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The Case for Knowledge Management Governance for Africa

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THE CASE FOR KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE FOR AFRICA.

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Introduction
- Definitions and meanings
- Knowledge Governance
- National Strategic KM Plans & Implementation
- Steps to make KM Governance work in Africa
- Conclusions

INTRODUCTION

- Knowledge as key factor of production more important than land, labour, and capital (World Bank 1999) Peter Drucker (numerous)
- Asian countries success compared to Africa – same level of GDP in the 1960s (World Bank 1999)
- OECD countries' recognition of knowledge creation, learning and innovation for development

INTRODUCTION

- Marginalisation of Africa because of the knowledge gap with the rest of the world (Musana 2007, World Bank 1999, Koenders 2008)
- Definitions and meanings of KM
- Defined as experience, insights and context specific information which enables human beings to act meaningfully and consciously (Davenport and Prusak 2002)
- Tacit and Explicit Knowledge dimensions as the two main types of KM

DEFINITIONS AND MEANINGS OF KM

- In organisational context KM refers to the totality of strategies aimed at creating smart organisations able to leverage knowledge from its various information and communication assets, to learn from past experiences whether bad or good and to create new value through knowledge (Menkhoff 2007). In other words, using knowledge as a strategic business resource

The knowledge pyramid concept – consisting of data, information, knowledge and wisdom

DEFINITIONS AND MEANINGS OF KM

- In national development context, KM refers to the steady supply of knowledge to the vital sectors of development in a country to achieve high productivity and competitiveness
- Knowledge Governance
- Framework to ensure delivery of benefits of services including authority structures & processes for managing a country's KM capabilities

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE

- National KM strategies and plans (Tiwana 2002; Menkhoff 2007)

Examples:

Malaysia National Knowledge Economy Plan and

National Knowledge Commission of India

Canadian Knowledge Management Task Force

- Formulating National Strategic Plans for KM

FORMULATING NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANS FOR KM

- The crucial challenge is to address the marginalisation of Africa through Knowledge Production, sharing and utilisation to accelerate development processes and transform Africa
- Need for a consultative model of KM Governance to ensure buy-in by all stakeholders
- Specific areas to be covered by the KM strategic plan will differ from country to country as it has to reflect a country's strategic vision and plans

FORMULATING NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANS

- Key sectors of a national economy: economic growth, industrialisation, education, health, agriculture, research and innovation, natural resources etc.
- Steps to Make KM Governance work in Africa
- Digital divide in Africa has received all the attention, now let's talk of the knowledge divide – ICT only a tool, the driver is KM

STEPS TO MAKE KM GOVERNANCE WORK IN AFRICA

- How can Africa strengthen Knowledge Governance and knowledge oriented development policies?
- Establish institutions to champion & steer KM at country level and continental levels eg. KMAfrica by DBSA, IKM Emergent, GDNet
- Legal and regulatory framework
- Create an environment for knowledge intensive organisations

STEPS TO MAKE KM GOVERNANCE WORK IN AFRICA

- Educate and train human capital and new ways of management/including knowledge management literate society
- KM diffusion in the private, public sector and civil society
- Adapt "best practices" from successful countries in KM Governance
- Conclusion – no knowledge management , no development? Africa as the last continent to adapt KM, need for KM governance structures to address the poor development performance of Africa. Thank you all