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## Indigenous Knowledge and Inclusive Innovations: a Conceptual Framework

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### Abstract

Inclusive innovations in agriculture have become widely embraced as a new way forward whilst including local stakeholders and their indigenous and local knowledge (ILK) traditions. Especially in the Global South, given a history of counterproductive attempts at so-called modernisation, the inclusion of ILK in innovation processes and policies has been promoted as a way of creating more balanced, sustainable and just human-environmental relations. Nevertheless, the inclusion of actors does not equate the inclusion of their needs or knowledge in this process, nor does it ensure an equal treatment of different knowledge traditions. The issue of power is one that cannot be overlooked. Furthermore, the concepts of inclusive innovations and ILK are often ambiguously employed, so there is a need to further clarify different perspectives on these concepts and how they interrelate.

Thanks to our review of the literature on ILK and agricultural inclusive innovations, we are able to present a conceptual framework that allows to analytically distinguish and reflect on different modes of how ILK is treated in inclusive innovation processes. These modes encompass the views that innovations are either an inherent part of this body of knowledge (internal to ILK), externally induced (external to ILK), or a combination of both (hybrid). Combined with the established narratives of ILK being either a body of knowledge fixed in time and space (“static”) or one that is continuously changing and adapting (“dynamic”), we discern five main frames or mental models when considering ILK and innovations. These five frames allow for a productive analysis of the development of inclusive innovations, looking at whose needs and which actors are included – and by whom –, and discusses possible pitfalls for each frame.

The framework is also intended as a reflexive tool for researchers, practitioners and policymakers that are interested in ILK and inclusive innovations. Therefore, we aim to take a meta-perspective on the conference topic, and provide important reflections to consider while moving forward towards a healthy and sustainable future.

**Keywords:** Epistemic justice, inclusive innovation, indigenous knowledge, power