Social Capital in Africa and beyond - UBUNTU -

Servant-Leadership Symposium 25 April 2016 VU Amsterdam Stacey Links
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Social Capital

WHAT?

- The central premise of social capital is that social networks have value
- Collective value of all social networks
- Inclinations that arise from these networks in doing things for each other [RECIPROCITY]

(Harvard Kennedy School)

Social Capital

HOW?

Works through variety of specific benefits that flow from: the trust, reciprocity, information, and cooperation of social networks

CHANNELS?

- Information flows
- Norms of Reciprocity
- Collective Action (Civil Rights Movement, Anti-Apartheid Movement)

Social Capital

'I' mentality → 'WE' mentality

WHERE?

Friendship networks, neighborhoods, churches, schools, clubs, associations, communities...even bars

WHAT?

- World view of Bantu peoples of South Africa
- African Moral Philosophy (Guides social behavior)
- African Humanism (Philosophy of humaness)
- Leadership Philosophy
- Cultural Value System

Central Tenets:

- Society and goods as communal enterprises
- Shared vision common goals
- (Inter)connectedness
- Collectivism and solidarity
- Relationships (esp. Family)
- Spirit of caring and community (beyond the individual)

"Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities towards himsefl and towards other people...

Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am" This is the cardinal point in the understanding of the African view of man"

(Mbiti, 1989: 106)

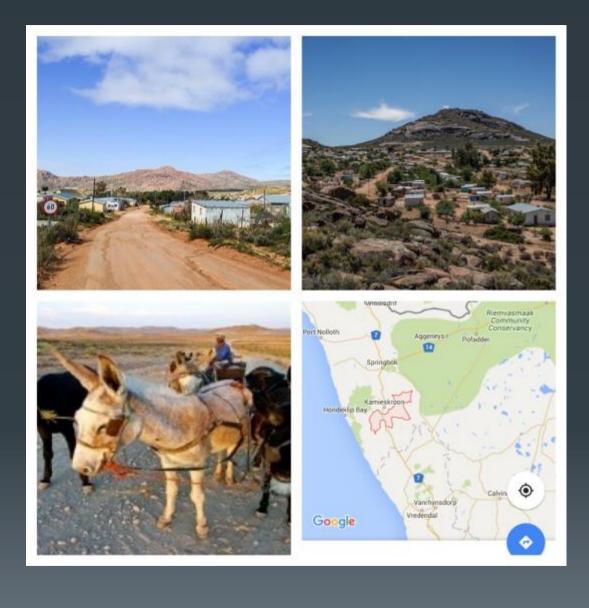
APPLICATION

As A Framework For:

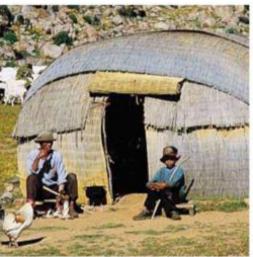
- Management, governance, citizenship and leadership
- Global challenges
- Tool for inclusive discourse
- Embrace marginalized non-western traditions → new modes of thinking

Also,

- Foreign Policy
- National, Regional, Continental and Global
- Post -1994 Nation-Building; Truth and Reconciliation Process
- Communal Conflict Resolution (Conflict resolution as a communal affair)









SERVANT LEADERSHIP

SEEKS TO:

- Respond to societal challenges and changes
- Serve or be of value for the community/society
- Give back
- Focus on the social responsibility of leaders
- Considers cultural diversity and sensitivity

"Valuing the worth of others and showing deference to others' potential to make a contribution" (Mangaliso, 2001)

Ex. Servant leadership applied to global challenges that could draw on philosophies such as *UBUNTU*

PITFALLS & CHALLENGES

- In-group
 - Discrimination?
 - Exclusive?
- Servant Leadership can help to mitigate this, instead promoting difference as a valuable resource
- → "Valuing the worth of others"...

VU AS CROSS-VALUE COMMINUTY

- How does/can the VU function as a CROSS-VALUE community?
- Ensuring that the VU is in service of the broader community (not exclusivist), how?