

# Key Policy Issues in Promoting Inclusive Technology and Innovation Policies

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# Recognition of Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems

- Must recognize indigenous, traditional and local knowledge systems as foundation of local innovations and peoples' technologies as equally important and on par with formal knowledge systems
- Innovations and technologies are based on diverse sources of knowledge, not just limited to formal and institutional knowledge

# Respect for community rights and control over resources and knowledge systems

- Promotion and support for dissemination of local innovations and peoples' technologies must not result to facilitating access and commercialization by private interests without prior and informed consent of communities
- Measures to protect against misappropriation must be put in place in consultation with communities
- Experiences on community registries of local knowledge systems and traditional seeds must inform the discussion on measures to protect community rights

# Providing enabling environment for communities to continue innovating

- Provision of enabling environment to foster and support innovations should not be limited to institutionalized and registered entities like SMEs, but should be equally extended to the informal sector, communities and local innovators
- Efforts to level the playing field such as through provision of specific incentives and support for local innovations should be made
- Community innovations and peoples' technologies should be promoted as options for communities to adopt and utilize to address specific needs, such as by:
  - Providing specific support to enable wider adoption of peoples' technologies
  - Supporting local inventors and fabricators of simple machines and tools that are accessible and affordable to communities

# Removal of barriers to sharing and promotion of local innovations

- Institutional barriers such as legal registration and strict compliance to industry-set standards should be scrutinized and flexibilities should be addressed to enable local innovations and peoples' technologies to prosper
- Free sharing and exchange of such innovations should be encouraged and supported alongside the building of entrepreneurial capacities particularly of women
- Use of creative models to reach out to rural communities in promoting solar energy such as those in Africa that gave rise to local 'solar-preneurs' who market solar lamps and solar-powered charging stations despite constraints posed by absence of local R&D to support local innovations to develop more appropriate solar energy

# Integrating gender perspectives in inclusive technologies and innovations

- Failure to incorporate gender considerations in policies and programs on inclusive innovations may result in unintended consequences and lead to further marginalization of women
- Enabling and ensuring the full participation of women in decision-making in the development and transfer of technologies, from design and development all the way to deployment and commercialization
- Women can actively participate as experts, developers and users of innovations and technologies
- Women's role in the impact-assessment process is critical when looking especially at the impact on health, economy, livelihood, culture, agriculture and the environment

# Inclusive Innovations through participatory evaluation of technologies

- Public participation in technology assessment could improve technology adaptation or lead to entirely new innovations
- Potential users of technologies must have the opportunity to participate in decision-making as to which options – not necessarily technological - best serve their needs by assessing potential technologies and available options and alternatives
- Participatory technology assessment should be a platform to present the broad technology landscape along with the implications of technology choices across sectors, communities and countries, rather than narrowly looking at the pros and cons of an isolated technology