

River restoration from a different angle: Culture and collaboration in international projects!

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In theory – and in practice....



- Social anthropologist – fieldwork in Africa
- PhD studies – culture and management in multinational companies
- Teaching, intercultural communication in PM (NTNU, Basque University)



- Nkosoo: Local content in Ghana's oil and gas industry
- RWH-4-Ghana: Resilience to CC impact on water availability
- SUWAM: Sustainable water management in South Africa

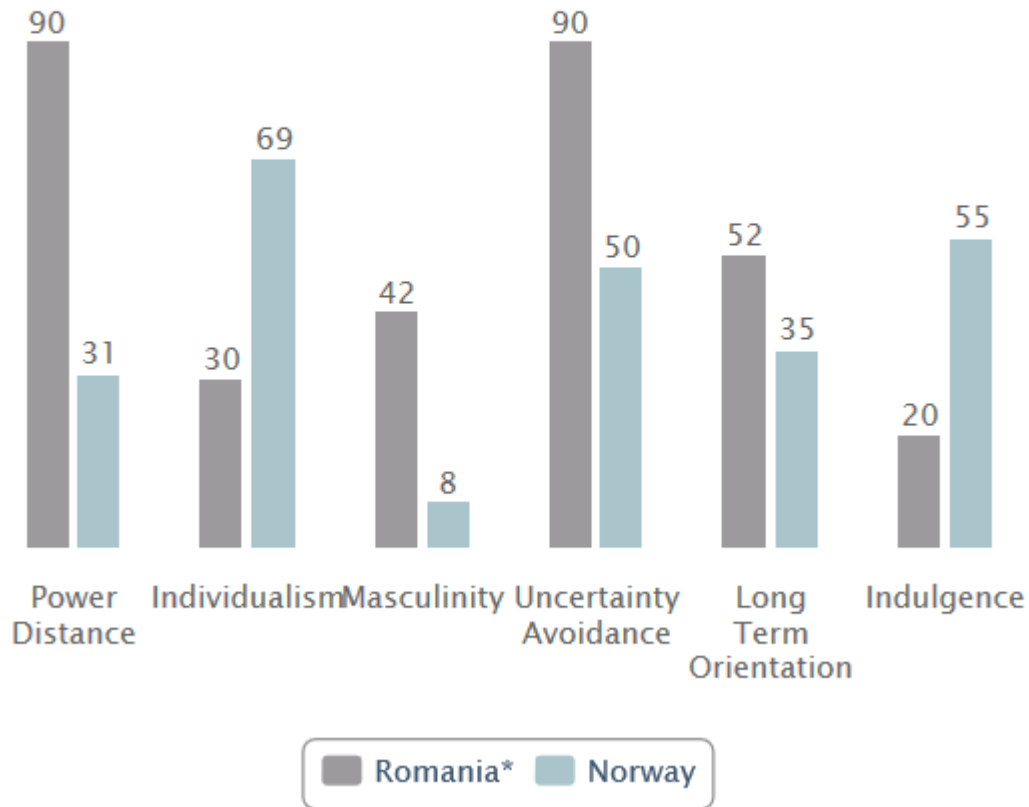
Rewards and challenges

- Management
 - Interpersonal interaction
 - Stakeholder involvement
 - Impacts?
-
- What do you see on the photo?

Illustration: Interaction at a meeting between Norwegians and Ghanaians



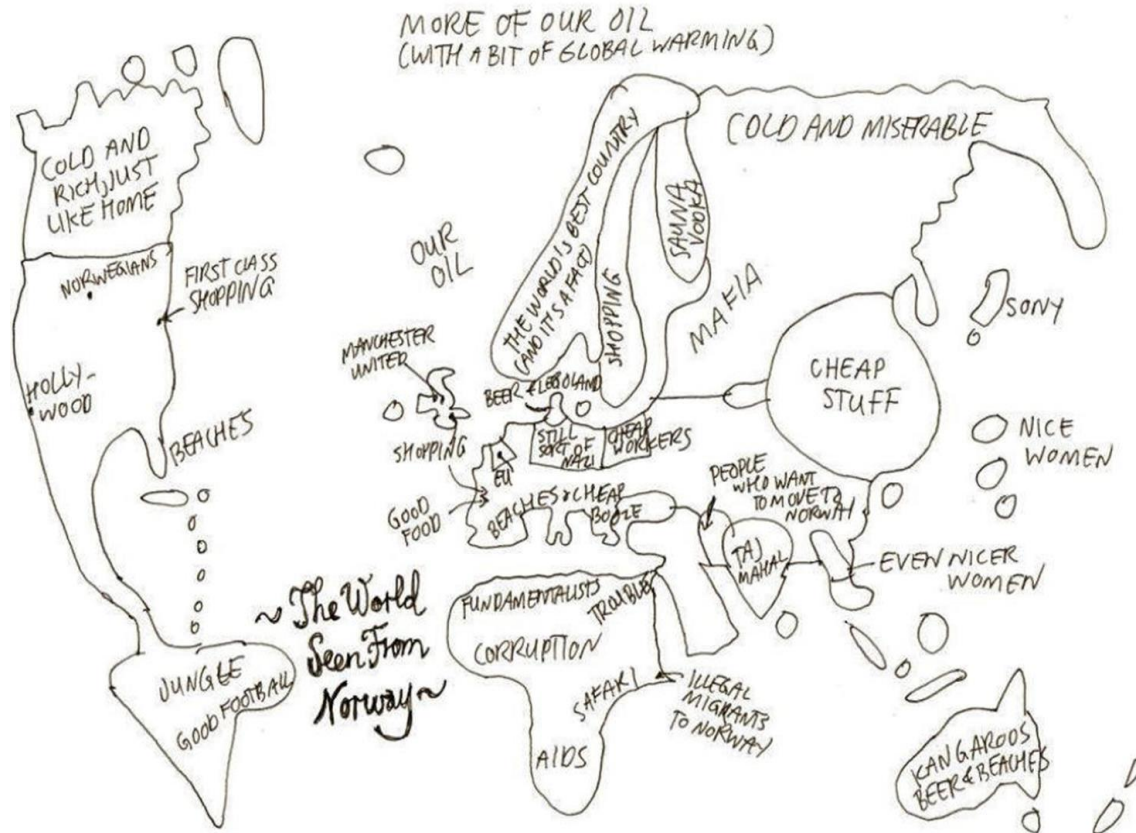
Romania* in comparison with Norway



Source: Hofstede Centre: <https://geert-hofstede.com/romania.html>

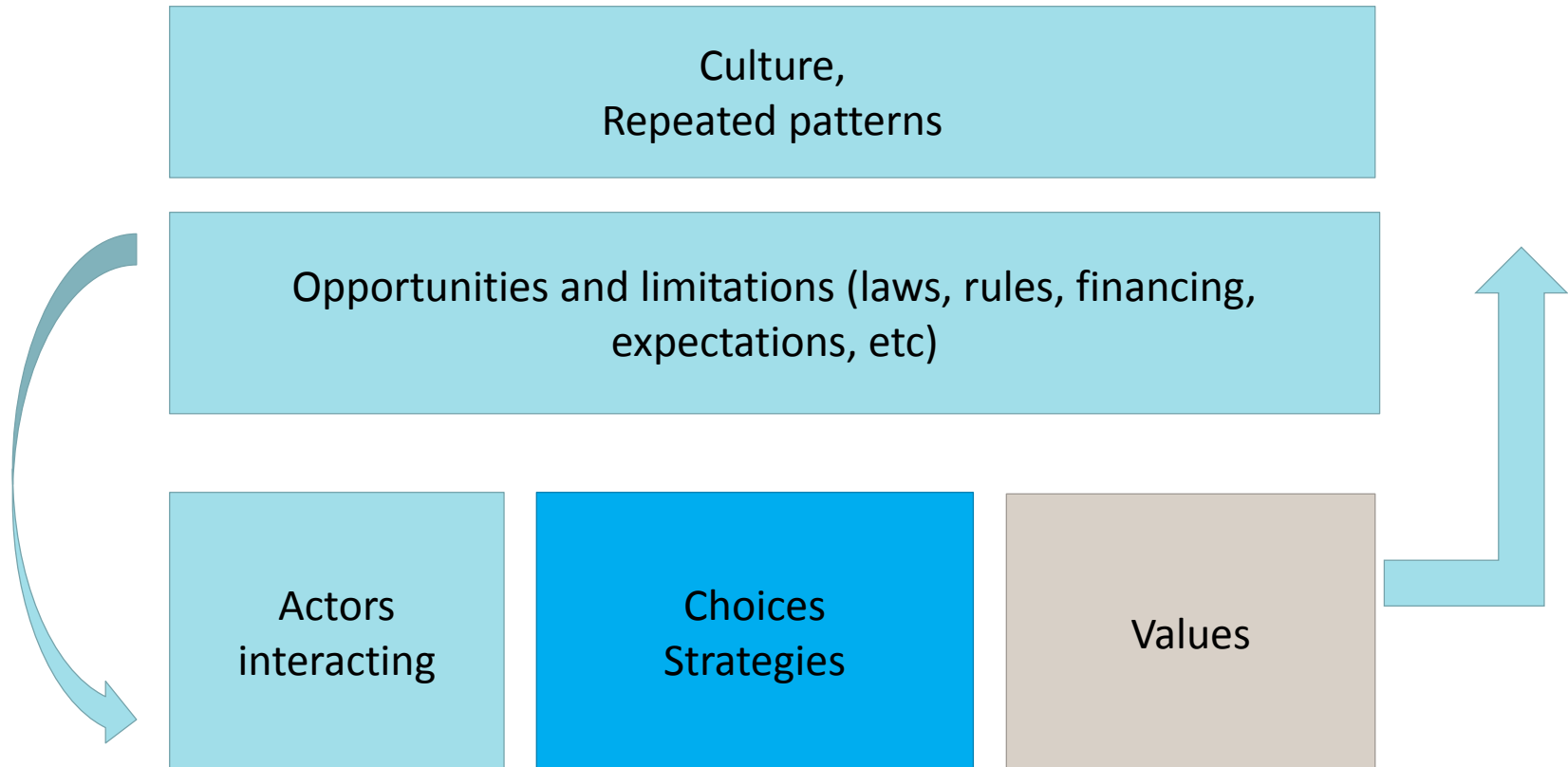
Culture differences – what, how?

- "Software" of the mind
- Different social "worlds"
- Generative social process
- Constructed - at different levels and for different purposes
 - Nation-building
 - Speak 'kebab', Norwegian youth
 - 'Yellow father' challenge in multinationals in South Korea, China
- In project life?



Drawing by G.T. Eriksen, profiled Norwegian anthropologist

Culture as a generative process

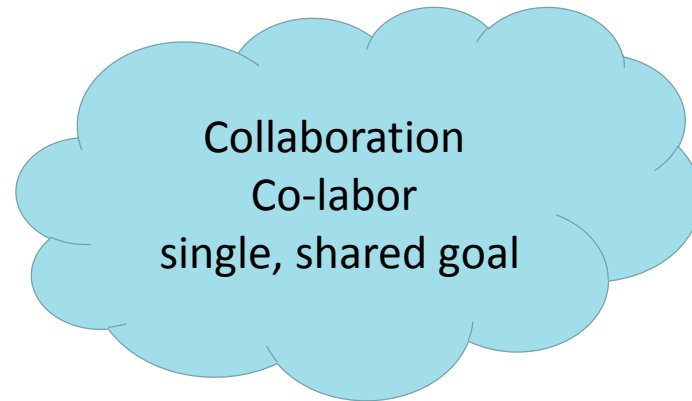


Reflecting on a past project

- Increase resilience and develop local business around RWH in Ghana
- Shared development aim and DoW
- Different ways of relating to the text
- Different perceptions, emphases regarding the goal
 - Partner: Develop nation, own role, position in RWH promotion, 'public orientation'
 - SINTEF: Local artisans, impact on the ground, 'private orientation'
- Opportunities and limitations
 - Partner: Networks, bureaucracy, hierarchy, infrastructure
 - SINTEF: Limited hours, performance pressure, specific deliverables, rigid reporting system
- Role of PM
 - 'Under' local managers, yet expected to live with, handle their internal challenges?
 - In charge of project, 'customer' expecting deliverables
- Still successfully completed & trying for new projects together

Your EEA project?

- Academic knowledge, environmental impact
- Also as EEA project: promote democracy, understanding, and tolerance
- To what extent do you share the same goals?



Summing up

- Culture – frame of mind, but also always 'in the making'
- International projects
 - Academic production
 - Social transactions, with entrepreneurs and brokers
 - Social learning – but many lessons at this level remain implicit
- EEA projects: Challenge and opportunity to address these aspects

- One possible approach?
 - (Clarify expectations, roles, known 'culture differences' initially)
 - Identify opportunities & limitations for researchers from each partner country
 - Discuss lessons learnt so far in current project
 - Your best moments so far – what were the challenges and success factors
 - Biggest challenge now – what are the main constraints, how can they be overcome
 - Address sociocultural aspects in 'wrap-up' discussions during visits and following major events, completion of deliverables