

The Information Appetite

In disaster situations

My first lesson: knowledge-practice

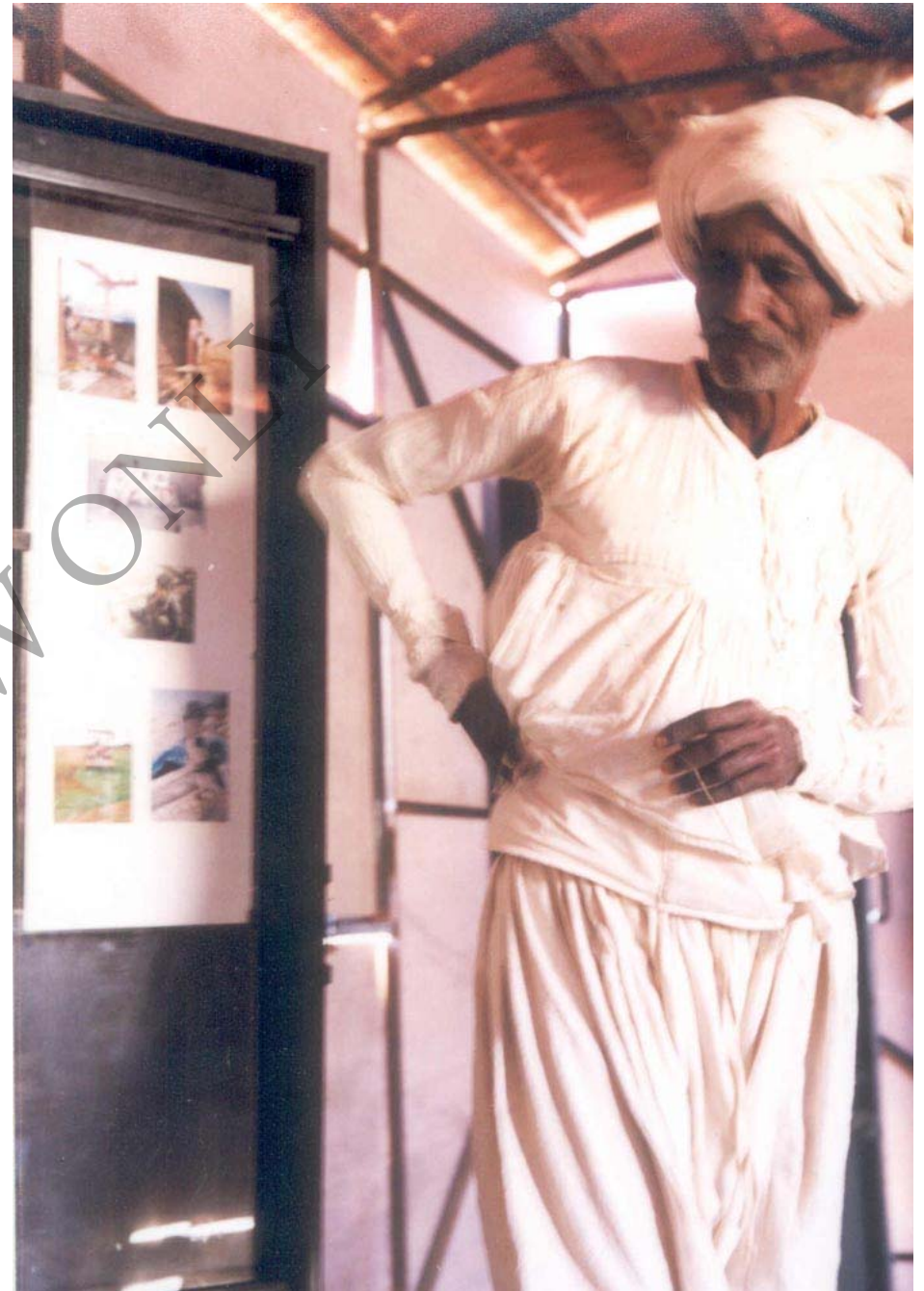
Earthquake in Gujarat (2001), 13000 lives lost



People lost their family members because they did not know even simple measures



Learning by doing

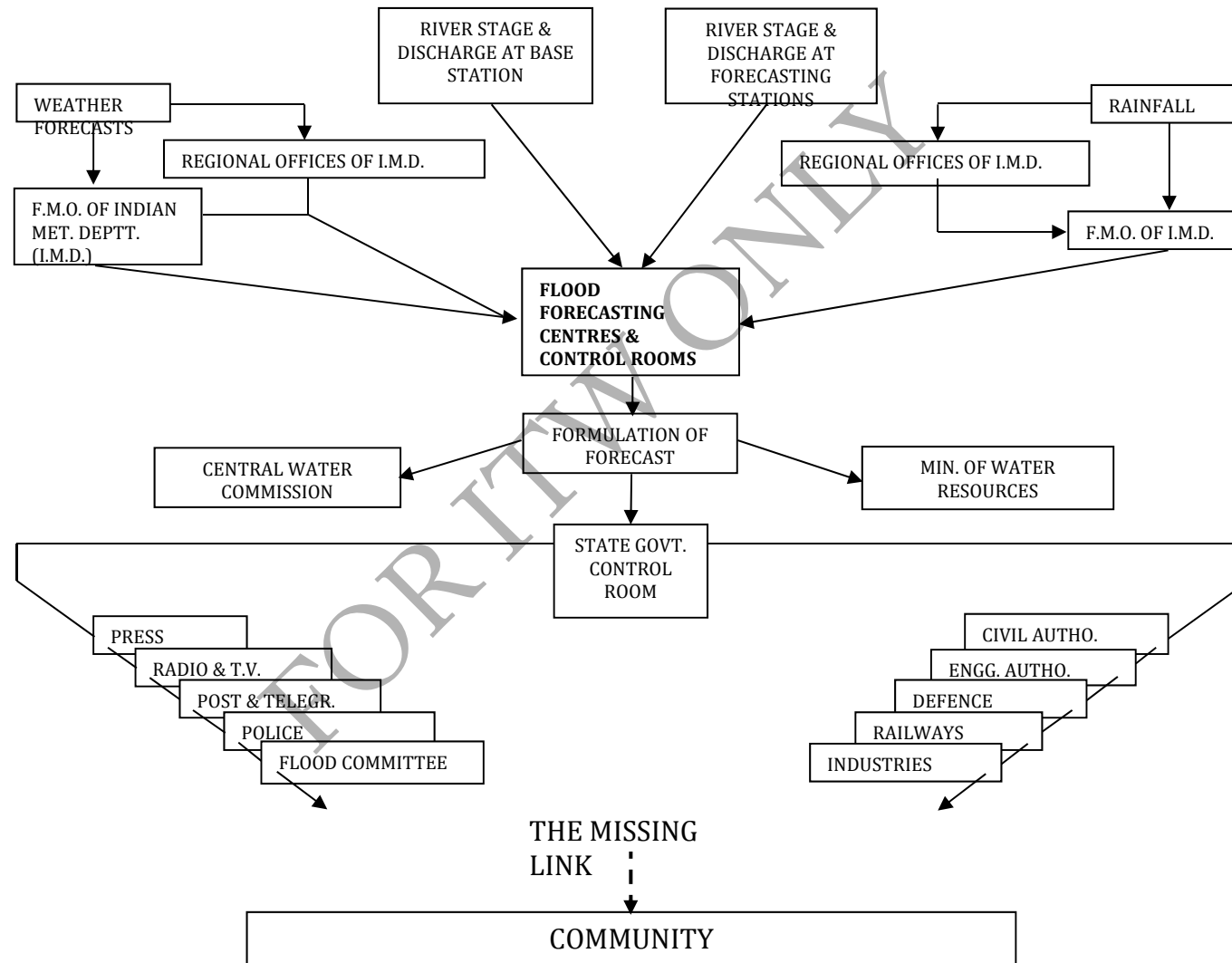


My Second Lesson : Demystifying Knowledge



Informal Housing in river bed, Delhi

How high technology gets interpreted on the ground





“The water level is expected to rise.
Make your own arrangements”

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Robust “last-mile” connectivity



Creating self-managed systems

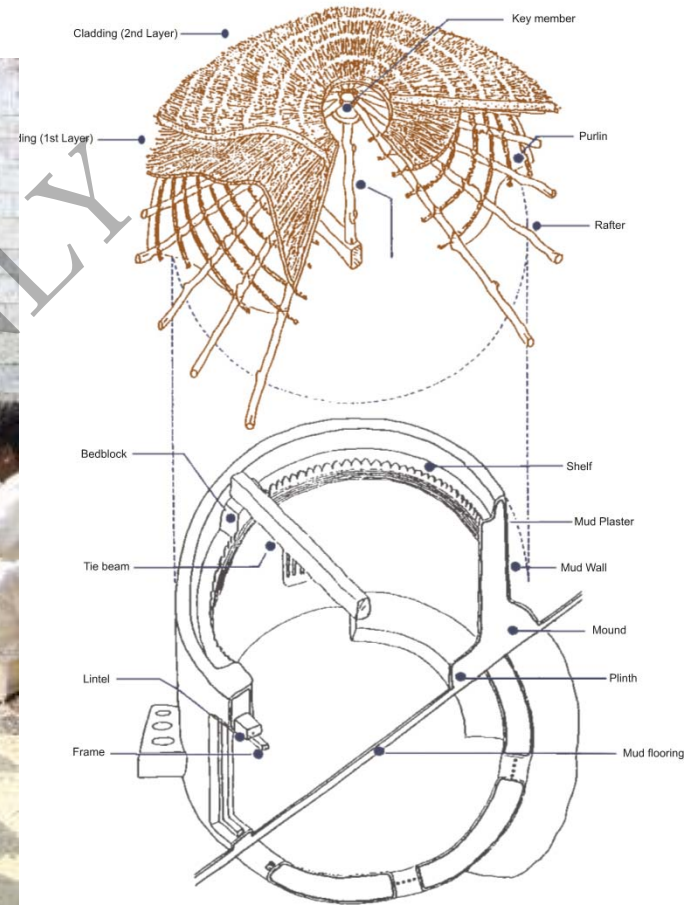


My third lesson: the richness of traditional wisdom, but also its limits !



Floods in Barmer Desert (2006), 139 lives lost

People 'knew' but perhaps not all



Design of the emergency shelter

Creating new learning for better resilience

The houses built were in complete compliance with local environmental and cultural nuances both in terms of design and technology used. At the same time, hazard and vulnerability profile of the area was also considered to ensure safety from future disasters.

Traditional Houses

Made of mud, circular in design and had thatched roofs



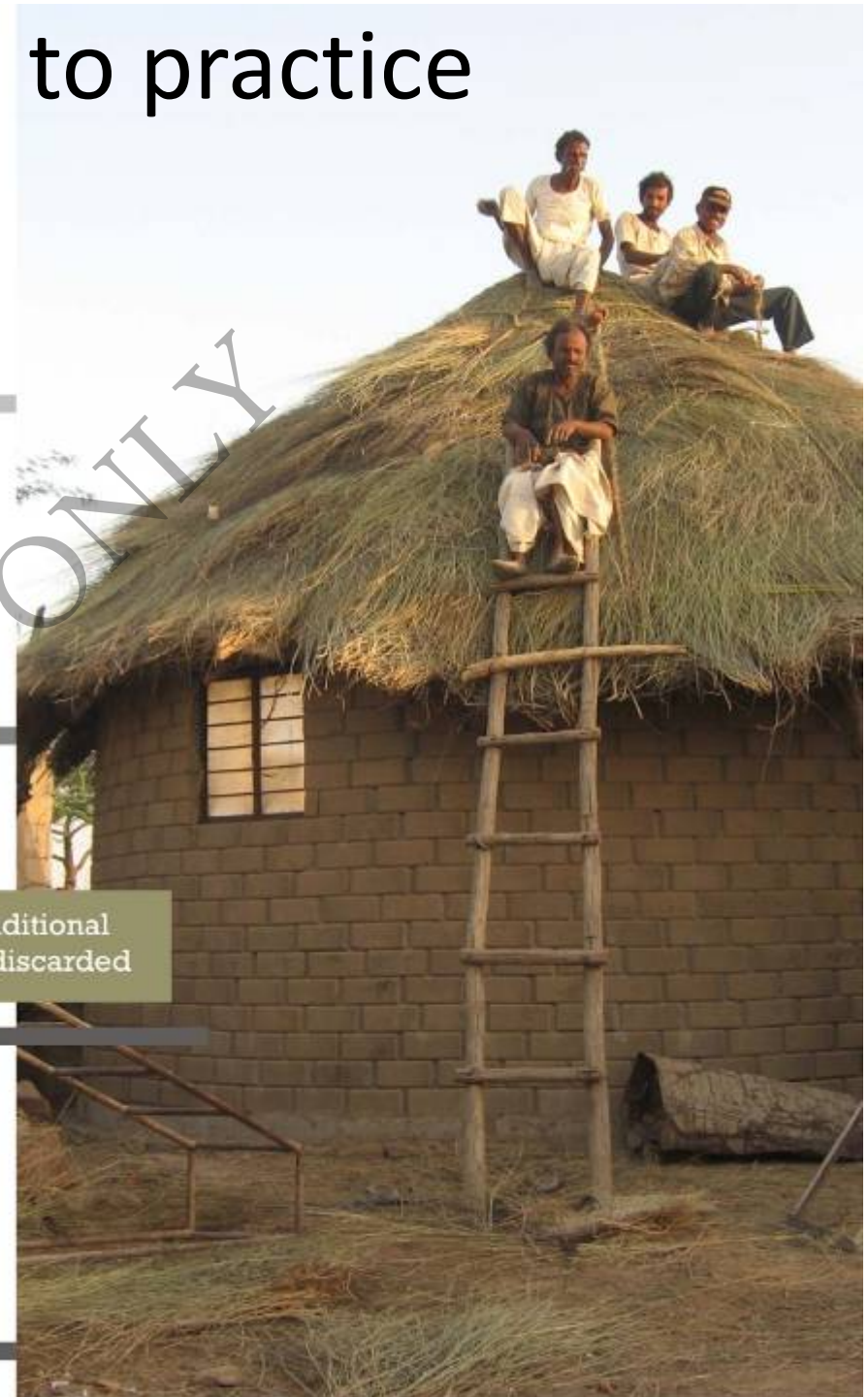
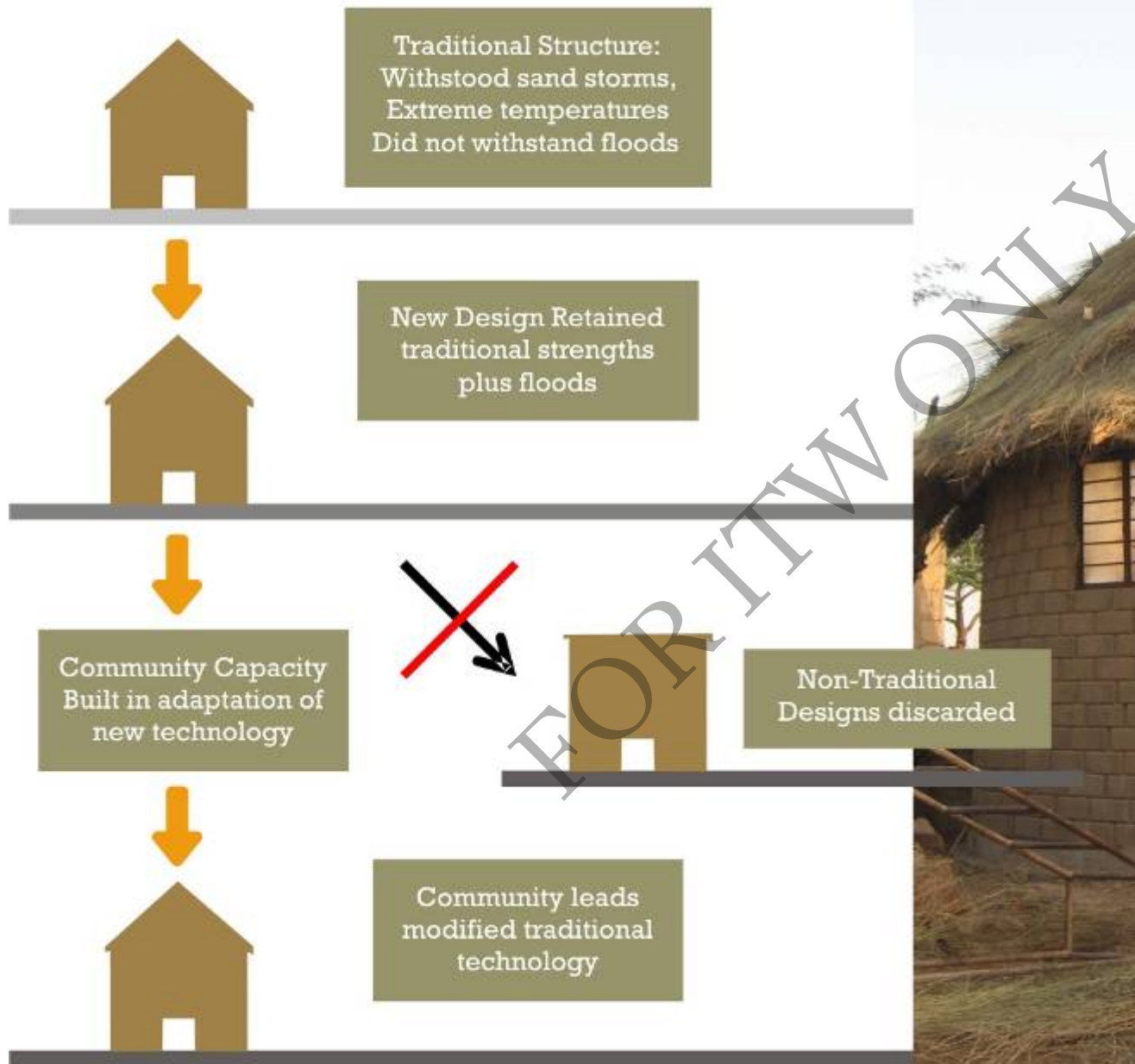
New Houses

Mud stabilized with 5 % cement and compressed for strength

Circular with interlocking blocks, proper foundations, and structural bands for strength

Thatched roofs for thermal comfort

From knowledge to practice



My fourth lesson: Information for building accountability



Road building across river basins causing floods and destruction, Orissa, 2007

Ensuring at-risk populations have a voice

- Right to Information as the starting point
- Powered by free media: voicing citizens' issues

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- Started soon after the Rwanda Genocide
- “The organisation ensures that the people it aims to assist and other stakeholders have access to timely, relevant and clear information about the organisation and its activities.”

- My fifth lesson: “Information as Aid”

“People need information as much as water, food, medicine or shelter. Information can save lives, livelihoods and resources. Information bestows power” (The 2005 IFRC World Disasters Report)

“We are safe”



IFRC in Haiti: Delivering vital aid related information



Source: Humanitarian Innovation Fund

- Increasing two-way communication with beneficiaries
- Reaching more beneficiaries with life-saving information
- Provide beneficiaries an easy way to get their voice heard
- Providing beneficiaries with more specialised information from different organisations
- In-depth information and analysis from beneficiary responses

My final lesson: Learning from my 10 year old
kid and his friends

Tremendous potential for “learning to apply”



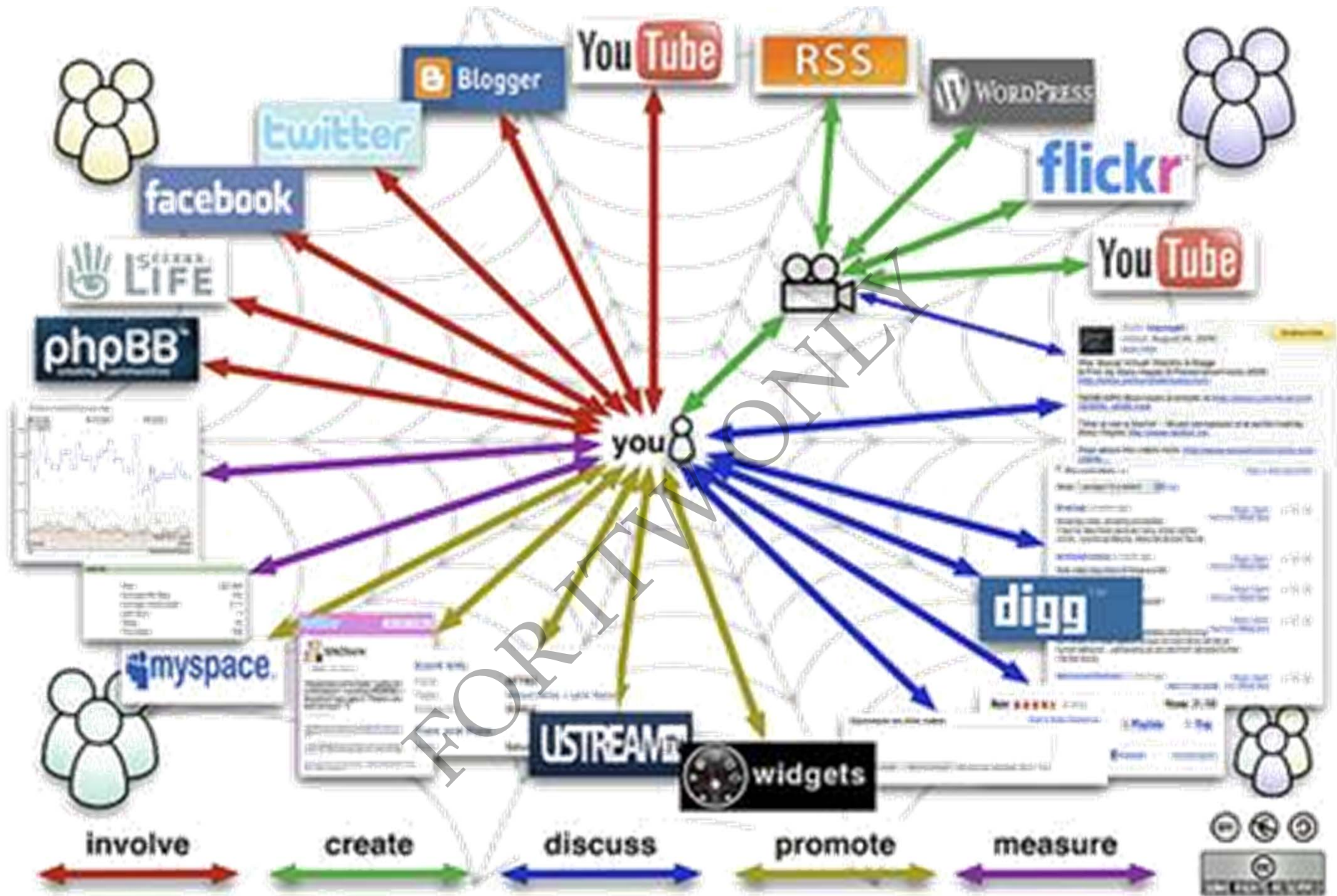
	IN THE OLD DAYS	NOW
LISTENING TO MUSIC		
WATCHING FILMS		
CHATTING WITH FRIENDS		
READING THE NEWS		
PLAYING MUSIC		

BEFORE



NOW





In summary:

- Information can save lives!
- Information can be empowering!
- The importance of “last-mile”
- Information redefining social institutions!

So where do we begin?

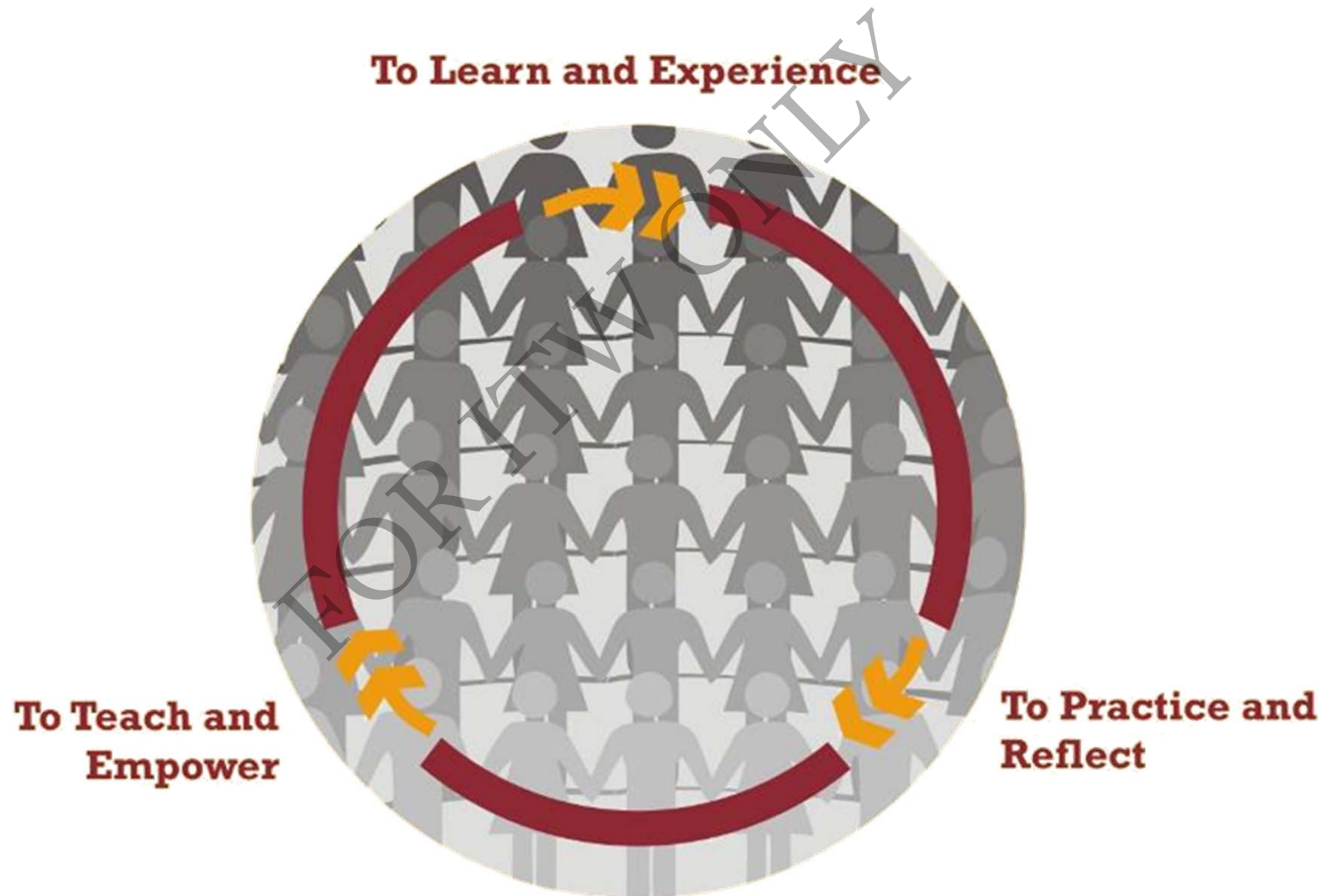
“

Solutions to community's problems
should correspond to their
perception of risk and solutions
rooted in tradition

”



A simple learning model



Working back from future

- Let's start with schools
- From Schools to communities
- From Communities to Communities of Practice

- Asian Disaster Reduction & Response Network; www.adrrn.net
- Global Network of CSOs for Disaster Reduction; www.globalnetwork-dr.org
- Humanitarian Accountability Partnership; www.hapinternational.org
- Active Learning Network for Accountability & Performance; www.alnap.org
- UNDP –Solution Exchange; www.solutionexchange-un.net
- Disaster Hyperbase; www.drh.edm.bosai.go.jp
- Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities, www.cdac-haiti.org



asian disaster reduction & response network



Thank you

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