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Limits to transferring local models for success

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Joensuu, 27 February 2008

Structure of Presentation

1. Success story
2. Model
3. Problems of transfer
4. Explanations

Location of North Karelia
Finland
Norway
Sweden
Russia

Social Innovations Against Exclusion in Information Society

North-Karelia, Finland

First two telecottages in 1986

Information Society is one of the main priorities of Regional Development Plan:

- **NOKIS Strategy**, EU RISI (Regional Information Society Initiatives). North-Karelia as a laboratory of *social dimension* in information society
- EU Innovative Actions programme for Eastern Finland 2002-04
- Information Society projects, EU structural funds

Starting points

Project are not based on

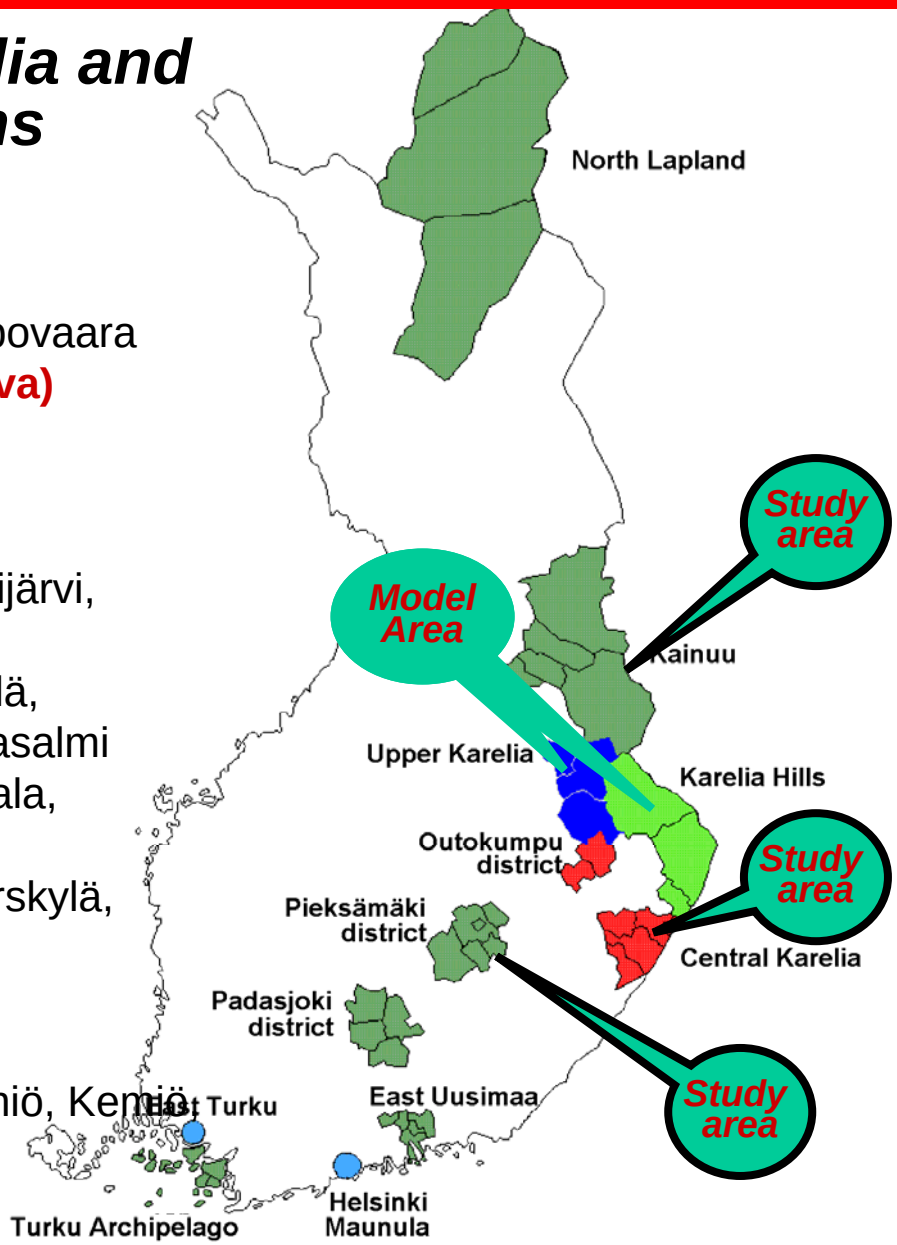
- big growth centres,
- high & specialist knowledge,
- technological improvements.

but rather on:

- social innovations,
- new forms of co-operation
- lay knowledge
- local human and social capital

Community Nets in North Karelia and Finnish OSKU Learning Regions (Funded by Sitra Foundation)

Upper Karelia Nurmes, Juuka, Valtimo
Karelian Hills extension Lieksa, Ilomantsi, Tuupovaara
Central Karelia and Outokumpu district (Oppiva) Kesälahti, Kitee, Rääkkylä, Tohmajärvi, Värtsilä, Outokumpu, Polvijärvi
North Lapland Sodankylä, Inari, Utsjoki
Kainuu Osku Hyrynsalmi, Kuhmo, Paltamo, Ristijärvi, Suomussalmi
Pieksämäki district (PiiSavo) Haukivuori, Jäppilä, Kangasniemi, Pieksämäki, Pieksämäen mlk, Virtasalmi
Padasjoki district (ePäijänne) Padasjoki, Asikkala, Sysmä, Kuhmoinen
East-Uusimaa (Kehä 5) Lapinjärvi, Liljendal, Myrskylä, Pernaja, Pukkila
East Turku urban area
Helsinki Maunula (Nettimaunula) urban area
Turunmaa Archipelago Dragsfjärd, Houtskari, Iniö, Kemiö, Korppoo, Nauvo, Parainen, Västanfjärd



Community Network
”Learning Karelia Hills”
2000-01

- inhabitants about 45 000
- registered users over 9 000 (spring 2001)

Net can be accessed from

- workplace
- schools
- open access kiosks
- home
- abroad
- with FirstClass-software
- Internet-browser

Learning Karelian Hills Network

Registered Users by Municipality,

31 December 2001

	Number	*Share of population*
Nurmes	2 595	**26,8** %
Juuka	1 549	**23,8** %
Valtimo	892	**30,3** %
Lieksa	1 885	**12,6** %
Ilomantsi	920	**13,2** %
Tuupovaara	374	**16,8** %
Together	8 215	**19,0** %

In addition there were about 700 users from outside the region.

Computer training and network access for all

Top Message Zones in Community Net

(Number of visits in January 2002)

Flee market	14 416
Free Debate	13 872
Trading Place	13 056
New Messages	12 484
Discussion Zones	10 707
Computers	9 845
Want to Sell	8 332
Nurmes Vocational Training Institute	8 219
Youth Column	7 795
Youth Only Zone	7 498
Greetings	7 252
Want to Buy	6 587
Motor Vehicles & Supplies	6 336
Public Services	6 323
Net Support Info	6 197
Topic of the Week	5 758
Women Only	5 270

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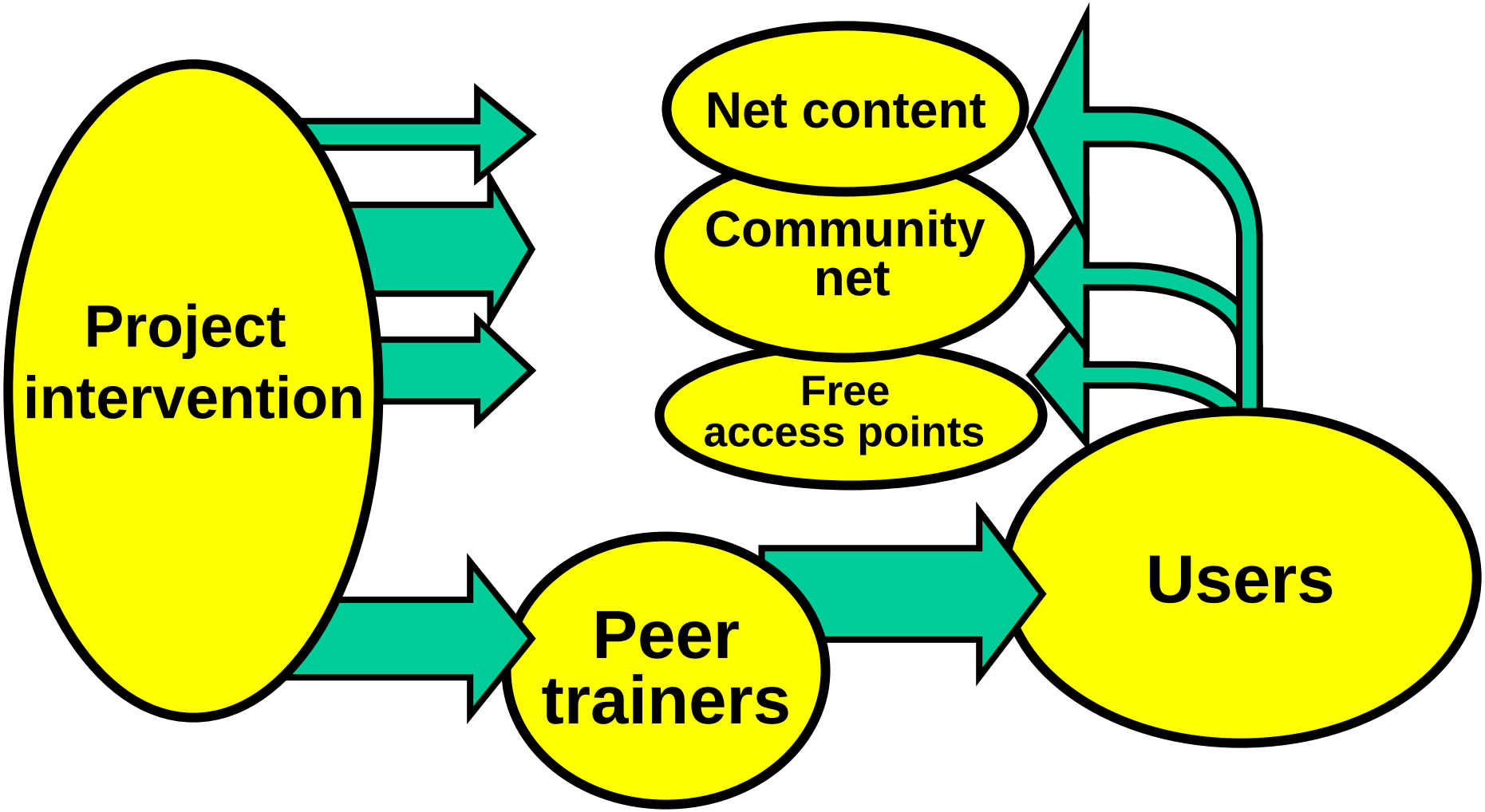
Upper Karelia Project Model



Open Access Kiosks

+ the most densely networked periphery in the world (open access point for every 600 inh.)
+ access for those not having computer
+ shops, banks, post offices, libraries
+ clubrooms of youth, pensioners, and unemployed
- not finding space for kiosks in the most remote villages

Peer Training

+ against digital divide: basic computer skills for all, including the unemployed, small entrepreneurs, youth, pensioners, voluntary associations
+ building upon local knowledge: the unemployed were trained to become project workers: peer trainers, support persons, network managers
+ support to school classes and parents

Professor Manuel Castells in Upper Karelia, December 2000

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Problems in new locations

1. Short-time project vs. local continuities
2. Connecting to local interests and values
3. Creating local network contents
4. Focusing and prioritizing

Problems in using the model in new locations

1. Short-time project vs. local continuities

- Connecting to the network of municipality administration was difficult.
- Lacking time resources (18 months project was too short time for starting new processes.)
- Opposing gatekeepers in some localities
- Short term employment of project workers (trainers), even cuts in the middle of short project (because of administrative constraints on funding and poor planning)
- Change of project managers

Problems in using the model in new locations

2. Difficulties in connecting to local interests and values

- **Finding hosts for open access kiosks, different interests and changing rules.**

- **Social struggles over technology on two fronts:**
  - **Lay users: “Information technology is not for us.”**
  - **Experts: “This is wrong software for us.”**

- **Spatial dispersal, for example, long distances, or two districts and three offices in the same project**

- **Users did not feel that the network was theirs**

Problems in using the model in new locations

3. Difficulties in creating local network contents

- Lacking skills of content makers
- Lacking motivation or understanding of the possibilities
- Local administration and enterprises felt that existing www -homepages were enough.
- Lacking of local discussion and participation

Problems in using the model in new locations

4. Difficulties in focusing and prioritizing

- Conflicts in the beginning
- Too much focus on school kids in the start
- Change of key workers of the project
- Expectation that the funding partner decides over local conflict
- Two aims in one project: portal (WWW) and community net based on client software (FirstClass)

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Three Interpretations of Success and Failure

A. Changing context

B. Learning networks in competition

C. Integrating ICT into the everyday practises

Changing Contexts: Place and Time

Development processes cannot be understood out of their context (local, social, cultural). Success cannot be copied from one context into another.

The paradox of technology and society:
When an innovation is technically ready, it is not socially acceptable. When it is socially accepted, it has become technologically obsolete.
(-Jarno Turunen)

Learning Networks in Competition

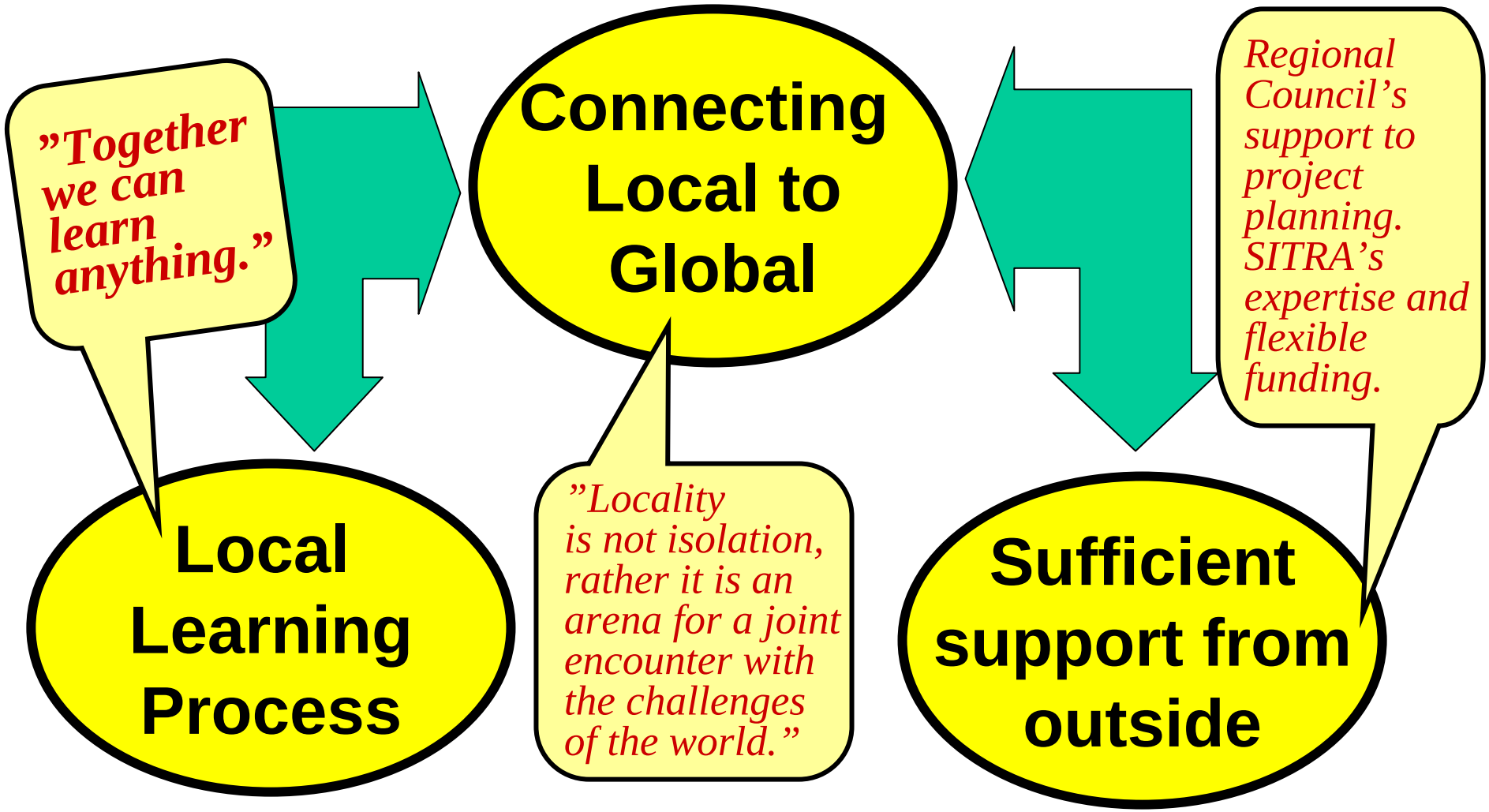
The networks for development combine together resources of different kinds.

Common learning and success create enthusiasm and self-confidence.

Collective experiences may be used to construct images and identities of communities and places.

They are used in attracting people and marketing local products and services (food, tourism, housing).

Three Factors of Success in Upper Karelia Project



Knowledge and Identity are Network Resources

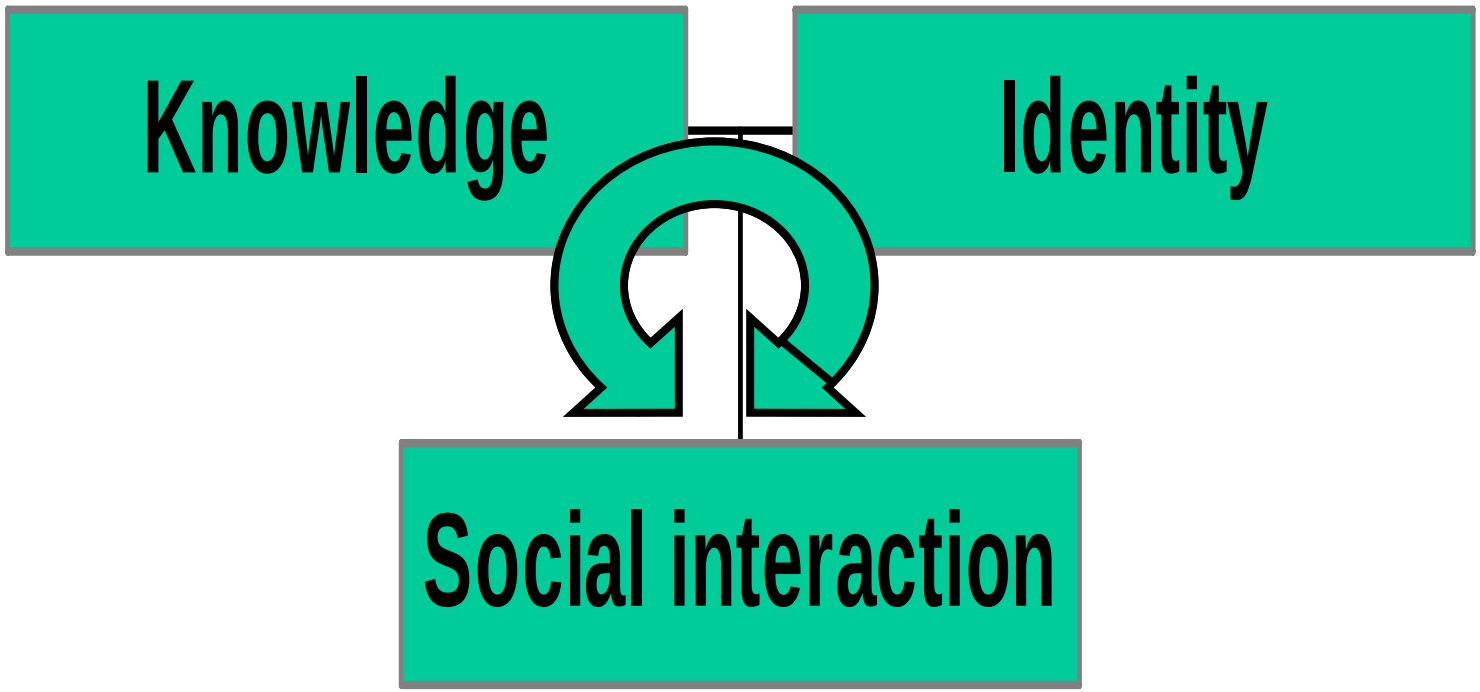
The collective learning process in Upper Karelia could be seen in terms of constructing and using knowledge and identity as resources, which is the definition of social capital as defined by Ian Falk and Sue Kilpatrick (2000).

Community Network Improves Connections

- New possibilities for interaction are created.
- Locally generated interactions of rural and urban people are initiated.
- Experience of being in periphery is turned into proactive activity.
- Local knowledge is translated into network contents, used by the locals.
- Excluded groups are helped to connect to regional, national and international partners and knowledge resources.

Construction of Social Capital

based on Falk & Kilpatrick 2000



Integration of IT into the Ordinary

Information technology is being integrated into ordinary routines and is becoming a part of self-evident practices of coping in everyday.

Similar concepts: mainstreaming, banalization, domestication, every-day use

Who are the Active Users of the new Regional Networks?

The typical user of the regional network is not (any more) a young man, neither a professional developer or an active participant in politics.

The most typical user is middle-aged female, training herself or having temporary job in service sector.

Over half of the users are over 40 years of age.

Network Survey: Seutuverkkojen käyttäjätutkimus 2003. Sitra, Oppivat seutukunnat. Taloustutkimus Oy.

Important use of the Network?

Practical needs, such as

- contact information of public officers,

- opening hours of offices,

- information of how matters are processed

- what has been decided.

Some willingness to do business in the net can be found, also some willingness to participate in local affairs, if the use of network is not too expensive.

Network Survey: Seutuverkkojen käyttäjätutkimus 2003. Sitra, Oppivat seutukunnat. Taloustutkimus Oy.

For Whom the Regional Network is Indispensable?

	Learning Karelia Hills	*Silicon Savo*	*Osku in Kainuu*
All Respondents	***69 %***	***51 %***	***52 %***
Pensioners	*82 %*	*79 %*	*57 %*
Farmers	*86 %*	*50 %*	*40 %*
Other Entrepreneurs	*81 %*	*42 %*	*50 %*
Workers, whole time	*70 %*	*54%*	*58 %*
Workers, part time	*84 %*	*43%*	*40 %*
Unemployed	*70 %*	*53 %*	*57 %*
At Home	*83 %*	*67 %*	*67 %*
Students	*60 %*	*40 %*	*46 %*
	n=1085	n=390	n=378

Network Survey: Seutuverkkojen käyttäjätutkimus 2003. Sitra, Oppivat seutukunnat. Taloustutkimus Oy.

The Best of the Best Practises:

The Alliance of Developers and the Everyday Needs

In the best case the community for the development is supported and accepted by the communities of everyday life.

The challenge is to keep the development community and its successes transparent and inclusive.

This is difficult because success is made of social distinctions and competition.

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Research on local information society
http://cc.joensuu.fi/~alma/infosoc/

This lecture is available at
http://cc.joensuu.fi/~alma/lue/

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