Chapter 8

Growing Collective Action: Three perspectives

Chapter Summary:

Those working on large systems change have developed ways to describe the process. Three of these approaches are presented here; each focuses on different development challenges. The Collective Leadership Compass emphasizes the dynamics of group formation to develop powerful collective leadership. The Systemic Change Process Map uses system dynamics mapping to describe the way key activities and tools interact as a system. Analysis of the development of Action Networks provides insight into on-going development processes and structures to realize breadth as well as depth. Creating a healthy array of these activities is a key to stewarding development of powerful societal change systems.

All ways of looking at the world are incomplete. Using multiple lenses is one way to enhance comprehensiveness. Three ways to look at transformation development processes are presented in this chapter. These descriptions suggest that the process is much smoother and more predictable than anyone actually experiences it. There is a lot of back-and-forth, and riffs on the approaches are necessary to respond to particular circumstances.

These approaches build on Otto Scharmer's U-Process (see Chapter 4) that identifies learning from the three future stages as co-sensing, co-inspiring, and co-creating. The Collective Leadership Compass looks at transformation as a co-creating change strategy; it focuses on building a powerful set of relationships and competencies necessary for collaboratively co-creating action. The Systems Change Process Map describes the change process in terms of specific activities, using system dynamics modeling to emphasize the relationships between transformation system activities. The Global Action Network development stages

framework is particularly valuable for understanding issues related to scaling up co-creation.

These three perspectives support the pathway from transformation to reform to incremental change, as described in Chapter 4. The Compass is particularly useful for initiating transformation processes with a Co-creating Change strategy (see Chapter 5), as well as for development of a powerful Societal Change System (Chapter 6). The Process Map details the movement from the transformation stage to the reform stage, where the enabling environment (markets, policies, and values) shifts and the experiments of the transformation stage become more widespread. A supportive enabling environment is associated with the proverbial tipping point, where experiments become the new norm and incremental change follows. Development of Action Networks is one increasingly common way to support movement through these stages. The development stages of these Networks themselves are associated with the emergence of new, collaboratively-produced norms of a flourishing future.

The Collective Leadership Compass[142]

Introduction

When the Southeast Asian country of Laos decided to pursue a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union to maintain and expand trading rights for its lumber and wood products, it agreed to undertake a national dialogue about the definition of "legal timber" and to develop a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable supply chain. As part of the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative, the country's Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry, Industry and Commerce, and Natural Resources and Environment made significant commitments. Forest degradation and fragmentation in Laos has accelerated since the early part of the millennium, with negative repercussions for communities, biodiversity, and the climate. Weak governance permits the forestry sector to be opaque and corrupt. Export of timber from unknown and potential illegal sources is at least five times the sanctioned volume, constituting approximately 80% of total timber exports. The pay-offs from the government's commitment could be significant: the agricultural and forestry sectors account for approximately 33% of Laos' GNP, while employing 75% of its workforce. Illegal harvesting means the government is losing out on significant revenues. The agreement would provide access to growing EU markets for sustainably produced timber and related products.

The Lao-EU initiative includes support for creating a licensing system for legally produced wood in a participatory and transparent manner. Due to the country's political history, there is a lack of experience with multi-stakeholder participatory processes. The government is one-party and centralized. Civil

142 Case contributors Dominic Stucker, Kristiane Schäfer and Petra Kuenkel of the Collective Leadership Institute, Potsdam, Germany, http://collectiveleadership.com/

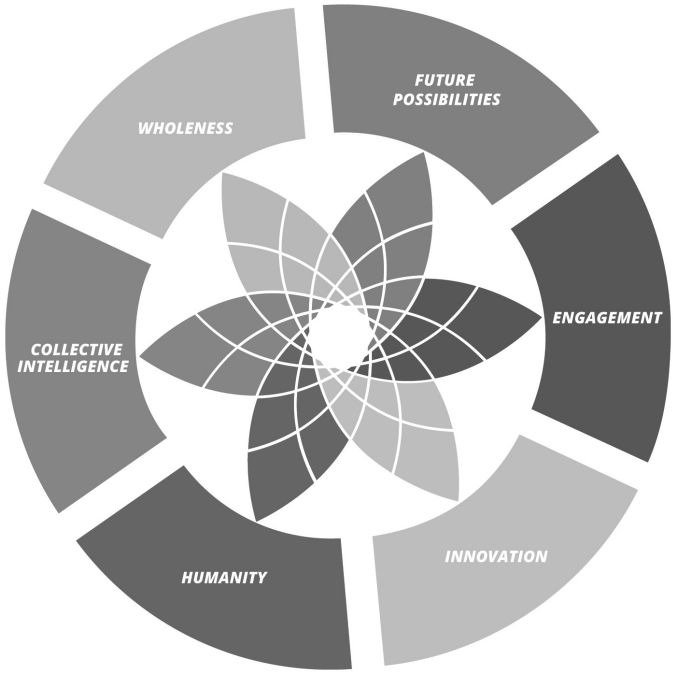

Figure 8A: The Collective Leadership Compass

society is a relatively new concept in Laos, and the "disappearances" of leaders have occurred in the recent past. The forestry sector has several large players that carry considerable influence. Some want to maintain the status quo, whereas others see the benefits in transforming the sector.

Approach

The Collective Leadership Institute (CLI) was engaged by Germany's development agency, *Gesellschaft für Internationalle Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), to build capacity among key actors for dialogue and collaboration competence needed to transform the forestry sector. In close cooperation with a GIZ program in support of the EU initiative, CLI was charged with bringing a group of key stakeholders into productive and generative dialogue across sectors (see: the Individual Change Sphere case, Chapter 3), catalyzing this team around a shared vision, developing its capacity to design and facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues in Laos, and building the capacity of a leadership team to realize forestry management transformation. The Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry, Industry and Commerce, and Natural Resources and Environment decided to collectively develop process leadership.

In July 2014, the CLI began with two four-day Art of Stakeholder Collaboration workshops with technical-level officials from the public sector, the wood processing and furniture industries, civil society, and academia. It was the first time

these individuals had worked together. To provide a focused environment conducive to team building, the workshops were held outside of Laos in neighboring Cambodia. The beneficiaries from illegal logging were not present.

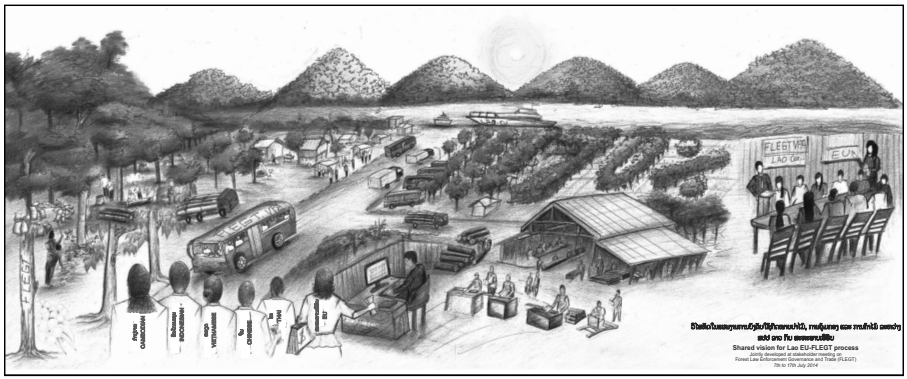

Figure 8B: The Vision for Sustainable Forestry in Laos

Through round table dialogue designed around CLI's Dialogic Change Model[143], the first workshop explored the context for building a team for change and designing stakeholder dialogues at both the national and pilot provincial levels. Before the second workshop, participants took a two-day break to visit a Cambodian community forest management project, as both a team-building exercise and a learning journey (Chapter 8). The second workshop focused on outlining a dialogic process with resources and agreements for moving ahead. The group articulated and drew a shared vision of sustainable forestry in Laos (Figure 8B) and formed Working Groups related to key parts of the supply chain: log landings in the forest, occupational health and safety in wood processing factories and timber export procedures at the country's borders. Four high-level government officials joined for the last two days. The stakeholders presented their work to them, including their shared vision and an image of the bus with diverse passengers, a metaphor of sharing a common journey. The officials signaled their high-level support by signing their names to individuals at the front of the bus, the drivers of the process. Together, they generated the basis of a shared sustainable forestry vision for Laos.

The next phase consisted of a three-day Art of Leading Collectively workshop in Potsdam, Germany, where CLI is based. The eight participants included high level employees from three Ministries (including those who attended the end of the above-mentioned workshops), in addition to one from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one from the National Assembly and two from GIZ ProFLEGT. The workshop was framed around co-creation and collective leadership for shifting a system. Participants built on personal examples of successful collaboration, prac-

143 Kuenkel, Petra, Silvine Gerlach and Vera Frieg. 2011. Stakeholder Dialogues: Skills for Better Cooperation. Potsdam, Germany: Collective Leadership Institute.

ticed self-reflection, and developed working groups to support the system shift. This included identifying how to gain the Vice President's support for the VPA negotiation process. This high level leadership team used the six Dimensions of the Collective Leadership Compass to assess and plan their change initiative at the personal, team and system levels. Each participant developed a personal action plan to realize their potential as a collective leader. At the end of the workshop, a special leadership coaching day was organized by CLI facilitators to build further trust and capacity within the group and to identify the key next steps.

Using the Collective Leadership Compass[144]

The Collective Leadership Compass was used implicitly during the planning and facilitation of the above workshops. The Compass is a framework developed by CLI Executive Director Petra Kuenkel that consists of six dimensions. Kuenkel refers to them as a "pattern of human competencies." She emphasizes that the "co-creation" act is at the heart of all human interactions. The dimensions are not treated as "stages" to go through consecutively; rather, they are entry points that represent a comprehensive view of competencies necessary for collective leadership. The Compass is a practice-oriented approach to leading complex change in multi-actor settings. It can be used to strengthen individual leadership skills, to enhance the leadership capacity of a group of actors and to shift systems of collaborating actors towards better co-creation. The Compass can be used as both a planning and assessment tool at the personal, team, organizational and systems levels, identifying strengths and areas that need development for successful collective leadership initiatives. Here are some ways in each dimension in which Compass use achieved tangible results in Laos, building a robust foundation for the ongoing process:

- **Future Possibilities:** Both the process of articulating a shared vision for forestry management in Laos, and literally drawing a picture of the future, created palpable resonance. A select team of participants presented a vision integrating input from all, which was adopted as a guiding document and image for the onward planning process.
- **Wholeness:** The group dove deep into looking at the bigger picture, as they jointly created a network actor map that defined engagement strategies.
- **Collective Intelligence:** Participants learned from one another and facilitators about the delicate balance between administrative procedures, planning processes, and the dialogic quality of the engagement of all relevant stakeholders. Collective Intelligence helped them to work across sectors.

144 Kuenkel, Petra. 2016. *The Art of Leading Collectively: Co-Creating a Sustainable, Socially Just Future*. White River Junction, VT, USA: Chelsea Green Publishing.
—. 2015. "Navigating Change in Complex Multi-Actor Settings: A Practice Approach to Better Collaboration." *Journal of Corporate Citizenship* 2015(58):119-36.
—. 2008. *Mind and Heart*: BoD–Books on Demand.

- **Engagement:** This enabled them to move towards engaging relevant stakeholders, planning further processes with attention to process quality, and prioritizing collective action steps.
- **Innovation:** The result was a process map for the coming months. On the final day of the second Laos workshop, the group presented its sustainable forestry vision and plan to high-level actors.
- **Humanity:** In addition to their vision, the group presented a vivid picture of a bus they had drawn as a metaphor representing both stakeholder cohesion and clarity of purpose. The moment had come to see if everyone was "on the bus." And they were! Everyone chose to sign their name to one person on the bus, including high level actors in the drivers' seats.

The next capacity building step in the process was a three-day Art of Leading Collectively workshop focused explicitly on the Compass. Participants included eight high level participants from the three Ministries (including those who attended the end of the above workshops), and one from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one from the National Assembly and two from the GIZ program. The workshop was framed around co-creation and collective action to shift a system. Participants shared stories of successful collaboration, practiced self-reflection, and developed informal working groups to support system improvements. This group used the six Dimensions of the Collective Leadership Compass to assess and plan their own contributions in the larger EU VPA process. Each participant developed a personal action plan to realize their potential as a collective leader. At the end of the workshop, a special coaching day was organized by CLI facilitators to build further trust and capacity within the team and to identify next steps for collective action.

At the technical level, a committed cross-sector group, selected from previous participants, took an Art of Dialogue course to build the capacity to design an on-going stakeholder dialogue process in three pilot provinces and to facilitate specific stakeholder dialogue events. With requisite high-level support, the technical-level team took on the responsibility of convening stakeholder dialogues at both the national and provincial levels, as well as applying CLI's Process Quality Monitoring Tool. Through the above-mentioned, multi-sector working groups, they also focused on specific issues along the timber supply chain.

GIZ ProFLEGT Project Director, Marc Gross, comments that CLI's approach "… has effectively brought together different interest groups within Laos to start negotiating a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). CLI's methodologies equip stakeholder representatives with tools to engage on the basis of trust, develop solid and fruitful relationships and increasingly value others' viewpoints."

The dialogic change and collective leadership approach has become so well-integrated and applied that CLI support is no longer required. One Laotian participant commented that CLI should work with EU negotiators to have them take a more dialogic approach to negotiations, making this a co-creative effort!

The Systemic Change Process Map

Introduction

Leading up to March 1, 2012 in El Golfo de Santa Clara (Santa Clara), where the Colorado River flows into the Gulf of California, Christian Liñán-Rivera from Noroeste Sustentable (NOS: a Mexican NGO) was running after signatures for an agreement on the curvina fishing future. The Curvina Management Agreement reflected long discussions amongst fishers, buyers, government officials, and environmental organizations to find a way to both ensure strong livelihoods and curvina population health. With the final signature, the implementation process began.

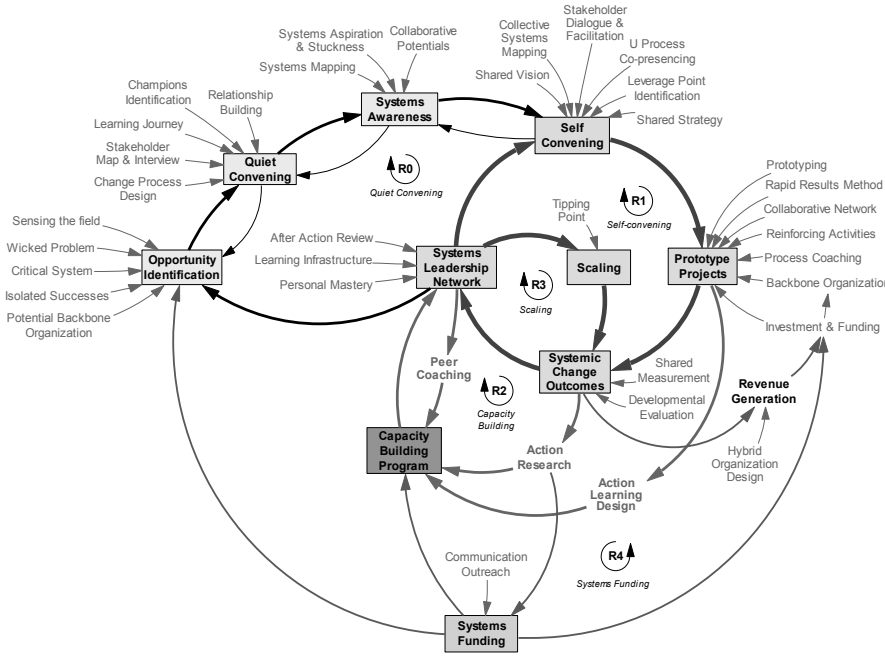

Figure 8C: Systemic Change Process Map (Produced by Joe Hsueh)

This story played a key role in defining the Systemic Change Process Map (SCMP, Figure 8B) by Joe Hsueh, in conjunction with the Academy for Systemic Change. Trained in system dynamics mapping (Chapter 8) at MIT with Peter Senge, John Sterman and others, Hsueh worked with a broad range of issues that follow the transformation pattern that the SCPM describes. Of course, no case follows this exactly. However, the map provides valuable insights into transformational processes and offers guidance for their development. The map identifies key steps as boxes, and describes via arrows how one activity leads to another in causal relationships. A list of possible actions is described for the steps (e.g.: sensing the field as an action in opportunity identification). The small R circular loops describe how activities reinforce one another to create five virtuous cycles:

- **Quiet convening cycle:** This is where the change process begins. Once a systemic change opportunity is identified, a quiet-convening process is initiated by interviewing stakeholders, mapping out the system and building relationships. This raises system awareness and the desire to collaborate across boundaries. The goal is a critical mass of stakeholders who are willing to initiate the self-convening process.
- **Self-convening cycle:** Through the quiet-convening process, stakeholders develop curiosity about the larger system and awareness that no one actor can solve the problem alone. This produces a desire to "self" convene and join other stakeholders in the same room to form a shared understanding of the current reality, co-create a shared vision and identify high-leverage points for collective action.
- **Capacity building cycle:** Critical to sustaining the systemic change process is building the collective capacity of a network of system leaders. Acting and learning from prototype projects and collectively evaluating outcomes help build a network of system leaders distributed across the system. Peer coaching, action research and action learning design reinforce the capacity building program which strengthens system leaders' capacity to self-convene and further prototype collaborative projects.
- **Scaling cycle:** As the prototype projects mature and a network of system leaders develops over time, a critical mass of system leaders and their activities reach a tipping point. This is when new ways of being, thinking and acting become the norms and attractors for others to replicate and scale up elsewhere in the system.
- **Systems funding cycle:** Strategic application of funding to these virtuous cycles is critical. Traditional funding focuses on identifying and scaling proven prototype projects. Systems-based funding focuses on the *process* of catalyzing self-sustaining systemic change by funding and strengthening quiet-convening, self-convening and capacity-building cycles to the point at which traditional funding can support proven prototype projects. It is critical to create a space for funders and stakeholders to collectively sense the system as peers to identify leverage-points for collective impact.

The Story

Christian Liñán-Rivera is a marine biologist and member of NOS, founded under the dedicated leadership of Liliana Gutiérrez-Mariscal, Alejandro Robles-González and Gastón Luken-Aguilar, to develop sustainable coastal communities in northwestern Mexico. They are also community organizers and change leaders. The issues of livelihoods and fisheries had long been identified as a problem in the northern Gulf of California. In 1975, totoaba fishing was outlawed, because the species was endangered. However, there was little capacity to enforce the ban. Growing up to two meters in length and 100 kilos in weight, the totoaba's swim bladder is considered to be a valuable gift by wealthy Chinese who pay as much as $15,000 per bladder. The vaquita – a small porpoise that is an evolutionarily distinct animal endemic to Mexico – is critically endangered, because it

is a by-catch in gillnets aimed at other fish and shrimp. The curvina is a beautiful silver migratory salt-to-brackish water fish that is also threatened by over-fishing. All are threatened by dramatic reductions in the Colorado River flow, to the point where it sometimes ceases flowing into the Gulf altogether. A maze of conflicting jurisdictions for government agencies, siloed government ministry traditions and an ineffective top-down style all befuddle efforts to address the entangled issues. Endemic corruption, involving murderous violence and intimidation, are part of the operating environment. The mix is truly a wicked problem to resolve.

These factors led to threats by international environmental NGOs to boycott Mexico at the beginning of the next millennium. In 2005, this forced change strategy produced the Peñasco Agreement under the collective leadership of AGS, a dialogue forum on the Sea of Cortez. However, it depended on government enforcement, and the government was soon overwhelmed. Here, we can see the first Quiet and Self-Convening cycles in the SCPM from Opportunity Identification to Self-Convening and Prototype experience. Government enforcement as a prototype simply failed. The government translated the agreement into a well-funded program, but there was no meaningful stakeholder role in its implementation. There was insufficient stakeholder involvement and commitment, unreasonable expectations of what the government could do on its own, and inadequacy in the quiet convening and systems awareness building steps.

The major outcomes of this first failed prototype were lessons learned and NOS leadership evolution. A re-initiation of the Quiet Convening cycle began with NOS talking to stakeholders and moving from the position of a neutral process facilitator to one of advancing a vision. The profiles of Robles-González and Luken-Aguilar as concerned environmentalists and businessmen, and Robles-González's 30 years of work with Gulf communities, engendered trust. For Quiet Convening, NOS organized meetings with government officials, fishermen, buyers, and the conservation sector. Christian describes this as working with ever-widening, spiraling circles. A reframing of the issue concluded that, "The major weakness was … the lack of capacity of the contributing organizations, not least NOS, to meet the challenges posed by sustaining the necessary behavioral changes within the key parties – the responsible government agencies, the international NGOs and the fishers."[145] In early 2011, Alto Golfo Sustentable (AGS) was re-convened as a multi-sector collaboration network. It represented the first time a community-based approach had been taken. In this second development cycle, AGS represented a prototype platform to carry work forward.

This time there was more focus on building quiet convening and system awareness. "For the first time it was about *creating a collective vision*," Christian explains. "That phrase we learned made a huge difference. It transformed our way to intervene. We started to focus on the actors, to create a sustainable fishery with well-being for the families and more fish in the water."

145 Olsen, Stephen, and Glenn Page. 2008. "Applying the Orders of Outcomes to NOS Initiatives in Gulf Of California, Mexico." Noroeste Sustentable, Walton Family Foundation.

Traditional meetings were held with officials behind a table at the front of the room and an "audience" in front. The NOS now began meetings sitting in circles, with the leaders as equals. "It generated a very different mood for collaborating and working together," says Christian.

This led to the collective Self-Convenings in November and December 2011, at which Joe Hsueh and Alejandro Flores-Márquez (a NOS systems thinker) worked with participants to develop system dynamics maps (Chapter 8), describing their situation. Particularly powerful was the tragedy of the commons archetype in which short-term individual gain from over-fishing reduces gains for all in the longer term. "Stakeholders realized that they had to collaborate," explains Christian. "They understood inter-dependencies. You heard people say 'Now I've got it. I see why you react like that to me.' It was really dramatic to see adversaries collaborate, because they had systemic understanding of the situation. And it was very easy to go from blaming to action." The shared vision spread.

Prototype action emerged by testing a new approach to a catch-share system (a management framework that had been introduced in Mexico by the NGO Environmental Defense Fund) to organize fisheries. On March 1st, 2012, Curvina Management Agreement was signed. In earlier government prototypes (prior to 2011), an overall quota for the Curvina Fishery had been determined. But, that was all. This time there were quotas for each fishing cooperative and an enforcement mechanism. Local buyers formed a coalition to define a fixed quantity to collectively buy from fishers with a stable price, with the goal of establishing a higher price than fishers had previously received. The fishermen agreed not to fish more than their quota and not to sell to outside buyers at a lower price. This approach aimed to produce higher prices for fishers and buyers, so that they would not lose out financially.

Liñán-Rivera remembers that when the group shared the Agreement with federal authorities, one official said: "What you're proposing has no place under our legal system. There is no way to implement it. But I will find a way, because it really makes sense … Don't ask me how, but I will."

The first year with the March to May curvina fishing season was very successful. Previously, fishers had fished as much as possible, assuming unlimited curvina. There was substantial spoilage, health issues and prices collapsed from 10 pesos per kilo to 5. Some curving were simply tossed away. For 2012, stakeholders formed working groups to implement the Agreement. Curvina prices were substantially higher and varied between 18 and 20 pesos/kilo.

It was easy to move forward, Liñán-Rivera recalls, because it was the stakeholders' document and they defended it. Moreover, they had developed new capacities for working together and creating solutions. Before, their actions had been limited to such things as manifestos, ineffective complaints and fighting.

Based on the 2012 prototype agreement, a 2013 agreement that integrated lessons learned was signed March 1stof that year. However, the success was not repeated. The federal government was in transition and its role was in disarray. A neighboring community was included in the process, but did not have permits for curvina fishing. They fished anyways, outside the agreement. Also, totoaba fishing

escalated despite the outright ban, bringing in the mafia and violence that overflowed into the Curvina Fishery. Corruption and violence overwhelmed all the hard work.

Realizing that pursuing its work required cleaning up organized crime and its ability to act with impunity in the region, NOS shifted its focus for the following year and essentially began a new systemic change process. Meanwhile, international environmental organizations again threatened the Mexican government with a boycott. In response, the government established a 500 million peso program (another prototype action) to keep 2,800 fishers off the water by making payments to them. However, the Curvina Fishery is an exception, since it does not affect the vaquita. The prototype action was more a traditional top-down response to an emergency, rather than the product of a thoughtful, self-convening stakeholder meeting. To receive payments, the fishermen have no obligations for anything, such as community service. This has led to excessive drinking and other social problems. Nevertheless, Liñán-Rivera is energetic and optimistic, commenting "We have to transform the community, the whole system in the Upper Gulf, and this is a great opportunity for AGS."

In this story, the SCPM reveals how cycles operate and repeat themselves. By identifying activities at each step, there is an opportunity for much more disciplined intervention. A simple "decision" can be crafted into an action research and action learning activity, with knowledge and capacity development categorically integrated to support virtuous cycles. As the complex system continues to evolve, the collective capacity of a network of system leaders develops community resilience. They adapt to new circumstances and the systemic change process becomes self-sustaining.

One key audience Hsueh developed the SCPM for, is funders of projects like the NOS one. Most funders are interested in funding specific projects, not processes. Yet, to identify high-leverage projects for systemic change, it is critical to understand the whole system by engaging stakeholders in forming a unified understanding of the complex system and its shared vision. This is the basis for identifying high-leverage points for collective action. He hopes more funders appreciate the importance of supporting the systemic change process by funding quiet and self-convening processes, prototype projects and capacity building, to the point at which traditional funding can come in and scale proven prototype projects. By creating a space in which funders and stakeholders can sense the system in the same room, funders are more likely to collectively fund supporting stakeholder aspirations to achieve collective impact.

Action Networks (ANs)

"In the early 1990s, corruption was a taboo topic. Many companies regularly wrote off bribes as business expenses in their tax filings, the graft of some longstanding heads of state was legendary, and many international agencies were resigned to the fact that corruption would sap funding from many development projects around the world. There was no global convention aimed at curbing corruption, and no way to measure corruption at the global scale."

"Having seen corruption's impact during his work in East Africa, retired World Bank official Peter Eigen, together with nine allies, set up a small organization to take on the taboo: Transparency International was established with a Secretariat in Berlin, the recently restored capital of a reunified Germany."[146] Within a few years, TI was operating globally, as the world recognized corruption as a critical issue.

During TI's beginning, Eigen travelled the world speaking with people to stimulate action. He arrived in Ecuador in the early '90s and met with Valeria Merino, founder of Participacion Ciudadana (PC). PC is a leading citizen sector organization aiming at strengthening democratic participation and civil rights in Ecuador; it monitors country-wide elections.

Their conversation helped clarify numerous things. One was that growing out of his World Bank history, Eigen's strongest network was with governments and associated officials who were concerned about corruption. Second was that the early Transparency International model was based on the idea that individuals concerned about corruption would be the key driver and organizing unit for TI. Third was that PC had been working on corruption issues for some time, and there were also other NGOs around the world that had also been doing so. NGOs, thus, had a clear contribution to make in combatting corruption.

This led to a shift in Eigen's thinking to see *organizations* rather than individuals, as the core members in TI. This was important for scale. Much of TI's work focused on connecting organizations around the world to undertake the local-to-global actions necessary to address corruption. What followed was a development speed globally, in terms of geography and engaged numbers, reflecting how social movements often develop. However, unlike social movements, TI has a leadership role working in a business and participatory manner with a broad array of stakeholders to develop the Societal Change System (SCS) for transparency.

ANs, as Chapter 6 describes, are an organizational innovation of our time. They arise in response to the inadequacy of traditional approaches, such as top-down hierarchies, markets, and social movements. They form locally at the municipal level, globally, like TI, and at all levels in between. TI represents a Global AN – a GAN. Its founding illustrates one of the three ways that ANs are launched: with individual leadership. Another way they often arise is from ad hoc meetings of organizations, such as around a particular crisis or as a committee that looks at an issue. Participants then realize that they need to create a more integrated joint effort. The Global Water Partnership, a GAN, grew out of annual meetings on water issues in the 1990s where funders realized they needed a more sustained collaborative effort. A third common way ANs are initiated is when an organization creates a program with multi-stakeholder ownership that eventually is spun off on its own. For example, the Global Reporting Initiative GAN arose from a program of the American NGO CERES to address the challenge of collecting data on corporations' social-financial-economic impact. Sometimes, there is

146 Transparency International. 2015. "Our History - In the Beginning." https://www.transparency.org/whoweare/history/: Transparency International.

Box 8A: ANs and Other Organizing Forms

ANs focusing on prototyping will have social innovation lab characteristics; all ANs focus on learning and capacity development and therefore have community of practice qualities. However, a distinctive quality of an AN is that it sees its core role is about organizing, visioning, advocating, and disseminating – actually changing the SCS – by building breadth of engagement and depth of change. It is a key large systems change agent. With a firm foundation developed with processes like the Collective Leadership Compass, an AN develops the system change process identified in the process map (Figure 8B).

a formal consultation process amongst stakeholders that leads to their collective recognition that they need to work together more creatively. This is the story behind RE-AMP, an AN in the north-central US that formed after a foundation conducted consultations and sponsored meetings (see Box 4C). More recently, a new launching process has developed: ANs themselves spin off other ANs. For example, TI has spun off the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) that focuses on a sub-set of transparency issues.

ANs' development can be described in terms of stages. Each stage is characterized by a specific set of questions that must be answered in order to move powerfully into the next stage. These questions are addressed by a set of activities (see Table 8A). This is all presented as a guide and

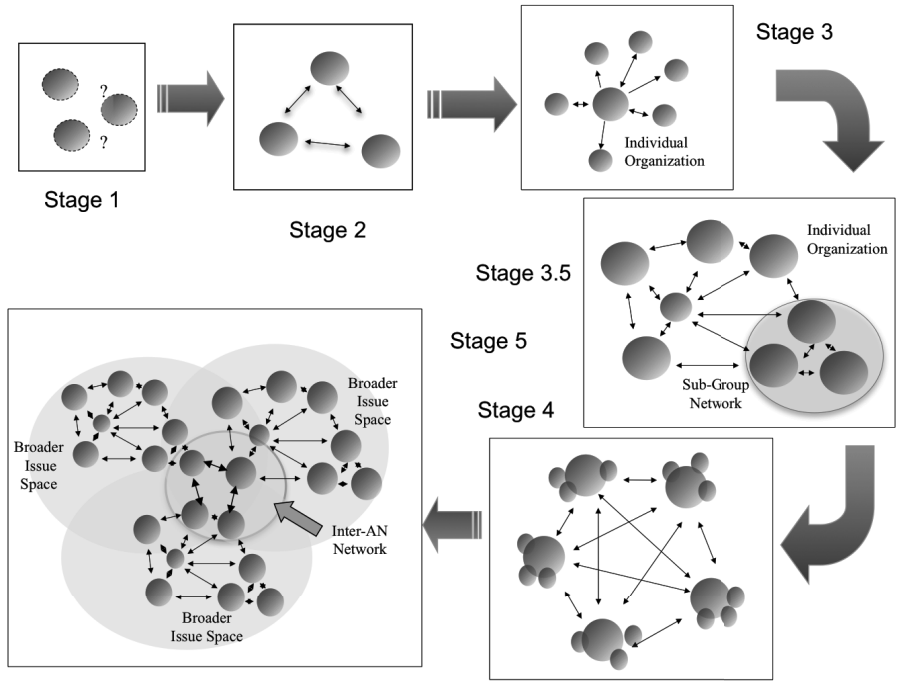

Figure 8D: Development Stages of ANs

different ANs have variations. Moreover, although it is generally true that there is a linear development process, this process is neither predictable nor irreversible. ANs might stop development at an earlier stage and still make important contributions. Moreover, there is more than one case in which an AN became a non-AN. For example, at early stages, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) was developing as a dynamic AN, but then, in association with the replacement of its Executive Director, GAIN simply became another bureaucracy with offices in various countries. The Kimberley Process, to stop financing conflicts through diamond sales, was at one point an AN. However, under undue influence from intergovernmental organization models, it expanded to include the governments of countries opposed to basic Process evolution (Zimbabwe, Russia, and Venezuela), and it lost its drive for change and continual advancement.

In the beginning – presented as Stage 1 – an issue is addressed in various ways by different organizations. The organizations start to become aware of each other, such as through Peter's TI investigations. This is a "sensing" stage to understand who is in the change arena, their current relationships, and who to bring together to "steward" AN development. In this stage, participants investigate their larger operating environment and what others are doing around their issue. They broaden their understanding about the collective definition of their shared challenge, diverse perspectives surrounding it and the collaborative effort required to address it. At this sensing stage, the systemic change matrix (Chapter 6) can be of enormous support, along with other mapping approaches (Chapter 8).

At this early stage, one key activity is boundary definition, which is an agreement about who is in and who is out of the emerging network community. This can be contentious, since some see enemies whereas others see opportunities. In Stage 2, this moves into more formal issue definition. The definition of corruption might seem obvious, but there were numerous discussions about the definition that held organizations together to form TI: *Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It can be classified as grand, petty and political, depending on the amounts of money lost and the sector where it occurs*. If an issue definition is too loose, common interests will be vague and there will be insufficient energy amongst participants. On the other hand, if the definition is too tight, there will be no "new" advantage from working together and organizations will drift back to their own individual ways of working. Very often, the definition of the problem changes during a GAN's life, as its participants deepen their understanding of the issue and/or they shift their focus as they realize success. In addition, the group must be able to attract participants of a caliber that make it appear legitimate or it will become irrelevant.

A small group stewards development; this can happen before more formal mapping and system analysis, or may arise out of these activities. The term "steward" emphasizes the collaborative quality of the work and that actions are always being undertaken on behalf of the broader system, which contains many leaders (see Chapter 9). To facilitate expansion, the term supports a dynamic of expanding co-ownership and engagement, in contrast to "permanence" around an individual or a limited number of individuals or organizations.

Table 8A: ANs' Development Stages[147]

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Key Questions	• What is the issue? • What is the vision? • Who should we convene? • How do we convene? Who will finance the exploration?	• What is holding us back from realizing the vision? • What are possible technical responses? • What are the stakeholders' roles in these responses? • What outcomes would individual stakeholders value? • Who/what is a "member?" • Who will finance initiation?	• How do we bring in new participants? • How do we manage global diversity? • How do we create robust sub-global structures? • How do we balance "going deep" and "going wide?" • What is the financial strategy?	• How do we create robust inter-node relationships? • How do we change the culture globally to support our vision? • How can we enhance legitimacy, accountability, and transparency? • How can we provide value on a massive scale? • How do we manage the "tipping point?" • What is the financial strategy?
Activities	• Consultations • Stakeholder identification • Mapping • Convening • Vision creation	• Piloting technical solutions • Creating initial network piloting structures • Defining the problem	• Broadening the application of physical technology solutions • Deepening understanding of social technology challenges • Increasing membership. • Decentralizing the structure	• Spinning off new entities • Mainstreaming issue with other organizations • Increasing the number of network nodes • Broadening to grass-roots

In Stage 2, they start to do something together to address an issue. At this point, they establish a joint identity – sometimes simply named a committee, coalition, alliance – and think of themselves as members or participants. Their actual activity can fall into any of the seven functions identified for Societal Change Systems (SCSs) in Chapter 6. A key activity is developing experiments to illustrate how the diverse organizations can work together to address their issue. This often contributes to issue definition. For example, at this stage, Transparency International developed a way to measure corruption and created the Transparency Index framework. These activities give AN participants the opportunity to learn about each other, including distinct competencies, and get a better sense of their potential. It is important to develop a framework that all key potential participants can identify with and become engaged when applying. Without this shared task, network cohesion will be weak.

147 Originally published in: Waddell, Steven. 2011. *Global Action Networks: Creating our future together*. Bocconi University on Management. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Stage 3 is when the attention focuses on further growth in terms of geography and participants. Classically, this is framed as a quandary between "going wide" and "going deep." ANs usually develop highly opportunistic responses to people's energy and resources. More organizations become involved, interactions

Box 8B: Great Bear Rainforest: The evolution of complex multi-stakeholder governance[1]

The Central and North Coast of British Columbia (B.C.) (Canada) was branded the Great Bear Rainforest by environmental organizations during their campaign to increase protection of endangered old growth forests. The Rainforest's rich wildlife includes huge grizzly bears and the Spirit Bear, a type of black bear. The remote region traces a narrow strip of Canada's western coastline more than 400 kilometers south to north along the fjords, and 64,000 square kilometers in total size (comparable in size to the German state of Bavaria). Trees average 350 years old, and many individual trees are 1,000 years old or older.

The forests became the center of conflicts in the 1980s as environmentalists waged pitched battles against forest companies and loggers. More than 800 people were arrested in the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history when protesters blocked logging roads and climbed trees to protect them from cutting. Forcing Changes strategies also included consumer boycotts that resonated in important Japanese, American and European forest product markets.

Government attempts at land use planning in the 1990s failed. The 2000 announcement of a cease-fire between environmentalists and companies was accompanied by the formation of The Joint Solutions Project (a multi-stakeholder environmentalist-corporation initiative).

Claims to the land by First Nations people (aboriginal Canadians) had standing in Canadian courts, giving them unusual power matched with moral authority. The Turning Point Initiative also was established to ensure that the government and other parties were mindful of the rights and interests of First Nations.

In 2001, all parties and the provincial government agreed to a new land use planning process. With funding from industry, environmental organizations, and the provincial and federal governments, the Coast Information Team (CIT) was created to provide independent scientific guidance. With extensive stakeholder engagement, all parties supported a broadly framed ecosystem based management plan in 2009. Six years later, again with extensive engagement, a detailed plan was approved. In essence, the process marked the evolution of a traditional government-run planning process to a multi-stakeholder one. The role of the government has become more like a secretariat for stakeholders, rather than a hierarchical governing entity. And at the same time, the First Nations evolved into a more powerful and sophisticated governance role.

1 *Sources*: Armstrong, Patrick. Undated. "Great Bear Rainforest Lessons Learned 1995-2009 ": Moresby Consulting.
Waddell, Steven. 2005. *Societal Learning and Change: How Governments, Business and Civil Society are Creating Solutions to Complex Multi-Stakeholder Problems*. Sheffield, UK: Greenleaf Publishing.

increase and sub-groups form. The network decentralizes its structure and activities to form subgroups. These might form around some sub-aspect of the issue, strategy and/or task. The application of frameworks, like the Transparency Index, broadens. For geographically expansive ANs, regions emerge, often quite spontaneously: the Global Compact was astonished in an early-stage review to find that participants had developed national chapters around the world. New stewarding groups emerge for these subgroups.

A big trap can be giving too much attention too early to questions about how to organize and make decisions. The answers to these questions should arise naturally from work. Otherwise, it cuts off innovative responses. TI eventually developed around national federations, referred to as Chapters, and the Global Reporting Initiative developed around particular industries and their idiosyncratic reporting needs. Often, at this Stage, there is a need for leadership renewal, since growing the network requires different skills from founding it.

The core organizing imperative is a commitment to a change mission and vision (remember, it is a complex vision about direction, rather than a complicated goal), as well as mutual accountability between the nodes as they undertake action. This is usually associated with statements of values and principles that must be interpreted within local contexts. For example, the Forest Stewardship Council is organized around three core stakeholder groups: business, environmental NGOs and social impact NGOs. But, in Canada, the First Nations people ("Indians") have a particularly important role and this led to organizationally recognizing them as a fourth stakeholder group. The mutual accountability principle requires ways to eject participants not working in accordance with the purpose. For example, the Global Compact "delisted" thousands of companies that were not fulfilling reporting requirements; the TI-Kenya office itself became embroiled in corruption, which resulted in its decertification (and later restarting with a different group).

Figure 8C shows a Stage 4 network without a center. The AN operates as a dispersed set of activities, with modest reference to each other as nodes specializing in different regions or other sub-groups. It is a mistake to think of the nodes operating within a geographic hierarchy (eg: for GANs, thinking that the global node directs other nodes). Unfortunately, people very easily slip into this thought pattern since it is so clearly a part of their organizational experience. For GANs, a global node is not a "head office" in any command and/or control sense. Rather, it has two functions. One, as with other nodes, is to work with organizations within its issue sphere; however, it focuses on global organizations. For example, TI worked with the OECD to establish a convention on corruption. Second, the global node supports network participants at global events, such as through TI's annual assembly. Similarly, it provides communications support and ways for members to identify global issues needing attention. In a highly functioning Stage 4, network nodes do not "go through" the global node to communicate with one another – they communicate directly. No "approval" is needed. Most GANs refer to their global node as "the secretariat" – a term I dislike because it sets up intergovernmental organizations, like the UN that uses the term, as comparable. I prefer simply "TI-Global," just like TI-Bangladesh.

Increasingly, ANs are entering Stage 5, recognizing the need to create connections between issues. At this stage, ANs focused on different issues start working together to overcome issue silos. They share "logics" in the way that they work and their values, which makes this relatively easy. On the global level, this collaboration occurs in conjunction with intergovernmental organizations. We can see the UN Global Compact taking leadership on economic-related issues with GRI, TI, and the Principles for Responsible Investment, in particular. Around the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, we can see something potentially emerging, such as connections between it and GANs, like the International Land Coalition, the Sustainable Food Lab, Ecoagriculture Partners and the Blue Number Initiative. With regards to health, the World Health Organization has taken a role in developing numerous GANs, including: the Stop TB Initiative, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (which is no longer really a GAN) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (which is by far the largest GAN financially, distributing billions of dollars).

The true power of GANs is still to be realized. In Guatemala, a colleague and I brought together the Forest Stewardship Council, the Youth Employment Summit, IUCN, TI, the Microcredit Summit Campaign, Social Accountability International, The Access Initiative and others to test our hypothesis that they would, because of similar organizational logic, be able to easily work together. This was supported by a two-day meeting, which resulted in a proposal to focus on the country's Cotan watershed to collaboratively apply over three years GANs' expertise and resources to advance development opportunities. Unfortunately, we could not find the funding resources to support the initiative.

Even with their global reach and scale, GANs do have ability to tip systems into true transformation. They are a part of the larger SCS, even if they are major players. They play within the Co-creating Strategy quadrant described in Chapter 5. Other strategies are needed. Even within the Co-creating Strategy, GANs participants include only some initiatives in their issue arena.