

Millennium Assessment

Bridging scales and epistemologies

Alexandria, 17-20 March 2004

**Knowledges and legal reform in the
Sahel: Mauritania Technology
Fosters Tradition (TFT)**

Lars T. Soeftestad, World Bank

supras.biz/library/web/tft

CONTENT

1. Presentation of Mauritania Technology Fosters Tradition (TFT)
2. Knowledge: Management and systems
3. Assess TFT

1. Presentation of TFT, Overview

- Location, environment and people
- Objective and character
- Law and legal paradigms
- Methodology and approach
- Output
- Scales, stakeholders and epistemology
- Partners
- Code Pastoral

Location, environment and people

- Location
 - SE Mauritania, near town of Aoun
- Environment and ecology
 - Semi desert
 - The isohyet for 400 mm precipitation moves south
 - Drivers: desertification, population increase
- People
 - Some black Africans, mostly Maure

Objective and character

- Objective
 - Document and formalize traditional property- and use rights to natural resources, specifically rangelands, together with local people, and through using GIS and ICTs
- Character of operation
 - Not investment, but research-cum-action

Law and legal paradigms

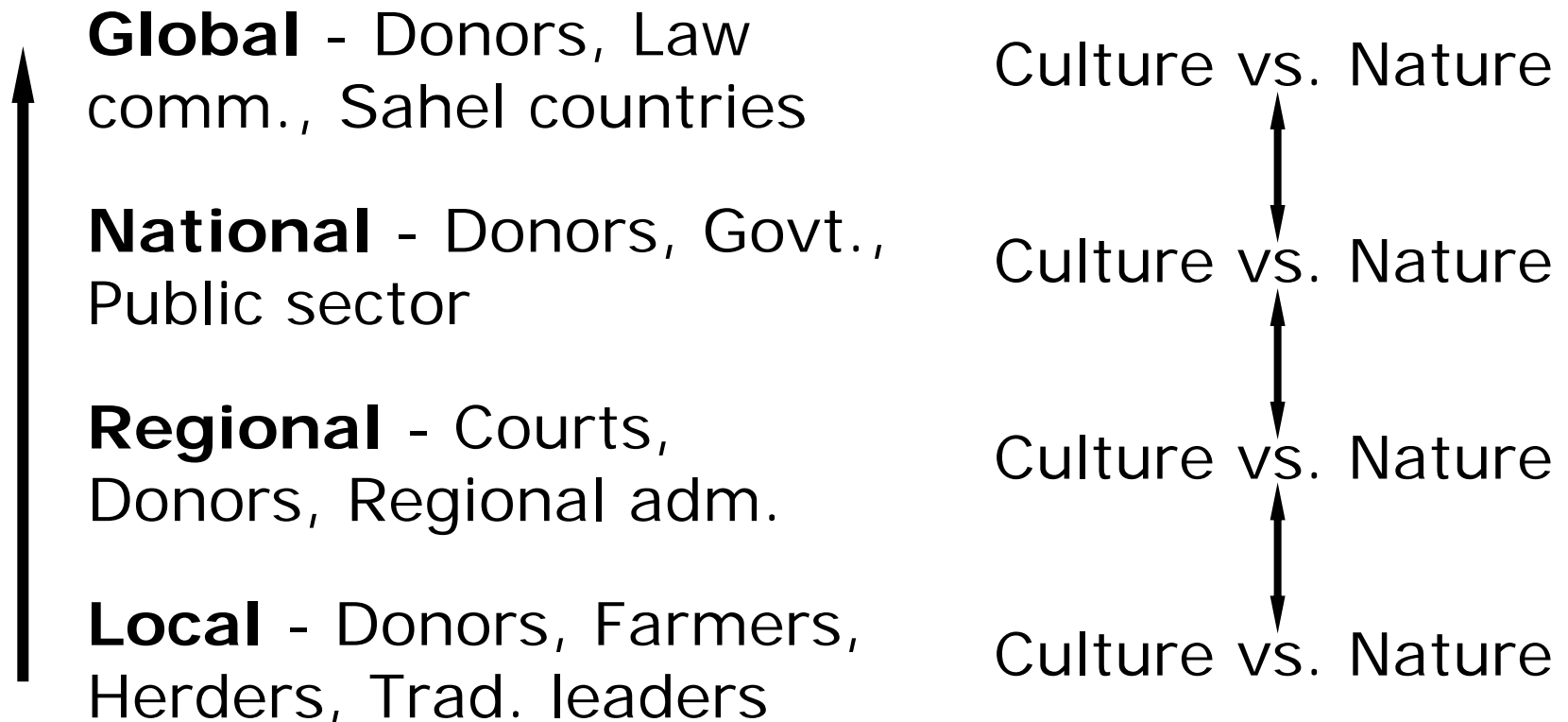
- Legal pluralism
 - Traditional law, Islamic law, French law
 - Problems of application and co-existence
- Characteristics of codes
 - Written and unwritten
 - Roles for interpretation and use
 - Applicable to a certain area or scale of culture/society

Methodology and approach

- Area assessment (survey)
- Identify land-use (interviews)
- Codify in local languages, translate into Arabic and French
- Establish a legal rural registry
- Set up new national co-management institutions
- Create GIS map, publish on Internet

Scales, stakeholders and epistemology

Users and beneficiaries at various scales:



Output

- Body of trad. knowledge pertaining to natural resource management.
Available in print form in relevant languages and on the Internet
- Institutional and legal reform
- Decrease in the amount of conflicts
- Dissemination elsewhere in the Sahel
- World Bank policy paper

Partners

The partners at the present time:

- External
 - CBNRM Net, GLIN (and NASA), GTZ, World Bank
- Domestic
 - Government

Code Pastoral

An example of law-making:

- National law on nomadism/herders, initiated by local NGO, supported by GTZ/World Bank
- Characteristics: Participatory process followed, Based on Sharia/trad. law, Good language that is easily understood, Conflict resolution mechanism
- Not yet adopted
- TFT aims to implement it in its project area, and emulate its drafting methodology

2. Knowledge: Management and systems, Overview

- What is knowledge?
- Characteristics of knowledge
- Knowledge management
- Stakeholders: Societal sectors, relations and co-management
- Knowledge systems

Knowledge vs. information, ethics, power and empowerment

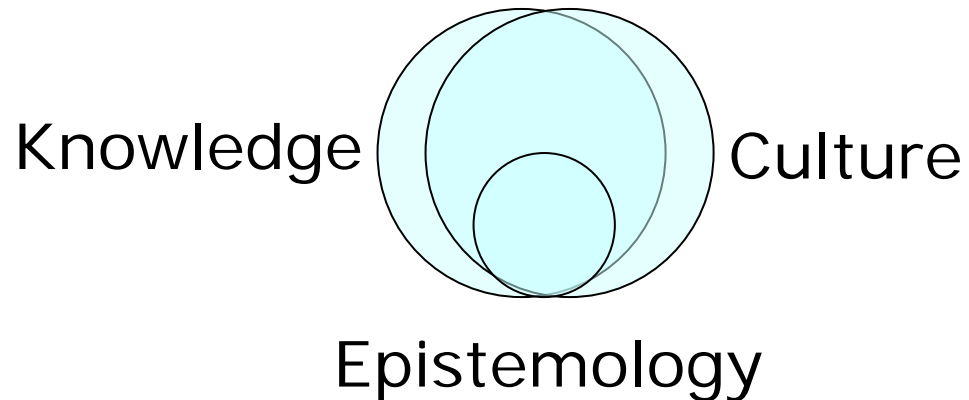
“In the terms of modern communication theory, information ... is everywhere, but knowledge can occur only within the eco-systemic context of a goalseeking adaptive system peopled by goalseeking subsystems. If this is the case, then we are required to ask how the knowledge has been coded and filtered; and what it is being used for, and for whom.”
(Anthony Wilden)

What is knowledge, 1?

- Broad view: the sum total of a culture's accumulated experience, incl. transfer, views on itself, the environment, and relationships with the environment
- Knowledge and culture
 - Knowledge is part and parcel of culture
- Knowledge and epistemology
 - Epistemology as a theory of nature and the grounds for knowledge, including its limits and validity, is part of a culture's knowledge

What is knowledge, 2?

Relations between knowledge, culture and epistemology:



Characteristics of knowledge

Knowledge can be characterized by a set of overlapping and dichotomized variables, that operate between and within scales:

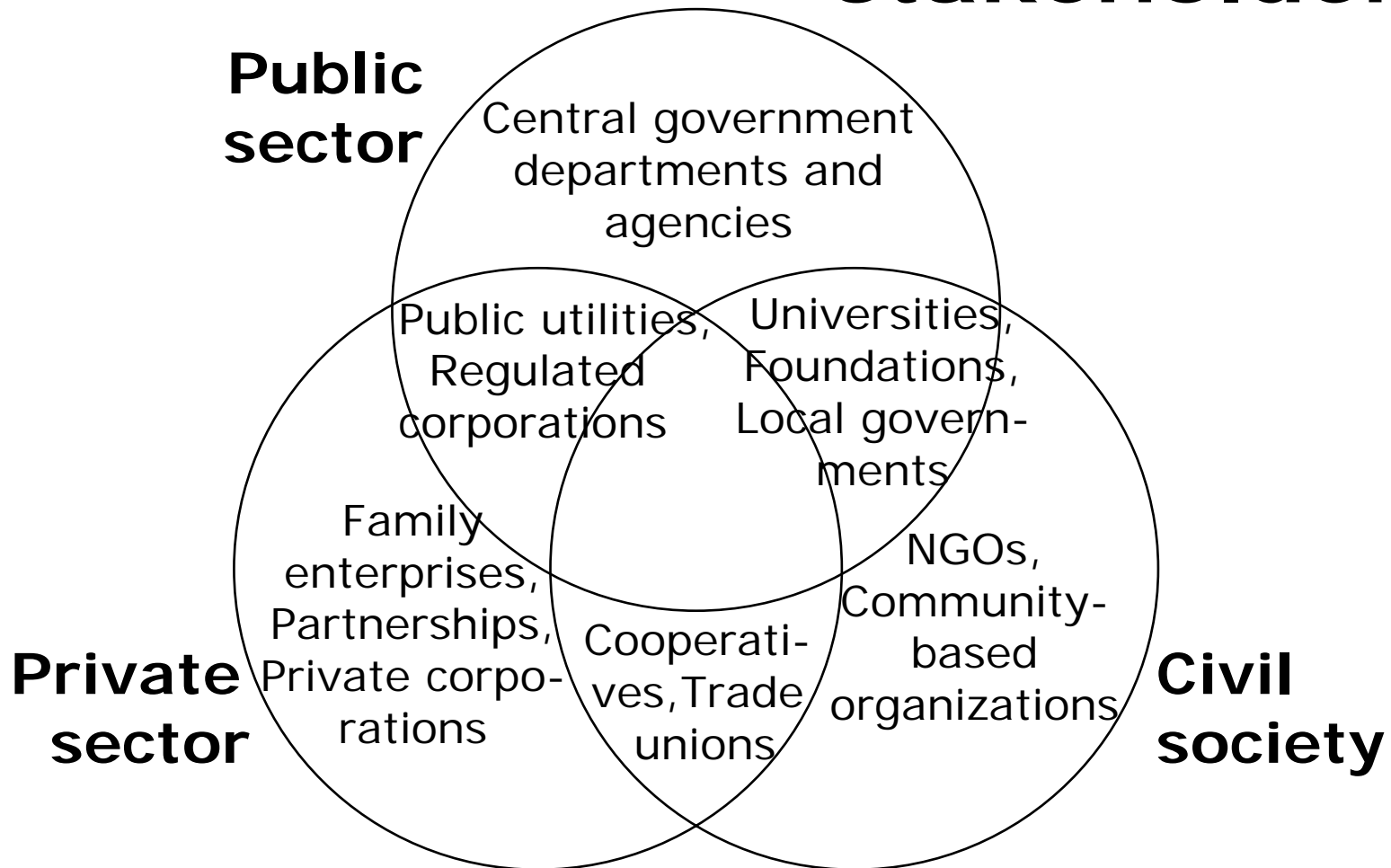
- Absolute \longleftrightarrow Relative
- Abstract \longleftrightarrow Concrete
- External \longleftrightarrow Internal
- General \longleftrightarrow Specific
- Objective \longleftrightarrow Subjective

Knowledge management

Aspects of managing knowledge within and between scales:

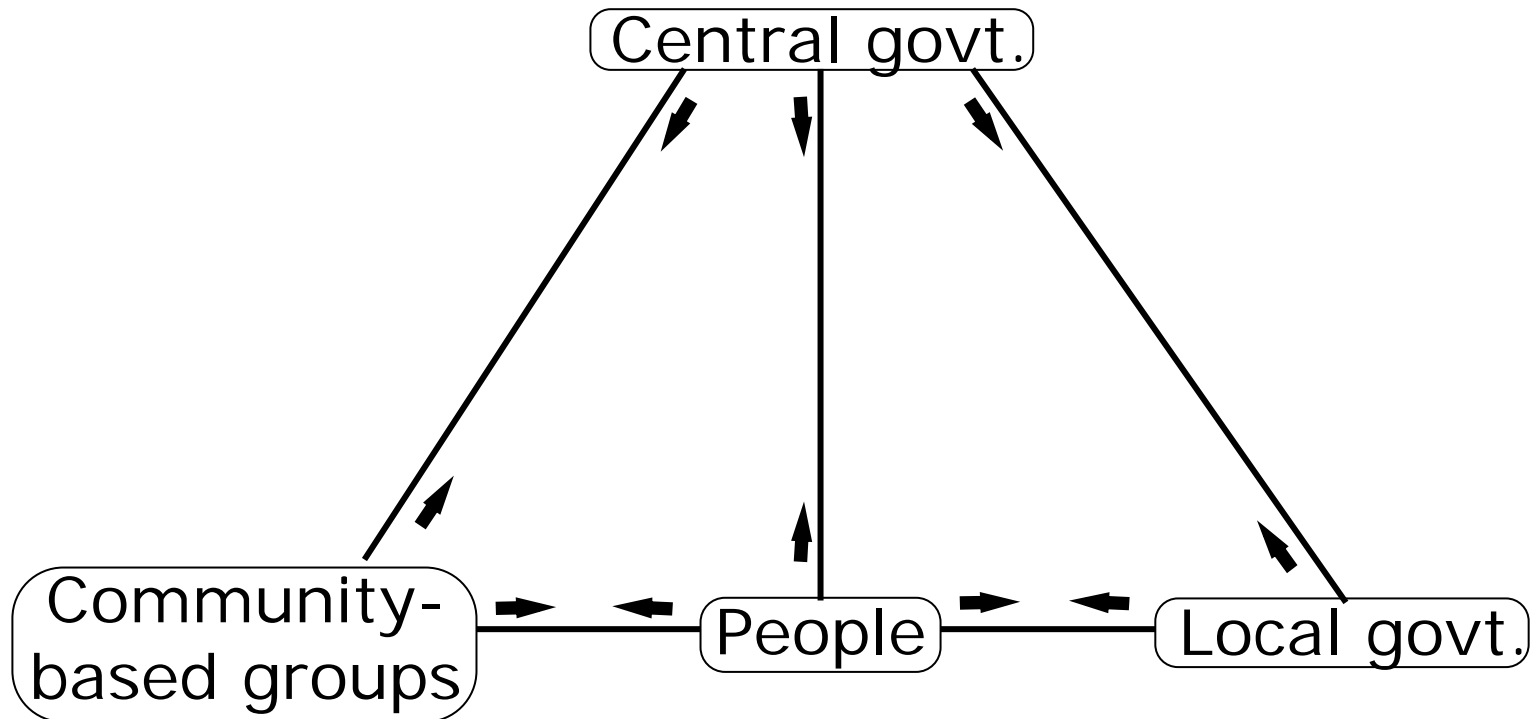
- Dimensions
 - With whom to share, what to share, how to share
- Tasks
 - Collection, evaluation, categorization, storage, retrieval, dissemination, as well as production of new knowledge

Societal sectors and stakeholders



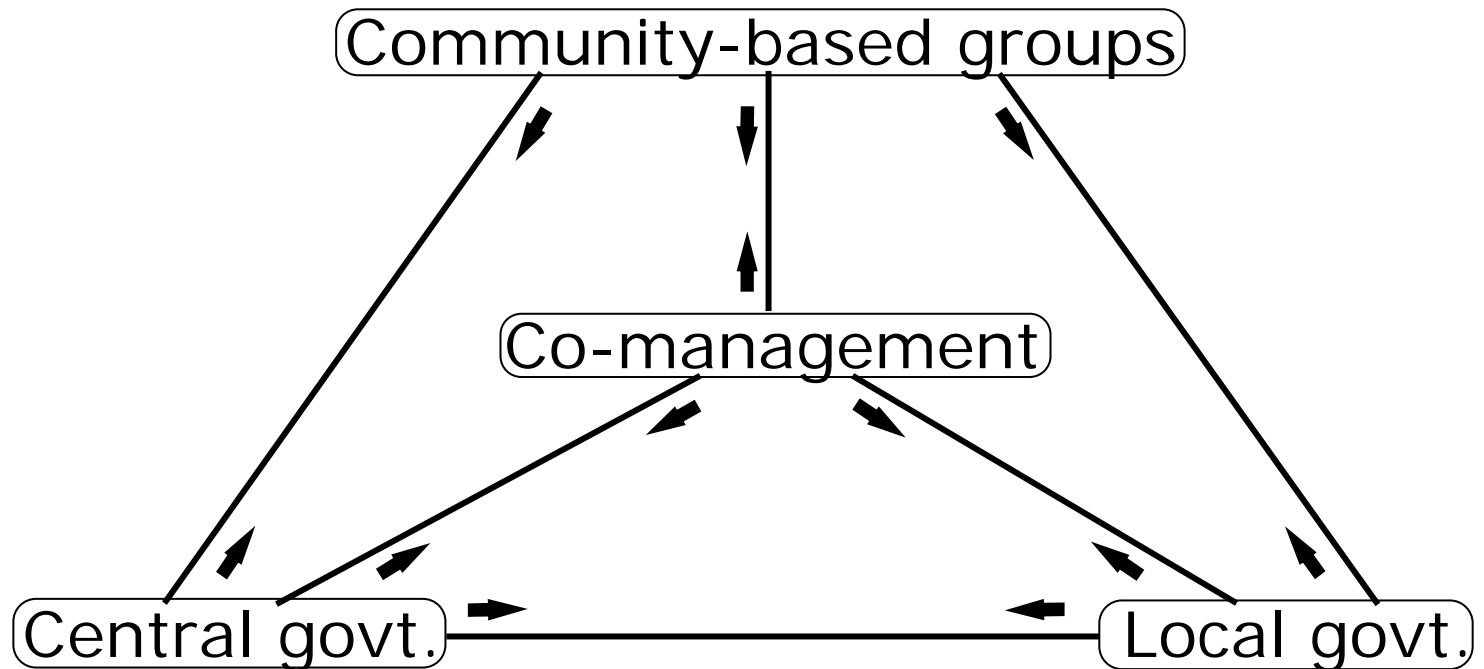
Stakeholders, Relations 1

The traditional model:



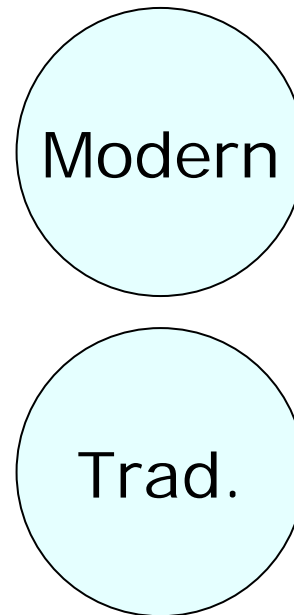
Stakeholders, Relations 2

The alternative and better model:



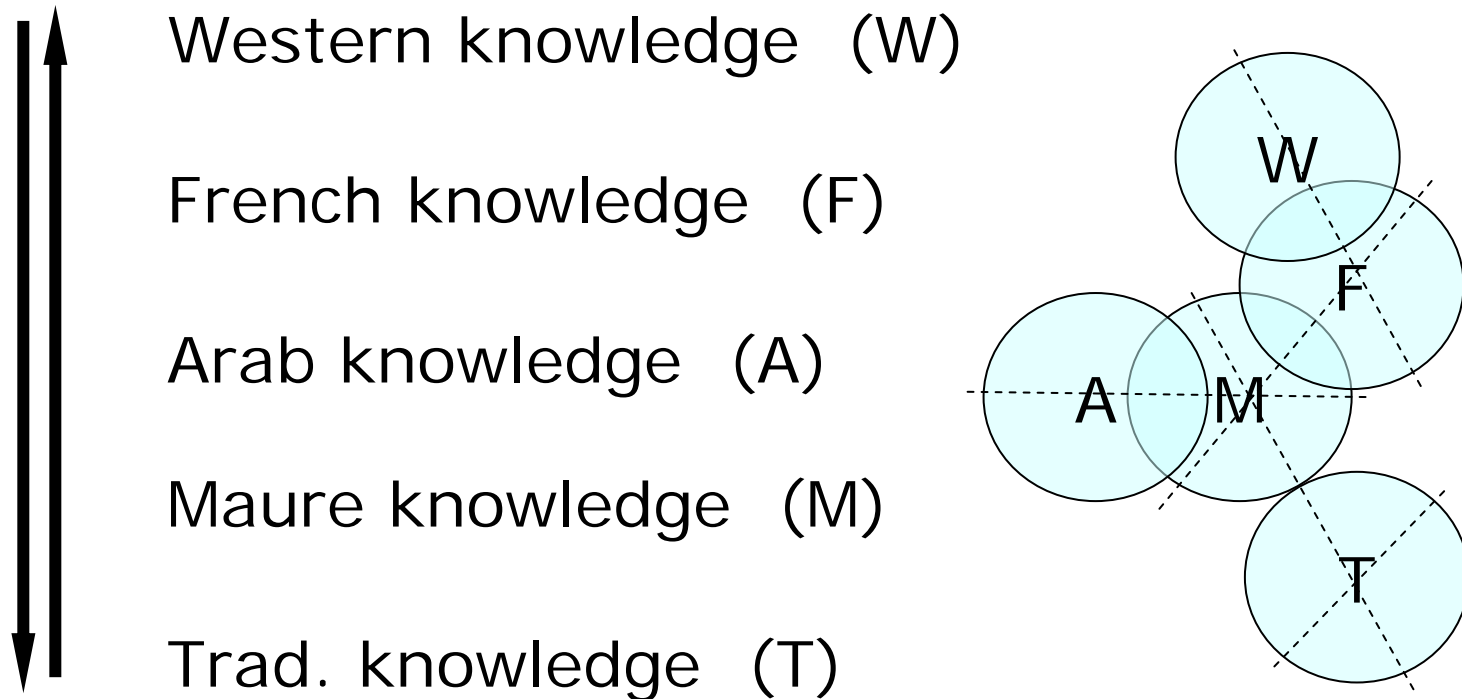
Knowledge systems: Traditional view

Two types, with different knowledge, for separate use, by separate stakeholders, and vertically related:



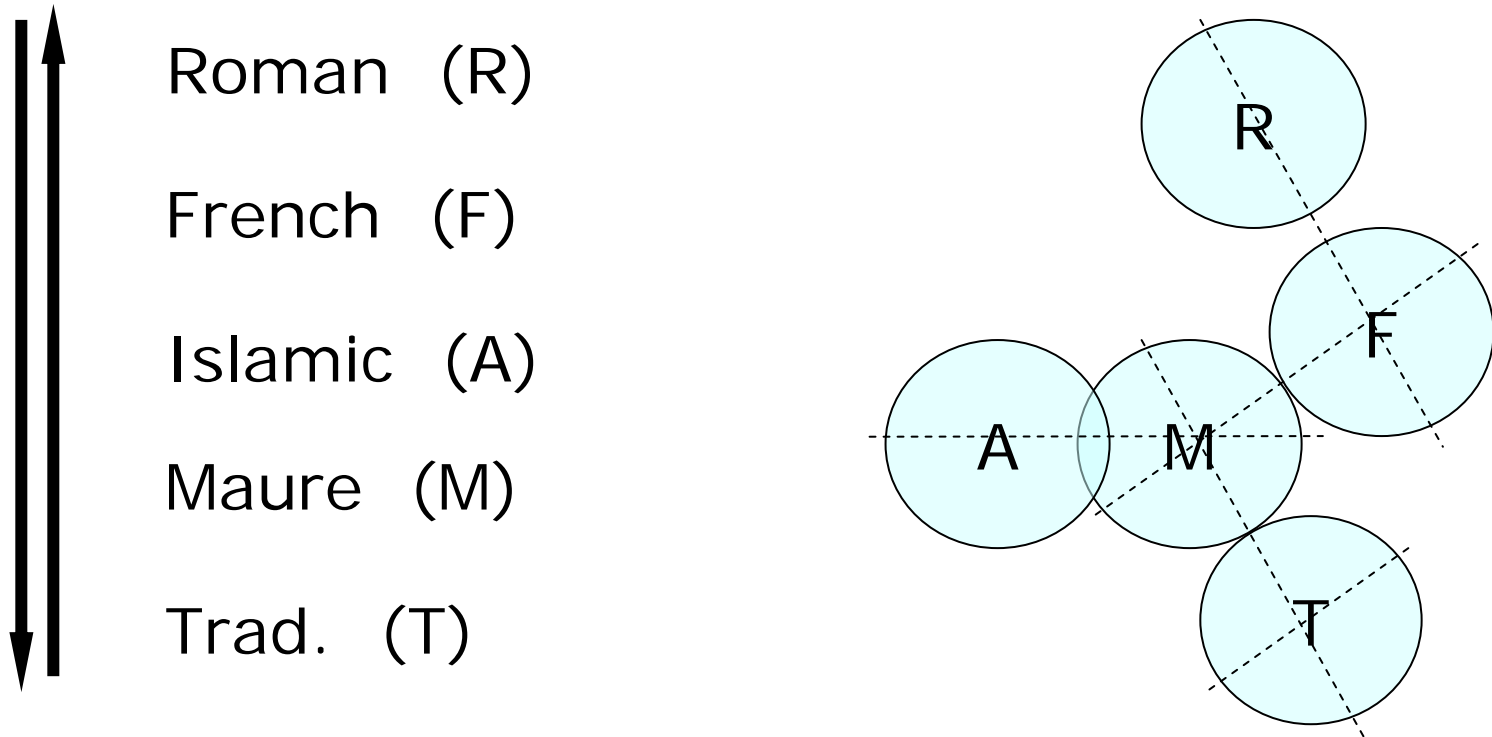
Knowledge systems in Mauritania

Knowledge systems and relations:



Legal paradigms in Mauritania

Legal paradigms and relations:



3. Assess TFT, Overview

- Methodology revisited
- Institutions and institutional analysis
- Power and empowerment
- Scaling legal paradigms

Methodology revisited

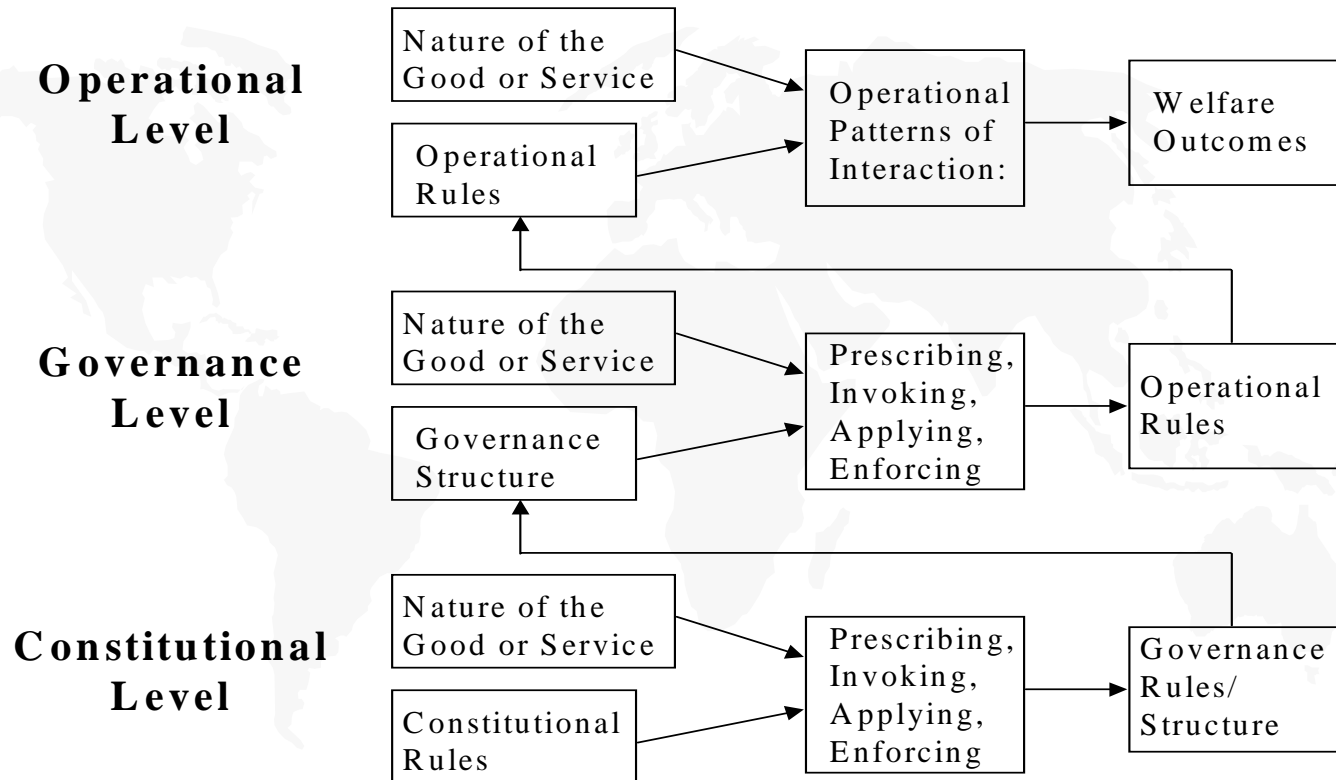
- Methods to be adapted to purpose and respondents
- Mix of qualitative and quantitative methods
 - Focus group interviews, GIS, ICTs, In-depth interviews, Participatory mapping, Participatory Rural Appraisal, Satellite photography, Surveys
- Validation

Institutions and institutional analysis

- Understood both as organizations and in the sense of institutional economics
- Facilitates and constrains the flow of knowledge and data between scales
- Important for understanding and assessing power and empowerment

Scales and institutions

Levels of an institutional system



Power and empowerment

The way to address power – and achieve empowerment – follows largely from the methodological approaches chosen:

- Ethics - knowledge to be used by whom and for what?
- Consensus-building, Consultation, Participation, Governance, Involvement, Transparency, etc.
- Trad. knowledge as both means and goal
- Scaling of knowledge has to be a bottoms-up approach

Scaling legal paradigms

On each scale three operations are involved in dealing with knowledge:

- Interpretation
 - Analysis of incoming knowledge/data
- Transformation
 - Adaptation to present scale
- Translation
 - Enabling transfer to next scale

Flow chart: Scaling legal paradigms

