existing and emerging practice, for people working in the development sector to raise and discuss means of addressing this issue; and

- finding, creating, testing and documenting ideas for processes and tools which, in addition to their intrinsic value, will illustrate the range of issues which affect how knowledge is used in development work and stimulate thought around possible solutions.

The research programme is intended to demonstrate ways of working in the geographical North and South[2], produce products and tools and involve and engage the development community, including policy makers in government departments, to set out an alternative, or rather, a series of alternatives to what is understood to be current majority practice. In the original documents and academic papers[3] written just after the project started, which contributed to the conception of this programme, majority practice is understood to be in general: technology-oriented, abstract, ideological in the sense of covering over the power relations between donors and institutions in the North and Southern actors, yet staking a claim for detachment or even objectivity, and monological. It is

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[1]   Emergent issues in information and knowledge management and international development. A schema outlining an integrated, interdisciplinary, inclusive research programme, IKME, 2007.

[2]   The authors are themselves unhappy with the terms 'North' and 'South', but use them in the absence of any widely accepted alternative.

[3]   Ferguson, J., Mchombo, K. and Cummings, S. (2008) Meta Review and Scoping Study, IKME Working Papers no 1; Powell, M. (2006) Which knowledge? Whose reality? An overview of knowledge used in the development sector, Development in Practice, Volume 16, Number 6: 518-532.

monological in the sense that information valued by donors or bureaucrats sitting at a distance from the processes of social development is privileged as being the best, or perhaps even the only way of knowing. This information tends to be quantitative, generalisable and abstract, and is often in English. The programme has outlined a critique of this majority practice by staking a claim for the multiple, contextual, historical and contested nature of knowledge and of the importance of knowledge being communicated in local languages, which the programme, through its many projects, intended to explore.

It has done so by focusing on three key areas of the IKM domain: the creation and content of knowledge, the tools and processes through which content is handled, and the organisational context in which it is managed, discussed and used. It is around these three areas that the three Working Groups have coalesced which are set up to work in the following ways:

- Assess the current state of knowledge and practice in its area

- Identify issues of strategic importance

- Plan work which will improve the state of knowledge and offer ideas for future practice

- Consider how its work links with that of the other groups

- Interact with other people in the sector North and South working on similar issues and with end users of the processes being investigated.[4]

The three working groups have been organised around exploring discourse – the creation, content and status of knowledge (Working Group 1); Making the most of information – the tools and processes through which content is handled (Working Group 2; the management of knowledge – the organisational contexts in which knowledge is managed, discussed, exchanged and used (Working Group 3). There have also been a variety of initiatives which have not sat formally with any working group but have emerged between and beyond them. A number of important workshops and conferences have organised arising from discussions within the working groups, or with interested parties who have brought themes of interest and concern to the programme directors. In addition the programme has paid attention to cross-cutting themes such as communication of the findings and work of the different projects. Underpinning the whole programme is the assumption that by paying attention to the multiple ways in which knowledge is created and used, the development process will be improved. As the programme has progressed, so the original concepts about the role of knowledge in development has developed and been refined.

In seeking alternatives and by pursuing a 'many worlds' view of knowledge

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[4] *Emergent issues in information and knowledge management and international development*, op. cit.

production, the programme documentation makes the case that the current processes of knowledge production are conditioned by figurations of power with donors and institutions in the North. In searching for alternatives, however, the programme has not striven to invert those power relationships, but rather, has encouraged pluralism. This intention of contextualising Northern conceptual assumptions and making power relations more explicit, rather than simply rejecting them, is clear in the programme's documentation. The annual programme report for 07 locates the programme clearly within existing economic and social power relations between the North and the South, and makes explicit the programme's understanding of knowledge management as being located in social relations, rather than being an issue of technology alone. By being committed to pluralism rather than a simplistic inversion of the current power relationships, the programme avoids attempting to throw the baby out with the bath water. There is no assumption in the documentation that all Northern knowledge production is 'bad' and all Southern knowledge production is 'good': rather, in rendering the power dynamics more explicit the programme seeks to subvert the ideological domination of Northern methods as being necessarily the best or the only way of undertaking the work.

In opening up dominant ways of understanding and practice concerning the production and use of knowledge, the programme is claiming that it can influence practitioners and policy makers and create with them new and innovative ways of working which will broaden the understanding of development. It aims to overcome barriers that Southern intellectuals face in being heard, and sets out to promote the contextual significance of development knowledge. The first IKM Working Paper[5], in reviewing the development of the IKM literature, describes the IKME programme as 'fourth generation' IKM, that is to say taking an interest in the contextual, the embodied and the practice based, and in principle being suspicious of techniques and tools, to which thinking about knowledge for development often gets reduced.

Although the programme began with a plan and the ubiquitous logical framework analysis, which is a prerequisite for obtaining funding in the domain of development, it has nonetheless remained sufficiently flexible, both by the constant reviewing of plans, and by leaving a good proportion of the funds uncommitted, to be able to develop ideas as they arose out of the work. This has meant that thinking and discussion in the working groups and in the wider IKME community has led to concrete decisions being made and new initiatives started which were not foreseen in the original programme documentation.

3   A discussion of evaluation methods and a (partial) justification of what we have done and why we have done it.

In this section we will describe a history of the development of the evaluation process as a precursor to drawing out some more generalised observations about

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[5]   Ferguson et al, (2008)

evaluation in programmes which overtly privilege the unexpected and the emergent.

The staged process of contracting
As we have indicated at the beginning of this document, we were invited in to a research programme where the directors and Steering Committee had already developed an understanding of the kind of evaluation they were looking for, which involved the evaluation team joining the research programme relatively early into its five year funding. The idea, then, was for the evaluative work to contribute to thinking about the evolution of the programme, what is usually termed a 'developmental evaluation'. In commissioning a developmental evaluation, programme managers had already problematised more conventional evaluation. In more orthodox evaluations, an entirely independent team of evaluators is invited, usually at a mid-way point and towards the end of a programme, to form a view as to the extent to which a programme has met its objectives. There is no suggestion that they would not also make developmental suggestions, or that a mid-term evaluation does not inform thinking about the next phase, but that the principle area of enquiry is an assessment of progress against objectives. In the case of IKME, we were invited in towards the beginning of the programme and our involvement would inevitably influence some of the things that we would be asked to evaluate, and we ourselves would also be influenced. We were comfortable with a developmental approach, otherwise we would not have tendered for the work in the first place.

The first phase of the evaluation
Chris Mowles started out as the only evaluator, and in my first presentation to the inaugural conference in Cambridge in 2008 questions about evaluator independence, methods of evaluation and the role of the evaluator were raised by members of the large IKME community at that time, which comprised project holders, stakeholders, members of the steering committee and programme directors. This was the first opportunity to share ideas with the research community and to debate what it was we understood by 'evaluation'. Many people in the room were experienced evaluators themselves. The discussion revolved around the difference between independence and 'objectivity': there seemed to be a general acceptance that the idea of the 'objective observer' of social development was a problematic concept. At the same time it needed to be clear that although the evaluator was receiving money from the programme like everyone else who was undertaking work, my job was different. Intriguingly, I was being paid to be more detached about what was going on. This would involve trying to be as explicit as possible about some of the assumptions I was bringing to bear if I was making judgements of value. It was my responsibility as evaluator to take a view on how the programme, and the projects that comprised them, were developing, but at the same time I committed to being as clear as I could about how I had arrived at any judgements I might make. If the programme and project holders needed to be open to critical enquiry, then so did the process of evaluation.

I rehearsed some of the proposals that I had put into the tender to secure the work in the first place, and these were given a critical airing in the Cambridge forum (2008). It was at this point that the suggestion of appointing a co-evaluator from the South was first put forward. The reasons some participants gave at the time were that the programme was itself predicated on the idea of making 'Southern voices' more central to the practice of development. So the evaluation itself could benefit from a Southern perspective, at the same time as recognising that the idea of the 'South' is a problematic concept, and no one person, or small group of people could ever be understood to be speaking 'on behalf of' such a broad concept. There was by no means a consensus on whether to take the idea forward and it was only acted upon after it was raised again during the Steering Committee of October 2009. The Steering Committee discussed the idea and finally gave it their approval. I approached a number of people, drawing on the connections of the IKME directors, as well as a couple of my own contacts including someone I had met at an IKME joint-sponsored workshop in Cambridge in September 2009. It was the last of these, Anita Gurumurthy, who responded most positively to the invitation and she was appointed at the beginning of 2010.

The appointment of the second evaluator is a very good example of dialectical engagement between the evaluator and participants in the IKME programme, and how the interaction shaped the evaluation. Setting out my assumptions about how the evaluation might work provoked critical input and engagement from IKME participants, which eventually influenced the way the evaluation was undertaken and who undertook it. Additionally, the person who eventually became the second evaluator was herself active in and experienced about the field of IKM and had attended a joint-sponsored event. This is a very good example of the point we are making throughout this report about the centrality of engagement, discussion and contestation to the emergence of knowledge.

In the Cambridge inaugural conference in 2008 I also took the opportunity of informing project holders that I considered myself to be the person who had accepted a key role in promoting evaluative thinking, but that, given the size of the programme, it would be impossible to evaluate everyone's project in detail. I reminded project holders that part of the responsibility of developing a project would to be able in parallel to comment on the quality of what they thought they were engaged in. They would need to undertake some evaluative work of their own and I was available to offer support to them in so doing. This could be done in the broadest sense of the word, and could be as simple as giving an account of how their thinking had moved in the course of developing their particular project. In the event, very few project holders undertook evaluative work in the formal sense of commissioning someone else to discuss with them what they were doing, or reporting on what they were doing, or calling on me as evaluator-in-chief to help them thing through what they were doing and why. There remains very little in the way of formal documentation of the progress in thinking of each of the project holders. At the same time it would be important to point out that a number of

project holders have blogged extensively about what they have been doing, or have presented to colleagues in the Wageningen meeting in April 2010, and everyone has kept in contact with one or other of the programme managers. Every project holder was forthcoming when engaged by either of the evaluators in describing what they had been doing, and what they thought of what they had been doing.

On a number of occasions, and in discussion with programme participants or project holders, I have suggested research techniques that they might adopt in order more systematically to understand what they are contributing to: these have ranged from keeping a diary and recording reflections on interactions through to writing a narrative account of how the project has developed identifying significant episodes. These suggestions were rarely taken up, perhaps because of the pressure of time, perhaps because respondents did not see the point of doing what I suggested, perhaps because of the power relationship between us and their seeing no requirement to do so.

Encouraging reflection, reflexivity and critical engagement
During the next 18 months I followed up the initial contact made with project holders in Cambridge and attended all the working groups and to understand better how they functioned, as well as to develop better relationships with their members. In general we agreed that I would interview them after key stages in the development of their projects to reflect with them what they thought about what they were doing and what their project was achieving. As a participant in the working groups I tried to encourage group members to reflect upon the way that they were working and to articulate the sense they were making of what they were doing. I was interested to know how their thinking was evolving as participants in the programme because I believed that this would help shape the programme. Although I was always welcomed onto the working groups, not every member agreed with the importance of being reflective, since some were concerned rather to press ahead with decision-making and/or agree a workplan. Nor was it always possible to spend as much time making sense of the experience of working in this way as I would have liked because of the pressure of the business agenda.

By no means all of the project holders were members of working groups, and there were a number of other events, like the jointly-sponsored IKM event in Cambridge in September 2009 and the linked data even in Oxford in November 2010, which emerged from discussions both within and without the research programme. This meant having independent conversations with other project holders, some of whom, for example Hannah Beardon's *Ripples* project, stayed with the programme for the duration, as well as talking to 'outside' event participants to hear their responses to IKME ideas. For example, WG3 presented their research to date to a forum of interested staff from NGOs at a meeting in the Hague in 2009. After the even I sent round questionnaires to all of the participants asking them what they had learnt about IKME as a result of the event, what they thought of what they had heard, and what difference these ideas might make to their own organisation.

Additionally, evaluators have sought out and interviewed respondents who are sympathetic to what the programme is trying to achieve, but have not played a direct role in carrying out direct project work. These include key people who were involved in putting together the original bid to the Dutch Foreign Ministry, senior people in organisations who are interested in the programme who may have attended one of the open meetings, or sent their staff, or colleagues who are trying to research information and knowledge in their own organisations who at one stage or another have come across the programme. These are respondents who have been able to take a semi-detached view of what the programme has been trying to achieve.

In the last phase of the evaluation evaluators contracted an outside scholar-practitioner, Michael Gurstein, who has worked himself for many years in the domain of information and knowledge for development, to carry out a review of the output of WG3 as well as a critical review of the IKME portal. The evaluators were also able to draw on some research work undertaken by an MA student who carried out extensive interviews with IKME respondents.

Project field visit
IKME is a research programme aimed at changing thinking and practice in Northern international development non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and donors: there is an inevitability, then, that most of the project holders turned out to based in the North as consultants, or employees seconded from INGOs. This made it easier for the evaluators to visit project holders in situ. Some important studies were also commissioned to take place in the South, particularly, but not exclusively, by the participants in WG1. The evaluators negotiated to visit at least one project in the South and decided on researching the work of Sulá Batsú in Costa Rica for a variety of reasons. To visit the project would cause no risk to the project holders, as was the case in both Sri Lanka and possibly Brazil, and in preliminary interviews Kemly Camacho had spoken in a way about her project which showed a high regard for reflexive research and ways of working. It seemed to the evaluators to be a good example of the kind of thinking that the programme as a whole was interested in researching. Additionally, Sulá Batsú was undertaking a similar kind of work in a very different context to that of Anita Gurumurthy and her organisation IT for Change in India, and the there looked to be good opportunities for the exploration of similarities and differences.

Report writing as method
I have summarised my evaluative findings in three previous reports, which have been discussed at the Steering Committee and have been made available to the IKME research community more widely. The first report, written after the inaugural Cambridge conference, was an attempt to frame some of the methodological difficulties of undertaking an evaluation of a programme which intended to privilege and respond to emergent ideas and suggestions, as well as offering some observations about the meeting in Cambridge in 2008. The second report served as an interim statement of what I had been doing as an evaluator, offered some

observations about the working groups and the workshop in the Hague, as well as outlining some of the different conceptual positions that seemed to be emerging in the programme. The third report was written with the co-evaluator, Anita Gurumurthy on the experience of meeting together in Wageningnen in 2010 and some of the themes that seemed to be presenting themselves in different discussion fora. The third report, then, took seriously the idea that IKME as a programme is also a knowledge community and that paying attention to the way that IKME participants talked about and negotiated their experience of organising together could also provide insights into thinking about 'local knowledges' one of the central themes of the IKME research programme. Reflexive research of this nature is a distinct discipline in the social sciences, and in academic literature on the connection between knowledge and practice it is broadly accepted that knowledge is enacted through people's practices. Paying attention to the practice of meeting together in Wageningen, then, and finding ways of talking about it in the different projects was for the evaluators a legitimate way to comment further on the work of the programme.

The point of writing and disseminating evaluation reports as the programme progressed was to contribute more thinking and critique to what I, and then latterly we, saw as some of the developing ideas in the programme. These evaluative observations were made publically available to be critiqued in their turn, to summarise and contribute to thinking in the programme but also to have our own thinking critiqued. It must be said that the documents did not provoke many responses in the way that they intended.

To write this fourth report the two evaluators have divided responsibility for interviewing respondents between them, largely according to areas of interest and experience. It also meant contacting staff at the contract managers, EADI, to gain a complete list of people who had contracted with IKME to carry out pieces of work, so that interviews did not comprise just those project holders who had worked consistently within the programme. So, some of the respondents were being interviewed for the first time, for others it was the third or even the fourth time of being interviewed, either formally or informally, about what it was they were doing.

The evaluators have shared the draft of the final report with the programme directors with a view to starting a discussion about the evaluators' findings and encouraging a response from them. This has led to a very intensive period of negotiation, with two further substantive drafts having been produced as a result. In the process of negotiation evaluators and programme directors have undoubtedly come to understand their respective positions better. In our own view the negotiation over the substance of the final evaluation report has been a very good example of the critique needed in order for robust understanding to emerge, which is the parallel we have been making with programme as a whole.

Summary of the evaluative methods and a critique
The evaluators have taken an adaptive, and evolutionary approach to the

evaluation of the IKME programme. Rather than starting out with a model of evaluation to be 'applied' to the evaluation of the programme, each involvement with working groups and project holders has suggested a different intervention from the evaluators, which has been discussed and negotiated with the project holders and working groups concerned. In this sense the evaluation shares the programme's starting assumptions that knowledge is produced in contested, local contexts, where history, relationships, and power are central to understanding what emerges and how it emerges. This is not to imply that we started out with a blank sheet of paper: if we had not suggested some evaluative techniques in our original proposal, then we would not have been offered the contract. However, a number of the intended techniques, such as attempting to map the growing web or relationships which was developing as a result of the work that project holders and programme managers were doing, was abandoned quite early on as being impractical. Nor have the evaluators attempted any assessment of cost-effectiveness: given that the broad range of outputs and impacts of the programme have proven so difficult to quantify, and it has been hard to discover any other programmes which are attempting to do similar things, questions of cost-effectiveness can probably only be answered by the funders of the programme themselves.

The evaluators have broadly favoured phenomenological and interpretive methods and have tried to encourage interpretation and reflection in groups and fora, and with project holders. In some cases project holders have needed no encouragement from evaluators, but have been working highly reflexively anyway and just needed to be given the opportunity to articulate this. Additionally, their observations and reflections on the evaluation process has itself been helpful to the evaluators to reflect on what they are doing, and have provided many ideas about what might be appropriate and illuminating. Evaluators have also used more structured methods, such as questionnaires, have undertaken field visits in the North and the South, and have undertaken a quantitative analysis of the usage of the IKME website. Additionally, they have commissioned a respected figure in the field to write a critical appraisal of the some of the documentary output of the programme, as well as to review the web products. So while privileging qualitative methods, evaluators have not relied exclusively on these, but have tried to take up methods most helpful for and illuminating of the situations into which they were trying to enquire.

By writing and disseminating evaluative reports throughout the course of the programme, writing observations and comments for the programme's blogs, and joining discussion in programme meetings and working groups, the evaluators have tried to develop systematic observations to contribute to what they have assumed is a self-critical community of enquirers. They have sought a dialectical engagement whereby they are helping to form, but at the same time are being formed by, the development in thinking in the programme. We have assumed that knowledge is practised by people in groups, constraining and enabling each other and negotiating their relationships of power. In some of our reporting and observations we have drawn attention to these processes, although bringing it into view has not

always been welcomed. We have also spent a small amount of time as evaluators drawing attention to our own differences without trying in any way to resolve them, except in finding a way to write reports which enables us to agree on what it is we are saying.

In a programme which anticipates funding projects which have not been pre-planned, or even imagined, in the initial start-up documentation, there is little point in understanding evaluation as an assessment of whether the programme has fulfilled its original objectives or not, except in the broadest sense of accepting that the programme directors planned to be surprised. Rather we have come to understand the evaluative undertaking as being about encouraging project holders and programme directors to continue to articulate in retrospect what they have come to value in a complex and continuously evolving programme. Amid this complexity, we have asked them to identify patterns, ways of working, products which have emerged in the course of discussion and negotiation in the programme over what it is people thought they were trying to achieve. We have attempted to do this systematically and in a variety of different fora and through different media: conversation, participation in groups, blogging, writing, structured questioning. Working in this way has not been without its shortcomings, however, and these are some of them:

- The privileging of reflective and reflexive methods has not been accepted or appreciated by all programme members, some of whom would have preferred more orthodox evaluation methods. Some expressed this openly, others were merely slightly bemused by being asked more than once and at regular intervals to speak about how their thinking about what they were doing has changed over time.

- The evaluators have had limited success with some project holders in encouraging them to take up suggestions about how they might further research or write about what they were doing for the programme. In a context where the programme as a whole is relatively light on documentation generated by project holders, this has left the programme more dependent on the interpretations of the evaluators than it might otherwise have been.

- A point of difference remains between the evaluators and the programme directors as to the relevance and validity of treating the IKME as a research 'community' and paying attention to the way that knowledge arises, or is constrained in the group. This disagreement turns on a question of degree rather than programme directors arguing that such an approach should be excluded altogether.

- There has been a danger of naturalisation of the evaluators, both from the perspective of project holders and from the perspective of the evaluators themselves. The evaluators have never made a claim to 'objectivity' but have nonetheless tried to take up a different and semi-independent role within the

programme. Nevertheless since the evaluators have been actively engaged in discussions, are broadly sympathetic to what the programme is trying to achieve and have a relatively good understanding of how one thing has led to another, perhaps they have come to be seen, and see themselves, as more part of the programme than detached from it. It has blurred the boundaries which would have been more obvious in an orthodox evaluation. This has sometimes made the process of trying to retain critical distance from what the programme is trying to achieve harder, and might have made the critique harder to hear when it was made. To a certain extent it is easier to make assumptions about what different actors think about what they are doing, or what evaluators think about the programme, once everyone has become very familiar with each other.

- The things we have set out to do as evaluators, to be illuminating, interesting, rich in points, complex and to research the IKME programme as a local knowledge community will not satisfy readers who are looking for tools and frameworks, or who are asking if the programme was successful or not. We do attempt to generalise from our findings, but in terms of principles rather than formulae.

Despite some of the difficulties outlined above, it is the evaluators' view that the benefits of a developmental evaluation have outweighed the disadvantages: it has enabled a much more thorough understanding of what the programme participants have tried to achieve, it has rendered the evaluation much less threatening in many ways, and it has certainly been helpful to the process of the evaluation as far as the evaluators are concerned.

4   The Working Groups

A   Working Group 1 – exploring discourses

The aims of Working Group 1 (WG1) were directly concerned with the ways in which local knowledge is produced and set out to investigate different approaches to promoting and exploring 'local knowledges'. In the words of the inception document:

The initial work of the group will be to deepen the understanding of the potential connections between local knowledge processes and the work of the development sector and to construct an appropriate methodology – one which benefits participants in such processes as well as researchers – to research these connections further. The aim of this research will be to identify good practice in the support of local knowledge processes and to explore and facilitate the potential links between local processes, local development discourse and development knowledge in general.

The group members thought that they might do this with the use of a) an 'evidence-based analysis' of the roles played by intermediaries in development communication, b) by reviewing the links between participatory programme work, research and organisational information systems, and c) by developing an overview of barriers and opportunities to use of Southern intellectual output by the

development sector. Of the various activities that the group thought that they might undertake in the earlier stages such as 'an of past practice and other potential methodologies for investment in local knowledge processes at innovation workshop (year 1)', research into diaspora communities, a review of the use of participatory methods by development organisations, and research into the barriers in the way of the take up of Southern intellectual output.

In the event, the IKME programme has to a degree undertaken all of the four planned activities, though not all of them under the auspices of the working group. Additionally, one of the research interests of one of the members of the group Wangui wa Goro, which is translation and the importance of language to the conceptualising of development, which she coined 'traducture', became an important animating theme during the progress of IKME and was taken up extensively by a variety of different actors in the IKME community. Wangui wa Goro has herself lectured widely on the theme, particularly in Africa and has organised a further conference in London in 2011 because of the interest she has sparked in the theme. Early on in the programme she presented some work she had undertaken with Martha Chinouya with HIV communities in the UK and Zimbabwe at the 2008 EADI conference in Geneva.

WG1 is the group which has most directly engaged Southern communities and has looked to develop a number of case studies as examples of different ways of working with local knowledges. Each of them did so taking into account their own backgrounds, their local contexts and their own particular understanding of what they were doing. We will discuss some of the similarities and differences at the end of this section. In Brazil Dan Baron Cohen developed a module of a university degree to work with community animators; in Costa Rica Kemly Camacho from Sulá Batsú co-operative was working directly with local communities and in Sri Lanka Michael David has gathered around him a group of activists interested in training organisations and groups as well as supporting local communities to produce content for a portal he has set up which includes tel-radio broadcasts.

What follows is a brief overview of the work of group members from their own perspectives on what they thought they were trying to do, how far they think they have accomplished this, and problems and difficulties they have encountered along the way. The overviews are developed from a series of conversations with the respondents over the last two years, some of them face to face, others by Skype or telephone.

Working with community animators in Brazil

The Brazil project proposal was to undertake research with 40, which became 48, community educators who are themselves students of *Pedagogia do Campo,* who are active within the communities from which they originate. Using video and a variety of artistic languages, the case study aimed to document different approaches to personal and community transformation through self-knowledge. The role of Dan and Manoela, his colleague, was to work alongside the educators to help amplify discussions between case study participants and support their

development.

In working together the programme participants have also collectively designed a contract which defines the professional relationships between each other. For Dan and Manoela this implies a new model of ethical responsibility and pedagogical principles in the agreements.

The project is embedded in a university, since all of the participants are themselves undertaking a degree that is part of Brazilian government policy, which is committed to the development and self-determination of the landless and of rural communities. This degree course takes place in the holidays between school and university semesters and arises out of previous government literacy and technical programmes. What this particular IKME project has enabled is further meetings outside the university context and the production of a collective, self-determined outcome.

As the project has developed it has drawn on the experience of the participants to develop areas of enquiry, discussion and further development. For example, four of the educators were involved in a road accident which resulted in the death of a young pedestrian. The driver was forced into hiding and his passengers chose to remain silent, out of grave concerns for their personal safety. This seriously affected the continuity of the project. This incident became the focus of collective reflection and reflexivity and was subsequently transformed into a university course on ethical pedagogy. The course addresses the question as to how best protect people who are unequal in the societies in which they act. Dan's own ability to work with this situation arose from his own long experience of conflict transformation; his involvement in IKME and has gone on to help inform the materials which are being produced for IKME.

One of the things the project has focused on is the development of a production structure to help project participants deal with and discuss their realities. Part of the work is finding methods through which they can begin to organise their knowledge. In doing so, they have attempted to recover their sensitisation to the use of methods beyond using the written word. They draw on narratives from their own cultures to inform and shape their experience. Colleagues have attempted to take up this pedagogy in a range of different frameworks in order to explore how they might live ethically in an unethical situation. They have tried to meet every 6 months and in meeting they are exploring the economy of solidarity as they exchange knowledges and the opportunity to learn from each other. The university where these educators are studying has agreed to adapt their timetable in order to accommodate this project, since they have been able to recognise its importance. The project participants are themselves taking up these ideas with their own communities and at least 20 others. 25 of them have attended the World Social Forum to talk about their work. This has enabled links to be made both nationally and internationally and has led to the participants feeling more confident about the form their research is taking and the knowledge it is producing.

The rural educators have taken up their research on issues of land, health, food production and sustainable development. Just before the project began, one of the participants, a mother of two, was murdered by her husband for choosing to become a literacy worker. During the course, leaders from their communities have been sentenced to imprisonment and faced death-threats for transforming abandoned land into camps, schools and allotments for the homeless. By taking on issues surrounding the democratisation of land they are engaging with the toughest question in Brazil.

The students who have been involved in the programme and are now writing up their projects so that they might graduate March 2011. Dan Baron Cohen is writing a book and producing a CD to coincide with their graduation either before or after carnival. The projects involve pedagogy students writing about their own educational lives: primary school, secondary school, literacy and continuing education. Although only 4/5 students will be focusing on arts-based pedagogy, all will include some aspect of the curriculum in their work. The theme of the arts has been the most consistent in their undergraduate life: the theme is there throughout all the projects. Dealing with questions such as rural education, the impact on urban education, how to revive education in peripheral environments – people from rural environments have helped to motivate and inspire urban colleagues about the environment in general.

The book will talk about some of the principles that have been developed during the programme and how they might be taken up elsewhere. UNESCO will ensure distribution of the book and CD which will allow for the impact of the project to go well beyond the university. It will comprise three main sections: section 1 will be a description of the arts-based pedagogy in which they have participated; section 2 will be a collections of their short stories, poems and lyrics; section 3 will be examples of the way they have taken these ideas up in schools or in popular education settings, contexts usually in rural or urban environments. Students have edited the 2nd and 3rd sections with support, DBC has written the first section and an academic at the university has written an introduction. It will appear in Portuguese and English.

36 of the 48 students participated in the World Congress meeting in Belem giving and receiving workshops on arts literacy. It was very good for their self-esteem to be there and to participate contributing about their own experience as rural educators in their own schools.

It has taken time to retrieve the group's sense of a collective identity, and the project has helped to forge and strengthen this. All of the projects are synthesised from the group activity.

Students also participated in a state-sponsored conference on pedagogies of the land. They were articulate and confident. They performed their poems and songs, they intervened and collaborated. They were able to bring development language and culture together in what they were doing. As a group they participated in

workshops and gave workshops themselves as they became exposed to different methods. This is an important by-product of the project which is not necessarily visible, and adds to the variety of unintended and unexpected outcomes of the project. It was an important phenomenon for them to go from a rural to an urban setting and speak for themselves, as well as taking risks in the World Congress. The idea of translation has become a landmark area in the World Congress.

A further impact of the project is a course on the ethics of pedagogy has been introduced to the university covering the threshold between the public and the intimate. The university authorities have drawn up a charter of rights and principles implying mediation between contexts, pedagogy and generations. Students have acquired mediation skills and are now very conscious of them.

Recovering self-knowledge in poor communities in Costa Rica – experimenting and changing thinking and action

Sulá Batsú is a research organisation that works as a collection of projects. It is an action research-oriented organisation with a focus on knowledge sharing and connecting multiple knowledges. It is the intention of Sulá Batsú members to connect multiple knowledges by creating opportunities for this to happen. The goal is always to produce something: a policy, an action, a programme of work. Their aim is to enhance the collective, to amplify the social nature of communities and to develop new methods for achieving this. In the development of training methods and trainers who can work with these approaches, Sulá Batsú members are conscious of the centrality of power to these discussions.

Co-operative members have been critical of the idea of local content because the idea of content, they believe, says nothing about the processes which have produced it: these processes are just as important as far as the co-perative is concerned. They are interested in the process of local knowledge production because they are concerned that local communities should come to understand themselves better and perhaps increase their self-esteem through hearing their own voices. The idea of local content is one aspect of this but is the product. In helping communities to develop more self-knowledge they are aware that ICT is only one medium for doing so. They are concerned also to help communities strengthen their own media.

Sulá Batsú co-operative members started working with local community reporters[6], in a development project which was conceived traditionally. They chose water as a subject to work on with young people in a particular community. But after this first case study, and after discussion and reflection, they realised that they had become much more interested in local knowledge processes, and became critical of the way that they had entered a community with an agenda of what should be

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[6] Sulá Batsú members prefer the term 'community reporters' to the more common 'infomediaries' because they feel that the latter term does insufficient justice to the social nature of knowledge production and dissemination.

important for them. In the second project they worked with housewives in a peri-urban area which has a large Nicaraguan immigrant population. This second project with housewives was not so successful and had to be rethought; they stopped attending some of the training courses and the project petered out.

In rethinking what they were doing Sulá Batsú members decided that they needed to work with a bounded community and alongside a local CBO who would contribute to sustainability and lend legitimacy to the presence of co-operative members. They also decided that they wanted to work with community reporters who would help work with the community with their connections with the digital world. Computers, and technology in general, were considered to be secondary to the community's oral traditions, as Sulá Batsú members and community reporters worked with them to find different ways of expressing what local people talk about and know. Although we may be living in an information society there is too little knowledge about ourselves and what is important to us. To a degree, then, Sulá Batsú members understand this project to be about citizenship, findings ways of exploring with local community members how globalisation has impacted upon them and resisting attempts to objectify local knowledge.

By the third case study Sulá Batsú members had undergone a shift in their thinking and in their approach, deciding that what was important was the use of ICTs to support narratives and stories, visual languages and pictures and interviews with local people. They could see that it was no use leading with a development question that was outside what concerned local people – they had to develop their own questions that were important to them. The training of community reporters involves developing their ability to use Web 2 and oral and visual languages. They experiment with how to create stories using research methods which depend upon interviews and group interpretation. Sulá Batsú members have accompanied them so that they can do this. There are three stages: the 'capturing' of knowledge, the valuing of it, then the 'return' of this knowledge to the local communities who produced it.

Evaluators met and talked to the community reporters in the Poàl community who had a chosen a variety of topics which were important to them including, interviewing local artisans, pursuing a community clean-up campaign which involved the school janitor interviewing and working with her head teacher on garbage and waste management, as well as documenting and recording the natural world in the local community. In each of these projects community reporters were able to find a voice in researching and discussing areas of enquiry which were important to them but were also often neglected aspects of community life. In drawing attention to them the community reporters were opening up new discussions with their peers and colleagues, and in doing so, were also further revealing existing power relations, such as between the head teacher and his staff, and the local chamber of commerce and the local artisans they were supposed to be working to support.

Anita Gurumurthy (evaluator), Kemly Kamacho (Chair Sulá Batsú) , Jeffrey, Katharina, Angel, Edwin and Laura, community reporters drawn from and working in Poàl community and learning ICT skills in the local Chamber of Commerce building, the local partner to Sulá Batsú. These community reporters blogs can be found at : www.lamagiadejeff.wordpress.com *;* www.arcofut.wordpress.com*;* www.lauviguez.wordpress.com *;* www.asmchwordpress.com *;* www.katachch.wordpress.com

During the evaluators' field visit to Costa Rica we were present for a prize-giving and a celebration in the school local to the community where Sulá Batsú had been working. The celebration was for local community reporters to display their work, and for children in the school, who had become involved themselves in knowledge projects, to exhibit and have their work acknowledged. The community reporters had produced a wide range of materials, photographs, videoed interviews, films, blogs and artefacts which were enjoyed by the children and amplified in their own projects.

Drumming session during school celebration of local knowledges project.

Co-operative members from Sulá Batsú changed their thinking about community reporters' project work through reflection on the research they were carrying out with communities over time. They are keen to stress that this is one of the principal outcomes of the IKME-funded project: they have become much more aware of method which has arisen out of their encounter with communities and their needs. The project has confirmed for them that:

- knowledge which is important to communities is often local and specific

- one of the trends of globalisation is that it can render this local knowledge invisible or unimportant.

- when this local knowledge is covered over it also impacts upon how local people understand themselves and their identities.

- as well as recovering local knowledge and identity the project has helped communities to re-identify as a collective, thus working against some of the atomising and individualising pressures of current global trends.

This project turns, then, on the potentially transformative value of individual and collective self-knowledge rather than on material development, the provision of services or even training in technical skills, although this latter has clearly been a major part of the project. What the project has encouraged is for the group of individuals and those in the community they have worked with, better to understand themselves through their own eyes, sometimes using ICT as a medium for doing so. As far as Sulá Batsú co-operative members are concerned, they have learnt a lot about their own methods and have come to understand emergence in their own terms. Although there is no alternative to proceeding with intention, they have become aware of the ways in which their own premises for undertaking the work, for example that the first case study should be based on water, have in their turn potentially covered over themes of importance for the community. Only in a rigorous and reflexive encounter with the reality of a particular community is it possible to know how to take the project forward. In many ways this is quite a radical understanding of emergence: the term can sometimes be taken up merely as an invitation to greater flexibility within a plan which has already been formulated. We understand Sulá Batsú co-operative members to be saying something more than this – emergence is the constant encounter with, and negotiation of what arises in the interactions between co-operative members, community reporters and the communities from which they are drawn.

Tel radio and digital story-telling in Sri Lanka
Michael David has been involved long term in community development projects in Sri Lanka and is part of a network of concerned family, friends and colleagues who do whatever they can to access funds, provoke discussion and thinking, or undertake projects. This takes place within a highly politicised and polarised environment in Sri Lanka, where the long-running conflict gets taken up in daily relations between people, and where every initiative can be perceived to be supporting this side or that side. To a large extent, all lives are governed by the war.

Michael started out by organising a conference in Bangalore through IT4Change, an Indian NGO with experience of KM4Dev. It brought a number of practitioners together to help focus discussion on some of the important themes around digital storytelling. Two important ideas emerged for Michael to inform his thinking.

- as a medium of expression digital storytelling promotes collective reflection and

discussion: it aids local politics. Unlike in the West where a three minute video may elicit barely a flicker from those who have watched it, where digital story-telling has been used extensively in Asia it can stimulate debate for days.

- where in the domain of international development there is usually a push to disseminate information as widely as possible, communities engaged in digital story-telling have been very aware of the need to safeguard against intrusion. Communities are much more conscious of the power of the medium for disruption.

Michael has been working long term with a community in the hill country of Sri Lanka where he helped them develop a radio station. They have already been doing some digital story-telling funded by another agency and he wanted to discover what skills they have been developing as a consequence. He has always been interested in how such initiatives can be financially sustainable: how might skills transfer be a way of generating income for the community?

From these discussions and combining his interest in radio and pictures, Michael developed the idea of telradio, internet radio accompanied by pictures which would make the radio station 'sticky'. In order to explore these ideas with others interested in similar areas of work, Michael organised a two day workshop in Colombo on digital-story telling for knowledge management and invited a wide range of participants. Some of these have already been doing digital-storytelling and felt they had learnt nothing new, while others were inspired by what they heard and determined to push forward with their own initiatives. A group at a university have started their own telradio as a consequence of the workshop and Michael continued to give them support. Another NGO intended using internet radio for their project on Aids. Some university teachers from a department of sociology began to enquire how they might us digital storytelling to publish their work and make it more available to the public and Michael has subsequently worked with them to develop course materials. A group of librarians have become interested in how digital-story-telling might promote story telling and access to traditional stories.

IKME funding has helped Michael and a loose coalition of 4-6 colleagues in Sri Lanka to set up and run the ChilliMango blog http://chillimango.wordpress.com/ as well as a Facebook site http://tinyurl.com/6klew92 . It also contributes to a portal comprising digital stories, telradio broadcasts and news updates, a service which started three five or so months ago: www.telradio.org . Most of the digital stories on the site are not created by David and his colleagues, however. David's intention is to participate in and facilitate discussions in Sir Lanka in particular (and SE Asia in general) where like-minded individuals and groups are considering the use of ICTs to keep open channels of communication in a conflicted society. He is concerned to find ways of involving people in discussions about development and about the wider outside world in a language that is accessible. Interest in the telradio portal has fluctuated however, dropping from 800 hits a day to around 200. David is aware that telradio on its own as an offer is weak, and needs a variety of other media around it to attract new, and keep existing, subscribers. The site is visually very busy

and not easy on the eye. This raises questions about how to make the project sustainable and how the variety of initiatives might be made more coherent. IKME money has also been used to fund training workshops in 2010 on digital story-telling and issues arising from waterways and health, for example. 30-40% of IKME money has been used to buy equipment for training.

David and his colleagues are currently involved in discussions as to how to make the rolling programme sustainable and how they might consolidate what they have done. Although their training work and web-based products have provoked a lot of interest and discussion, they have yet to penetrate the NGO sector and have done most of their work with state institutions. The state is very hard to avoid in Sri Lanka and the government is currently threatening to bring in new legislation to regulate telradio. David and colleagues have yet to answer the question as to how to keep the work going after the funding ceases. It is clear that one of the things that will survive will be the network of people and organisations who have become involved in digital fora and training.

Critical appraisal of WG1

Members of WG1 were the ones working most closely developing methods which could be helpful in furthering discussion about how to work with the subject/objects of development interventions. They are three very different cases studies. In Brazil Dan Baron- Cohen is working with a highly evolved, though still evolving, pedagogical method with community animators in a university context. One of his aims is to broaden the range of methods taken up by animators in their particular contexts and to work against the logocentric nature of much discussion and practice of method. So he and his colleagues encourage the use of drama, mime, singing and music and poetry in ways which probably speak much more directly to the development aspirations of poor and excluded people than do the highly abstract, systematised methods employed by many INGOs. One way of understanding what Dan and his colleagues are doing is to broaden the repertoire of community workers and to make more complex their understanding of the ways in which communication, research and development, are possible. Another benefit is the way in which Dan is challenging his own academic institution to broaden what they take to be research and academic work and the ways in which one might think about teaching and learning in contexts where animators are working with the disposed in highly political contexts. What is generalisable from what Dan is doing are the insights that we might derive for the education of development workers, the way we teach research methods, and the importance of training local people as researchers of, and activists in, their own communities.

In Costa Rica, workers in the Sulá Batsú cooperative have noticed the ways in which their assumptions about what they were doing have framed the work which they were undertaking. In encountering the 'brute reality' of the communities they were working with, they faced a variety of choices about how they might respond, choosing in the end to focus on how they were thinking about how they were thinking. One might think of this as a process-oriented view of development. This

reflective and reflexive attitude to what they were doing meant deepening their understanding of the work they were doing: in paying attention to themselves and their activities they understood themselves and what they were doing differently. What is generalisable from what Kemly Camacho and colleagues are doing in their context is the transformational potential of reflection and reflexivity. Paying attention to how they are working and trying to unpick their assumptions about it has changed the work they are doing and what they consider to be of value. There is little attempt, then to compare what they done against some fixed criteria fixed at the beginning of the programme: rather we are tempted to find value in the ways in which they have intensified their understanding of what it is they have become involved with, and how they understand themselves, and the communities they are working with, differently. The work with the community has, in many ways, only just begun as the community reporters venture into a digital environment where they will also be constrained by power relationships. The ways in which the community shapes their presence, and is shaped by it will be a subject on continuing enquiry.

Michael David's work in Sir Lanka is predicated, like Dan's, on finding different ways of encouraging communities to articulate what they choose to value[7] in an environment where open expression can bee deemed a political act. Michael and his colleagues are constantly negotiating the possible and are concerned to continue to open up discussion and debate. The work turns on training groups and communities in the use of technology and then encouraging them to turn their skills to activities of most use and value to them. Of the three, Michael's work is the least explicitly theorised, tends to be episodic because he is based in the UK and only visits Sri Lanka, and is also the least well documented. At the same time it shares, with the Sulá Batsú -trained community reporters, the most visible products. In this regard it is more difficult to derive generalisable insights from Michael's work except to say that it is organised with the cooperation of the same kind of coalition of committed individuals and groups that the IKME programme is as a whole, which may be the point of recognition between Michael and IKME programme directors. The lack of explicit theorisation is likely to say as much about the context of undertaking development work in Sri Lanka as it does about Michael and his colleagues. One might draw a simple conclusion that the fact that these groups are still going is one definition of success.

In our judgement the strengths of the work in Brazil and Costa Rica turn on the constraints of the disciplines or theories being adopted, in developing a curriculum in an academic institution in the first case and in the rigour being brought to reflection on practice in the second. We would contrast this with the relative lack of discipline in the case of Sir Lanka in terms of the way the programme is being taken up, although clearly the Sri Lankan context brings with it its own constraints. However, without an account of methods used, or a plan, or a reflective and retrospective account or something it is difficult to draw general lessons from what

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[7]   This is a formulation coined by Amartya Sen in his book *Development as Freedom (1999), Oxford: Oxford University Press.*

has been attempted. We know that Michael and colleagues are involved in writing a book as a contribution to IKME, so after reading this document we would be happy to revise the judgement we are making.

One more significant event to comment on, since it seems to us starkly to raise profound questions about what we take knowledge to be, whose knowledge it is, and the power relations that are always fluctuating in the negotiation over who 'we' are and what 'we' know, is the way in which WG1 collapsed around internal and unresolved disagreements. It is not necessary to go into the details about who was arguing and over what, but it is significant that in attempting to resolve the difficulties, which unsuccessfully involved both programme directors and members of the Steering Committee, and led to the group ceasing to function. It would be too easy to conclude that this is just an example of two different personalities clashing. We would want to draw some generalisations from what happened to reflect on what sometimes gets forgotten in abstract, perhaps scholarly accounts of knowledge management in development, even though they are obvious when written down. So knowledge does not exist independently from knowing subjects, and the discussion of who we are and what we think we know and how we come to know what we know is likely to provoke strong feelings in us, not all of which we will necessarily be proud of. It can provoke identity-threatening clashes. It is important, then, not to be naïve about 'sharing knowledge' or to take up 'local knowledges' in an idealised way assuming that this will generate harmony and unity, since there is also the potential for aggression, exclusion and conflict.

In turning to one of the central premises of the IKME programme, that valuing local knowledges will make development interventions more successful, one can see that the proposition is slightly more problematic than first appears if the experience of WG1, comprising seasoned professionals who have been round the block a number of times, is anything to go by. Whether what we know is explicit to us, how we feel about sharing it if it is, what other people make of what we think we know, themes of affect, power and identity seem to be centrally involved in the taking up of knowledge in development.

In general, though, and taking into account both the work that WG1 members undertook 'in the field' and the observations that we can make from the way that they worked as a group, we might conclude that WG1 members have made significant contributions to the practice and theorisation of local knowledges.

B   Working Group 2 – Making the most of information

The original aim of this group was to develop 'a network interested in thinking less how existing technologies can be applied in a development context but what specific issues exist in the finding, handling and use of information in the development sector, and working collaboratively, to find or create tools and processes which might address them.'

Specifically the WG2 set itself the tasks of:

1. Investigation of new artefacts for expression and their relevance to the development context. The group was committed to exploring written, visual and oral artefacts.

   Development and assessment of classification and searching tools which will enable greater user control in identifying and accessing development related information.

   Investigation of awareness and use of new tools by development actors.

   Examples of its work include:

- the Summaries Project, which involved the production of 800-1000 word summaries by id21 (www.id21.org) of a selection of papers produced by CODESRIA, the Nordic Africa Institute and *Development in Practice* journal to see whether this format improves the use of such material by development practitioners and policy makers.

- the Vines Project which aimed to explore a different way of approaching the issue of bias in the process of finding development information on-line.

- experimental IKM Interactions which will aim to explore the potential value of emerging technologies with groups of potential users within the development community.

- an exploration of the long term impact of the Catalysing the Creation and Exchange of Local Content programme (which grew out of the 2002 G8 Dot Force initiative)on the methods of creation of local content and its use by the development sector.

Spanning different activities, this group has concerned itself with the structures and semantics of knowledge, in order to bias its representation and use from the standpoint of development. A considerable part of the working group's efforts, needless to add, has been on digital technologies.

As part of this evaluation, face to face, skype-based/ audio and email based interviews were conducted with those who are/have been part of this working group.

A discussion of the sub-projects in their own terms
In response to the dominant power relationships emerging through current information architectures, IKME, through the work of some members of WG 2, has attempted to posit alternatives. Through the IKM Vines for instance, textual information from sources that generated alternate discourses on development was attempted to be made visible. CODESRIA's journals were indexed and set up on Vines.

More recently, the work on linked data has also sought to address incumbent power structures. The effort has involved showing how to import content from social

bookmarking sources that can be used by NGOs to make visible content from the south, and link all kinds of information - not only data but also stories.

Linked Data (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linked_Data) describes a method of publishing structured data, so that it can be interlinked and become more useful. It builds upon standard Web technologies, such as HTTP and URIs - but rather than using them to serve web pages for human readers, it extends them to share information in a way that can be read automatically by computers. This enables data from different sources to be connected and queried. Technically speaking, linked data is based on the key message that that there are common architectural principles giving coherence to data sets from diverse sources. Tim Berners-Lee, director of the World Wide Web Consortium, coined the term in a design note discussing issues around the Semantic Web project. He argues that the semantic web or the web of linked data from the perspective of international development institutions, can help construct relationships between aid flows and poverty or even poverty at a sub-national level (say through maps) and where development projects are located in a particular country.

The use of linked data is thus seen to have the potential to transform the way knowledge is managed, decisions are made, and relationships can be discerned between apparently unconnected phenomena. As a result of participation in a workshop in Oxford (IKMemergent Workshop) in Oxford, UK, in November 2010, IFPRI developed a linked data set for the Global Hunger Index (GHI) as an example and published it as a linked data RDF files and documented the experience. This is the first stage of the project to make the data available and then monitor its use and look at ways to promote and integrate it with more datasets. An IKMe discussion space has been set up in D groups facilitated by one of the group's members to debate and discuss linked data. Other communities are considering using the GHI dataset to produce new mappings of the data. IKME 's involvement in the development of the GHI dataset as a pilot can be considered an important step in creating the technical enablement for translating data into usable knowledge.

In the development sector, linked and open information is not only gaining currency and already being produced by many large agencies – USAID, the World Bank, DFID, OECD etc, but also emerging as an issue needing interrogation in these early times. IKME argues that the result of investment by the development sector organisations in their own ICT systems over the last 20 years has been that the 'information rich' are now considerably richer in relation to the information poor: In other words this investment, seen as a whole, has been anti-developmental. IKME therefore hypothesises that linked open information, especially if it is limited to handling raw data, has the same potential to privilege certain sorts and sources of information over others; filtering out the voices of the poor and marginalised.

Pioneering alternative models in this area, IKME has initiated dialogue and engagement around the potential of linked open information for the development sector, positing a set of principles to guide all its work in this area. These according to

one of IKME's briefing documents[8] includes a commitment to:

- Link all relevant information, not just data

- Promote diversity of input and source in information produced and used (in particular to ensure that locally produced information and feedback is visible)

- Develop and use tools which identify the source of all information used and that help trace the re- use of that information (in the interests of transparency and to protect against misuse of information)

- Invest in creating linked open information environments relevant to actors at all levels (so that the new infrastructure can include and be informed by the whole of the development sector)

- Invest in ensuring that all stakeholders, particularly the poor and marginalised, whom the
 information concerns have access to and can make effective use of its content (so that development information empowers those whom development is supposed to benefit)

- Collaborate with other agencies in the development of thematic or geographic sections of the
 overall eco-system and infrastructure (to build a global common good)

- Agree and adhere to common standards for the licensing and technical structure of the linked open
 information produced (without common standards, the potential for creative re-use of material is
 lost)

The work on the local content strand was seen as offering certain practices and approaches that are an effective counter-weight to larger-scale, Northern driven development agendas, and more meaningful to people and their organisations at the grassroots in terms of profile, connections and learning. Through the efforts on 'local content', some members of the WG have sought to engage with partners in East and Southern Africa for local knowledge exchanges (http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/files/IKM_Local_Content_Proposal_02.doc). The attempt has been to bring information experts together to focus on the information that is valuable to agriculture/ livelihoods, also using social media to create and take up local content. (The outline of the set of activities is summarised on the wiki http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/index.php/2010_Plans.)

Also, a larger scale conference, the AgKnowledge Africa ShareFair (http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/index.php/File:AgKnowledge_Africa_sharefair_propoHYPERLINK "http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/index.php/File:AgKnowledge_Africa_sharefair_proposal.pdf"sal.pdf , also see, the Share Fair website http://www.sharefair.net/en/ and links

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8   http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/files/1011-linkedinfo.pdf

to reports http://www.sharefair.net/share-fair-10-addis-ababa/content/en/) was organised to bring together a wide range of people and organizations working with Africa's agricultural and rural knowledge: farmer organizations, agricultural extension workers, researchers, students, academics, policy shapers, information and communication specialists, commercial advisors and input providers, and governments. The aim was to cover a wide range of knowledge types and modes of sharing – oral, visual, drama, music, video, radio, documentary, publishing, storytelling, web‐based, geospatial, networked, mobile, computer‐based, SMS, or journalistic and to put people who are developing these methods in touch with each other. The site generated by the event is a good resource of ideas, blogs, tweets and pictures about the various initiatives undertaken by a multiplicity of organisations across Africa.

The WG also explored data visualisation through which an attempt was made to reshape a large data set (of the DFID funded Young Lives Project) into formats accessible to practitioners. Being done in 2 stages, the visualisation project used longitudinal data from multiple countries, on how families cope with shock and how children are impacted. The research maps how when a shock occurs, families make choices and how the impact of these choices pans out. The first stage of the visualisation was reported as a learning experience; the data collected from Round 2 of the research was used for the first stage visualisation by creating a Virtual Village. Round 3 data will be used for the next stage and address the gaps from stage 1, and experiment with data mash-up and employ a new web design for the Virtual Village. The Young Lives pilot was also seen as a way to generate materials in the countries where Young Lives is located. The data analysis and visualisation have showed that longitudinal analysis is complicated and in representation of local facts, ethical issues become significant when qualitative, place and person-specific representations cannot ensure anonymity. However, the effort also has value for how it has been able to respond to local partners in different countries like Save the Children, to have better access to the data, for their own work with local communities.

A theoretical exploration of gatekeeping by intermediaries in the digital environment was also a product of this group. Papers were commissioned to examine intermediation more broadly, looking at new actors in the digital ecology; for instance, counter-movements in the digital space for participatory cultures. The papers thus looked at the shifting canvas of local development when technology is added into the local dynamics.

The articles were published on the IKM emergent wiki under the Changing Environment space (http://wiki.ikmemergent.net/index.php/Workspaces:3._Intermediaries_changing_en vironment), organised in four themes:

1. Efforts to establish and protect a digital commons

2. New layers and agents of control in online information flows

3. The role of virtual communities in information production and dissemination

4. New tools for collecting, visualising and disseminating information

Commissioned contributions highlighted:

- The importance of communities coalescing around shared ideals and technologies for addressing important development challenges. Whether it is communities generating content as in the case of Appropedia or communities building tools that others can adopt, modify and use as in the case of Ushahidi, new technologies support relationships that can expand the problem-solving capabilities of the development community;

- The potential for innovation that is supported by the next generation of information and communication technologies. Open source software and open data initiatives, like FreeSMS and OpenStreetMap, establish feedback loops between innovation and the uses of innovation. The Map Kibera initiative, a cutting edge project that uses the tools and techniques of the OpenStreetMap Project to enable communities on the ground to pursue their own agendas, is generating tools and insights that push the agenda of how information can empower the poor and the vulnerable that can yield further methodological and technological innovations;

- The importance of the new artefacts that emerge at the interface of communities and new technologies, like geo mashups, i.e. websites in which different sources of information and data are displayed in some geographical form, for understanding, coordination and decision-making.

- The ambiguity of 'openness' and the limits to technological innovation . Technologies, such as mobile phones, that may appear as highly decentralised at one level may be extremely centralised at another: mobile phone providers, for instance, can exercise a great degree of control over what kinds of information people are able to access and exchange. The story of the Map Kibera indicated how much effort in terms of training, partnership building and outreach work the successful introduction and use of new technologies necessitated.

Reflections of WG 2 members about the value of their contributions through IKME
For the evaluation, WG 2 members reflected on the qualitative nature and implications of the groups' effort for knowledge for development. Views of members interviewed are summarised below:

One strong premise and conceptual thread in WG2 seems to pertain to understanding biases in mainstream knowledge processes and creating alternative knowledge systems from the standpoint of development. The work on structures and semantics has had a strong logical thread; for example it was identified by one of the members of WG2 that Vines' continued development and integration into the

Linked Information/Data strand would be important, given that 'tagging' was a core concept for both.

In terms of IKM Vines and IKM Labs (Interactive), one respondent reflected how it had started from a standpoint that newer ICTs could be used creatively to both demonstrate the IKME case and for alternative ways of communicating and connecting that supported IKME's attempts to challenge orthodoxy and illustrate alternatives. The respondent felt that IKM Vines has demonstrated what it set out to, that there are alternatives to the Googleisation of Knowledge.

Building collaborative, locally embedded, techno-social spaces has been another core conceptual theme. The work on local content has been rooted in a critical analysis of current knowledge practices in mainstream development. As expressed by one respondent, "These have historically been insufficiently responsive to the 'local' – in terms of local need, local knowledge, local capacity, local knowledge processes and local structures – and this has strongly influenced how information and knowledge, as well as the processes for sharing and learning associated with them, have been framed. The way ICT systems have worked seems to drown out multiple knowledges – reducing local content processes to aggregating and parcelling data."

It was also felt that traditionally, KM has underplayed the importance of the social, emphasising instead formats and classification, systematic storage and consistent retrieval, aspiring to develop knowledge stores rather than facilitate and support people in connecting and communicating with each other. This was expressed by one of WG2 members, in a longish but instructive observation:

> "..people eagerly adopt technology to connect and share, and content is important currency in that process. The most recent manifestation of this trend is the growing importance, or perhaps more accurately, increasing recognition of the importance of the social in search and knowledge exchange. 'The news will find me' was the emblematic response of a young American in a discussion about lack of use of more traditional news media. Similarly, the use of social connections in Facebook and Twitter is threatening Google's increasingly spammed search algorithms based services as illustrated by Facebook powered content recommendation technology. At the time I started working with IKME I had a foot in both camps: arguing for the importance of database-ready content, and the importance of the digital on the one hand, and, on the other, promoting the utility and growing significance of digital tools to support collaboration and participation. IKME has been one of the places where I have engaged with these ideas, using and testing my work in the digital with IKME participants, and relating them to the realities of the African and other Southern participants in the Local Content, IKM Vines and IKM Interactive strands. As a result I feel more comfortable about my understanding of the interplay of these two elements – content and people – and the role of technology in that dynamic as well as their relevance to development processes, notably learning and sharing of

experience and innovation."

The space for dialogue in the local content work was seen as very meaningful and found mention in the impressions shared by one member - "The coming together of African researchers and information professionals, the IGF community centred on the Diplo Foundation and EADI's Information Management Working Group was effective both in facilitating learning exchanges and also exploring digital media, for a deeper, practical understanding of how these tools can be used to support a more open, collaborative, approach to their work, one broadly supportive of the 'idea of the commons' expressed in the Interim Evaluation Report, and transformational." The same was felt by another member working on local content - "In particular, the use of new technological opportunities to provide livelihoods information and the use of training to change how people working in the development sector view information has been very valuable."

The creation by IKME for spaces to build bridges between techies and participatory development practitioners and scholars was seen as a unique contribution.

Insights into the Programme
The experiences of members in terms of their own insights into the IKME network were mixed. For some, the work opened up new contacts and connections with a variety of actors – those working with ICT, social media and digital devices; people from small NGOs involved in working with communities; staff of INGO; development sector specialists in core domains like agriculture; independent consultants and researchers. These contacts and meetings – owing to the programme's vast and complex mission – opened up for some people, opportunistic and fortuitous connections. However, one member from the South also mentioned having brought into IKME more contacts than than they themselves had developed connections due to IKME.

Internal and external communication
The specific methods of the programme, and its broad membership and division into working groups to address pragmatics of work organisation seems to have also generated a dynamic which allowed the incubation of diverse and valuable ideas, no doubt, but also made synthesis and coherence more difficult. As one member of WG 2 said:

"I am not sure if the discussions are clear to everyone but that is part of the process. Discussions go uphill .. IKME has have a certain way of working .. It is deliberately unstructured and many people find it hard to work like this and that includes me...."

The fact that many participants were working part time was also recognised as one reason for reduced investment in collective processes:

> "My personal feeling is that the project was may be too ambitious in relation to its means and the fact that for a lot of people what they did in IKME was something marginal; but that does not mean that is was not important or interesting."

Another member was equally concerned about the way the programme's good work was perceived:

> "I think – speaking personally – that most people engaged within the programme are advancing their own understanding of the issues central to IKME and making or strengthening personal connections; I am not sure how the programme as a whole is seen from within mainstream development, although I fear that it is not widely known of or considered within debates."

Some members did identify the complexity and experimental nature of the programme as introducing an inherent difficulty around internal and external communications.

> "I think the programme could benefit from its members better communicating what they are doing. IKME is one of these rare programmes that gives its members the freedom to pursue their interests. I think this has led to some very interesting pieces of work, which, however, are quite difficult to integrate at the outset."

The future-oriented nature of the programme in grasping the technological aspects and work with hypothetical models has also led to a learning by doing dynamic, which seems to have left some gap in the theorisation. As one member said,

> "I do need to write how to apply what I am doing. I think that reflections should not happen in separate groups. IKM is only a part of the KM for dev field. Theorisation can make a contribution to the field so that IKM can feed into the bigger debates."

Practical hurdles in developing technology models
As with all development projects, the uncertainties intrinsic to collaborative work has had some role to play in shaping outcomes. Further, in the work of WG2 concerning the development of tangible technology products, budgets were a constraint. The demos were unable to mature as models because of available budgets. The planned prototypes were also not taken into a real experimental context. As one member of the group put it in the context of Vines, "to develop a living thing that maintains itself takes a lot – it needs an organisation and an orientation behind it." Another member spoke about how Vines was initially intended to be tried out with a partner organisation reputed for its ICT tools in the KM4D sector, but that did not take off because the organisation in question ran into trouble. Here the programme did experience an unfortunate turn of events. The idea had been to demonstrate enough to suggest such strands of work that would get the attention for more serious investment. The need for heavy financial investment in developing technology models was articulated also in the case of data visualisation as a barrier - "We only have proprietary software and that is why we have not gone very far on the mind-mapping exercise."

Critical appraisal of WG2
The work of members of WG2 has attempted to privilege Southern knowledge

through a variety of different methods which are technology-based: by developing technological platforms which indexed and sorted Southern-produced knowledge first; by visualising Southern data, by summarising intellectual output about the South, and by bringing together knowledge workers in the South better to share and articulate what was important to them. There are some overlaps with the work of WG1: for example, the Agricultural ShareFair was also an attempt to privilege local knowledge, but proceeding much more clearly from a technological perspective, what one WG2 participants termed a more 'instrumental' perspective, than is the case for example with Dan Baron-Cohen's work in Brazil. WG2 members have also activated their networks, some of which engage important decision makers in the North, to consider more directly the ways in which Southern realities are ignored and marginalised. These initiatives are serious examples of programme participants being encouraged to address knowledge and technology asymmetries which we identified in the programme's inception documents. What is generalisable from the work of participants in WG2 is that it is possible to develop different technological tools, platforms and ways of working which give greater voice to Southern perspectives.

What seems to emerge is that there are specific gains and insights within the boundaries of specific projects in WG2 have brought value to participants, enabling the exposition of very new hypotheses in K4D. In that sense, IKME seems to have provided an affirming, and even unique, space to work with ideas for the future. However, this is not equally the case with a sense of the collective learning in terms of shared concepts: there is no clear mechanism for socialising what has emerged over time within the group because of the programme's complexity, and perhaps because the independence encouraged by the programme has in some ways worked against shared processes. It would seem that that some participants have a better understanding of what the sum of the groups efforts amounts to than others. The specific projects undertaken and the opportunity for interface or lack thereof with key inside and outside actors in relation to their own projects does also seem to influence how members of the group see the programme, its key messages and successes in reaching out its messages.

In the evaluators' view the technological nature of some of the projects of WG2 have also needed more consistent project management than perhaps the work of the other WGs might have done. For this reason it is difficult to judge whether a more thorough attempt to follow through, or follow up on what was emerging from the sub-projects might have led to more substantive achievements and more complex things to say about the work of the WG. It is certainly the view of some of the participants in WG2 that because work was not as closely supervised as they would have liked there was a tendency sometimes for projects to drift. Since this observation is offered by respondents it is important to take it seriously while acknowledging that some project holders will always need more managing than others. By its very nature, the development of technology has tended to produce more instrumental ways of working and ones based on clear project management methods. If this working group intended experimenting both with more pro-South

technologies along with experimental approaches to their development, then this would have been in and of itself and interesting programme theme to reflect upon and learn from.

C   Working Group 3 – Management of knowledge

According to the schema setting out the programme plans, members of Group 3 (WG3) were concerned to explore the following for their programme of work:

1. ' Examining how knowledge is currently created and applied within development as a whole and within different constellations of development organisations.

2. Examining the human face of knowledge for development.

3. Identifying approaches that have been successful in bridging the knowledge divides and distilling the approaches in good practices.

4. Developing instruments for evaluating the application of knowledge management within the development sector and development organisations.'

Members of the WG3 intended to analyse and review past and contemporary organisational methods and practice concerning information and knowledge for development, with a view to producing IKME's own intellectual output. They have done so in a variety of ways. They have encouraged and sponsored discussions about the use of knowledge in development in workshops and fora with other like-minded development organisations practitioners and academics, such as HIVOS, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague, and Neijmegen University to name but a few. WG3 members have also formed working partnerships with academics and practitioners to pursue specific lines of enquiry and develop particular methods, such as bibliometrics (analysing word frequencies and tracing the geographical origins of academic output), or semantic mapping, which are claimed to reveal 'the hidden structures of knowledge for development' and to highlight some of the 'knowledge divides' in development. WG3 members have also organised successful meetings and conferences.

For example, and most notably WG3 staged a conference in Windhoek in November 2009, which received a lot of publicity locally and enhanced the status and standing of a new degree being launched in knowledge management by one of WG3 members, Professor Kingo Mchombo. The participants in Windhoek drew up an alternative to the World Bank-influenced knowledge priorities for Africa which were based on self determination. and led to an hour long television programme on knowledge for development. WG3 also organised a conference in Brussels to encourage the organisation of French speakers around similar themes, which has now gone on to become an active francophone community. The group has also decided to sponsor the continued publication of the journal KM4D, which aims to explore theory and practice in the domain of KM4D. The Working Group worked on some special Issues of the journal, which included a paper which provides an inventory of organisational KM practice, and a paper by Valerie Brown on multiple knowledges.

One of the tasks of the group has been to sponsor the writing of

academic/practitioner papers on various aspects of strategy, management and evaluation of knowledge in development. This has led to the publication of some of the IKME Working Papers. These have been complemented by other papers not commissioned by the group, but arising out of the work of other project holders, or other interested parties. The following is a brief, but critical review of the working papers taken as a whole, which is a combination of the output of WG3 and other papers, which are presented as set of papers on the IKME wiki. We realise that in offering a critique of all the papers together, members of WG3 might interpret this as being rather unfair to them, since they did not commission them all. However, our justification in doing so would be to argue that the papers are laid alongside each other on the wiki as though they were a consistent contribution to IKME concepts. Our review of the working papers is a similar exercise to the ones which WG3 have themselves undertaken.

Working Paper 1[9], which one might think of as the inception paper for the working group, conducts a meta-review of the field of knowledge management, and specifically knowledge management for development. In doing so it attempts some definitions of what knowledge management might mean and places IKME as a 'fourth generation' knowledge management research programme; that is to say one which goes beyond realist and IT-based parameters to include into consideration management, practice-based, cultural, and contextual aspects of knowledge. The paper identifies five areas for further enquiry by the IKME programme in general and WG3 in particular and these are: a) the Northern and Anglo-Saxon bias of the dominant knowledge management discourse in development; b) the way that knowledge management is conceived and organised in and between different development organisations, be they in the North or the South; c) the 'human face' of knowledge management, or the extent to which context, language and culture impacts upon knowledge management practice; d) the extent and quality of knowledge 'asymmetries' between North and South (a research question which in many ways is linked to the first research question); and e) enquiry into relevant evaluation methods for knowledge management interventions.

This is an interesting, thorough and useful paper to initiate the work by WG3, and one which gives theoretical underpinning to the research interests of participants in the IKME programme. But at the same time it is possible to see how it has produced a highly abstract set of research questions which arise predominantly from discussions aired in the literature, rather than necessarily being drawn directly from the interests of the participants in IKME. Any one of these questions on their own would have been enough for a five year research programme. To a degree, then, the work of WG3 has proceeded from conceptual pre-occupations framed in the North, to which the paper readily admits, and works from a literature review. In privileging thought before action it perpetuates what has come to be taken as a standard way

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[9]   Ferguson, J., Mchombo, K. and Cummings, S. (2008) Meta Review and Scoping Study, IKME Working Papers no 1.

of undertaking research, particularly in the North, of carrying out a literature review and identifying 'gaps' and questions, which then frame the work to be carried out. This is very different from what might be termed experimental research where the questions might not be so clear to begin with and it is only in the practice that they become more tangible. The practice raises research questions and the research questions inform practice. To be fair to the members of WG3, it seems that the orientation of the group and the way it operates has changed over the course of the programme from being outward-facing, and contracting people outside the programme to write research papers towards being much more concerned to enquire into what participants in the programme are themselves producing and the research questions that these imply. In the latter stages members of the working group themselves have become researchers.

Working Paper 2, *Communicating information and knowledge management: challenges and approaches*[10], is a write-up of a workshop in London hosted by HealthLinks, which comprised 15 people from five different countries who had convened to:

- identify management tools used within the sector, their relation to knowledge flows and whose interests they serve;

- identify key changes which could help create a more receptive and better informed environment; and…

- shape the communication strategy of the IKM Emergent Programme.

The paper is a good illustration of holistic and abstract thinking where the participants in the workshop were concerned to make a difference to the development domain *as a whole*. In adopting this approach the workshop engaged in the use of a variety of tools and techniques to 'map' the sector and to identify what were considered to be power relationships between different players. There was a useful discussion of the meaning and function of 'multiple knowledges', and the workshop reaffirmed the idea, outlined in Working Paper 1, that development depends upon relationships between people. In this respect the workshop took up and enquired further into themes already identified in WG3's inception paper. However, participants in the workshop are working to the assumption is that it is possible to derive courses of action by identifying the general and moving to the particular. So they went on to develop a number of key messages that they wanted to take up with prominent development actors. There are a number of reasons why this workshop might have been very useful for those participating in it, in terms of the sense of common purpose and solidarity that it might have engendered, as well as the opportunity to explore concepts with each other. However, it would be possible to argue that participants have adopted exactly the same methods to change the sector that many groups in organisations use to perpetuate, or even amplify the current patterning of interaction of which the

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10   Deepthi Wickremasinghe, (April, 2008)

participants in the workshop were trying to mount a critique. That is to say the movement is from the general to the particular, and development messages are understood as a series of reduced slogans to influence key decision makers. It would be possible to make the case exactly the other way round, if one has already made the point that knowledge is also contextual, specific and relational, that the best way to start would be from specific examples, perhaps of the participants' own experiences, and try to derive some generalisable principles or messages from these. This could have framed research in the programme too, that attempts might have been made to understand what IKME programme participants were doing in their particular projects as they were doing them, as a way of deriving messages about what participants in the IKME programme were discovering in their work. To derive key messages in advance of doing this might be considered as putting the cart before the horse.

Working Paper 3 (WP3) was an investigation of monitoring and evaluation methods in the development sector[11], and was contracted from a development practitioner who had so far been outside the discussions which had led to the setting up of IKME programme and its initial meetings. This may have been a contributing factor to the dissatisfaction that was felt by WG3 members as to the helpfulness of the working paper they had commissioned, and led to further work on monitoring and evaluation being done in year 4 of the programme by working group members themselves. WP 3 demonstrates a dedication to tools, grids and frameworks for understanding knowledge management of which WP1 had already mounted a critique; it takes a highly realist approach to knowledge management 'high octane KM', and sets out a number of methods by which organisations might place a monetary value on 'intangible assets' so that there can be a calculation of Return on Investment (ROI). The paper takes up a wide, and one might say contradictory, variety of orthodox managerialist literature and sprinkles concepts borrowed from them uncritically throughout the paper. It would be hard to think of an example of thinking which is more diametrically opposed to what IKME intends.

It seems that the commissioning of this paper, and another paper from a consultancy group in Holland on monitoring and evaluation which was also deemed to be insufficient, provoked a strong discussion between the project directors of IKME, and within WG3, about the commissioning process. It may have led to the realisation that programme participants' own experience was as valid a resource as 'external' commissioned academics and practitioners, particularly if the external resources were unfamiliar with, or had not engaged with the central themes informing the research programme. Although the IKME programme is broadly pluralist conceptually, and is by no means seeking 'consensus', this is not to argue that it has no position at all, and some approaches to the key concerns of the programme are likely, although by no means predictably, to have more relevance than others.

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[11]   Talisayon, S. (2009) *Monitoring and Evaluation in Knowledge Management for Development*, IKME Working Paper 3.

WP4, *Learning networks for bridging knowledge divides in international development: aligning approaches and initiatives*[12], speaks directly to the concept of bridging knowledge divides identified in the initial scoping paper. The paper takes an explicitly systemic approach to bridging 'divides' and argues for the amplification of the already mushrooming networks and alliances that are arising to form 'epistemic communities' or communities of practice. It has much to recommend it in the way it grapples with the dynamic and non-linear nature of divergence and convergence of knowledge asymmetries, as well as treating the socially constructed, contextual and multiple nature of knowledge. In this respect the paper speaks directly to the IKME programme's concerns. The author also sets out some interesting organizing principles for amplifying the potentiality of learning networks, such as appreciating non-conformists and calling for diversity and the exploration of difference. However, at the same time the paper contains within it its own contradictions. For example, it never calls into question the idea that such networks can be managed (by whom, and participating how?) nor does it fully reconcile the idea of dialectic, the generative negation of negation or *Aufhebung*, with the recommendation of convergence and alignment through a Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SIE) systems approach. Presumably convergence and alignment would collapse the very dialectic to which Pant helpfully points. In the end the author believes that complexity can be managed and systematised, even if this might take a long time. WP4 is another example of a literature-based, abstract paper which nods towards practice, but is essentially theoretical.

WP 5, *Policy-making as discourse: a review of recent knowledge-to-policy literature*[13], is a thorough review of the literature on how knowledge is translated into policy by predominantly Northern institutions written by a researcher who is based in one of those institutions, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). The author is aware of, and acknowledges this limitation. The paper helpfully reviews different definitions of knowledge and although not prescriptive nonetheless comes down on the side of the individual 'knower': that is to say it tends towards a cognitive and Cartesian understanding of what knowledge is and how it arises, rather than exploring social co-creation of knowledge previously identified by WP1. Nonetheless, the paper is interested in power and it argues that power relations significantly affect policy production, drawing on Foucault's concept of discourse. Power, however, is understood in reified terms, as though it existed independently of the people exercising it, where power is thought to 'affect' policy. The author implies, though does not spell out explicitly, the idea that power relations condition what it is that we take to be knowledge in the first place. The paper laments the lack of representation of the voices of the poor in the policy-making process. Although the paper argues that getting the right knowledge to influence policymaking processes is more of an art than a science, involving judgement, it argues that there could be

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[12]   Pant, L. (2009) *Learning networks for bridging knowledge divides in international development: aligning approaches and initiatives*, IKME Working Paper 4.

[13]   Jones, H. (2009), *Policy-making as discourse: a review of recent knowledge-to-policy literature*, IKME Working Paper 5.

longer term sustainable 'solutions'. The author encourages further research to discover models to redress the current imbalance, and the development of 'clear analytical categories'. In conclusion the author states:

> Enabling this is likely to require institutional change and new organisational forms, to facilitate innovation and to put in place feedback mechanisms to make interventions sensitive to ongoing changes. In turn this presents a challenge of power structures: certain interests are served by the status quo in knowledge production as well as policy-making, and institutional incentives may make it difficult to voice concerns about prevailing paradigms, or trial new approaches. (Jones, 2009: 30)

In reviewing the literature the paper is a helpful contribution to the discussion, but being itself theoretical and abstract it can only hint at further theoretical, abstract and unspecified changes that might be needed in the future. As we have outlined in the Interim Evaluation Report, WP5 has the following characteristics: it is pro-South as a way of improving Northern policy-making; it understands international development as the further improvement of instruments and theoretical models, and is problem/solution oriented; and the paper sits broadly within a scientific and systemic paradigm.

WP 6[14] AND 7[15] sit together since they research and discuss the way that participatory methods are taken up in INGOs in the development context, and go on to reflect on, and make sense of, their findings for the development of theory and practice. These are the first papers, then, explicitly to hold onto the generative tension between theory and practice, but nonetheless privilege and pay attention to practice in the South. They are both directed towards improving INGO practice. WP 6 reviews the practices of a variety of INGOs in Kenya and notes the way in which change arises both as a result of paying attention to what beneficiaries of aid need, as well as being buffeted about by external changes. The authors note how these constant changes disrupt staff in INGOs from thinking about and formalising their learning processes so that staff demonstrate a consistent inability to learn from experience. WP 7 discusses the same theme, but additionally introduces the theme of power relations as the principle obstacle preventing local perspectives from influencing INGO planning and strategising processes. To a degree, both papers are concerned with developing tools and techniques to be taken up by staff in INGOs as means of organisational 'transformation' without reflexively drawing attention to the fact that tools and techniques are also one of the means by which the current working processes and power relationships are sustained. There is nothing inherently emancipatory about participative methods, particularly when they become systematised and highly codified, as Cooke and Kothari[16] have noted (2001).

Perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the work of Beardon and Newman for

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[14]   Kirimi, S. and Wakwabubi, E. (2009) Learning from promoting and using participation: The case of international development organizations in Kenya, IKME Working Paper 6.

[15]   Beardon, H. and Newman, K. (2009) How wide are the ripples? The management and use of information generated from participatory processes in international non-governmental development organizations

[16]   Cooke, B. and Kothari, U. (2001) *Participation; the New Tyranny*, London: Zed Books.

the IKME programme as a whole is the way that in which the group drawn into the discussion about widening the ripples continued to meet, to reflect on its own ways of working, and to write more about them thus modelling the research method to which they were drawing attention. Beardon and Newman will be guest-editing an edition of PLA Notes, to be published by IIED in summer 2011, which will contain a variety of insights, narratives and explorations of participative working arising from the experience of group members working together. Their contribution to the programme then, is not just in the documents which they have produced or have encouraged to be produced, but in their working methods, which to some extent mirror the methods taken up by Sulá Batsú. The authors have pointed to the tension between theory and practice again and again in the IKME research community and in doing so have helped others to keep it in focus. Additionally, they have exercised great discipline in their own working methods, which is the enabling constraint to which we have been pointing previously.

WP8, *Knowledge management and multiple knowledges: a multi-case study within the development sector*[17], is the outcome of research of an MA student studying at the Free University in Amsterdam, and enquires into the extent to which INGO knowledge strategies entertain and accommodate the idea of multiple knowledges. The paper understands the development sector to be knowledge-intensive and embraces the idea of the social construction of knowledge and its social, contextual and specific nature. Multiple knowledges arise both within an INGO and between INGO staff and their target beneficiaries. For the first time in any of the papers the author introduces the concept of emergence. Zirschky understands emergence in the knowledge management context as being those daily processes of social interaction which produce understanding and knowledge, but which need to be accompanied by 'top down' management intervention and visioning. In this sense emergence is understood as the opposite of managing knowledge as command and control (i.e. bottom up as opposed to top down). Zirschky deals with the concept of power, but understands it as inhibitor of trust and sharing, rather than as condition of all human relating which has the potential for both constraining and enabling interaction and indeed, according to Foucault and Elias, is necessary for the production of knowledge. Her recommendations include the idea that multiple knowledges need to be 'integrated' into organisational strategy without any reflection on what this might mean for practice. In our reflections on the functioning of WG1 we noted the way in which the sharing of knowledge became an intensely painful experience for group members which led to the provoking of strong affect and processes of exclusion and inclusion. Zirschky was not to know this, but the programme's own experience does help contextualise what it is she is offering as a finding.

WP9[18], *Good planning or benign imposition? Innovation, emergence and risk in developmental research: Learning from ICTD*, is the write-up of a collaborative conference between IKME and other practitioners and academics, in particular the Judge Institute, Cambridge University, interested in exploring the constraints of more linear ways of understanding development, including the management of knowledge in development. The workshop engaged with the concepts of

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[17]   Zirschky, P. (2009) *Knowledge management and multiple knowledges: a multi-case study within the development sector,* IKME Working Paper 8.

[18]   Rafiq, A. and Gulzar, N. (2010) *Good planning or benign imposition? Innovation, emergence and risk in developmental research: Learning from ICTD*, IKME Working Paper 9.

emergence and risk, although occasionally in problematic fashion. So for example, on day one there was not always a clear distinction made between risk and uncertainty, the former being identifiable and to a degree predictable, and the latter manifesting the quality of Donald Rumsfeld's 'unknown unknowns'[19]. Uncertainty, by its very nature, is unpredictable. Equally, the discussion sometimes took the turn of implying that emergence could be harnessed, or that certain degrees of it could be 'allowed' or disallowed: in this sense, as in the last paper, emergence is understood as the opposite of planning, or some kind of bottom-up process.

By day 2 the conference participants had acknowledged the paradoxical implications of being in control and not in control at the same time. The paper explores the restrictions of short planning cycles in development and the way that project development, particularly in the domain of ICT, is often iterative: that is to say that practice informs theory, which in turn informs practice. It also acknowledges how development can be reduced to economic development, which brings with it an obsession with measuring and quantifying things. This is equally reflected in the dominant discourse of managerialism, which is taken up largely uncritically in the development domain. Participants also discussed the contested nature of 'evidence' and how power relations affect what is and isn't taken to be evidence.

The paper sets out the participants' desire to change the environment which they are co-creating with a broad variety of approaches, from producing academic products, staging conferences, through to engaging key decision-makers in organisations. In sum, the paper is a record of discussions held, rather than a paper making an argument, but is drawn from participants' reflections with others on their experience of working in the development domain on IKM issues and in this sense is grounded, practical and convincing.

WP 10[20], *'Things can be other than they are.'* Understanding the limitations of current management thinking and knowledge practice for work in the development sector, draws on 'design thinking' and rhetoric as means of 'transforming' management practice in organisations. Jenkins' proposition is that current management theory rests upon analytic and engineering assumptions: that is to say organisations have tended towards hierarchies and quantitative ways of knowing. We assume mechanistic causality and manage towards efficiency and control. New conditions in the 21st century, Jenkins argues, demand new approaches, particularly with the glut of information which may distract our attention from what is important and which challenge analytical approaches. Jenkins makes a distinction between tame and wicked problems: wicked problems tend to be social or developmental problems which are fluid and unstable, have multiple causes and about which no agreement may exist as to the starting point and end point, merely competing perspectives about what needs to be done, which in turn shift the nature of what is being discussed. Borrowing from Aristotle Jenkins tries to rehabilitate the ancient art of rhetoric. He takes rhetoric to mean not superficial public relations, but the art of developing persuasive arguments to

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[19]   Although originally coined by Luft and Ingham's in their cognitive psychology tool, the Johari's Window (1955).

[20]   Jenkins, J. (2010) *'Things can be other than they are.'* *Understanding the limitations of current management thinking and knowledge practice for work in the development sector,* IKME Working Paper 10.

influence each other in different settings of the viability of a range of futures. Jenkins argues that rhetoric is much more rooted in subjective experience and is 'end-user' oriented and is therefore much more suited to dealing with social development, which he understands to be filled with wicked problems.

However, the difficulty arises with the paper when Jenkins tries to reduce these interesting perspectives on old and new paradigms to a series of 6 methods, some of them using techniques trademarked by his own consultancy company, which purport to create a new 'system' of knowing. This new 'system' seems to demonstrate many of the characteristics of the old one which Jenkins has previously criticised; for example, he argues that conversation is most 'effective' when it is carried out with three (trademarked) perspectives which can be taught. Conversation, then, still needs to be managed and controlled and there is little indication about how he would know if it was 'effective': a 'wicked' perspective would surely argue that there are only a range of points of view on what we might mean by effective in a highly contested environment. And on wicked problems, if there is no agreement on the shape, cause or constituents of a wicked problem, in what way is it helpful to refer to it as a problem at all? Participants on Jenkins' training courses are taught how to speak to each other and are then invited to align with a new, shared vision. This seems to replicate many of the instrumental tendencies of managerialist discourse, which are predicated on ideas of conformity and alignment, rather than the exploration of diversity and difference which Jenkins has previously indicated he is interested in.

The paper is an interesting contribution which speaks to some of IKME's concerns and provides interesting insights, such as the visualisation techniques used in his company's method for example, but which, unfortunately, falls into its own contradictions and is unable to sustain the critique which it has started. The critique of instrumentalisation itself collapses into instrumentalisation. There is a highly significant aspect of what Jenkins is pointing to, though, in the question of rhetoric, which the IKME programme is expecting to address in its communications strategy. One way of making the case that IKME programme participants are concerned to set out is with convincing, articulate accounts of why the multiplicity of knowledge and local contexts and traditions are important. In other words, change comes about in the ways in which programme participants are able, through their rhetoric, to influence the game they find themselves playing with others. This points to the ancient Greek concept of *parrhesia*, or bold and fearless speech, where engaged citizens, acting ethically, can speak truth in the agora as a political act of trying to influence others. However, Foucault[21] makes the point that for many Greek philosophers, *parrhesia* was thought to be the opposite of rhetoric since it was much less artificially constructed, and best conducted dialogically. It was contextual, timely, persuasive, rather than high-flown, dramatic and technical. Perhaps one could think of it as rhetoric-lite, and very different from what Jenkins recommends with his company's trademarked conversation techniques.

WP11[22], *Power and Interests in Developing Knowledge Societies: Exogenous and Endogenous Discourses in Contention* takes a broader view of information developments and by drawing on texts published by the UN and the World Bank

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[21]   Foucault, M (2001) *Fearless Speech,* Los Angeles: Semiotexte.

[22]   Mansell, R. (2010) *Power and Interests in Developing Knowledge Societies: Exogenous and Endogenous Discourses in Contention*, IKME Working Paper 11.

demonstrates the way in which exogenous theories of information and knowledge have marginalised 'non-Western knowledge systems'. Exogenous models are principally concerned with technology gaps, knowledge gaps and information dissemination, whereas endogenous models are more concerned with human beings, decision-making processes, and encouraging the poor to make their own society through participatory and inclusive processes of development. She notes that although the models of development are in contention, exogenous approaches are more likely to influence the endogenous position rather than the other way round. This, she argues, is likely further to entrench the interest of big corporations, particularly those selling technology. Mansell draws on the work carried out by project-holders in IKME as examples of endogenous approaches which contest the domination of the exogenous narrative of development. The paper explores in more depth some of the implications of working with an emergent understanding of knowledge, and it keen to highlight the ways in which power relations condition which knowledge is valued and how the development debate unfolds. One of the strengths of the paper, then, is the way in which it helps locate the work of IKME in the broader context of discourse about the role of information and knowledge for development.

The evaluators know that some group members of WG3 have been asked to develop thinking on monitoring and evaluation by drawing on the experience of working in the programme, and which will presumably result in WP12. As indicated earlier, this seems to indicate a shift in thinking of the members of WG3 and an inclination towards theorising from the programme participants' own experience and trying to hold onto the generative tension between the two. The evaluators have seen presentation slides setting out some of the ideas of the working group members on monitoring and evaluation, which clearly draw on some of the working papers and current trends of thought in the programme, but it is as yet unclear what their synthesis will be.

In sum it is possible to see how many of the working papers have arisen out of the ideas found in the inception paper of IKME, and Mike Powell's (2006) original journal article[23], and WP1. However, they engage more or less explicitly with themes identified in them and one output does not necessarily bear any relation to another – of course, there was no necessary intention that they should, but then the programme directors are left with the task of saying something about the very diverse outputs which appear to stand for IKME thinking. An inquisitive researcher would have to hunt among the various products to follow the thread of what programme members had come to understand about, say, emergence in IKM, or how they might understand 'multiple knowledges' for development, or what IKME participants have learned about the difficulty of straddling practice and theorising about practice. Some of this, perhaps, is what might appear in the evaluation papers which are currently in production, but which the evaluators have not yet seen.

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23   Powell, M. (2006) Which knowledge? Whose reality? An overview of knowledge used in the development sector, *Development in Practice*, Volume 16, Number 6: 518-532.

Critical appraisal of the output of WG3

Taking together the products of WG3, which we take to mean the workshops, blog posts, events and some of the working papers produced by the working group members, it is clear that they are rich and diverse, and many of them of substance. Good links with different institutions have been initiated, maintained or developed, and more people have been brought into discussion about what it might mean to work with 'multiple knowledges'. A term which has come up time and again in interviews with group members is the word 'confidence': having been engaged in a systematic discussion of theoretical and practical issues over a period of time in a group that met episodically but continuously has enabled each to the group members to pursue whatever they were doing outside the programme, from setting up a new curriculum in Namibia through to exploring different methods with other colleagues outside the programme. Initiatives involving the KM4Dev Journal and the initiation of a francophone knowledge for development group have made a significant contribution to pushing forward the ideas of the IKME programme.

WG3 appeared to be the most cohesive of the working groups and the one where group members professed themselves to be most creatively engaged in the work of the programme. The working group was particularly helpful for younger members of the group who found themselves thrown together with older practitioners and academics. The combination of older and younger, more and less experienced, academic and practitioner seemed to work particularly well, especially as the working group members began to develop their own abilities to take on responsibility to develop an IKME position on monitoring and evaluation, for example. One could argue that this is a demonstration of the members of WG3 valuing their own 'local knowledge' and trying to theorise from their own practical experience as researchers.

One of the significant outcomes of the work of WG3 is the way it has enabled group members, after Jenkins' identification of rhetoric as an important aspect of social change in WP9, to be articulate and convincing champions of a particular social understanding of knowledge for development with the plethora of fora that they have engaged in since the programme started. They have become better equipped to play the game and to set out an alternative point of view to the dominant discourse.

However, the evaluators concur with the external reviewer they commissioned to read the working papers and review the wiki, someone with long experience of domain both as an academic, policy-maker and practitioner, who argues that there is little in the way of a summative framework that helps an outside reader make sense of the work that WG3 and other contributors, have produced. The critical evaluation of papers above is, to the best of the evaluators' knowledge, the first comprehensive view of the working papers. What is the group's view of the papers they have commissioned and those that have been included as part of the products of IKME's theoretical research? To what extent has it helped inform their thinking about what they are doing; in other words, how has all this theory informed

practice, and vice versa? Without some kind of critical response to what they have commissioned or which has been included on the wiki, and the activities they have become engaged with, which by no means needs to be a consensus view, it is hard to assess how WG3 members have developed their thinking, although it is clear from their accounts to the evaluators that they think they have. How would they summarise what they have achieved? Clearly working group members have already exercised critical judgement in rejecting one of the papers they commissioned, and in deciding to do more work on monitoring and evaluation themselves: on what basis do they accept or reject, and why do more work? What is it that they are looking for that they have not found, and how does this inform their emerging thesis about the role of IKM for development?

As an example of what we are pointing to, there seems to the evaluators to be a distinct, qualitative difference between WP 2 and WP9, both of which are reports from workshops held at different stages of the development of the programme. WP2 seems to be filled with what one might consider the usual broad and generalised abstractions about making a difference to the domain of development as a whole, as if this were possible. WP9, however, manages to combine both general and specific observations drawn from the similarities and differences emerging from a diverse range of people working in the knowledge for development domain. The paper documents the way that grappling with the issues changed participants' understanding of what they were talking about and led to a variety of intentions for further action, not the least of which was a strong IKME presence at the ICTD4D conference at Royal Holloway in Dec 2010. So WP9 documents a clear movement of thought which had practical consequences and better illuminated for the participants what it was they thought they were struggling over. But what difference do members of the group think these documents have made to thinking in the IKME programme?

One of the reasons for setting up the IKME programme in the beginning was to create space and time for doing things differently, and reflecting on this process. So there are always judgements to be made about how much to involve existing institutions in the discussion, and how to engage them. A number of organisations have allowed their members of staff to become involved in the programme, including the Steering Committee. One potential area of research not identified by WG3 could have been the extent to which staff from contributing NGOs were able to take up IKME ideas in their own organisations. Documenting the barriers and hurdles that they experienced trying to work practically with these issues in their host organisations might have produced interesting material for the programme in general and WG3 in particular to be working with and thinking about – they might have been 'live' case studies from which to develop theory bringing some grist to the work of the group. If it is difficult taking up these ideas in organisations sympathetic to the central thesis, then what chance is there with organisations which are less so?

5 Web presence and artefacts
Some comments

Some statistics showing how some of IKME's web artefacts have been accessed can be found in Annex 1 at the end of this report.

IKME uses several online tools, including wikis and blogs as also dialogue forums like D groups and social networking tools. The KM4D agenda has been mostly shaped in the North and academic interest in the domain is still largely in Northern countries. This is one important reason why the traffic on the main wiki is predominantly from the North. Further, IKME's connections with the South through the programme were based on locally bounded activity, with locally generated web presence (as indicated in the discussions on WG1). These geographic sites where work was undertaken by projects, for instance in Sri Lanka and Costa Rica, used online spaces customised for community use independent of IKME's wiki. WG2 also did engage with some African organisations through workshops on local content. While reflections about this work are present in the Giraffe blog, they are also found in other spaces like http://communitycontent.maneno.org . By and large, the engagement of individual projects with the online spaces of IKME discussed here seems to be sporadic. Blogging is done by few regulars whereas the IKME community is certainly much larger than would be possible to discern through the bloggers on the Giraffe. The IKME wiki and the Giraffe can thus be considered more as meta spaces – the online face of the programme for communication, with good viewership statistics, and functioning as a means for disseminating the programme's intellectual output and communicating to actors in the North.

Very few people in the evaluation commented on the programme's web presence. But it was felt by some that a stronger use of social media would have helped to create a stronger sense of being part of an active research community. An alternative perspective would be that if this, a technology-savvy group of researchers did not make much use of the existing ways of communicating, then providing more social media may not have made much difference. The copious amount of material on the main programme wiki was also seen by one member as too vast to do justice to the visibility of the outputs of the sub-parts of the programme.

6 Governance and management
The IKME research programme has three principle mechanisms for governance and management. The first is a Steering Committee comprising academics, senior INGO managers, senior figures in research institutions as well as project holders on the programme. The second is a group of advisers who have not been formalised as such, but who have remained interested in the programme over the long term, often since its inception, and who have been invited to attend the international meetings and the first, open day of the Steering Committee. The final governance mechanism is the management meeting which has been hosted by the budget

holder, EADI as a means of keeping track of the budget and the contracts.

The Steering Committee is intended to:

- Offer overall intellectual guidance and challenge to IKM Emergent

- Assist in peer review and quality control

- Contribute to the impact of the programme through the value of their association with it and the dissemination of relevant material through their own personal and professional networks

- Approve, reject or qualify the co-ordinator's annual report

- Approve the annual plan

- Intervene in or re-organise the management arrangements of the programme if necessary

In the Steering Committee and the advisory group are different individuals who have been involved in the domain of knowledge and IT for development for at least the last 20 years or so, many of whom are now eminent in their field. They hold or have held positions in the civil service, in academia, in research institutions or in INGOs. They also tend to understand the importance of knowledge, and ways of knowing, to development and take a critical position of the way that knowledge management is generally taken up in research or in the field of international development. These supporters have usually been friends and/or colleagues of the two IKME programme directors, and they have encountered each other during many years of working on the issues, as each of them took up roles in a variety of different institutions and pursued their careers. Latterly other members have joined the Steering Committee who have not had the same shared history. The supporters of IKME have been extremely helpful in shaping the programme before it was submitted to the Dutch Foreign Ministry, during its submission and subsequently, either as members of the Steering Committee or less formal advisers who have been invited at key moments of the programme's development, such as the annual Steering Committee Meetings, or during the two international gatherings of the IKME programme.

It would be the evaluators' judgement that without this shared history of interest, discussion and long-term collaboration, this programme is unlikely to have got off the ground and to have been funded to the degree that it has been, particularly an environment which is risk-averse and tends to favour orthodoxy. The group of people involved in putting the programme together, whether they have subsequently remained 'inside' or 'outside' the programme, have contributed significantly to the programme's bona fides and the credibility with which it has been viewed by many stakeholders. Since the programme has started it would seem that the assumptions guiding the management of development have taken and even more realist turn, with the proliferation of grids, frameworks and quantitative indicators which purport

to 'measure' impact. The current climate for development, with its emphasis on techniques and tools which are principally designed to control at a distance, make the emergence of a programme like IKME, which privileges the local and the contextual, seem even more remarkable.

To describe this loose group of colleagues as 'supporters' of the IKME programme in no way implies that they have been unable to keep a critical distance from what the programme has been trying to achieve. They have been broadly sympathetic, but this has not prevented them from engaging critically with each other, and with programme project holders about what they think they were doing and what the projects were achieving. So programme evaluators have attended all but one of the Steering Committee meetings which are reflective meetings to an unusually high degree. Steering Group meetings have tended to comprise an open first day, where long-term supporters of the programme and representatives of the Dutch Foreign Ministry have been invited to discuss together with Steering Committee members and the evaluators, followed by a second day which is open to Steering Committee and evaluators only. Both groups have been enquiring, discussive, tolerant of ambiguity and able continuously to locate the work within the broader domain of knowledge management and knowledge for development. One of the roles of the Steering Group and advisors is that they have constantly reminded the programme managers of the world in which the programme is operating from their own perspectives, whilst cleaving to what the programme is trying to achieve at the same time.

Where this discussive environment has proved less successful for Steering Committee members, according to the members themselves, and perhaps to the programme directors, is when members have missed meetings, have not attended an international meeting and have become disconnected with the discussions taking place in the programme. They themselves find it difficult to know what is going on, even with the help of the annual report written by programme directors. It is in these instances that the generative tension between the difference that the programme aspires to making and perhaps more orthodox debates taking place outside the programme begins to break down. When Steering Committee members, or advisory supporters, lose the thread of the discussion, it becomes understandably difficult for them to participate in it. To a degree, then, one of the central themes of the IKME programme, that development is contextual, local, time-bound, is played out in the Steering Committee too. Some Steering Committee members have expressed frustration that the programme has not addressed more urgent development issues, or has not made a sufficient case for itself in the wider domain of IKME. This may be partly true, but also needs Steering Committee members to help make that case: there are powerful pressures in any domain to conform to a dominant view.

One of the central roles of Steering Committee members, then, is to understand the programme in broad terms and to try and articulate thematic similarities and differences. However, more than one of the Steering Committee members observed to the evaluators that they did not think they were 'steering' anything. We think that

this observation reflects both a philosophical and a practical position: philosophically because members of the Steering Committee have tried to work in a way which is more consistent with the ethos of the programme. In other words, they have been less interested in continuously scrutinising and supervising the doing of the work and have been more concerned to discuss its strategic value. Practically, with a group of very busy people who have met for a day and a half once a year, the detailed scrutiny of individual projects would have proved impossible. Since the more detailed work of managing the programme is devolved to the management committee which has met at least annually, the focus of the Steering Committee has been more broadly based. Discussions have often been quite wide-ranging and have been capable of addressing very difficult and intractable themes which have arisen in the programme. The evaluators were present when a particular difficulty was discussed which involved a serious conflict in one of the working groups, and the chair of the committee continued to be involved for many weeks after the event offering guidance and support to the programme directors.

In order to qualify for DGIS funding IKME required a host organisation which would legally contract with the Dutch government and provide management services to the programme. This organisation was EADI who have a lot of experience of managing contracts, organising conferences and commissioning research. Both directors and a number of the programme participants are members of EADI, so there was a good fit of interests.

From quite early on in the course of the programme the IKME directors and EADI staff agreed to meet face to face on a regular basis with the Chair of the Steering Committee to go through the fine detail of the contracting and the finance. In fact, the meeting has never met with the Chair present but has met virtually to deal with a number of difficult situations to every one's satisfaction. Meanwhile, the management committee has met regularly, if infrequently to argue through the generative tension between being flexible and responsive on the one hand, while at the same time recognising the more orthodox funding and contracting environment in which the work might be audited on the other. Over time the management arrangements have proved satisfactory to all parties, although the evaluators have not sought the views of the Dutch Foreign Ministry. The EADI administrator maintains two spreadsheets in Googledocs: one covers programme expenditure, historical, committed and planned, and the other lists every contract which has been let, and what these contracts are expected to produce. It is the first of these that is most discussed in the management committee meetings, although the two taken together give a reasonably up to date picture of what has been done. The process of contracting, accounting and discussing has also evolved over time, and as IKME directors, participants and EADI staff actually operate the management processes that are supposed to meet everyone's needs.
Contracting the work

According to the programme directors the work is contracted in three ways:

1) Programme directors make an estimate of people's participating in programme and similar meetings and participants invoice against the budget.

This is a broad category of funding where individual participation is not overseen, and who is involved and to what extent varies from year to year. Where a piece of

work is organised involving a number of events and different participants, then a project manager is appointed with an agreed budget who is able to authorise expenditure against the budget on the production of an invoice, and following completion of the agreed piece of work.

The work is overseen between the project manager and the programme directors and variations to the budget are permitted by agreement.

2) The majority of the programme work is contracted with standard EADI contracts, one for individuals and one for organisations. Each contract is accompanied by a detailed terms of reference which have been mutually discussed and agreed.

The programme directors had originally intended to contract work by competitive tender for half of their contracts and to let the other half to people who had expressed an interest in the work of the programme, people the directors refer to as 'insiders'. In the event programme directors learnt that tendering for work from outsiders who had not been party to any of the discussions did not usually produce work which addressed the issues the programme wanted to explore, although there have been some notable successes. The programme directors have exercised oversight of the individual contracts with e-mail or telephone contact of a frequency of never less than three months. Variations to what has been contracted have been agreed in writing.

There have been some delays leading to underspends in the planned budget, but apart from some known exceptions project holders have come up with what they agreed, and often have done more than they said they would.

Communication
The programme directors have developed a number of fora and methods for communicating across the programme and about the programme. These have included the website, the Giraffe and Process Diary blogs, an annual newsletter, and latterly commissioning help with editing and summarising working papers and with updating different audiences about how the work is progressing. The directors acknowledge that they would have liked to have accomplished more than they have in the time available, but this is not the same as saying that too little has been done. They also make the valid point that the programme already generates a good deal of interest, and given how lean management is, it could be that investing more in disseminating about the programme could have led to a level of demand with which they would have struggled to keep up.

Critical appraisal of programme governance and management
The IKME has recruited a substantive group of people onto its Steering Committee who have contributed to a highly reflective and discussive environment in broad support of the themes of the programme. It would be hard to stress enough the original and unusual nature of this achievement given how common it is for trustee groups to get lost in the detail, and to understand what they are doing solely in disciplinary terms. This has been supported by a broader group of stakeholders who have maintained an interest in what the programme has been doing and who have consistently attended the first part of the Steering Committee meeting, or other events. The Steering Committee has at the same time shown itself capable of

offering a critique of what the programme has achieved, and of asking for more, as well as being capable of offering support in times of conflict and difficulty. However, because the Steering Committee has met infrequently by many standards it has perforce concentrated on the broad sweep of the programme and has relied heavily on reports from the two programme directors. Since the Committee has met infrequently, missing meetings has had a significant impact on committee members' ability to make a contribution to the emerging discussion.

The programme directors have developed a variety of ways of managing the programme which have been both low cost and low key, broadly trusting programme participants to get on and do what it is they have said they are interested in doing, but at the same time retaining the sanction of only making payments against outputs. Programme directors and staff at EADI have managed to develop ways of working which have suited them both, and seem to meet the requirements of the Dutch Foreign Ministry. Inevitably in a programme of this size and complexity there will have been lacunae which will have needed adaptation and negotiation to put right. This particular management approach is very different from the conventional panoply of disciplinary measures that are usually developed in organisations to ensure 'performance'.

The programme has commissioned work by the now widely used method of tendering: however with some notable exceptions (the PAMFORK report and the Ripples research) the programme directors feel that the exchange of Terms of Reference with relative strangers was often not sufficient for 'outsiders' to know what it was that the research programme was really interested in enquiring into. Potential contributors tendering 'cold' for IKME contracts have often not been sufficiently aware of the discussions and perspectives which led to the programme being developed in the first place, and the radical tenor of some of their research enquires. Far more successful seems to have been the process whereby discussions within, or without the programme led to an idea being put forward which could be responded to either by programme participants, or by people outside the programme but interested in its work, to put forward suggestions which could then hashed out into a contract and costed. Programme directors have been able to demonstrate again and again the ability to respond to initiatives which have developed with in the programme, or from links with contingent groups and discussions, which have led to ideas for projects being developed which were never part of the original plan, nor could they have been. The programme has evolved in emergent ways which could not have been foreseen, and which have arisen as a result of ideas and discussions which were taking place in the programme, and between programme participants and contingent parties. One way of putting this explicitly, but at the same time paradoxically, is that the programme directors and the Steering Committee have planned to be surprised, and to be prepared to adopt new ideas or initiatives which may not have originated with them. This is a form of leadership which does not require the programme directors to have a 'vision' and then to oblige everyone else to conform to it except in the very broadest sense of having a commitment to this way of working.

The methods for managing and monitoring the work seem to be robust and the contacting with individual contract holders is novel, in terms of the difference it establishes with more orthodox ways of working. And at the same time it satisfies professional requirements. However, the evaluators still have some observations to make about the management of the collective undertaking and the important role of the programme directors in making meaning, which both programme managers accept to a degree. IKME is a diverse programme undertaking a wide variety of research work – some project holders have continued to generate new ideas and have been funded by the programme over a number of years, others have done short, one-off pieces of work and then have left. Some project holders have attended both programme-wide meetings, some have attended neither. This makes it very hard for the programme to achieve its own aspiration:

> '**Constructing a narrative**: most of the work of the programme is done in the form of small projects. Each of these has its own rationale and purpose but each should also make sense on the wider canvas of the overall programme. The picture needs to be clear at all times, but it should also be constantly changing.'[24]

For many respondents that we spoke to this wider canvas, and where they appear on it, has been insufficiently clear. This is not to imply that it has not been there at all, nor that different project holders were necessarily impaired from doing what they set out to do because where they did not understand where they fitted into the broader canvas. The overwhelming majority of project holders have produced work of a high quality. However, since we are meaning-making animals, there can be no surprise that the majority of respondents expressed a desire to know more fully how what they are doing contributes to what everyone else is doing. In a small minority of cases monitoring what project holders were doing has not been enough to help them make a better fist of what they were doing – inevitably, some people need more support than others, and part of this support is the management task of helping project holders make better sense of their efforts. The way the programme directors have developed IKME is with a highly respectful, one might say decentred theory of leadership. So, with certain safeguards in place, and with regular checks, programme participants have been encouraged to get on with what they want to do unencumbered by the usual panoply of techniques of disciplinary control. There is much to recommend this approach, particularly in its marked difference with many contemporary organisations where managers are constantly pulling projects up by the roots to see if they are growing.

One of the things we think we are pointing to is the dilemma around leading a very diverse programme. The evaluators accept that project holders have engaged with the programme in a wide variety of ways and for a wide variety of reasons, and so there is no one way of so including them in the programme's development. However, the programme itself was put together as a way of supporting managers

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[24]   Powell, M. and Cummings, S. (2009) *IKME Emergent – Synthesis of Progress to Date*, IKME October.

in INGOs to 'have a holistic understanding of this challenge (managing information exchange and relationships)' so ideally would have a developed a substantive and 'holistic' view of what it has been like to manage information and knowledge coherently and consistently in IKME.

There are a number of IKME documents, one of which we have referred to above, as well as the testimony of project holders which provides good evidence that the programme directors have grappled seriously with how to manage knowledge in a knowledge management research programme. Programme directors have already responded to our critique, which we accept is a high level argument and is informed by a particular set of academic assumptions, and is made in no way to imply that they have not taken their responsibilities seriously.

7   Reflections on all of the above

What is original and different?
There are a variety of ways in which this research programme is highly original, not to say unique, and the particular nature of its originality poses a profound challenge to taken-for-granted approaches to the commissioning, planning, implementation and assessment of development interventions. Originality also brings with it its own particular problems of organising, which we will also explore below.

So, for example, the programme arises out of a set of professional and personal working relationships which turn on a similar interest in exploring the potential of knowledge for development from a critical perspective. A cohort of people, who in the beginning of the programme largely knew each other well, or who had worked with each other continuously over a period of years and understood each other's interests and perspectives and were thus able to put together a coherent programme of action. This is a very different activity from ad hoc groups of consultants forming in order to put a tender in for a piece of work, or organisations competitively bidding against a pot of money where the donor has defined the criteria. This was a programme of work looking for funding, rather than funding looking for a programme of work. An informal network, brought together on a voluntary basis, with a commonality of purpose rather than a commonality of employer were responding to a perceived need/question that had arisen in their work. The application to the Dutch foreign ministry had a relatively long gestation period comprising lots of consultation and discussion – there was no rush to meet a funding deadline, and this gave the group time to think through its plans and to cohere. Nor does this imply that the programme only developed as a result of the relationships between a particular group of people. Over time it has attracted people to the programme who were never part of the original grouping and who have brought new and interesting ideas to the research table. New connections and associations have arisen as a result of a particular approach to the work, and a similar interest in privileging local knowledges.

This is a very different understanding from the idea that development is a techno-

rational discipline that anyone can do given the right skills, and that the best way to contract development interventions is through an arms-length tendering process which depends predominantly on paper accreditation and abstract criteria.

The programme group comprises research participants who are not solely dependent on the programme for their income. This amplifies the strong theme of voluntarism and increases the importance of negotiating the timing, the meaning and the importance of what it is programme participants think they are doing together. To a degree this has also increased the opportunity for autonomous thinking and for importing experiences and points of view from outside the programme. It has also worked against some of the worst aspects of the dominant form of managerialism which is practised in many INGOs, where a focus on targets, 'performance' and the needs of the institution can occlude and distort what the work requires. In remaining tolerant of ambiguity, the programme managers are not assuming that change comes about by setting pre-reflective targets and controlling towards pre-given ends.

This has enabled the programme to identify, work with and anticipate some significant research questions, lacunae and problems in the domain of knowledge for development, and even ones which are only starting to emerge. For example, the initiative around linked data has picked up a theme of work which is still nascent in the development sector and already given it a good airing from a progressive perspective. So participants were exploring the diversity of input and source used, the inclusion of marginalised communities, common standards for licensing and the technical structure of the linked and open data used. Thus the programme has offered space for people with varied interests in the knowledge for development community to come together to form associations of mutual advantage that hold promise for future alliances for change.

The programme has been able to put into practice its concern with local knowledge production, has actively included Southern voices and NGOs and has tried to privilege them, and has funded radical and new ways of working which draw attention to endogenous knowledge development processes. In so doing it has tried to work seriously with the ways in which dominant ways of conceiving of knowledge for development often unwittingly militate against the interests of the poor and marginalised. It has put money into making local knowledge processes more visible and has developed some interesting methods for doing so.

Whether or not the programme documentation can define emergence or not, it is clear that the programme has evolved in response to the opportunities and obstacles which people have encountered along the way. Although acting with broad intention, and starting with a specific programme of work, the programme has been developed to reflect the changing understanding of what people thought they were doing. New people and organisations which the programme directors have come across have been included, programme directors and other key players have responded to invitations, or ideas for new work that seems to arise from what people are committed to. In other words, the programme continues to gather

people in and to have an influence the broader domain of information and knowledge for development. This is in itself is a different and highly adaptive way of commissioning the work and mirrors the way in which the research programme was formulated in the first place. As programme participants interact with others in conferences, workshops, other institutions and events, so other like-minded people are discovered who have been able to put ideas to the programme directors in fulfilment of the programme's broad aims. Informal discussion about what might be done eventually translates into formal contracting, so the programme is not without some discipline, but the ideas precede the bureaucratic fulfilment of them. The programme has been able to respond to and develop ideas about new project which have arisen as technology and thought changes. It has been able flexibly to make connections between different groups with similar interests and to give some impetus to them to explore further. To a degree, then, the programme has been able to help incubate different critical approaches to information and knowledge for development, both 'inside' and 'outside' the programme. The research programme has demonstrated a fruitful permeability.

There is a wide variety of evidence that the programme has been highly influential in terms of the ideas that have arisen from among the various projects. It is not always possible to document this in a linear way, that X idea has led to Y improvement, but is evident in the growing cohort of people who have been able to give voice to a different way of conceiving of and undertaking knowledge for development who are engaged in multiple different fora and can articulate the difference that IKME has been trying to make. A respondent in one of the working groups observed the following:

> "Many new ideas for IKM for development have been brought to the community of organizations in the North. I think some organizations in the North have changed the way they work as a result of the IKM activities, and even if they have not, they are more aware of the issues around biases in knowledge provision for development. For the training I did for the Danish Development Research Network, a number of the ideas from IKME provided a background for the preparation of the workshop and guidance."

In the evaluators' experience the programme is discussive and reflective to a high degree, including in the Steering committee – this way of working privileges negotiation and meaning-making. This is one of the ways in which the programme works to include very different participants and in a constantly emerging understanding of what it is they are undertaking together. Working in this way involves risk, and is truly experimental and experiential: it takes a good degree of courage. The negotiations within the working groups have also been a form of mutual accountability. There have been some very interesting examples where groups within the wider programme, particularly those using methods of reflection and reflexivity, have sustained generative discussions for long periods of time with have led to the production of substantive products: web content, journal articles, artefacts, contributions to conferences and materials which have been taken up

widely by a diverse group of users.

The programme is diverse and pluralist and the wide range of approaches have been immensely creative, from art installations and visualisation of data through to the development of new software applications for the privileging of Southern intellectual output. The programme has already produced substantive output of intellectual depth.

Some issues to take seriously in the remaining period of the programme

It would also be true to say that IKME's particular approaches to the work have also called out specific difficulties, some of which have already begun to be addressed.

Engagement with, and testing of, ideas generated
For example, the programme is broad and diverse and many project holders have stated that they are not sure where their particular contribution fits in to the overall programme. They are not always clear which discussion they are part of and how to participate further. From the evaluators' perspective there are a number of reasons for this:

There have been only two programme-wide opportunities for meeting and discussing with other programme contributors, in Cambridge in 2008 and in Wageningen in 2010, at which events participants make their own links, connections and sense of what it is they are involved in. In the original plan for IKME there were no such meetings planned, so in organising two, the programme directors have already responded to a perceived and growing need. The evaluators have tried to argue throughout their engagement with the programme the importance of such fora, not just as a bonus to the work, but as constitutive of the work.

This lack of a feeling of belonging has also been expressed by Southern programme members who have to a degree been frustrated by the lack of clarity about how to influence discussion. There is a certain inevitability about the research programme ultimately being North-facing in attempting to influence Northern donors and NGOs, and to a degree it may have encouraged greater expectations from its Southern participants than it would ever have been able to meet.

IKME is also a local knowledge community from which will arise multiple knowledges. It is very important to reflect on and maximise and make sense of what comes out of people's work because this is what is most original and new and grounded in the experience of the programme. There has certainly been a developing sense of the importance of this in WG3, where there has been a growing realisation that insights gained from working in the programme, and researched by active members of the programme, will be as strong as research commissioned by outsiders who have not been party to the discussions and experience of IKME. In general the programme directors have been racing to catch up with theorising about what the programme is doing and to disseminate this theorisation, to the IKME community in particular and a wider population in general. As one participant in the programme put it:

"IKME is not an easy programme to manage: too much control over the

direction of the programme might lead to losing its distinctiveness, which comes from the coexistence of varied perspectives and ideas, too little and there is a danger of all the small parts not really amounting to something substantive."

There has been interaction between the working groups, and the ability to make sense of what each is trying to achieve to the others has been promoted, but in the evaluators' view and with the exception of the wider programme meetings, could be addressed more thoroughly in the remaining period.

As another example of the potential for improving coherence, the *Interim Evaluation* paper drew attention to the fact that there are broad similarities in the conceptual assumptions of some of the main intellectual contributors to the programme, but also some significant differences. There are tensions between academic knowledge and practical wisdom, between local knowledges and global applications, and a variety of responses to the idea of the digital 'commons'. Illustrating the latter in the Wageningen evaluation paper the evaluators identify four types of contribution to the programme: strong participants with strong commitment to the idea of the commons; strong participants with weak commitment to the idea of the commons; weak participants with weak commitment to the idea of the commons; weak participants with strong or indifferent commitment to the idea of the commons. These are not differences to be resolved in some kind of idealised unity, but they are differences to be explored and further reflected on because it can tell us something about the kinds of issues that arise when a community works to reflect on its own knowledge production. Reflection on difference does not necessarily resolve, but it does give programme participants something to bite on and know better how the thinking is moving in the programme and how they might contribute, or react, or respond to the perspectives being set out. Articulating a summative perspective does not necessarily close discussion down, it may simply give discussion a further twist.

As a consequence, there is something of a thicket of concepts being generated by the programmewhich may need some pruning in the next period . So we are presented with 'wicked problems', bibliometrics, the Cynefin grid, tacit and explicit knowledge, the RAPID framework, the Brown framework, positive deviance to name but a few. It would be helpful to have a clear steer on which are more helpful for the programme's interest in emergent working and local knowledges. It is the evaluators' view that some of the ideas generated by the programme need a more thorough critical evaluation from the emerging perspective of pursuing a research enquiry seriously. In using the term critical evaluation, the evaluators are drawing on an academic distinction between critique and criticism.

IKME programme participants have engaged widely with the broader development community in terms of attendance at more mainstream conferences and inviting employees of more mainstream institutions to become members of the research programme and/or the Steering Committee. In general, though, there has been less developed engagement with more orthodox institutions: we noted how particpants

in the IKME have generally had made little headway within their own organisations in promoting IKME ideas, and members of the Steering Committee from NGOs were more likely to be less engaged with the work. This may have been a tactic on the part of programme directors to allow the ideas of IKME to flourish and grow, but it could also be a missed opportunity to try and institutionalise some of the important insights from the programme. The programme directors have been permissive and tolerant of ambiguity, and this has led to a tremendous strength in terms of the voluntarism of contribution and the creativity it has promoted. However, as we have pointed out in the management section of this report, some project holders have needed active monitoring more than others. Those who have been struggling to find their way with what they were doing would undoubtedly have benefitted from more chances to frame their difficulties with a programme director in a consistent way. In the programme as a whole documentation of what people have been doing is relatively light. It is probably obvious from all of what has preceded that the evaluators would not have been in favour of a heavy and bureaucratic process of scrutiny, where project holders have to report regularly against pre-reflected targets. However, it could have been incumbent upon project holders to report once a year with a few pages of narrative account of what they have been doing, warts and all. This would have been a resource to other project holders should they have been interested enough to make their own links with them, to the programme directors and to the evaluators, as well as to other stakeholders in the programme who may have legitimate interests in finding out what people have been up to and what has inhibited/enabled their work. Very few project holders have done much in the way of evaluation of what they have been doing, despite this having been an expectation, sometimes contractually from the beginning of their work, so it comes as no surprise that the evaluators have had to work quite hard to get a substantive evaluative account out of some of the participants in the programme of what they have been doing.

The evaluators share the programme directors' critique of the often heavy-handed and punitive forms of management which seem to prevail in the international development sector, and there is much about the way that they have conceived of and managed the programme which is innovative and different. There are numerous examples where both programme directors have responded appropriately to the needs of programme participants. The programme directors have been highly discussive and enabling, have been thorough in the way that they followed upon the work in terms of monitoring and ensuring that contractors did what they were supposed to. Nonetheless, both programme directors have a particular place in the discussion of what the programme is trying to achieve, and which a number of respondents have told us that they would have been grateful to hear more explicitly. IKME is very different from a conventional organisation in some ways, and not so different in others. In the ways that it is not so different, programme participants have needed lots of opportunities to make sense with other programme participants of what they are doing, and what it means for the overall enterprise, sometimes in small ways.

8 Conclusions

IKME is a large and complex research programme which is ambitious, bold and innovative both in its ways of working and in terms of what it has produced. At the same time, in trying to work differently it has also thrown up a number of important questions and themes which need further investigation in the last phase of the programme.

Contributions to the knowledge for development debate

The IKME programme has knitted together a strong cohort of experienced practitioners who have a long history of commitment to privileging local knowledge and Southern voices. In general there is an acceptance that development is a social and a political undertaking.

In so doing the programme has given further demonstration of the ways in which relationships are central to social development. It is a radical manifestation of alternative ways of thinking and working.

Programme participants have been encouraged to continue to work and research in ways that have long been interesting to them and which arises out of their grounded professional experience. To a degree this is a reversal of the way in which development can sometimes be undertaken, where donors create pots of money to fund programmes which are of strategic importance to them, rather than to beneficiaries.

The programme has been adaptive and creative, responding to opportunities and initiatives as they have arisen, often as a result of what the programme has been researching.

Additionally, the programme has identified, and begun to address research themes which are still nascent, such as linked data, and in being alert to emerging phenomena will have made a strong contribution to framing these themes for other development practitioners.

Programme participants have often negotiated their programme of work within the three working groups. The broader programme meetings and Steering Committee meetings have been reflective and discussive to an unusually high degree.

Programme participants have produced a broad variety of outputs, including installations, web content, journal articles, conferences and other materials, and has a robust presence in the domain of KM4D. Programme members are often articulate ambassadors for alternatives to the dominant techno-rational discourse on knowledge for development. Progamme members and programme directors are increasingly invited to speak at important outside fora, which give opportunities for further dissemination of the ideas.

Methods of working, which have at times demonstrated high degrees of reflection and reflexivity, have been as novel and unusual as some of the concepts, such as traducture, IKMVines and the work with community-based reporters in Costa Rica.

The routes the programme has taken are multi-perspectival, often imaginative, and generative of further discussion. The fruits of programme participants are likely to be taken up in different fora for many years to come.

The programme has made a genuine effort to fund work which makes local and Southern knowledge more visible, including funding conferences and workshops in the South, and has a reasonable record in involving prominent Southern academics and practitioners in discussions, platforms and ways of working. However, this attempt at inclusion has inevitably provoked observations from Southern participants that they have not felt sufficiently included, and have not felt adequately able to shape priorities.

The programme has also encouraged alternative approaches to evaluation of which this report is an example, making a significant attempt to reflect on the implications of paying attention to emergent phenomena.

Areas for further discussion and work in the remaining period

As a research community interested in knowledge management, participants have sometimes struggled to manage their own knowledge. This is understandable given how many initiatives there are both within the working groups and outside them, so that some participants are unclear what contribution their own sub-project is making to the undertaking as a whole and to know what overall discussions they are part of.

Programme directors have been rightly parsimonious in their budgeting for management overheads, and have found a variety of ways of bringing the programme members together to discuss what they were doing. They have also used a variety of media to communicate about some of the programme's concerns. However, there may have been a partial trade-off between inclusiveness and coherence.

This has been felt in particular by some of the Southern members of the research community who have commented on the domination of Northern colleagues working to influence Northern institutions. To a degree this is inevitable and the programme was always likely to encourage more expectations than it was likely to meet in this regard.

Any community of diverse people who come together to try and achieve things together will always generate conflict, and differences of opinion and perspective, and will call out strong affect in each other. One might argue that this is the richest resource available to research programme interested in enquiring into multiple knowledges and what it means to do so. There are a number of examples where programme directors and Steering Committee members have actively engaged with conflict in the programme and this has been often very upsetting and difficult, but is central to the work. A number of participants also voiced their desire to meet again collectively and to talk through their understanding of what the programme has been addressing at the same time as recognising the difficulty of doing so. There are areas of enquiry, the academic/practitioner divide, for example, the continued

critical engagement with each others' products and ideas, which would lead to further fruitful engagement.

The programme suffers from a proliferation of concepts which need further critical engagement. The evaluators would encourage further articulation of what prominent programme members now understand about emergence, multiple-knowledges, privileging Southern voices, for example, which they understood less well at the beginning of the research programme.

Programme directors have commissioned the work in both a professional and innovative way, where, in the words of an influential report, they have organised to be surprised. In general they have trusted people to get on and do the work they have contracted to do, with the ultimate sanction of refusing payment if the work is not done: this has happened in very few cases and always by agreement. It would also be true to say that many of the respondents would have liked greater facilitation, shaping, meaning-making opportunities with the programme directors, or with other colleagues, than they have had, although this has not prevented them for producing often excellent pieces of work.

The discussions in the programme have yet to be institutionalised, particularly in any of the organisations which have allowed staff to be seconded to IKME, although alternative fora have been set up as a result of the work of the programme (such as the francophone network) which also take the ideas forward.

The thinking behind the process of commissioning the work was sometimes insufficiently socialised and sometimes provoked strong reactions from some programme participants about who 'we' are, what 'we' think we are doing and who has a right to speak on behalf of the group. Throughout the course of the programme participants have asked questions about authority, leadership and power, and are likely to go on doing so. This is not a 'good thing' or a 'bad thing' but is an inevitable consequence of organising different people to achieve things together and is a legitimate area of enquiry for thinking about how to manage complex programmes such as this one, particularly ones based on the idea of local, contested knowledge.

9   Final reflections on being a developmental evaluator

Anita
I got into this programme initially as a participant in the Cambridge workshop (2009), and subsequently became a co-evaluator. My interest in the programme as evaluator was triggered mainly because of the programme's leadership and vision and the consonance of views I share with its core value propositions. What strikes me is the mind-blowing variety of pursuits in the programme that combine to form its whole, and in many ways, defy a complete grasp as would be needed to be an 'evaluator'. I have had to - in willingly agreeing to Chris' suggestion to look at WG2 (working on technology) in particular - invest much time also learning continuously

about the domains of inquiry, so that my own interest and knowledge have expanded considerably. I feel grateful for having had the opportunity to be engaged in the manner I was. The agenda of the group and its nascent but powerful role in shaping K4D is a critical area in global political economy Yet, the possibilities and the particular pathways of technology in its autonomous propensity are debates occurring at levels too removed from traditional constituencies engaged in pro-south advocacy. The programme I felt was ahead of times in mapping this phenomenon and bringing in some rare - maybe, super-rare - species of socially sensitive and politically minded techies.

However, as an evaluator and participant, I felt that the strong analysis of the political contours of the technology debates could have penetrated the processes of the programme, through discussions across projects on how the dominant digital logic impacts the field of KM4D.   While the question of Southern knowledge in the technology space was seen as being addressed by the experiments commissioned, some of the pioneering work of the programme in relation to digital architectures and knowledge have remained relatively less prominent and less understood within the programme for its key connections to academic work and lived realities of marginalised people . Perhaps the Southern partners with whom the programme has worked must claim more space to shape the meta theories-in-the-making of the programme as it goes into its last lap.,

In a programme of this scope and size, I do realise, as a fellow manager working in the development sector, that there would always be room for dialogue within any network, and it may not be easy to facilitate a completely shared understanding across a diversity of actors whose motivations are varied. I think the programme has been remarkable for demonstrating how knowledge for development can be if it had different starting points. IKME has also encouraged independent nodes of activity for greater ownership and has privileged flexibilities and non-linear working. These preferred ways of working do imply a certain bias in the direction of decentralisation and diffused, but creative, work activity rather than of centralisation and a more linear and planned output structure. However, they also do pose the question of the shared politics in a group working on an issue of deep strategic political significance. It is indeed important that I clarify why I say this. The work of IKME is only a beginning of intensive work that may be needed within the development sector to address the complex and daunting challenges in the knowledge sector. Interrogating the way knowledge is conceived and structured and positing alternatives, however small, is what would comprise the bottom-line agenda of creating sustainable futures. Southern agendas in new territory always need huge amounts of financial and social capital; I see IKME as a critical and credible link in this ecology of conversations and contestations that contribute to a K4D discourse that is pro-south; the dominant trends are more or less on auto-mode and they are also powered by vested interests. Clearly, therefore, IKME is not just an academic research project, but research that is about discourse, ideology and policy. I have felt myself coming back to this question repeatedly in my insider role as evaluator. How IKME frames its partnerships and alliances, its methods and

processes, and how it deals with its self definition would determine how much of a political force it will be in democratising a progressive and pro-south 'knowledge for development' agenda. Here there would be a role for more active dialogues within the IKME network and a larger space for political theory making.

These thoughts have actively influenced my observations as an evaluator.

Chris
In my twenty years as a consultant to INGOs I have undertaken tens of evaluations in which I have striven to take a developmental approach, despite the pressures to do otherwise. Whether a programme has or has not met its original goals is of course an interesting question, but is usually the least interesting question to me. I have usually been much more interested in what the programme has become and how participants are now thinking about the work that they originally undertook, probably with a very different understanding. So experience and reflection on experience changes us and out attitudes about what we think we are doing and it seems to me that it is this aspect of international development work which is often covered over by orthodox evaluation methods.

Although it may not seem like much, the ability continuously to understand ourselves and what we are doing differently, seems to me one of the profoundest aspects of being human. Of course another condition of being an interdependent social being is the ability to keep promises – to be able to account to each other for what we said we would do. However, what I would consider a very narrow conception of accountability has come to dominate in international development, i.e. reductive, often quantitative promises of project performance made to donors from those who receive donor money. It is my view that one of the important aspects of a renewed, perhaps more generative conception of accountability would not just involve accounting for whether one has achieved one's goals or not, but also how one has come to understand one's goals differently as a result of undertaking the work seriously and having responded intelligently to challenges encountered along the way. It is very difficult to hang on to and justify a nuanced, complex understanding of what it is one is doing and what one intends by it because in the current climate this is taken to mean a lack of professionalism or seriousness. It is sometimes hard to keep the discussion of the contested nature of development alive if one is forced so say reductively whether something is successful or not, whether it has achieved its objectives or not. Successful according to whom? Remaining open to experience and our changing understanding of who we are and what we are doing is an ethical as much as a political challenge.

Having been party to a variety of discussions in the programme, then, is one experiential way of understanding more fully what is at stake. One of the advantages of taking an explicitly developmental approach to this evaluation is that the developing discourse amongst IKME participants makes much better sense to me having been involved. So it is much easier to understand what people mean by what they say rather than parachuting into the programme at a late stage and trying to join a discourse which has developed independently. One of the dangers of the same process, however, is of being co-opted and naturalised in the ideology of the group to which I am contributing. Bringing Anita at a point slightly over half way through the proceedings was one way of thinking again about what is taken for granted and has re-energised discussions about politics.

In writing this paper in the way we have, paying attention to the themes of conversation that have come up again and again in a research community, we are practising a particular evaluative method. This method takes seriously the way that participants in this research community discuss their research which enables us to reflect upon the way they are making sense of their practice together. Our implicit assumption then, which we are making explicit here, is that the way that programme participants make sense of their world is the way that they make their world. They are talking IKME into existence (Boden, 1994),[25] and there is no IKME programme separate from the people and the way that they understand what they are doing. We have an assumption, then, about the indivisibility of speech, thought and action. We are also assuming that IKME community is arising in the paradoxes of conflict and co-operation, inclusion and exclusion as people struggle to make sense of what they think they are doing together. We are interested in the way that themes of discussion shape the experience of being involved in the programme, and in turn, how the experience of being on the programme shapes the discussion. We are also interested in the way that discussion changes over time, which is illustrative of the way in which thought about IKM is moving and changing.

Developmental evaluation is, I think, a way of trying to draw attention to the importance of understanding experience as fully as possible before rushing on to the next thing, as first identified by John Dewey more than 70 years ago:

> Zeal for doing, lust for action, leaves many a person, especially in this hurried and impatient environment in which we live, with experience of an almost incredible paucity, all on the surface. No one experience has a chance to complete itself because something else is entered upon so speedily. What is called experience becomes so dispersed and miscellaneous as hardly to deserve the name. resistance is treated as an obstruction to be beaten down, not as an invitation to reflection. An individual comes to seek, unconsciously even more than by deliberate choice, situations in which he can do most things in the shortest time. (1934/2005: 46)[26]

Chris Mowles

Anita Gurumurthy

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[25] Boden, D. (1994) *The Business of Talk: Organizations in Action*, Cambridge: Polity.

[26] Dewey, J. (1934/2005) *Art and Experience*, New York: Perigee.

Annexe 1 – some web statistics

This section attempts a brief analysis of IKME's web presence. The IKME Wiki (wiki.ikmemergent.net) is the main home of IKME's online life.

Table 1: Traffic for Jan 2011 - wiki.ikmemergent.net

Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
887	1167 (1.31visits/visitor)	5078 (4.35Pages/Visit)	11760 (10.07Hits/Visit)	880.57 MB (772.67KB/Visit)

As the table indicates, the IKME wiki attracted about on an average, 30 unique visitors every day in Jan 2011.

Table 2: Visit Duration - wiki.ikmemergent.net

Number of visits: 1167 - Average: 181 s	Number of visits	Percent
0s-30s	1005	86.10%
30s-2mn	44	3.70%
2mn-5mn	24	2.00%
5mn-15mn	32	2.70%
15mn-30mn	12	1.00%
30mn-1h	18	1.50%
1h+	29	2.40%
Unknown	3	0.20%

While most hits seem to be for cursory scanning of the site, (see Table 2), quite a few hits – as many as 50 – have been for at least half an hour, indicating a fair number of engaged visitors. Most traffic, as indicated by Table 3 below, seems to be coming from the US and UK.

Table 3: Page Requests by Country - wiki.ikmemergent.net[27]

Top 10 Countries – Highest page requests	
Countries	**Pages**
United States	1724
Great Britain	879
Unknown	656
Netherlands	311
Canada	201
Germany	180
Italy	96
Russian Federation	89
Poland	75
Latvia	69
Others	798

Another relevant statistic is that majority of the traffic (82%) to the IKME wiki is direct, while another 12% comes through search engines and social media. This can be taken to suggest a brand that is generating interest. This fact may be seen as being corroborated by the number of direct hits coming on to the home page as the number 2272 in the Table below indicates.

Table 4: Web pages by views - wiki.ikmemergent.net

Top 10 Pages URL – (this are the most popular webpages in the site)	
Top 10 pages-url	**Viewed**
/ (Root)	2272
/index.php/Main_Page	346
/files/IKM_MEETING_-_FINAL_REPORT-v1.pdf	174
/files/090911-ikm-working-paper-5-policy-making-as-discourse.pdf	165
/files/090817-ikm-working-paper-3-monitoring-and-evaluation-in-k...	132
/index.php/Workspaces:The_changing_environment_of_infomediaries/...	84
/index.php/Documents	66
/opensearch_desc.php	59

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27   The tool used to analyse the site was not able to resolve country names for page requests for over 650 hits.

/files/010720-newsletter-4.pdf	31
/index.php/About_the_programme	30
Others	1719

IKME's main blog space, the Giraffe blog (thegiraffe.wordpress.com) has been operational since 2007[28]

Table 5 : Views as on March 2nd 2011 - thegiraffe.wordpress.com

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2007										742	441	668	1851
2008	1267	754	1080	1720	3347	3478	2037	1396	1985	1624	2507	871	22066
2009	950	745	1119	735	845	871	582	437	571	767	401	727	8750
2010	1334	920	933	719	612	606	605	415	701	657	606	517	8625
2011	623	1255	52										1930

In the past couple of years, the giraffe blog site has had over 8500 views annually and over a hundred posts which have evoked over 160 comments. Most traffic comes to the blog from the IKME wiki, as the Table below suggests, with some also coming from social networking sites.

Table 6: Referrers (where have visitors come from) for the last 365 days ending 2011-03-02 - thegiraffe.wordpress.com

Referrer	Views
wiki.ikmemergent.net	156
Twitter	57
evaluationrevisited.wordpress.com	51
Facebook	30
ikmemergent.wordpress.com	30
mail.yahoo.com	26
Google	24
unam.na	20
delicious.com	18
Google Reader	17
linkedlin	16
search.conduit.com	15
mail.live.com	14
cordless-homephone.info	13
sarahblogexperiment.blogspot.com	12

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[28]   This section does not analyse http://theprocessdiary.wordpress.com, another blog space used by the programme. This has about 40 posts and is less accessed compared to http://thegiraffe.wordpress.com/

Table 7: 20 Top Posts for 365 days ending 2011-03-02 – thegiraffe.wordpress.com

Title	Views
Home page	2237
Giraffes and tools	788
Converting tacit to explicit knowledge and vice-versa	508
Monitoring knowledge (management): an impossible task?	290
Our mission	264
Complexity Theory, Development and IKMemergent.	254
Defining what is relevant research... and how to build knowledge sharing in research	228
Who are we?	216
Evaluation revisited II: complexity and evaluation in a cleft stick?	214
Linked Open Data Web (or, Not the Semantic Web)	204
What is a wonk?	195
Linked data experiment	169
Development knowledge ecology: another visit to the KM kitchen?	134
Sarah Cummings	129
Evaluation revisited I: rigorous vs. vigorous	123
WG 3 theoretical framework and the O word	122
Not the Semantic Web, part two	122
Tracking African AgKnowledge and Local Content	105
Methodological paradigms of the M&E of KM	98
Ben Ramalingam	91
Slow Knowledge at the AgKnowledge Africa ShareFair and McK-snacks	81
Pete Cranston	76
Information versus Knowledge	70
Bernike Pasveer	70
The giraffe kicks!	70

Interestingly, despite more hits on a couple of themes, there is a fair spread of views across various posts.