Bridging Divides: Translating the Idea of Sustainable Livelihoods to Rural Indonesia through Institutional Empowerment Work

Isabel Brüggemann
Cambridge Judge Business School, University of Cambridge
ib353@jbs.cam.ac.uk

Jochem Kroezen
Cambridge Judge Business School, University of Cambridge
j.kroezen@jbs.cam.ac.uk

Paul Tracey
Cambridge Judge Business School, University of Cambridge
p.tracey@jbs.cam.ac.uk
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ABSTRACT

This study delivers insights into how heterogeneous promoters and adopters of an idea can effectively overcome asymmetries in their life-worlds and positions of power to achieve idea translation. Based on the case of the translation of the concept of sustainable livelihoods to Indonesia, which involved the activities of rural farmers and an international conservation NGO, we argue that idea translation involving heterogeneous groups of actors can pass through different stages - translation modes (controlling, collaborative and generative translation) - which involve different distributions of power between promoters and adopters. Each translation mode is associated with unique challenges related to promoter-adopter asymmetry that can be addressed through institutional work – empowerment work on the part of intermediaries and translation work on the part of idea promoters and adopters – that can trigger transitions between these modes. Importantly, empowerment work enables inclusive participation of low-power stakeholders during a translation project and supports the building of relationships between heterogeneous promoters and adopters through addressing a lack of interpersonal trust and identification with an idea. We contribute by developing a dynamic, processual view of translation, which complicates the largely one-directional notion of translation that is currently prevalent in the literature. Furthermore, we show the types of institutional work required to establish cooperation among heterogeneous groups of actors, and deliver insights into tackling the challenge of achieving participatory community development.

Keywords: Translation; empowerment work; sustainable livelihoods; international development; intermediaries
INTRODUCTION
The strategic translation of ideas and their associated practices from one institutional context to another is inevitably a political process (Olivier de Sardan 2004). At the core of translation is a struggle between actors seeking to shape the ideas being transferred in such a way that they “fit their own wishes and the specific circumstances in which they operate” (Wedlin and Sahlin 2017, p. 109). And yet the organizational literature on translation often downplays these power dynamics. Indeed, research to date has tended to focus on cases where translation is driven by either the promoters or the adopters of an idea rather than negotiated in complex ways “between actors of different statuses, with varying resources and dissimilar goals” (Mosse and Lewis 2006, p. 1). Thus, we lack studies where multiple, diverse actors engage jointly in translation processes (Saka 2004). As a consequence, while organizational researchers have made great strides in pushing forward our understanding of how ideas and practices spread, the crucial political aspects of the translation process are less well understood.

One of the reasons that existing work downplays power and politics may be that most empirical studies focus on the translation of ideas between “developed” countries where the institutional contexts involved are relatively similar. However, recent decades have witnessed the proliferation of a very different type of translation effort concerned with the transfer of ideas from organizations based in North America and Europe – the Global North – to organizations based in Africa, Asia and South America – the Global South1. These translation efforts are often grouped under the label of “international development” – a set of interventions, led by “advanced” nation states and their civil society organizations, ostensibly designed to promote the welfare of “underdeveloped” places (Potter et al. 2017). This form of translation has largely been neglected by organizational researchers (but see Venkataraman et al. 2016). This is somewhat surprising, not only because of its prevalence and the significance of the issues it is designed to address –

1 We recognize that the labels “Global North” and “Global South” are imprecise and do “not adequately convey the political configuration of the world”. However, it is the favoured terminology in the development community where it is generally considered “the best approximation available” (McCann and Kim 2013, p. 4), and it is therefore the terminology that we adopt in this study.
political scientists have suggested that successive efforts to address global inequalities have resulted in “an era of development” (Ziai 2007) – but also because from a theoretical standpoint it presents a fascinating set of questions with the potential to challenge, nuance and extend our assumptions with respect to how ideas move between places.

To address this shortcoming in the literature, we examine the translation of a particular model of sustainable development from the Global North to the Global South. Specifically, we study how the idea of “sustainable livelihoods” was translated to rural communities in Indonesia through the collective institutional work performed by a large UK-based international conservation NGO, Indonesian farmers, and local intermediaries. Sustainable livelihoods refer to sources of income that provide a “secure” standard of living without undermining natural resource bases, which in the case of rural Indonesia involved the development of local markets for non-timber forest products, such as forest honey, kepayang oil, and tenkawang butter, as alternatives to those based on timber forest products, such as palm oil and rubber. The case is particularly interesting because it required complex coordination among actors with highly asymmetrical “life-worlds” and power positions (Long 2004, Mosse 2013, Mosse and Lewis 2006, Rottenburg 2009). While the project was ultimately deemed a success by all of the parties involved, the journey to get there was far from straightforward, with many difficult moments along the way.

We rely on rich qualitative data in the form of extensive participant and field observations, formal and informal interviews, and archival sources. The core of these data were obtained by closely following in situ the ongoing work performed by the key actors involved in the translation project. Our findings revealed the complex and dynamic nature of multi-actor translation in terms of (1) ongoing interactions between promoters, adopters, and intermediaries, (2) iterative cycles of editing and reformulation of the idea, (3) continuous clashes of meaning systems between promoters and adopters and (4) fundamental shifts in power between actors during the process. More specifically, our findings reveal three different translation modes (controlling, collaborative and generative translation) that may demarcate different stages during the translation process and which involve different distributions of power between promoters and adopters. Finally, we find that each translation mode is associated with unique challenges related to
promoter-adopter asymmetry that can be addressed through institutional work – *empowerment work* on the part of intermediaries and *translation work* on the part of idea promoters and adopters – that can trigger transitions between these modes.

Our findings contribute to the literatures on translation, institutional work, and institutional change, and have implications for the struggles that confront actors engaged in international development. First, our study of an extreme case of multi-actor translation – involving interactions between highly asymmetrical groups of actors in terms of life-worlds and power positions – enables us to draw attention to different translation modes; a repertoire spanning a continuum from promoter-driven, to collaborative, to adopter-driven. Our conceptualization draws attention to the unique challenges associated with each mode and, as such, provides an explanation for why some cases of translation might be more successful than others.

Second, we develop a multidimensional, processual view of translation, which complicates the largely one-directional notion of translation often prevalent in the literature. Our concept of institutional empowerment work, involving iterative interactions between promoters, adopters and boundary-spanning intermediaries, explains transitions between the different translation modes. It illustrates how adopters can be empowered to take control over local idea dissemination. In the context of institutional empowerment work, ideas travel from one institutional setting to another through undergoing multiple cycles of editing.

Finally, we contribute to debates on outsider-driven institutional change in international development. Whilst concepts such as “self-determination” and “bottom-up participation” have become prominent development theory and practice of development (e.g., Chambers 1997), some scholars argue that neo-colonial undertones persist, with the targets of development still little more than “passive objects” in development discourse (Mohan and Stokke 2000). Drawing on an institutional lens, our analysis suggests that effective development can be conceptualized as a dynamic institutional work project. Our contribution here is not simply to show that interventions need to be designed around local cultural practices and ways of working, with very high levels of ownership and control on the part of communities – but to theorize the barriers to doing so, and the types of work required on the part of different actors to overcome them.

**THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**
The use of translation as a metaphor and conceptual lens to understand the travel of ideas across different contexts has appealed to scholars in many disciplines, including organization theory and international development (e.g. Lawrence 2017, Mosse and Lewis 2006, Sahlin-Andersson and Wedlin 2008). To frame our study and motivate our research question, we first review the literature on translation in institutional theory – the main perspective on translation in organization theory. We then consider work that has examined translation in international development, a particularly important body of work given the nature of our empirical context.

Research on Institutional Translation
There is a long tradition of institutional research that has examined the diffusion of ideas across institutional settings (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, Green 2004, Kennedy and Fiss 2009, Strang and Meyer 1993). Whilst diffusion theories offer great insights into why certain norms or practices spread among populations of organizations, they have been criticized for downplaying the role of adopters in the exchange of ideas – they often implicitly assume that diffusion involves the uncontested, wholesale adoption of ready-to-wear elements in order to signal conformity within a field (Ansari et al. 2010). By contrast, the concept of translation acknowledges that ideas can “hold very different meanings for diverse recipients” (Powell et al. 2005, p. 233). It explicitly considers how ideas change as they diffuse, showing that they take on new forms and meanings attributed by local actors so that they “fit” the new context (Sahlin and Wedlin 2008). Adopting a social constructionist stance, translation researchers have argued that “to set something in a new place is to construct it anew” (Czarniawska and Sevon 2005 8). This observation has led some scholars to argue that the very process of institutionalization is inherently a process of translation, because institutionalization invariably involves the “recursive interaction” of different sets of meanings in a given context (Zilber 2006, p. 282, see also Maguire and Hardy 2009).

Most institutional translation research is concerned with the travel of ideas between organizations in different national contexts (e.g., Boxenbaum 2006, Meyer and Höllerer 2010, Saka 2004). Ideas from outside an organization enter a complex web of other, already existing organizational elements, leading to “organizational variation and distinctiveness” (Boxenbaum and Pedersen 2009, p. 179). For instance, new
ideas travel to contexts with pre-existing cultural norms that define “appropriateness” and thus necessitate a “cultural fit” between new and pre-existing belief systems (Ansari et al. 2010, Meyer and Hollerer 2010, Lawrence 2017). Translation thereby involves the merging and appropriation of external and local norms, guided by the institutional setting into which an idea is introduced (Sahlin and Wedlin 2008, Saka 2004). One example is Frenkel’s (2005) study of the adoption of management concepts from the US, a relatively individualistic society, to Israel, a more collectivist society. Frenkel depicts how a human resource management model that transferred the dealing of workers’ welfare issues from unions to personnel departments in the US was remodeled to allow for collectivist worker practices that actually strengthened labor unions in Israel. Another example is the selective adoption of the idea of New Public Management in Austria, where only those elements consistent with the traditional public sector logic were implemented (Hammerschmid and Meyer 2005). As such, whilst ideas that share the same label appear to spread relatively easily across different contexts, local variations in adoption of these ideas can be very significant (see, also, Mazza et al. 2005, Meyer and Hoellerer 2010).

Embedding Ideas in New Contexts. Institutional scholars have devoted substantial attention to the translation processes that are typically required to embed existing ideas in new contexts. They have argued that translation occurs through certain repeating patterns, namely “editing rules” (Sahlin-Andersson 1996). Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) describe four such editing rules. They argue that an idea first needs to be “disembedded” from the particularity of its original context. Second, the idea is then “packaged” into an object that can attract adopters, typically by labeling it as a solution to a particular organizational problem. Third, adopters then “unpackage” the idea in their local context by, for example, merging it and creating a fit with existing local norms. Finally, the idea is “reembedded” in that context when particular institutionalized practices emerge that anchor it locally.

Empirical research has shown that if an idea is not conveyed coherently, its meaning is likely to remain ambiguous to potential adopters. As a consequence, the idea may fail to be “reembedded”; i.e., translated into concrete practices (Erlingsdottir and Lindberg 2006, Özen and Berkman 2007). And even if the idea is conveyed coherently, diverging interpretations and meaning systems between and within the
recipient and promoting contexts mean that the practices ultimately adopted may be very different than those originally associated with the idea (Boch Waldorff 2013, Frenkel 2005, Jeppsson et al. 2004, Khan et al. 2007). Thus, the available evidence suggests that insufficient or ineffective interaction between promoters and adopters of an idea may lead to poor translation outcomes. Finally, in situations of great distance between promoter and adopter contexts, embedding an idea is even more complex, as “reinterpretation through repackaging and simplification into tools and techniques over several cycles is necessary” (Morris and Lancaster 2006, p. 210).

Whilst institutional studies on translation have delivered important insights into the movement of ideas from one context to another, empirical studies have focused on a relatively restricted set of cases where the objects being translated move within or between North American and Europe. Moreover, although research has distinguished theoretically between the roles of promoters and adopters of an idea (Maguire and Hardy 2009, Zilber 2006), we lack studies that examine the micro-dynamics of the interactions between different actors during translation. In other words, the “mechanisms behind participation” in collective translation processes remain poorly understood (Creed et al. 2002, p. 478).

**Translation Research in International Development**

An important context where institutional translation is likely to be visibly more complex and dependent on greater levels of interaction than has commonly been studied is that of international development. There is a long history of development projects originating in the Global North that aim to translate “enlightened” ideas to “impoverished” communities in the Global South (Long 2004, Mosse 2013, Mosse and Lewis 2006). Yet, the effectiveness of these translation efforts is often criticized (e.g., Mohan and Stokke 2000, Nelson and Wright 1995). Studies of development initiatives provide empirical evidence of translation processes that are rife with challenges rooted in the relationships between those on both sides of the translation process (Murray Li 2011, Rottenburg 1996, 2009). Indeed, development research points to significant difficulties that may prevent an idea from being embedded in the target context – difficulties rooted in the structural asymmetry between promoters and adopters.
Specifically, this work suggests that an uneven distribution of formal power between promoters and adopters of an idea often pervades the translation process. Although power relations are frequently downplayed in contemporary development projects, research suggests they are intertwined with the very nature of development itself (Mohan and Stokke 2000). In particular, while communities in the Global South are seldom ‘forced’ to accept external interventions, dependence on the resources associated with these interventions mean that local adopters often believe they have little choice but to do so (Powell et al. 2005). And as adopters’ dependency on external resources increases, they may feel less and less able to edit an idea so that it fits their local context. This represents a significant barrier to the translation of ideas, because the literature has shown that all the groups involved in a translation project need to embrace an idea – to ‘buy in’ to it – if it is to travel between institutional settings (Czarniawska and Sevon 2005). And yet many development initiatives fail to engage meaningfully with its adopters despite strong evidence that “low consultation leads to low local ownership” (Pritchett & Woolcock, 2004: 200). Rather, they use their resource advantages to push them through.

Interestingly, the development literature suggests that the structural asymmetries that hamper the translation process relate not only to formal power rooted in the control of resources, but also to the priority accorded to the different meaning systems – often termed “life-worlds” by development scholars – in which the promoters and adopters of an idea are embedded. Different life-worlds build divergent frames of reference – “laid down by differential patterns of socialization and professionalization” (Long 2004, p. 29) – which promoters and adopters draw upon to make sense of a given idea. As a result, an idea can carry different meanings to these actors, preventing it from traveling in the way intended by its promoters: “Western institutions do not just materialize in different cultures. They have to be reproduced by active, thinking human beings who have something to contribute themselves” (Spybey 1996, p. 174). Empirically, this has been illustrated in cases where “deep seated mentalities” hindered the ability of development professionals to address challenges facing target communities because they privileged their own meaning system (Corbridge 2007). Part of the problem is that the models used by the development community tend to be rooted in ‘expert’, Western knowledge. As the translation process unfolds, development professionals...
are confronted with indigenous knowledge that is constituted through different local experiences (Ellen and Harris 2000). Development professionals are trained to be mindful of these differences, and yet the evidence suggests that the translation of ideas in international development is often hampered by the assumption that indigenous knowledge is “closed, parochial, unintellectual, primitive and emotional” (Briggs 1995, p. 102).

Translation in the Context of Life-world and Power Asymmetries

In sum, translation is inevitably a political process involving complex interactions between promoters and adopters of an idea: the formal capacity of these actors to shape the implementation of the idea may vary dramatically, they may have fundamentally different conceptions of the meaning system in which the idea is being translated, and their understanding of the idea itself may also diverge. However, these aspects of the translation process have tended to be glossed over or downplayed in much institutional research. International development provides a particularly powerful setting in which to observe such complex translation processes, because the differences in life-worlds and power positions between the promoters and adopters of an idea are often extreme, and the stakes high, which raises questions about how translation can be effectively enacted in these circumstances. To explore these issues further, we seek to answer the following research question: How can promoters and adopters effectively achieve the translation of an idea under conditions of life-world and power asymmetry?

METHODS

Research Setting: Translating the Idea of Sustainable Livelihoods to Rural Indonesia

To address our research question, we draw on an in-depth case study of a development initiative focused around the translation of the idea of “sustainable livelihoods”. The promoter of the idea was Fauna & Flora International (FFI), a UK-based international NGO, and the adopters of the idea were farmers located in rural communities on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra in Indonesia. The key components of the sustainable livelihoods approach to development are summarized in Table 1. At the core of the idea is the creation of markets that provide a “secure” source of income “to meet basic needs” without undermining the resource base of the natural environment². It forms part of a broader set of interventions in the

² http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/x9371e/x9371e22.htm
development sector designed to combine issues of economic and environmental sustainability, and which have been promoted through numerous international agencies, including the UK Department for International Development (DfID 2001).

----- Insert Table 1 about here -----

The farming communities that FFI supports in Borneo and Sumatra comprise 3,600 members across two Indonesian conservation landscapes. The landscapes span some 50,198 hectares of forest and are home to highly endangered species, such as the tiger and orangutan. FFI has been working with these communities since 2009, mostly through a network of local NGOs (which had started to make villagers aware of the importance of conservation of their local environment), but in early 2016 its level of engagement and the resources expended increased significantly. It was at this point that the sustainable livelihoods program became formalized. The overarching aim was to develop ways of incentivizing local farmers to move away from the production of timber-forest products (TFPs) such as palm oil and rubber which cause significant damage to the natural environment through deforestation. In its place FFI sought to help rural farmers on the islands switch to non-timber forest products (NTFPs), including forest honey and kepayang oil in West Kalimantan (Borneo) and tenkawang butter in Jambi (Sumatra) – products processed from nuts that grow, respectively, on tenkawang and kepayang trees.\(^3\)

Thus, FFI understands its mission as supporting farmers to replace “unsustainable livelihoods” focused on TFPs, with economically viable, environmentally sustainable alternatives focused on NTFPs (rather than simply deinstitutionalizing local markets for TFPs). However, in encouraging local farmers to make this transition FFI faced a major challenge. Specifically, while the production of TFPs is the root cause of local deforestation and will cease to be viable in the long-term when the forests are gone, it delivers economic security for communities in the short-term because there are established markets for TFP products. By contrast, there are no established markets in Borneo and Sumatra for NFTPs. From the

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\(^3\) Timber forest products include not only products that use timber, but also products that require trees to be cleared in order to grow them, e.g. as can be observed in the context of rubber production in Asia (https://www.worldwildlife.org/projects/transforming-the-global-rubber-market).
perspective of the farmers, then, the switch to NTFPs represented a significant risk in the absence of a major buyer for these products. Moreover, farmers did not perceive an immediate threat from deforestation, and thus there was no impetus for them to make the change. Nevertheless, whilst the existing local markets for TFPs were economically more efficient at the time when FFI started their interventions, they were also characterized by unfair structures: Community members predominantly engaged in palm oil and rubber production facilitated through powerful local market intermediaries, who bought the products to sell them on. As such, FFI’s development of local markets for NTFPs involved equipping these markets with fairer structures (e.g. forming village cooperatives in which earnings could be distributed more evenly).

Initially, FFI worked mainly through local partners in Indonesia, supporting the initiatives of local conservation NGOs that worked in collaboration with FFI’s local Indonesian staff. However, progress was considered slow, and at the beginning of 2016 FFI sought to take a more active role in the translation process. In doing so, it sought support from a well-respected international development charity, PAC, to help accelerate the development of the kepayang oil and tenkawang butter sectors. Our study takes a close look at the translation efforts of all involved parties (see Figure 1) from the inception of FFI’s sustainable livelihoods initiative in 2016, although much of our data collection occurred between February 2016 and March 2017 (see Table 2). Below we briefly describe each of the main actors involved in the project.

Promoter: FFI. Fauna & Flora International (FFI) is one of the oldest and largest conservation NGOs in the world. Headquartered in London, the organization works in more than 40 countries worldwide, many of them in the Global South, to help marginalized communities engage in livelihoods that do not contribute to deforestation. A key element of its approach involves the creation of economic incentives to help communities safeguard their environments. Its work is sponsored through grants from donors interested in innovative approaches to conservation around the world. Many of FFI’s projects focus on the agricultural sector, whereby local farmers are supported in gaining access to a larger share of an existing market. For example, FFI works to connect farmers to large national and international buyers, often environmentally conscious organizations keen to source products in a sustainable manner. FFI’s hope is
that, through gaining a more central position in the market for certain products, local communities feel motivated to safeguard the natural resources that function as raw materials for these products.

**Adopters: Rural Farming Communities.** The communities that were the focus of FFI’s sustainable livelihoods initiative live in rural forest landscapes across a number of villages on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra. They earn their living through the production and sale of both timber and non-timber products, but in 2016 the latter accounted for only a very small share of income in the vast majority of villages. While farming communities were open, at least in principle, to the idea of focusing their livelihoods around non-timber products, they were deeply skeptical about the viability of these markets.

**Intermediaries: Local field teams and PAC.** Two key intermediaries played a central role in our case: 1) local field staff and 2) PAC. With regard to the former, FFI works closely with field staff from several local conservation NGOs and has also set up its own branches in Indonesia which have their own field staff. In both cases, these field staff are predominantly Indonesians. They are deeply engaged in community life, often living in the villages for several months a year to support and guide local production that has conservation value. These staff thus become intimately familiar with local customs, and many of them occupy well-respected positions in the villages. Their local embeddedness meant that they were well-placed to mediate between the farming communities and FFI UK.

The second intermediary in our case, Practical Action Consulting (PAC), is a development charity that specializes in training for a market building methodology called “Participatory Market System Development” (PMSD) – a program designed to bring all of the actors within a particular market together with the aim of jointly developing strategies to improve the functioning of the market in mutually beneficial ways. A core idea underpinning PMSD is that no single actor can bring about systemic change, and the methodology incorporates the ideal of bottom-up involvement in development. PAC was able to draw on its extensive experience of development projects around the world to support the implementation of the sustainable livelihoods initiative.

The local field staff and PAC thus had complementary skills and played complementary roles in the translation process. They worked closely together throughout the period of our study.
Data Collection

We were able to collect rich qualitative data on the activities of all three groups of actors throughout the duration of the translation project from 2016 onwards – from its initial inception by FFI HQ to the adoption of new practices by Indonesian farmers. The first author had unfettered access to all actors involved, including the farmers in the Indonesian villages. Her first visit to the field was facilitated through a consulting project designed to advise FFI on the development of the agricultural sector in West Kalimantan, which she joined as a participant observer. The second visit consisted of observations of participatory market mapping workshops conducted by FFI in provincial capitals, to which members of rural communities were invited. As such, we were able to rely on a ‘balanced’ dataset that included the perspectives of the main actors at multiple points, as well as observations of their interactions at key junctures in the translation process.

We collected data from three sources. First, the first author engaged in extensive participant observations in the form of attending and helping FFI staff and the consultant to facilitate the workshops. Specifically, she attended preparatory meetings at FFI headquarters in the UK, and joined workshops and meetings in Jambi City (Sumatra) and Pontianak (West Kalimantan), where the main actors met several times to work jointly on the project. She also visited the rural communities in Sumatra and West Kalimantan that were the focus of the development efforts. She recorded in a field diary 1) descriptive information about what she saw, 2) her impressions of the interactions between the three main groups, and 3) her emotional reactions to events as they unfolded. This resulted in 200 pages of field notes in total.

Second, we conducted 50 semi-structured interviews with representatives of the promoters (X) and adopters (25) of the idea, the intermediaries facilitating the idea’s implementation (22), as well as a small number of other local actors such as buyers and government officials (3). These interviews were mainly conducted with individuals, but sometimes informants were interviewed together (e.g., field staff from the same local NGO and members of the same farmers’ production group). With regard to the adopter interviews, the first author spent one week in each of the two villages that were the focus of sustainable livelihoods, where she worked with a translator to interview local farmers and other community members.
Third and finally, we obtained all the email correspondence between FFI and the various intermediaries that took place between February and December 2016, as well as 400 pages of workshop materials that were used for the project. Together, this resulted in a total of about 800 pages of raw data. See Table 3 for a summary of our data sources.

Data Analysis
In analyzing the data, we followed Langley’s (1999) recommendations for process research. First, we compiled a list of key events that occurred during our observations. We then constructed a detailed narrative from our raw data that described these events in order of their occurrence, producing a “realistic tale” (Van Maanen 2011) that offered a balanced account of the perspectives of all involved actors and incorporated rich contextual details.

Second, we identified higher-order temporal patterns or phases of the translation project. In doing so, we paid explicit attention to differences in the nature of interaction between promoters and adopters over time. In particular, the role and distribution of power jumped out as an important time-dependent factor. Thus, we identified three respective modes that captured variations in promoters’ and adopters’ interactions and positions of power: The controlling mode was illustrative of a stage in the process when translation was primarily driven through the work of promoters, and adopters could exercise little influence. The collaborative mode referred to instances of joint negotiation over translation goals, during which influence over translation was relatively equally divided between promoters and adopters. Finally, the generative mode captured adopter-driven translation, driven overwhelmingly by the translation efforts of local farmers. Each mode was deemed to correspond to a discrete phase in the translation process.

Third, we went through the narrative over and over again, paying close attention to key translation challenges that emerged and actors’ responses to the latter. This led us to investigate the roles of the various intermediaries in the translation project, which, in turn, motivated us to pay close attention to how transitions between the different translation modes occurred. Intermediaries, sitting between the life-worlds of promoters and adopters, appeared to resolve obstacles regarding the collaboration of the two groups. In
particular, they seemed to be able to facilitate interactions between promoters and adopters leading to the empowerment of the adopters by shifting responsibility for translation towards them. To theorize this dynamic, we drew on the participatory community development literature (Brocklesby and Fisher 2003, Chambers 1997, Mohan and Stokke 2000, Nelson and Wright 1995). In particular, we paid close attention to how this literature theorizes and labels different capabilities related to the empowerment of ‘marginalized’ citizens (Nussbaum 2003, Sen 1989). This helped us to conceptualize specific types of institutional work – that we labelled empowerment work – enacted by intermediaries, e.g., “exposing clashing expectations” and “facilitating interpersonal trust”. Intriguingly, we analysis suggested that intermediaries’ empowerment work enabled the creation of four spaces for translation: spaces for negotiation, building trust, power reallocation, and identification.

Fourth, we focused on classifying differences in translation work performed by promoters and adopters within the four types of space identified above. In doing so, we used the institutional translation and institutional work literatures as a guide while simultaneously remaining open to emerging phenomena. We distinguished between instances of within- and across-actor translation work, which helped us to collapse our first-order concepts into second-order themes (Gioia et al. 2013). Our second-order themes included overarching dimensions of translation work, such as “formulating ambitions” and “negotiating translation goals”. We crosschecked these dimensions of translation work against the narrative.

Finally, we built a data table to provide additional evidence for each translation mode, the transitions between modes, and the different forms of types of institutional work that we identified (see Table 4), and constructed a process model that illustrated diagrammatically the relationships between the various constructs that emerged from our analysis (see Figure 2).

----- Insert Table 4 about here -----

**FINDINGS: TRANSLATING “SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS” TO RURAL INDONESIA**

Our analysis offers an account of how the idea of sustainable livelihoods was translated to the local Indonesian farming communities in West Kalimantan and Jambi. It is structured temporally around the three translation ‘modes’ that we identified through our analysis – controlling, collaborative, and generative
– with each mode representing a phase in the translation process that we observed. In the findings that follow, we outline the nature of each mode, the set of challenges associated with them, and the institutional work enacted by the participants to support the transition from one mode to the next, leading ultimately to the successful translation of sustainable livelihoods concept.

**Phase 1: The Controlling Mode – FFI Directs the Translation Project (January – October 2016)**

FFI had a strong idea about the aims of the sustainable livelihoods initiative from the outset and directed it closely; farming communities had little say in how the project was designed or implemented at this juncture. We labelled this approach to translation the *controlling* mode – translation that is predominantly driven by the promoters of an idea with minimal input from prospective adopters.

In particular, FFI began with a clear vision of how translation should unfold. In its view, sustainable livelihoods represented a unique way to promote conservation of the Indonesian rain forest through economically empowering local farmers. Put simply, if farmers were supported in producing non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in a way that would result in economic gains, they would be motivated to safeguard their local environment. And once they had secured contracts with large buyers, they would develop a sense of “pride” – another “incentive to conserve the forest” (1.4.), as one senior staff member argued. A key element of FFI’s initial plan was the formation of regional associations through which farmers from neighboring villages could collaborate and combine their produce, providing economies of scale. Farmers could then jointly approach large national, even international, buyers who typically require high volumes of produces to be delivered to them on a regular basis (see table 1 for details of idea). Whilst FFI staff conceived of this idea during initial project meetings at their HQ, local field staff in Indonesia were responsible for disseminating the plan within the communities. They held meetings with farmers in the respective villages to inform them about FFI’s intentions. These meetings uncovered many concerns of the community members in regard to FFI’s conceptualization of the idea.

During an afternoon in late spring of 2016 in Nanga Betung, West Kalimantan, a group of women from the village set down together with field staff from FFI. “We do not want our children to become tenkawang farmers”, the women said. Unconvinced by the potential of tenkawang, the women had different
hopes for their children – doctors, gold miners, palm oil plantation owners. If tenkawang was going to be the major source of earnings for future generations, they feared that their children would have few opportunities to escape poverty. A problem with the production of NTFPs, including tenkawang butter, kepayang oil and forest honey, was that it was not nearly as lucrative as that of the TFPs, such as palm oil or rubber, that were major root causes of local deforestation. In many rural regions, palm oil and rubber were, in fact, the major livelihoods for the vast majority of farmers – they arguably had little choice but to resort to TFPs as often these represented the only viable sources of income. Moreover, farmers were deeply skeptical whether forest honey, kepayang and tenkawang production could produce sufficient revenues in the short run. Yet, because FFI did not adequately consider the perceptions and needs of communities, the initial blueprint for sustainable livelihoods did not adequately capture the life-worlds of the adopters or the ‘fit’ with the communities in which they were working. We describe this challenge as “exclusion of adopters’ perspective”.

Meanwhile, in Ujung Said, West Kalimantan, a farmer explained that he would carefully track whether tangible improvements in local living conditions could result from any collaboration with FFI before committing to sustainable livelihoods: “If there is no improvement, the next year we will stop them. You can no longer work here. That’s it.” He explained that, in the past, the local communities had frequently been approached by large buyers – both from Indonesia and abroad – that showed an interest in their products. However, according to stories told to us by the locals, these buyers often reneged on commitments they had made, sometimes well beyond the point at which farmers could find other buyers, thereby inflicting severe economic hardship on the communities concerned. For example, community members explained that, in Jambi, farmers had previously negotiated with a large national buyer from Bali who requested a large amount of kepayang oil to be produced before entering the deal. After the produce had been set aside, however, the buyer stopped communicating with the farmers. In the meantime, the farmers had missed opportunities to sell their harvests to other local buyers. Events like this had nurtured a generalized sense of distrust amongst community members towards interventions proposed by outsiders. The lack of engagement of the part of FFI – and its apparent unresponsiveness to local needs – seemed to exacerbate
these concerns. As such, FFI faced a negative legacy of “interventions” in the communities in which they worked (referred to as “traumas of the past” in an internal workshop report) that had fostered a sense of generalized distrust by community members toward outside organizational actors. We describe this challenge as “adopters’ generalized distrust”.

In sum, FFI’s initial approach – while well-intentioned – did not appear to take adequately account of local market conditions as well as experiences of community members. Our analysis suggests that while the controlling mode may have helped FFI get sustainable livelihoods off the ground, the exclusion of the perspective of adopters meant that the initiative quickly ran into troubled waters.

**Transition from Controlling (Mode 1) to Collaborative (Mode 2) Translation: Enabling Negotiations**

During Phase 1, the project thus appeared caught in a kind of paralysis, with each party unclear about the other’s goals and motivations. FFI’s UK team were acutely aware of that the project had gotten off to a difficult start, even if they did not necessarily realize the depth of feeling on the part of the communities at this point. A key moment in the translation process happened in February 2016, when FFI hired a consultant from the development charity PAC to help move the project forward. The consultant’s role was to prepare and facilitate workshops involving FFI HQ and representatives from the local farming communities, allowing both parties to air their views and concerns, and to develop a path forward to which both parties could commit. These workshops, which took place on the provincial capitals on the islands, were based around the Participatory Market System Development (PMSD) methodology described above.

In her preparations for the workshops, the PAC consultant worked closely with field staff (Indonesians employed by FFI and local NGOs) to understand the approach taken by the FFI UK team and gauge the feelings of the farmers. These actors – PAC and local field staff – began to work closely together and take a prominent role in the translation process. In essence, they were intermediaries facilitating dialogue between FFI’s UK team on the one hand and the farming communities on the other.

It quickly became apparent to the intermediaries that deep skepticism of community members towards sustainable livelihoods risked derailing the project and that it was therefore necessary for promoters and adopters to engage in negotiations over translation goals. Our analysis suggests that this prompted them
to engage in two sets of actions – *exposing clashing expectations* and *facilitating trust* – in an effort to move the translation project forward. Intriguingly, this work on the part of intermediaries had a significant impact: by enabling promoters and adopters to adjust their positions, it allowed the translation initiative to transition to a different basis. Specifically, exposing clashing expectations gave farming communities the confidence to *voice discontent*, which in turn pushed FFI HQ to an *adjustment of its ambitions*. At the same time, intermediaries’ facilitation of trust between promoters and adopters encouraged FFI HQ to *defer its agenda*, which in turn motivated farming communities to *reduce their skepticism*. As a result, negotiations over translation goals between promoters and adopters could take place.

We labelled the actions of intermediaries *empowerment work*, because they appeared designed to create space for the promoters and adopters of the focal idea to work through their differences. At the same time, we labelled the actions of promoters and receivers *translation work*, because they were concerned with working through the practical challenges inherent in translating the idea. Collectively, these forms of work help to transition the translation efforts to a more collaborative engagement. We consider each in turn.

**Empowerment work (1): Intermediaries expose clashing expectations.** First, intermediaries’ repeatedly exposed promoters’ and adopters’ clashing expectations during separate meetings with each party. For example, during early brainstorming sessions in the FFI HQ, the PAC consultant, a highly experienced international development professional, communicated in a direct way her understanding of the shortcomings of FFI’s initial approach:

“There is no point wasting your energy trying to promote a market that doesn’t generate any interest in communities. (…) We really need people to be appealed by a product for its business potential, for the opportunity to make money literally. And in conservation, I’m not sure to what extent you take that into consideration.”

After the consultant’s remark, an uncomfortable silence immediately enveloped the meeting room. FFI staff exchanged glances in despair. A senior member of the UK team finally jumped in, acknowledging:

“I think this is one of the interesting areas where we might differ slightly from aiming to achieve the biggest impact for poor people in the development line.”

In previous projects, conservation had always been prioritized as an end goal over the economic empowerment of communities, but the limitations of this approach were becoming apparent.
At the same time, local field staff pushed community members to think about how they related to buyers and others in the agricultural supply chain. FFI UK planned to connect farmers to large buyers via commercial contracts for NTFPs. Forming such contracts would entail satisfying the unique quality requirements of such buyers: “They [buyers] have certain administrative standards and some of them are not even negotiable” (1A.4.), a field staff member told a group of farmers in West Kalimantan. However, farmers had never engaged with buyers on this basis, and were unsettled by such a prospect. One woman remarked in response that they only knew how to produce cooking oil: “That’s what our ancestors did.” Farmers did not see the relevance of bureaucratic requirements related to the harvesting, processing or storage of their products – they had managed fine until now, they reasoned – but they were now being asked to explore the implications of their perspective on this issue for their economic wellbeing.

Thus, during these initial meetings – held in preparation of the workshops – intermediaries made both the promoters and receivers of the idea aware of the potentially clashing expectations inherent in the project. FFI’s UK staff came to understand the scale of the resistance to their plans among communities, and communities began to have a stronger sense of FFI UK’s expectations about how markets functioned, which were largely alien to them. Our analysis suggests that this prompted translation work on the part of both the promoters and adopters.

Translation work (1): Adopters voice discontent. Following on from these initial meetings, community members used the workshops as an opportunity to substantiate their discontent with sustainable livelihoods in front of FFI. This was the first time they interacted with HQ staff members. Early on during the workshops, one tenkawang farmer from West Kalimantan explained to them: “We are often disappointed. We collect half the order, and [then] the price suddenly drops. (...) No one would buy the nuts”. One woman from Jambi, who was involved in kepayang oil production, could hardly conceal her unhappiness, when explaining that she had been looked down upon by other villagers, who were solely producing TFPs and generating much higher earnings than her: “It’s better to work with something that will make money quickly, that is not as laborious. That’s the common mind-set.” (1A.1.) Her account uncovered
the pervasiveness of some farmers’ attachment to TFPs and villagers’ general discontent with plans that did not seem to respond to their preeminent needs to generate sufficient earnings.

Translation work (2): Promoters adjust ambitions. In the face of communities’ discontent, FFI’s initial ambition to secure contracts with large international buyers appeared far-fetched, and an adjustment of ambitions for the translation project was deemed necessary. During an internal strategy meeting, a HQ staff member repeatedly mentioned the importance of adopting a more nuanced understanding of local “wellbeing”, one where short-term income generation, for instance through commercial sales, could be an important aspect (1A.5.). In turn, FFI produced a revised project proposal that was substantially different from the first version. Specifically, the end goal of the project shifted from the creation of economic incentives for conservation, which did not appear to resonate with community members, towards the delivery of tangible “well-being benefits” – which included financial (income) as well as social (“building relationships with new market actors”) and human (“developing new skills”) goals (1A.6.). Overall, sparked by the empowerment work of intermediaries, the translation work of adopters and promoters led to far greater inclusion of adopters’ perspectives in the translation of sustainable livelihoods.

Empowerment work (2): Intermediaries facilitate trust. The second type of empowerment work enacted by the intermediaries was focused on helping promoters and adopters to take each other’s perspective, which supported their negotiations. Field staff, as well as PAC, made it clear to FFI HQ that the motivation and trust of community members had to be triggered through a prioritization of short-term, tangible improvements in local living conditions. This could only be achieved through addressing community members’ “most immediate priorities and needs” (PMSD guidance document). Yet, during the workshop in Jambi City, the provincial capital of Jambi, FFI’s UK team outlined a plan for contract negotiations with a large international cosmetic retailer interested in kepayang oil, which entailed an initial trial purchase at the end of 2017 and a potential product launch in May 2019. Field staff appeared puzzled and anxious. During dinner on the same day, the PAC consultant turned to one of the field staff, and wondered out loud:
“How are we going to get them [villagers] behind this idea? Farmers expect immediate returns from their harvests and they know they cannot immediately and regularly benefit from [the product], so there is no motivation.” (1B.4.)

Furthermore, the consultant reminded FFI UK to be compliant with PMSD guidelines, which she had circulated in shared documents through numerous emails: FFI’s interventions had to make sense to and support “the poorest and most vulnerable people” (PMSD guidance document). When everyone gathered again on the next day, field staff kept pushing for greater attention to the generation of short-term, tangible impacts for community members – the creation of “something that will be beneficial for the villagers first” (1B.3.). This was key in order to gain the trust of adopters.

At the same time, intermediaries worked to rebuild the confidence of FFI HQ in the communities with which they were working – they were concerned that FFI was losing faith in community members’ ability and motivation to engage in sustainable livelihoods. For instance, the PAC consultant took every opportunity during the workshops to speak individually with HQ staff to reassure them that – from her experience over many interventions – the communities would commit to the project if and when the commercial opportunity became apparent, but that FFI needed to be patient given the risks to communities if the new markets did not generate the hoped for returns. We illustrate evidence for an increase in trust between promoters and adopters in their translation work described below.

_Translation work (3): Promoters defer personal agenda_. FFI increasingly came to the view that its original blueprint for building new markets for NTFPs by combining produce from different villages in an association was flawed, because it created short-term gaps in income – the current mix of TFPs was simply better able to provide a more consistent income stream across villages. In internal discussions in the autumn of 2016, some FFI staff started to critically question the benefits that sustainable livelihoods provided for villagers, as illustrated in the following discussion about the potential of the tenkawang sector:

Staff 1: “If they have a harvest every four to five years, where does that leave the communities that we are engaging with in the gap periods? [The] solution of going to [different] communities [who would be members of an association] and getting it when there is a harvest there deals with the supply issue in one respect, but it doesn’t deal with the massive fluctuations in income [for individual community members] from this particular resource.”

Others remained wedded to the original plan:
Staff 2: “I think this [tenkawang sector] is as good as it gets: It’s a tree that creates a habitat for wildlife, it’s a tree that creates a buffer for native forests. It’s a tree, so by definition, it improves microclimate and structure for wildlife to live in, also the harvesting does not require any chemical input. It’s as good as it gets.”

These excerpts were illustrative of the ongoing arguments taking place within FFI HQ – arguments about the extent to which conservation outcomes should be ‘traded off’ in favor of economic ones for communities. However, those in favor of a more pragmatic approach prevailed, with increasing attention devoted towards the economic welfare of communities. This was observable in the way staff members started to actively engage community members on their most urgent concerns and needs. For instance, toward the end of the workshops in the provincial capitals in October 2016, FFI HQ staff asked community members to split into small groups from different villages to discuss the obstacles they faced in production. FFI came to trust the value of taking in the experiences and concerns of adopters. This was in contrast to meetings during the first couple of days, when FFI staff members had addressed community members in larger groups and were less proactive in seeking their opinions.

Translation work (4): Adopters reduce personal skepticism. As FFI started to move away from its preconceived agenda and instead sought to learn about and understand local needs from the perspective of farmers, community members began to take notice. A woman from the Sarolangun district in Jambi explained:

“The usual workshops or trainings [that we receive] are patronizing. They show us some slides and we take notes. So there is only one person speaking. This workshop is different, that’s why it’s exciting. Very exciting. We learn together, it’s not patronizing, and we are able to draw our own conclusions.”

(1.B.1.)

Other farmers, who had attended the workshops, summarized their perceptions as follows: “I think we are equal” and “I think I do have control”. After the workshops, not everyone’s skepticism had entirely disappeared – some felt that it was too early to draw conclusions (1B.2.) – yet, overall, we found that community members had started to reduce their skepticism and sensed increased trust toward FFI.

Phase 2: The Collaborative Mode – FFI and Local Communities Translate Together (October – December 2016)
Our analysis suggests that, as a result of empowerment and translation work described above, a different translation dynamic emerged, one that we termed a collaborative mode. In contrast to the controlling mode described above, the collaborative mode is characterized by joint negotiations over translation goals, which promoters and adopters mutually endorse. Crucially, adopters – as well as promoters – are able to contribute their views. The likelihood of local acceptance is therefore higher, and the chances that an external idea is edited in accordance with local life-worlds is also greater.

As an example in our case, during the collaborative mode, the concept of sustainable livelihoods entailed different sets of practices than those envisioned by FFI during the controlling mode (see table 1). These practices were the result of negotiations facilitated by intermediaries, described above in the transition phase. In particular, promoters and adopters agreed that the implementation of sustainable livelihoods should entail satisfying immediate needs within the communities, e.g. during gaps between harvesting periods for NTFPs, given that some species, such as tenkawang trees, only grow infrequently. For example, farmers in West Kalimantan asked for “seedlings, fertilizers, covering the costs of planting” to be able to start planting local species that can be harvested yearly. Furthermore, the forest honey association in West Kalimantan was supported through additional funding so that farmers, who were members of the association, could be paid closer to the time of their harvest. As such, economic wellbeing of community members – a crucial component of sustainable livelihoods - was defined differently than under controlling translation, when this merely meant being able to sell to larger buyers in order to potentially make more substantial gains in the future, rather than satisfying more immediate needs.

At the end of the workshops, a staff member of FFI reflected that the intake of community members’ perceptions prevented them from repeating “the mistakes of past development initiatives: acting as an intermediary that is single-handedly ruling the market.” (2.4.) Instead, adopters were now actively contributing their own ideas, which changed the set of practices associated with the idea of sustainable livelihood and thus the way that communities felt about the initiative. Overall, promoters’, adopters’ and intermediaries’ joint translation efforts led to the formulation of mutually endorsed goals which placed the project on a much sounder footing.
Yet, disquiet among communities soon began to surface again: Villagers present at the workshops represented only a small fraction of the population that was to adopt the idea. Among them were kepala adats (village heads) and leaders of production groups from the respective villages, who had been invited by FFI to attend the workshops in person. Once the kepala adats reported the idea back to the rest of their communities, they encountered significant resistance: It was difficult to convince the majority of farmers of the merits of the sustainable livelihood plans. While strong collaboration had been established between FFI UK and village heads, some community members believed that FFI did not care about or understand the community as a whole. One farmer explained: “[We] want the support to be equal across the board, directly from FFI. [We] don’t want the support to be given to a certain group or individual, everyone should get the aid.” We described this challenge that occurred during the collaborative translation mode as being connected to “inter-recipient power imbalances”.

Another issue was that the new commercial guidelines agreed between FFI and village heads called for harvests to be processed in small production groups whose membership was systematically defined: “When I work with the group, my neighbors can no longer help me”, a woman from a processing group explained in despair. Moreover, the guidelines undermined deep-rooted cultural practices which were core to community identity. For example, honey farmers in West Kalimantan performed ceremonies involving songs and prayers passed on from their ancestors, conducted at night time, when they climbed up trees to collect the hives. These ceremonies were of functional as well as cultural significance: part of their purpose was to protect the farmers from being stung. Under the new agreement, honey farmers were now required to harvest during day time (when bees are more likely to find their ways back to the hives and start producing honey on the same tree again), and the nighttime harvesting ceremonies were therefore under threat. In sum, adopters were asked to abandon traditions and customs close to their heart, which impeded their identification with the idea. Thus, a second challenge during the collaborative translation phase was “adopters’ lack of identification with idea”.

**Transition from Collaborative (Mode 2) to Generative Translation (Mode 3): Enabling Idea Identification**
Given these persistent challenges, intermediaries believed that more fundamental action was required if the project was to be successful. Indeed, they increasingly took the view that farming communities needed to take full responsibility for the idea, and to enact it in ways that made sense to them. They therefore pushed both promoters and receivers to adopt a more radical position. On the one hand, they encouraged the farming communities to take complete ownership of the idea – to feel that it was ‘theirs’ rather than imposed upon them from the outside. On the other hand, they encouraged promoters to relinquish control – to ‘let go’ – and to remove themselves physically from the communities concerned. Overall, this led to a more “advanced” level of empowerment, i.e. adopters’ identification with the translated idea.

In particular, this involved two kinds of work on the part of intermediaries. The first of these, encouraging local idea ownership, sparked realization among FFI UK that local farming communities would not fully embrace the sustainable livelihoods project while they were so visible, and that removing their local presence was an important step in their translation efforts. In turn, this gave farming communities the confidence to claim control of the idea. The second type of work in which intermediaries engaged was reinforcing local traditions. This had the effect of encouraging promoters to engage communities through intermediaries (rather than directly), given the latter’s expertise in local customs, while motivating adopters to transmit their local identities. Again, we conceptualized the actions of intermediaries as empowerment work, and the actions of promoters and adopters as translation work. Collectively, these forms of institutional work helped to transition the translation effort to a new mode, one that we termed generative translation. We consider each type of work in turn.

**Empowerment work (3): Intermediaries encourage local idea ownership.** The PAC consultant made it clear to FFI HQ that if they wanted local farmers to transition to NTFPs, and make a long-term commitment to participating in markets for these products, farmers needed to take the initiative in the translation project and to turn an idea of external origin into their own: “The quicker they [community members] forget about [FFI], the more sustainable the change” (2A.3.). Having observed discussions between community members and FFI during the workshops, she found that FFI had shown little interest yet in passing on actual responsibility for the translation project to community members. Visibly frustrated,
she started to share stories with some of the local field staff of other development projects that she had seen fail at first hand:

“If you are too involved, you can kill people’s capacity and willingness to work on something. NGOs, like the UN, they go there with big vans and people keep their hands open for free things. They [communities] just wait for them to help them. And then when they leave and run out of money, the people don’t know what to do. This is not sustainable at all.”

Her monologue was overheard by a workshop facilitator from FFI, who, during breakfast on the final workshop day, asked the consultant about her views on the progress of the workshop. The consultant took this as an opportunity to repeatedly reinforce the importance of local idea ownership: “We need to encourage them [the villagers] to speak up.”

**Translation work (5): Promoters remove local presence.** After the termination of the workshops, FFI’s UK team decided to step back and rely entirely on local field staff – those employed by FFI and other local NGOs – to liaise with communities. Crucially, these field staff understood their role to be that of a facilitator rather than leader:

“We come there, we inform them about the program. Meanwhile, the villagers make their own decisions. Our mission is to create an association. The community members actively create the association. (…) They choose their own people; they make their own decisions. So we’re really just there as a facilitator. They are the ones who implement things.” (Local NGO staff member, West Kalimantan)

Following the October workshops, local field staff oversaw the implementation within the villages of the action plans agreed between community members and FFI, but took a step back when it came to the actual execution of the plans: “We can’t stay there for too long, or they won’t achieve autonomy. They will be dependent upon us” (Local NGO staff member). Indeed, they worked hard to support local farmers in becoming experts in the local facilitation of sustainable livelihoods themselves. For example, they organized regional training sessions in new sustainable harvesting and production practices, which were attended by farmers elected by their village communities. Following these sessions, the local implementation of sustainable livelihoods was entrusted entirely to the village communities: “We do not set standards. They set their own standards.” (Staff member, local NGO, West Kalimantan). As a result, it was no longer only a powerful minority within the communities who controlled translation, but all farmers from across the villages.
Translation work (6): Adopters claim control. As their confidence in sustainable livelihoods increased, the communities began to take up the invitation to claim control. Their first step was to form local production groups headed by an elected leader from each village, an idea that they came up with themselves. A farmer from West Kalimantan explained the process: “We would like to form a group, so we gather people. Then we choose someone, who is perceived [to be] capable as a leader through a group discussion.” These leaders did not undermine farmers’ existing knowledge, but rather took responsibility for overseeing the coordination of farmers’ activities. A member of a production group remarked: “I work on my own. They [group leaders] only give me inputs.” (2A.2.) Furthermore, when individual farmers had queries about certain processes or ideas regarding improvements in harvesting or processing, they would directly turn to the leaders of their groups, who would try to address and incorporate farmers’ ideas and concerns.

In addition to this collective institutional work that supported structures of local ownership and control, the parties also engaged in institutional work to co-construct a set of concrete practices that were consistent with, and supported, local customs and identities, but at the same time allowed for the development of sustainable livelihoods, as we discuss below.

Empowerment work (4): Intermediaries reinforce local traditions. It was apparent to field staff that there was little chance of new practices that were inconsistent with local cultural traditions being translated in a meaningful way. A senior field staff from Jambi explained:

“The process begins with learning from the community. We learn about indigenous knowledge in the area. We learn about customs, socio-cultural [conditions] and daily lives. (…) [We learn] how to prepare kepayang oil traditionally. Based on what we learn, we try to come up with an innovation in order to increase their effectiveness.” (2B.3.)

Introducing new, commercial production guidelines, whilst also acknowledging local routines and customs carried two practical consequences for the field teams: First, the expertise of local producers had to be acknowledged and built upon. One staff member explained their approach: “We learn the [production] process from the community and we try to find tools or equipment that [can execute] the same function.” Villagers were not introduced to ‘new’ production processes per se, but encouraged to modify current ways
of working. Indeed, one farmer reported: “they [the field teams] are the ones who get more knowledge from us”. Second, local customs surrounding production, which constitute the life-worlds of adopters, had to be retained. For example, when field teams suggested to honey farmers in West Kalimantan that it was more sustainable to harvest during the daytime, they supported villagers to find ways to continue their honey harvesting ceremonies, typically conducted at nighttime, as daytime rituals. Thus, the freedom that adopters eventually had around the implementation of the idea of sustainable livelihoods allowed them to retain existing local traditions while adopting new practices, which contributed to adopters’ identification with the new idea.

**Translation work (7): Promoters engage communities through intermediaries.** From the viewpoint of the FFI HQ, indigenous customs and ways of working posed significant challenges for the sustainable livelihoods initiative. In particular, producing for large-scale commercial markets required consistency of production across villages (2B.6.). As such, FFI HQ feared that pulling back too soon could have a negative impact upon the success of the project. However, by this point FFI was acutely aware that the community needed to feel in control of the implementation of the project if it was to succeed. Thus, after the workshops, instead of directly monitoring the communities, the FFI HQ team switched to indirectly imparting expert advice through intermediaries. This was not always an easy process – FFI HQ realized that local field staff were reluctant to promote practices that clashed with the customs and wishes of community members. Below is an excerpt from the workshop diary of a senior FFI HQ staff member:

“[Name of field staff] mentioned his concerns regarding putting in place lots of infrastructure and raising expectations without a firm contract from an international buyer due to ‘trauma’ from similar situation with [national buyer] where [communities] put in a lot of work but no contract resulted. But I think he understands the need for [new buyer] to be able to deal with a single entity, as opposed to several district-level coops.”

Her diary entry is illustrative of FFI’s attempt to impart external buyers’ requirements through intermediaries, and the latter’s careful consideration which of these requirements stood a realistic chance of adoption given high levels of local skepticism.

**Translation work (8): Adopters transmit local identities.** As promoters increasingly withdrew their presence, community members felt enabled to continue with their existing customs during the production
of NTFPs. Together with field staff, they debated how sustainable livelihoods could be made to ‘fit’ their existing identities. The stories they shared were numerous and made explicit reference to practices engaged in by their ancestors. They referred to rituals and celebrations involved in the harvesting of raw materials, such as the nighttime ceremonies associated with forest honey farming in West Kalimantan. During a discussion in a village attended by field staff, a young local farmer, who had recently took over his father’s honey business, explained that he would never abandon the production of “lalau” (honey that grows up on branches high on trees and can only be reached by climbing) in order to solely produce “tikung” (honey that grows on “honey boards” installed on the lower part of the trees, thereby easier to reach):

“During the night, we climb up the trees. We ask the bees to give us their honey, ask them not to attack us. These ceremonies have been passed on from our ancestors, like the business itself.”

Overall, whilst the first transition phase towards collaborative translation had enabled negotiation between promoters and adopters leading to mutually endorsed goals, the second transition phase entailed opportunities for adopters to identify with the idea of sustainable livelihoods and ultimately claim control over its translation. This finally enabled a generative translation mode, which we describe below.

**Phase 3: The Generative Mode – Adopters Take Control (January 2017 – March 2017)**

The local institutionalization of the sustainable livelihoods concept was only realized when communities began to control the implementation of new production agreements themselves, a form of translation that we termed the generative mode – when the translation process came to be driven by adopters. In this mode, adopters take control of the editing and/or local implementation of a particular idea. Whilst promoters’ requirements or knowledge may be taken into account by adopters, promoters do not have direct influence over adopters’ engagement with the idea.

In our case, we saw that the concept of sustainable livelihoods came to be defined by different sets of practices than those associated with the idea under the controlling or collaborative mode (see table 1). In particular, commercialization of NTFP production was controlled by the elected leaders of local production groups who carried out quality inspections of the produced goods and requested training in the novel methods for farmers according to their own needs assessment. Members of production groups also regularly gathered together to discuss issues arising from their engagement in the project – “We usually gather in
someone’s house, like the group leader’s house.” (3.1.) – and thereby determined how the idea was to be enacted. This produced a revised – and distinct – version of sustainable livelihoods that was very different from the idea originally proposed by FFI: “Here [in the workshops] it’s just something that’s written on the white board. While in the village, we see the real thing directly.” (3.2.) Four months after villagers returned from the workshops, farmers negotiated with buyers on the phone, determining feasible production volumes and prices. Women in Jambi had set up local kepayang tree nurseries, thereby taking control of villages’ production volumes themselves. Furthermore, given that farmers had made a case to continue practicing local traditions, the concept of sustainable livelihoods during the generative translation phase also incorporated the social, besides economic wellbeing of communities.

With the idea quickly gaining traction, the role of promoters and intermediaries was simply to facilitate the uptake of the idea across other villages. A senior HQ staff member described FFI’s work during this phase as identifying “early adopters” within villages to lead the translation process, including any further editing of the idea. According to FFI, the role of these local advocates was crucial, because then “there is momentum and other community members will pick it up” (3.4.). Among the early adopters were, for instance, the locally elected group leaders, whom village farmers turned to in order to seek advice and deliver ideas for improving production. Field staff were present again during this phase to provide training and support as requested by farmers.

In sum, after cycling from controlling, through collaborative to generative translation - enabled through the institutional work of promoters, adopters and intermediaries - the Indonesian farming communities and FFI were able to translate the idea of sustainable livelihoods to the local context and initiate its institutionalization.

DISCUSSION
Our study started with the question of how promoters and adopters can achieve the translation of an idea under conditions of life-world and power asymmetry. To answer this question, we build on our deep investigation of how local farmers, a large NGO and their local field staff translated the concept of sustainable livelihoods from the UK to rural villages across two provinces in Indonesia. It appears that the
success of outsider-driven translation projects under conditions of promoter-adopter asymmetry hinges on the success of the multiple involved actors to cycle effectively through the various modes. There is therefore a need for researchers and practitioners to adopt a dynamic approach to institutional translation. Key here is to understand when and how a transition from one mode to the next can occur. Our process model conceptualizes transitions as fundamental power shifts between promoters and adopters that are enabled through different forms of institutional empowerment and translation work, which is executed through promoters, adopters and boundary-spanning intermediaries. Our findings result in notable contributions to the institutional translation and institutional work literatures, and deliver insights into tackling the challenge of participatory community development, which may extend to other cases of outsider-driven institutional change. This section highlights each of these contributions in turn.

A Typology of Translation Modes

A first contribution of our study is a typology of translation modes, which provides a useful lens through which previous research on institutional translation can be understood. In particular, our process model may explain the conditions for success and failure of translation projects in relation to the ability of actors to make the necessary transitions between different translation modes. For instance, frequently reported failed translation cases and scenarios where the mere name of a concept is adopted without actually leading to any or only a limited set of newly institutionalized practices or reforms (Erlingsdottir & Lindberg, 2006; Özen & Berkman, 2007; Sundewall & Sahlin-Andersson, 2006) could be associated with being stuck in controlling modes of translation, where a large number of adopters are excluded from the process of translation and/or feel unable to trust the translation plans of promoters. Other cases of controlling translation might be found in situations where translation leads to different outcomes than anticipated by promoters (e.g., Jeppson et al., 2004; Khan, Munir & Willmott, 2007), who seemed largely unaware of local conditions and/or meaning systems and fail to consult local recipients. For example, Khan, Munir and Willmott (2007) describe the case of the deinstitutionalization of child labor in Pakistan that led to families experiencing even deeper poverty due to a large number of women having to drop out of the workforce to take care of their children at home. In the West, preventing child labor was objectively perceived as the
“right” thing to do, but the views of local women who may have to enter unemployment had not been included from the start.

Yet other translation initiatives may reach a more collaborative mode, however, still not progress any further, leading to incomplete or even failed institutionalization. One might refer to numerous initiatives of international development, in which marginalizing structures were largely kept intact, when promoters ignored inter-recipient power dynamics and primarily interacted with powerful local rulers or intermediaries (Mansuri & Rao, 2013). In such scenarios of collaborative translation, it might also be that different practices are adopted than those originally associated with the idea, a situation that previous literature has described as resulting from diverging interpretations within a local context (Boch Waldorff, 2013), which were presumably not sufficiently taken into consideration.

On the other hand, successful cases of translation might be explained through the experience of promoters (and adopters), who can recognize and address certain translation challenges, thereby being able to move at ease between different translation modes. Successful institutional translation cases have, for instance, been identified in situations where translators had prior experience with combining foreign practices and frames of references with legitimate local frames (e.g. Boxenbaum, 2006, Frenkel, 2005). Importantly, our dynamic approach to institutional translation implies that there is no one optimal translation mode, but rather that it is the ability to shift from one mode to another depending on the nature of the challenges and the progress of the project. In other words, shifting directly to generative translation may not necessarily lead to successful translation. More controlling modes of translation could be necessary when adopters are not aware of the long-term benefits of an idea or when they lack the knowledge or resources to drive translation solely by themselves. In general, the three translation modes – constituting a repertoire of institutional translation - encourage thinking about the different paths that can result in successful idea translation.

**The Creation of Relational Spaces through Institutional Empowerment Work**

A second contribution of our study is that we have examined and theorized a particular form of institutional work, empowerment work, executed through boundary-spanning intermediaries, which seems to create
interstitial (translation) spaces and thereby enable interaction between highly heterogeneous groups of actors. Recent work in institutional theory has highlighted the importance of temporary and transitional “interstitial” spaces in creating shared meanings and achieving coordination among actors from different fields who subscribe to diverse belief systems (Furnari, 2014; Granqvist & Laurila, 2011; Maguire, Hardy & Lawrence, 2004; Zietsma et al, 2017). Importantly, individuals within interstitial spaces engage in “collective experimentation”, temporarily deviating from their respective field institutions, which leads to the emergence of new practices (Furnari, 2014). Furthermore, previous research has identified that skillful intermediaries or “catalysts” are needed to sustain multi-vocal interaction within these spaces, without directly intervening in or controlling interaction (Furnari, 2014). However, we know little about how such intermediaries, whose boundary-spanning capacities have been widely acknowledged among institutional theorists (Mair, Marti & Ventresca, 2012; Munir et al, 2017; Saka, 2004), create interstitial spaces. That may be because few studies have analyzed “the work needed to marshal support from actors in different fields, who may have vastly different goals and occupy very different roles.” (Hampel, Lawrence, & Tracey, 2017: 572). Our conceptualization of intermediaries’ institutional empowerment work seems to provide an answer.

We illustrate that interstitial spaces (spaces for negotiation and identification) can be built through different forms of institutional empowerment work. They include exposing clashing expectations, facilitating trust, encouraging local ownership and triggering identification and are exercised by intermediaries with deep knowledge of the situations and conflicting life-worlds of diverse actors. We label these streams of institutional work “empowerment work”, as they facilitate a substantial reduction of power differences between heterogonous groups of actors – a condition that has been acknowledged as an important requirement to facilitate consensus among the latter (Wijen & Ansari, 2006) and drive institutional change involving diverse actors (Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). In particular, the four categories of empowerment work enable important human capabilities, identified as fundamental entitlements by development scholars (Nussbaum, 2003). They include political control over one’s environment, i.e. being able to participate in choices that determines one’s own life, (enabled through
exposing clashing expectations that hinder equal participation and encouraging local ownership), and the capability of affiliation, i.e. being able to engage in interactions that lead one group of actors to imagine and thereby understand the situation of another group of actors (enabled through facilitating interpersonal trust and triggering identification). Thus, overall, institutional empowerment work contributes to the de-marginalization of non-powerful groups of actors, who are equipped with important capabilities. It thereby enables equalization of heterogeneous actors, which appears crucial for interstitial spaces to emerge.

Our conceptualization of institutional empowerment speaks directly to formulations of power and institutional politics within institutional theory. As Lawrence (2008: 174) reminds us, “power is a relational phenomenon […] an effect of social relations” and can be exercised episodically, through actors’ use of influence and force (institutional agency), and systemically, through institutional discipline and domination (institutional control). Viewed through our model, it appears that both the exercise of institutional agency and control, i.e. episodic and systemic power, are partially conditioned by the presence or absence of institutional empowerment work. Whilst empowerment work could enable non-powerful actors to execute episodic power in their interaction with others, systemic power could be partially limited by empowerment work, namely in situations where routines that create marginalizing structures (e.g. practices embedded in the Indian caste system) are challenged and dismantled through work involving the reallocation of power positions. As such, it appears that institutions’ impact on actors’ beliefs and behaviors that lead to marginalization mainly works in the absence of institutional empowerment work. This absence, in turn, could account for a dark side in cases of institutionalization that institutional scholars have started to alert to (e.g. Khan, Munir & Willmott, 2007).

**Implications for Outsider-Driven Institutional Change**

Finally, our conceptualization of institutional translation provides insights into how the challenge of achieving participatory community development can be addressed, as well as delivers more generalizable revelations about outsider-driven institutional change.

The bottom-up involvement of marginalized citizens in international development projects is frequently described as listening to local people and appreciating their reality (Chambers, 1997). Yet,
participatory development remains immensely difficult to achieve, as the needs of the latter often continue to be determined by outsiders (Nelson & Wright, 1995). Indeed, some have argued that interventionist undertones endure in the image of powerful outsiders empowering powerless locals (Long, 2004; Mohan & Stokke, 2000). We suggest that approaching developmental change as a mere translation issue, which starts with the view of powerful promoters or powerless adopters, is doomed to fail as it paves the way for a relatively one-directional process. For example, even if translation is primarily driven by adopters, it can free the providers of development support from their responsibilities towards the marginal—a situation that development scholars (e.g. Immerwahr, 2015) have previously warned of. Instead, participatory community development could be approached as a multivocal translation project that requires transitions between different modes of engagement between the providers and recipients of development support (involving controlling, collaborative and generative elements), enabled through the institutional empowerment work of intermediaries. Our model of heterogeneous idea translation illustrates the dynamics and challenges surrounding the achievement of empowerment in community development.

Furthermore, insights from our study may be extended to other cases of outsider-driven institutional change (e.g. Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010), where ideas for change originate outside of the context in which they are intended to get adopted. In principle, many cases of outsider-driven change will face similar challenges as prevalent in heterogeneous idea translation and participatory approaches are presumably needed for success. For example, many initiatives in regard to tackling climate change are often driven by outsiders, e.g. environmentalists and NGOs trying to put pressure on governments or powerful businesses incorporating vastly different values and meaning systems (Wright & Nyberg, 2017). Mutually endorsed solutions naturally require input from both the advocates of actions regarding climate change and the parties in demand to participate in these actions. In particular, businesses’ tendency to focus on short-term economic gains to satisfy shareholder expectations firstly needs to be incorporated, rather than excluded, in negotiations over sustainable solutions (during collaborative translation), so that businesses can eventually gain ownership over and intrinsic interest in tackling climate change (ending up in generative
Intermediaries with deep knowledge of all parties could be engaged to facilitate their interaction.

Overall, through advancing understanding of challenges related to outsider-driven institutional change initiatives and delivering practical insights into how these challenges can be addressed, or model of heterogeneous idea translation is an important contribution to the literature on “grand challenges”, as many of the important challenges of our time involve translating ideas from one domain to another (Ferraro, Etzion, & Gehman, 2015; George et al., 2016). Whilst climate change is one evident example, other cases are, for instance, the translation of tried-and-tested practices from one country to another to solve social issues (e.g. Lawrence, 2017), or the translation of ideas and policies from the elite to marginalized communities to facilitate development (e.g. Mair, Wolf, & Seelos, 2016; Munir et al, 2017; Vakili & McGahan, 2016). Our model of heterogeneous idea translation appears to speak to many of these cases.

A limitation of our study might be the building of theory from one extreme case of translation. In particular, translation in postmodern international development entails unique challenges that might not feature so prominently in other cases of institutional translation. However, as highlighted in the context of other grand challenges, once the distance between the promoting and recipient context of an idea grows larger, translation becomes inherently complex and is likely to involve similar challenges related to asymmetries between promoters and adopters. Therefore, findings from our extreme case should carry applicability across a considerable range of outsider-driven translation cases. Nevertheless, future research is required to determine whether our typology of translation carries applicability in a variety of settings.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH
Translations consist of several modes that attribute different roles to the promoters and adopters of an idea. Our study of the translation of sustainable livelihoods to rural Indonesia, involving heterogeneous promoters and adopters, shows that gradual shifts in power leading towards the empowerment of adopters to determine local idea dissemination may be crucial to embed an idea in its local recipient context. This is illustrated in transitions between translation modes that occur through intermediaries’ institutional
empowerment work generating interstitial translation spaces, in which promoters and adopters can overcome important asymmetries.

Our findings suggest a range of interesting future research opportunities: First, given institutional theory’s continuing lack of engagement with issues of power (Munir, 2015) and marginality (Lawrence, 2008), institutional empowerment work appears to be a useful lens to study these domains. In particular, empowerment work illustrates a means through which the overcoming of marginality in institutional fields could be analyzed, as it seems to speak to the puzzle of how non-powerful actors can gain institutional agency. Second, our research complements other work in drawing attention to the institutional work of boundary-spanning intermediaries or other institutional entrepreneurs in situations where heterogeneous groups of actors need to work together to achieve institutional change (Mair, Marti & Ventresca, 2012; Munir et al, 2017; Saka, 2004). Future research could investigate whether such intermediaries can indeed play a vital role in driving change in institutional fields when such change seems highly unlikely, e.g. due to the presence of logics that are deeply institutionalized.

### APPENDIX

**Table 1: Concept of Sustainable Livelihoods and Corresponding Bundles of Practices (across Translation Phases)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Controlling Translation Phase</th>
<th>Collaborative Translation Phase</th>
<th>Generative Translation Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Sustainable Livelihoods”</td>
<td>Conservation: Responsible treatment of natural resource bases that provide raw materials for production; exclusive focus on NTPFs to sustain individual livelihoods</td>
<td>Conservation: Gradual exit from non-sustainable businesses, such as palm oil and rubber production</td>
<td>Conservation: Gradual exit from non-sustainable businesses, such as palm oil and rubber production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercialization: Following production standards required to enter commercial retail space— those desired by non-local buyers and, in particular, international buyers to meet quality standards for a product that are typically expected by national/international customers. Standardization of production through producing in defined production groups.</td>
<td>Commercialization: Community members receive support from FFI to increase production volumes and meet novel requirements, including training, provision of machines to reduce workload and financial capital to scale up production</td>
<td>Commercialization: Elected leaders of local production groups conduct quality control and request training in standardized production methods for producers according to own needs assessment (taking in feedback of group members)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maximizing economic wellbeing: Cooperation in production across villages (village cooperatives): combine produces to enter joint contract with large buyer that demands higher volumes than those that can be sourced from one village during one year

Maximizing economic wellbeing: Village cooperatives provided with stable sources of income to pay producers regularly; planning for gap periods between harvesting seasons of NTFPs

Maximizing economic and social wellbeing: Producers retain local traditions and social ties in the context of novel production methods

### Table 2: Timeline of Overlapping Events during the Translation of the Concept of Sustainable Livelihoods to Rural Indonesia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring - Summer 2016</td>
<td>Planning of sustainable livelihoods project conducted by FFI UK in cooperation with PAC. Involves several meetings held in London and Cambridge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn 2016</td>
<td>Workshops conducted in provincial capitals: Invited community members meet FFI UK team for the first time and together discuss issues and aspirations regarding production of respective goods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2016 - Winter 2016/2017</td>
<td>FFI field staff learns local processes and customs from villagers. FFI UK formulates commercial production standards, which are merged with existing processes. Field staff leaves after having trained local inspectors to oversee implementation process. Local production groups implement new standards. Workshop evaluation meetings in London (Nov’ and Dec’ 2016) Machines arrive in villages to ease production processes and farmers start to negotiate prices with larger buyers (Feb’ 2017).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Description of Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant observations</td>
<td>Followed the three groups of actors between February 2016 and March 2017, including observation of rural village life in West Kalimantan (2 weeks); observation of workshops conducted by FFI in provincial capitals in West Kalimantan and Jambi (2 weeks); observation of 14 preparatory and evaluation meetings attended by PAC and FFI UK in London and Cambridge. 200 pages of field notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>25 with members of rural communities, 20 with local FFI staff, 2 with market intermediaries (traders), 1 with local government representative and 2 with PAC consultant conducted in Indonesia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival material</td>
<td>Email exchanges between FFI UK, PAC and FFI Indonesia between February and December 2016. Over 400 pages of preparatory workshop materials shared between FFI and PAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>In total, over 800 total pages of raw data (comprising field notes, interview transcriptions and archival material).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 4: Selected Qualitative Evidence for Translation Modes and Transition Phases**

### Translation Mode 1: Controlling Translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adopter (Communities)</th>
<th>Promoter (FFI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expressing Needs</strong></td>
<td><strong>Formulating Ambitions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. We ask them [FFI] to fix the roads (…) Maybe if we make a proposal in the village, they will help us pass it on [to the government]. They haven’t done it yet, but maybe we will have road access, clean water, and other things.” (Farmer, West Kalimantan)</td>
<td>1.3. “Sustainable markets can act as a powerful platform to give marginalized farmers in developing countries (…) access to valuable networks, technologies, experiences and assets that can help them work their way out of poverty, while having a positive environmental impact on natural resources, ecosystems and wildlife.” (FFI Terms of Reference document)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. “It is difficult to process kepayang. It takes a long time. And maybe if there are some additional machines, we can shorten the production time. And also use less [human] energy.” (Farmer, Jambi)</td>
<td>1.4. “Say kepayang producers go down the line of securing a contract with [mentions large international retailer]. The kind of pride that people would have from that is just as important, because it’s also an incentive to conserve the forest in which these things occur.” (FFI HQ senior staff member)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Transition 1A: Political Empowerment Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adopter (Communities)</th>
<th>Intermediary (PAC &amp; field staff)</th>
<th>Promoter (FFI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voicing Discontent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exposing Clashing Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Adjusting Ambitions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1A.1. “A lot of people mock us for working with kepayang. (…) People want to work and gain money instantly. A lot of them do not want to make all the effort like we do. It’s better to work with something that will make money quickly, that is not as laborious. That’s the common mind-set.” (Woman processor, Jambi)</td>
<td>1A.3. “Would you keep pushing for a product that has less potential for income, where there are less profit opportunities for people, but is absolutely very important from a conservation perspective?” (PAC Consultant)</td>
<td>1A.5. “The extra criterion that we would have to add here is basically capturing [that] it’s not purely about income generation, but it’s more about increasing wellbeing and not only economic value.” (FFI HQ staff member)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1A.2. “There is not enough equipment to produce the oil on our own. For instance, we only [produce] enough to make cakes for our own consumption.” (Farmer, West Kalimantan)</td>
<td>1A.4. “If we obtained funding from anywhere – from companies or international NGOs – they have certain administrative standards and some of them are not even negotiable. Sometimes the villagers are confused.” (Field staff, West Kalimantan)</td>
<td>1A.6. “The project addresses multiple dimensions of well-being (…) financial (credit/income), physical (production/processing/storage/transport/infrastructure), social (community/producer organizing, relationships with other market actors), human (skills/knowledge for sustainable resource management, equitable engagement in market systems), ad natural (secure tenure, ecosystem services).” (FFI project proposal, final version)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transition 1B: Social Empowerment Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adopter (Communities)</th>
<th>Intermediary (PAC &amp; field staff)</th>
<th>Promoter (FFI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reducing Personal Skepticism</td>
<td>Facilitating Trust</td>
<td>Deferring Personal Agenda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1B.1. “The usual workshops or trainings [that we receive] are patronizing. They show us some slides and we take notes. So there is only one person speaking. This workshop is different, that’s why it’s exciting. Very exciting. We learn together, it’s not patronizing, and we are able to draw our own conclusions.” (A1.5. Farmer, Jambi) | 1B.3. “When we create a program (…) only to restore an area that has no impact on the villagers, usually they will say no. We need to create something that will be beneficial for the villagers first.” (Field staff, West Kalimantan) | 1B.6. “For me, the really important thing is that we have a very solid theory of change for why it works with the communities that we are directly engaged with in terms of forest management. (…) If they have a harvest every 4-5 years, where does that leave the communities that we are engaging with in the gap periods? Pak Herri’s solution of going to communities and getting it where there is a harvest deals with the supply issue on one respect, but it doesn’t deal with the massive fluctuations in income from this particular resource.” (FFI HQ staff member) |
1B.2. “I trust them for now, because their work has multiple stages.” (Leo, farmer, West Kalimantan) | 1B.4. “If the communities have low motivation, then how are we going to get them behind this idea? Farmers often expect immediate returns from their harvests and they know they cannot immediately and regularly benefit from tenkawang, so there is no motivation.” (PAC Consultant) | 1B.7. “The aim is to identify needs through the workshop, come up with an action plan at the end of that workshop and address some of those needs with (…) money [and] mentoring supporting activities listed in the work plan.” (FFI HQ staff member) |
1B.5. “By experience, people come up with a lot of blockages and your role as a facilitator is to unpack that, pool the strings and get people to think about solutions before the workshop that we are going to have.” (PAC consultant) |

Translation Mode 2: Collaborative Translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adopter (Communities)</th>
<th>Promoter (FFI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating Translation Goals</td>
<td>Negotiating Translation Goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1. “Whatever the support is, it has to be something we actually need. If we don’t need it, it will be wasteful.” (Farmer, West Kalimantan) | 2.3. “It is particularly important that we allow all participants to have a voice and to come away from the workshop feeling they have voiced their opinions. If we don’t, they will likely not come back to any future events.” (FFI HQ staff member) |
2.2. “I told them about my future goals, that if they indeed want to develop or support whatever we talked about today, then the villagers in [village name] greatly hope that we can have a small machine (…) So we can follow their steps and organize a training session. So then we’ll have a new skill.” (Farmer, Jambi) | 2.4. “What we are trying to do is not repeating the mistakes of past development initiatives: acting as an intermediary that is single-handedly ruling the market. That’s why we embrace the PMSD approach, in order to not make these mistakes again and create more long-lasting change.” (FFI HQ staff member) |

Transition 2A: Political Empowerment Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adopter (Communities)</th>
<th>Intermediary (PAC &amp; field staff)</th>
<th>Promoter (FFI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

42
### Claiming Control

2A.1. “I’m involved in the processing directly. I can work without any control from them [mentions names of field staff]. (…) Because I work on my own [and] they only give [me] their support, I think I do have control.”

(Nadu, farmer, West Kalimantan)

2A.2. “I work on my own. They [field staff] only give me inputs.”

(Afandi, farmer, West Kalimantan)

2A.3. “The more market actors feel like they are taking ownership, the better you are doing. The more decisions they get to make, the better. The quicker they forget about you, the more sustainable the change.”

(PMSD guidance document on “Good Facilitation Principles”)

2A.4. “In building a relationship, we need equality, the sense of togetherness (…) The point is, we will have a better connection if there is no difference among us. To me, that’s the key. Once you are aware of the difference – like that guy is the boss, and that guy is an employee (…) – that’s not good.”

(Field staff, Jambi)

2A.5. “A problem with a lot of NGOs is that they are very interventionist: They go to one village and if they see something works there, they try to get funds and copy the exact same way of doing things in another village. But actually, there is a benefit of systemic thinking: Thinking about each situation and [involving] all [respective] stakeholders.”

(FFI HQ senior staff member)

### Encouraging Local Idea Ownership

### Removing Local Presence

### Transition 2B: Social Empowerment Work

#### Adopter (Communities) Intermediary (Field staff) Promoter (FFI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transmitting Local Identities</th>
<th>Reinforcing Local Traditions</th>
<th>Engaging Communities through Intermediaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.B.1. Excerpt from field notes: A local from Ujung Said, West Kalimantan tells me and the others visitors (local FFI staff) that during the war between Indonesia and Malaysia, locals were fighting on the river and their boats fell apart. That’s when they noticed that split wooden parts are attractive for bees to settle on (due to the shape of the wood). So they started producing wooden boards for forest honey farming (tikung), to complement harvesting from natural branches (lalau). Later during the day, I went to the local tikung factory. Villagers again proudly emphasized that this was a local and historical invention.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B.3. “The process begins with learning from the community. We learn about indigenous knowledge in the area. We learn about customs, socio-cultural [conditions] and daily lives. (…) [We learn] how to prepare kepayang oil traditionally. Based on what we learn, we try to come up with an innovation in order to increase their effectiveness. (…) Then we teach them [community members] how to harvest kepayang fruits sustainably. That’s what we teach them. But overall, [we learn] more from the community.” (Field staff, Jambi)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B.4. “[We need to consider] things that are important to [community members] and things that might be considered as a taboo.” (Herri, field staff, West Kalimantan)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B.5. “Of course we need to adapt. We are the ones who came</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B.6. “[Mentions names of buyers] need reliable quality, traceability and one entity with which to trade, as opposed to several. They therefore need communities to set up a provincial level cooperative, as opposed to the district level one which exists now. They need processing centers to be built so that they can ensure the procedures used to extract it are consistent and the resulting quality reliable and they need traceability protocols to be put in place.” (FFI HQ staff member)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B.7. “We have given them the machine to extract tenkawang oil. (…) They need to know how to split their work, [how] to maintain the condition of the machine, how to use it.” (Director, collaborating NGO, West Kalimantan)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cooking oil and to make cakes.” (Woman from processing group, Jambi)

over to their home, so we are the ones who have to adapt ourselves to their customs.” (Misriadi, field staff, Jambi)

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**Figure 1: Actors Involved in Translating Sustainable Livelihoods to Rural Indonesia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation Mode 3: Generative Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adopter (Communities)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedding the Idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1. “Here we are in a [formal] building. We are not directly in the location [of the projects]. Us locals, we usually gather in someone’s house, like the group leader’s house. We gather with local groups in a region. We discuss things.” (Farmer, Jambi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. “Here, it’s just something that’s written on the white board. While in the village, we see the real thing directly. For example, this is how to process kepayang. There is direct counseling on [how to process] kepayang.” (Farmer, Jambi)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2: Process Model of Heterogeneous Idea Translation – to be revised!

REFERENCES


