



# Understanding Knowledge Mobilization for firms engaged in Global Projects

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# As firms internationalize, how do they learn?

## “NICK”



Your boss says, “Adios”, sends you on a plane and you are “splashed” into a new culture, operating in “bump navigation” mode.

## “JIM”



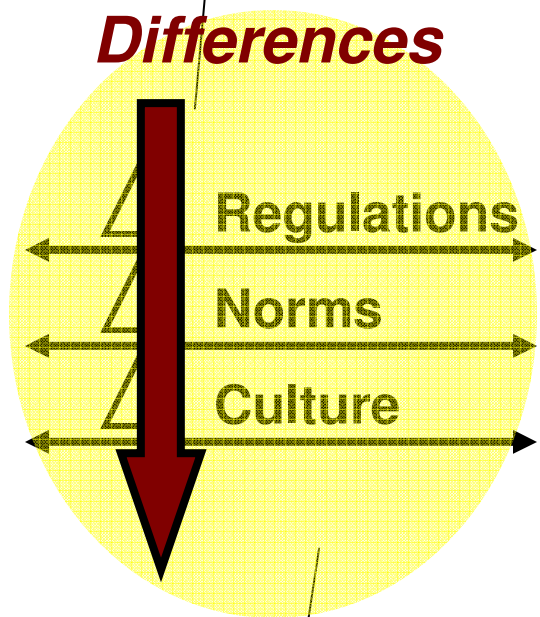
Today, the company has fairly systematic ways of entering a new market- we created best practices, checklists, questions, etc... what has been difficult in the past? What seemed to work best? We talk to each other, review our plans, shoot holes in what we are doing.

# Institutional

To better align the project with the local environment?

**ENTRANT**

**PROJECT LOCATION**



***Increased: Risks, Misunderstandings, Costs & Durations, Reputation Damage, etc.***

How can organizations learn these Institutional elements?

# Research Questions

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- What kinds of local knowledge are important for different firms engaged in international projects?
- How are firms acquiring this knowledge?

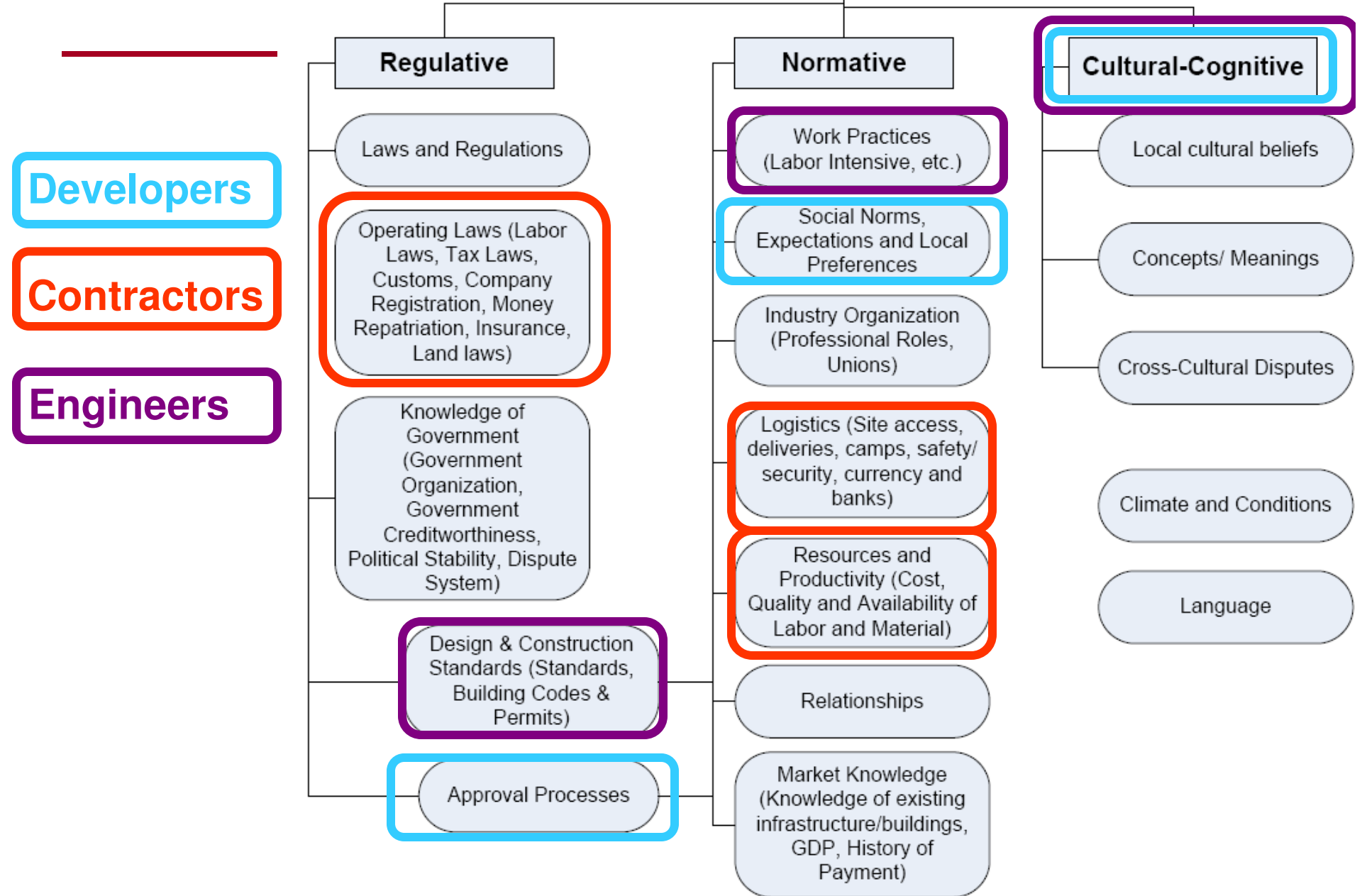
The last 9 months... 5

# Qualitative Data Collection & Analysis

**Over 100 Interviews (150+ hours) with managers and executives from 15 International Companies:**

- 4 Real Estate Developers
- 5 Contractors
- 6 Engineers

# Important Knowledge for Global Projects



## Firm Type

## Acquisition Strategy

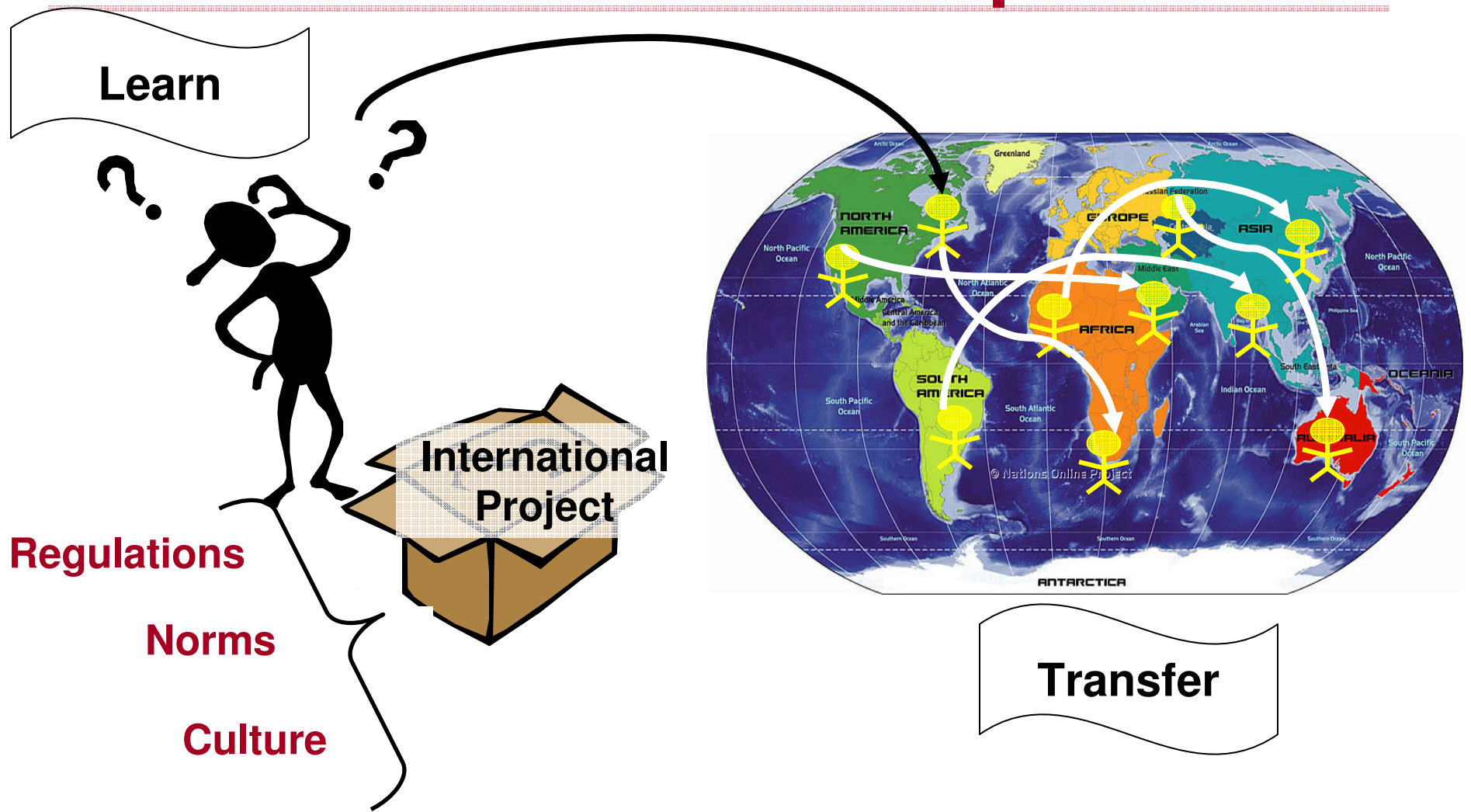
## Rationale

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|   | Hire locals / Establish local office (long time)                           | Long term investment-need legitimacy & understanding                           |
|  | <i>Hire Consultants for approval processes, laws</i>                       | <i>Knowledge changes frequently &amp; requires experts</i>                     |
|   | Rely on external sources (short time)                                      | Important knowledge is changing frequently & project specific                  |
|  | Rely on existing in-company knowledge                                      | Geographical spread of offices, diverse staff, completion of multiple projects |
|  | <i>If knowledge is not existing, rely on clients or “learn as they go”</i> | <i>International engineers are hired for their technical superiority</i>       |

# Current Questions under Analysis

- How do firms transfer institutional knowledge within the firm?
  - ❖ Methods/processes/incentives/organizational information
- Can we develop a theoretical framework to explain and predict how this varies by firm type?

# Practical Implications



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Collaboratory for Research on Global Projects  
at Stanford University

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