Fluency, Competence and Coherence in Indigenous Knowledge Systems for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Reflections and Learning for the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

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The **SDGs** are …

- A set of 17 goals for the world’s future, through 2030
- Backed up by a set of 169 detailed Targets
- Negotiated over a two-year period at the United Nations
- Agreed to by nearly all the world’s nations, on 25 Sept 2015
What is new and different about the 17 SDGs?

First, and most important, these Goals apply to every nation ... and every sector. Cities, businesses, schools, organizations, all are challenged to act. This is called Universality
Second, it is recognized that the Goals are all inter-connected, in a system. We cannot aim to achieve just one Goal. We must achieve them all. This is called Integration
And finally, it is widely recognized that achieving these Goals involves making very big, fundamental changes in how we live on Earth. This is called Transformation.
Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Envisions a world in which women’s rights are recognized as human rights & every woman is able to achieve her full potential.

In such a world women have access to all resources & are represented in decision making positions on an equal basis with men.

In such a world no woman lives in fear of violence.
Beijing Platform for Action
12 Critical Areas of Concern

Women and the environment
Women in power and decision-making
The girl child
Women and the economy
Women and poverty
Violence against women
Human rights of women
Education and training of women
Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Women and health
Women and the media
Women and armed conflict
Produced at the international level for application at the local level, this knowledge rarely draws from indigenous knowledge systems;

The result is heightened resistance, tokenism and gender fatigue as patriarchy fights back despite progressive legislation and policy interventions.
BPfA /SDGs & IKS

“Gender equality is more a way of life achieved by a proper perspective rather than one of formal guarantee under the laws” Justice J.S. Verma.

Indigenous knowledge systems are relevant in a context of a rapidly globalizing environment to achieve peaceful co-existence and sustainable growth at the family, community and national levels.
IKS & SDGs

Examples of women’s positive contribution towards sustainable development through indigenous knowledge.

Custodians of indigenous knowledge lack western education, but have vast knowledge on their environment and culture, beyond that of experts/specialists who come in with developmental programs for the rural communities.

Many development projects have fallen short of their intended impact.
IKS & SDGs

With time, an appreciation of indigenous knowledge has been seen as part of the whole that is complementary to Eurocentric learning, as well as to development programs;

Elderly woman, have a backlog of knowledge that is often unspoken, overlooked or undervalued due to the mere notion that this knowledge is not based on scientific research or documented.