Stanford SOCIAL INNOVATION Review

The Science of What Makes People Care

BY ANN CHRISTIANO & ANNIE NEIMAND

STANFORD SOCIAL INNOVATION REVIEW

The Science of What Makes People Care / Mastering System Change / Worldly Strategy for the Global Climate / Psycho-behavioral Segmentation in Global Development

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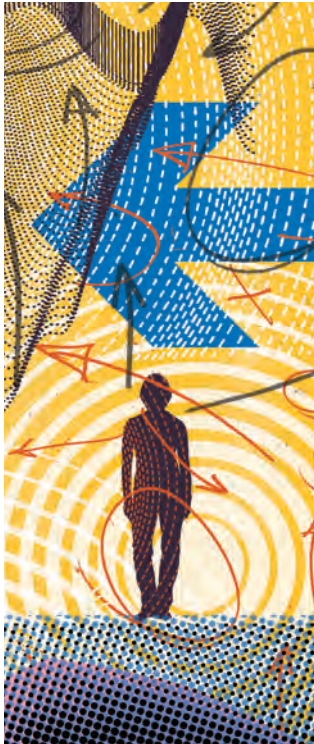60+ SESSIONS AND EVENTS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

De Tocqueville Redux

One of *Stanford Social Innovation Review*'s goals is to bring together people from across society to exchange ideas about how to solve pressing social problems. That's why we said yes when Independent Sector asked us if we would like to partner with them to produce a series of articles exploring the challenges facing American civil society. Together, we launched the series, "Civil Society for the 21st Century," on *SSIR*'s website in June and will wrap up the series in September.

Both organizations felt it was important to publish this series of articles because America is undergoing dramatic upheavals, and one of the ways to understand these changes and to come up with solutions is to examine them through the lens of civil society. Consider just a few of the changes that are roiling America today: increasing cultural and political polarization, growing income inequality, increasing numbers of immigrants, declining public support for traditional institutions, and growing demands by oppressed groups for equal rights.

These problems are not unique to the United States. Other countries—such as Mexico and England—are undergoing their own upheavals, brought on by a mix of globalization, immigration, technological change, urbanization, and other trends.

The solutions to these upheavals won't be shaped by just one group of people or one set of views. They will require people with good intentions from across the political and cultural spectrums to talk and work together. As Independent Sector President and CEO Dan Cardinali wrote in his opening essay, "When community is limited to those with whom you share a worldview, then American civil society is deeply compromised in its ability to build a common good that extends beyond any limited, self-selected group."

That is why we deliberately sought out authors with diverse points of view, including conservative ones, to write about the future of American civil society. One of the first essays we published was by *New York Times* columnist David Brooks, who believes that people engaged in the social sector are helping to create a new set of values for American civil society built around community, healing, and belonging. And *National Affairs* Editor Yuval Levin argues that civil society can play an important role in bridging the growing polarization of American society.

We also feature writers from the other side of the political spectrum. PolicyLink CEO Angela Glover Blackwell believes that some of the disruption and polarization in the United States today is actually a good thing, because it is the result of women, racial minorities, and others demanding equity and justice. And UnidosUS President and CEO Janet Murguía argues that American civil society has been flawed from the beginning because it excluded Latinos, African-Americans, Native Americans, and many other groups.

Our hope is that these essays become part of a broader conversation about the future of American civil society, and that they inspire people not only to think, but to go out and change the world for the better.

—ERIC NEE

SSIR ONLINE
ssir.org

Civil Society for the 21st Century

This article series, presented in partnership with Independent Sector, is sparking conversation and providing a forum for diverse thinkers to propose and discuss their understanding of the role that civil society plays in America today. Contributors include PolicyLink CEO Angela Glover Blackwell and *New York Times* columnist David Brooks.
ssir.org/civil_society

Reforming Management Education

In September, Andrew Hoffman, Mary Gentile, Henry Mintzberg, and other professors will share their visions for how to reform business, management, and public policy schools; their curriculums; and their production of research.
ssir.org/management_education

The Power of Feedback

Through a collection of articles, videos, podcasts, and other multimedia presentations launching in September, some of the social sector's leading voices will share tips and advice to encourage nonprofits and foundations to seek more constituent feedback—and act on it. This series is sponsored by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.
ssir.org/power_of_feedback

PODCASTS

Human trafficking, slavery, and child labor remain pressing concerns in many global supply chains. Hear Harvard University's Siddharth Kara lead a discussion on how a variety of organizations and sectors can play a role in finding solutions.

Listen to these and other conversations and talks:
ssir.org/podcasts

fundamental questions to mobilize their campaigns.

READERS RESPONDED:

"The authors miss one important strategy: The training of advocates to be more knowledgeable and effective. The Women's Foundation of California has been running a Women's Policy Institute at the state level for more than 15 years, training women in how to engage effectively with the legislative process. We have recently expanded that program into training grassroots leaders to advocate for policy change at the local level. We have more than 450 alumni spread across California working on a wide range of issues from health to education to environmental justice. Through the alumni and their organizations, we have the potential to activate millions of people to advocate for change. Training women leaders to advocate on behalf of their communities is one of the greatest and most lasting resources philanthropy can support."
—**Michelle Cale**, *board chair at the Women's Foundation of California*
Read more: ssir.org/phil_advocacy

READER COMMENTS

Artificial Intelligence for Social Good

In their June 2018 article "Artificial Intelligence as a Force for Good," **Gideon Rosenblatt**, a writer and former executive director of Groundwire, and **Abhishek Gupta**, founder of the Montreal AI Ethics Institute, argue that recent breakthroughs in artificial intelligence offer enormous benefits for mission-driven organizations and could eventually revolutionize how they work.

READERS RESPONDED:

"The most daunting obstacle is cultural. The nonprofit sector in general is just less technologically innovative, and while the strategic case for Machine Learning can be made clearly and articulately, cultural resistance doesn't necessarily respond to logic. As I am often reminded

in the world of organizational change, 'Culture eats strategy.'"
—**Nik Beeson**

"What access do nonprofits have to the type of workforce that understands and can efficiently and effectively tap into machine-learning tools and processes? Can the majority of the nonprofit sector attract these people or only those with funds to pay for higher salaries and higher skilled labor?"
—**Monique Sherrett**

COAUTHOR REPLIED:

"I think that smaller organizations will struggle to adopt these new machine-learning techniques. Medium-sized organizations will soon be able to use machine learning in fundraising applications, accounting, marketing, and the like, and they will eventually be

able to rely on existing nonprofit technology consultants. Larger organizations will become increasingly technical, as they face pressure to differentiate through technology, much like for-profit organizations do."
—**Gideon Rosenblatt**
Read more: ssir.org/AI_for_good

When Philanthropy Meets Advocacy

In their Summer 2018 feature, "When Philanthropy Meets Advocacy," **Patrick Guerriero**, founding partner of Civitas Public Affairs Group, and **Susan Wolf Ditkoff**, a partner in The Bridgespan Group's Boston office, argue that if philanthropists are going to help charitable organizations step into the public policy arena and lead the causes they care about, they will need to work through five

BOOKS

In *Leapfrogging Inequality: Remaking Education to Help Young People Thrive*, Rebecca Winthrop, senior fellow and director of the Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution, along with Adam Barton and Eileen McGivney, also of Brookings, present a road map to help guide education innovators and anyone interested in transforming education for the better.
Read more excerpts and reviews: ssir.org/books

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WHAT'S NEXT
NEW APPROACHES TO SOCIAL CHANGE

Zipline's just-in-time drone-delivery technology has helped transform Rwanda's medical supply chain.

On-Demand Medical Drone Delivery

BY NOËL DUAN

D elivery by drone is not a novelty for Silicon Valley-based startup Zipline—it's a matter of life and death in the regions that the drone-delivery system serves. In October 2016, the company launched an on-demand service in contract with the government of Rwanda to deliver more than 50 different types of blood products (blood, plasma, and platelets) for immediate medical treatment.

Rwanda was an ideal first partnership country for Zipline: It has one of the highest population densities in sub-Saharan Africa, and 70 percent of the population lives in rural areas. Zipline operates two distribution centers carrying three days' worth of supplies, which together distribute drones to all 10,169 square miles of the landlocked country.

While Zipline markets itself to governing bodies as a logistics service, the company does not contract with other drone manufacturers—it makes its own. "There was no technology like this when we started," CEO and founder Keller Rinaudo says. On opposing ends of the price and functionality spectrum, there were $60 million military-operated devices and $100 plastic helicopter toys—both of which were drones. Zipline designed a drone that can handle flights of more than 100 kilometers over autono-

mous areas and can be easily maintained. It does not plan to sell its self-proclaimed "automotive grade" drones. "Our customers don't care about drones at all," Rinaudo says. "[They] want to focus on taking care of their patients."

Zipline dispatches a drone with a package to the healthcare practitioner who ordered it via SMS or WhatsApp. Delivery takes 15 to 25 minutes. Rinaudo claims that the boxes don't need a cold chamber because the deliveries arrive before the products lose integrity. But more scientific studies must be done before drone delivery can be claimed to be entirely safe for medical supplies, says Bruce Y. Lee, associate professor of international health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. "The situation is that heat can denature proteins in vaccines or other biological products like blood," he explains. "It can change the nature of the product. Most likely it's not a concern, but we need more studies."

Despite his caution, Lee supports using drones in the supply chain because they can reduce costs up to 50 percent compared with land-based transportation, which requires human personnel. Furthermore, a drone-based delivery system could lessen the workload for medical practitioners, who, in many rural areas, simultaneously serve

as doctors, transporters, and suppliers.

Integrating with the local community is an essential concern to Zipline. Currently 30 of its 100 employees are Rwandan. "There aren't many other opportunities to become an expert in robots there," Rinaudo says. "In parts of the world, drones have a negative connotation, associated with military," Lee adds. "We can't underestimate the fact that people fear when they see drones." Rinaudo acknowledges this association, but credits the support of the local government for the positive reception of Zipline's integration by Rwandans into the national health-care system. Before Zipline contracted with the Rwandan government, lack of infrastructure contributed to excess waste of blood products —a common supply-chain issue in many other countries.

Though Zipline is the most established example right now,

other companies are manufacturing drones specifically for humanitarian purposes. This year, Netherlands-based Wings For Aid is testing its own remotely piloted aircraft in the Dominican Republic. "Tech that is available to military forces should also be available to the humanitarian world," founder and general manager Barry Koperberg says. "A lot of innovation comes from public forces. The Internet, mobile telephones—all invented by the military."

Organizations like Wings For Aid look to Zipline as an excellent initiative for small-cargo payloads. (Wings For Aid's drone is larger and meant for carrying 20-kilogram boxes full of disaster relief supplies, such as blankets and water.) And Zipline has the results to show for its efforts in streamlining the medical treatment supply chain: In Rwanda, access to rare products has increased

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PRIYA SHANKER is the deputy director at Stanford University's Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (Stanford PACS).

⬇ *Pratik Sinha cofounded the nonpartisan fact-checking website AltNews to set the record straight while curbing the spread of misinformation on social media.*

by 168 percent and blood waste has decreased to zero. Hospitals no longer have to keep in stock what they don't need. Since the program's inception, the company has delivered 12,000 units of blood on more than 6,000 flights in Rwanda. By the end of 2018, Zipline will operate in rural North Carolina—its first North American contract. ◼

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Combating Fake News in India

BY PRIYA SHANKER

I n early 2017, a gruesome video of a young girl being lynched by an angry mob began spreading rapidly through WhatsApp. The accompanying text claimed that a Hindu girl in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh was being punished for refusing to wear a burqa after marrying a Muslim man.

When staff at the nonprofit fact-checking website AltNews.in began looking into the authenticity of the video and the accompanying narrative, they noticed that the people in the video did not look Indian, nor did it sound like they were speaking an Indian language. In addition, none of the other women in the video were wearing a burqa. A simple Google search revealed that the video had been shot in a Guatemalan village in 2015 and the girl was attacked for being an accomplice in the murder of a taxi driver.

AltNews shared international coverage of the actual incident with links to the original video through its website, social media accounts, and its WhatsApp broadcast lists. It also traced the earliest instance of the message to a Facebook page with apparent ties to right-wing Hindu nationalists. This was one of dozens of fake news stories that the AltNews team busted in its first year.

"It probably took us five minutes to get to the bottom of this story," says Pratik Sinha, cofounder of AltNews, "yet most people do not think to check the veracity of even the most obviously misleading stories."

Sinha was working as a software engineer in the city of Ahmadabad when he cofounded AltNews in 2017 with the anonymous administrator of "Unofficial: Subramanian Swamy," a parody Facebook page of the Indian politician. They had each spent several years attempting to debunk fake news on social media. While together they had more than one million Twitter followers, they found themselves stuck in an ideological bubble, unable to reach the people that such misinformation seemed to affect most. They launched AltNews with the hope that an independent online platform would have a wider reach.

AltNews' six full-time staff members fact-check stories on a broad range of topics, including politics, science, education, and religion. All content is licensed under Creative Commons and is free to reproduce with attribution. As a new entrant to India's crowded media landscape, AltNews still has to prove its credibility, but its articles are increasingly being referenced or republished in mainstream publications, Sinha says.

The website describes its methodology in painstaking detail in an effort to substantiate its claim as a fair, transparent, and nonpartisan fact-checker. Sinha hopes these guidelines empower other people, including professional journalists, to do their own fact-checking.

Sinha recognizes that AltNews will need to work with local law enforcement, civil society, and technology companies in order to have real impact. In July 2018, the team met with the police commissioner of Ahmadabad to propose a pilot program for collaboration between fact-checking websites and local government and law enforcement to curb the spread of misinformation. AltNews is also working with Google to design a fact-checking curriculum for journalists.

Last year, rumors of child abduction rings began floating around via WhatsApp messages in the Eastern state of Jharkhand, leading to lynchings of suspected child kidnappers. Similar rumors have since spread in different parts of the country, and at least 20 people have been lynched in recent months.

"The peer-to-peer nature of WhatsApp messages and the fact that it is often the only window to the Internet for people in small-town and rural India makes it uniquely advantageous for spreading fake news," Sinha says.

Looking ahead, AltNews plans to develop its own mobile application that will allow individuals to submit stories they would like to see fact-checked. The idea is to track the frequency of requests for a particular fake story and track users' geo-coordinates to determine where fake stories are spreading. AltNews would then notify local law enforcement to curb potential violence resulting from the false rumors.

"Fake news has become an epidemic of sorts in India," says Ravish Kumar, a senior journalist and television anchor for NDTV India. "AltNews has institutionalized the busting of this misinformation machine when few in mainstream Indian media have had the courage to take it on." ◼

WHAT'S NEXT

ADRIENNE DAY has written for *The New York Times*, *Nautilus*, *New York*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, and ImpactAlpha, among other publications. She is a contributing editor at *Demand*, a publication of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

SECURITY

New Weapons Against Nuclear Threats

BY ADRIENNE DAY

In the early '80s, two films likely had a greater impact on the national conversation surrounding nuclear weapons than any policy wonk or talking head. President Ronald Reagan saw *WarGames*, about a hacker who nearly triggers World War III, shortly after its 1983 release and issued a security directive that amounted to the first national policy on reducing the vulnerability of computers to hackers. That same year, *The Day After*, a made-for-TV film about a nuclear war with the Soviet Union that takes out much of the American Midwest, convinced millions of terrified Americans that a nuclear strike could indeed happen on our soil, and is now credited with helping to curb the arms race.

N Square, a multimillion-dollar foundation-supported initiative dedicated to ending the threat of nuclear weapons, is betting on popular culture's power, among other tactics, to influence policy. By supporting different players in a sprawling network that touches on everything from industrial design to Hollywood screenplays, N Square hopes to influence the cultural conversation and rekindle public awareness about the danger nuclear weapons pose to humanity. With the Iran nuclear deal now in jeopardy, in addition to renewed tensions with North Korea, concerns about managing the arms threat are heightened —especially as some of the world's more than 15,000 nuclear weapons approach 70 years old.

"There is a sense that the threat [of nuclear war] went away after the Cold War, but the threat of nukes is greater and more immediate than climate change," says Eric Schlosser, an investigative journalist whose 2013 book *Command and Control* examined terrifying near misses involving America's nuclear arsenal. "The only way to change that is by raising awareness with citizen activism," he says. N Square helped fund *the bomb*, a 61-minute experimental film that Schlosser codirected.

According to a 2016 Chapman University poll asking American adults about their greatest existential fears, nuclear weapons didn't even

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register in the top 15, says Kate Folb, who directs Hollywood, Health & Society, a program of the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center that provides entertainment industry professionals with information for storylines on health, safety, and national security. "It was just completely off people's radar," Folb says.

N Square approached Folb about providing funding and contacts to include the issue of nuclear security in her program's portfolio of activities. The program has since developed storylines about nuclear weapons in popular shows such as the political drama *Madam Secretary.*

"This is an issue we all have a stake in and all can have agency over," says Erika Gregory, N Square's managing director. The collaboration was founded in 2014 by program officers from five foundations invested in peace and security issues— MacArthur, William and Flora Hewlett, Carnegie, Skoll, and the Ploughshares Fund— which were concerned by the lack of new ideas, energy, and resources being devoted to the disarmament field. Public fears regarding the threat of nuclear annihilation, which faded with the Cold War, are now largely enshrined in dated cultural artifacts. Until recently, the threat of an accidental or deliberate nuclear strike seemed obsolete in the face of more tangible crises like school shootings.

Today, the organization is building a network of experts and donors from a variety of fields, all committed to nuclear-threat reduction. Gregory helped launch the N Square Innovators Network in 2017, bringing

together a group including engineers, brand strategists, designers, media wonks, futurists, and nuclear-threat experts, for retreats, meet-ups, and other gatherings. N Square puts up everyone together in houses, and activities have included everything from nighttime beach walks to discuss arms control to games such as figuring out how to escape a room called the "Putin Bunker" as a way to think about the role of kinesthetic experience in building public awareness. Two more cohorts will follow this fall and next spring.

Gregory wants to make sure that those working on disarmament have the resources and allies they need, she says.

So why work with Hollywood instead of the Pentagon? Gregory cites *The Medici Effect*, in which author Frans Johansson argues that innovation happens when different disciplines and ideas intersect. Having people from very different backgrounds working together is critical, she says. Each person brings his or her own unique expertise to bear on a common problem. "People working on policy agendas don't necessarily have any idea what is going on with new technology."

Complacency comes at a cost, says Morgan Matthews, N Square's program manager and design strategist. "We don't have frameworks for managing [a nuclear event], yet it has the highest consequence of anything humans can do to our planet and ourselves," she says. Such threats, as well as newer technologies like synthetic biology and autonomous weaponry, "will continue to come at us." ■

⬇ *A series of community meetings led to inexpensive improvements that helped revitalize Akron, Ohio's, Summit Lake. Akron is one of five cities involved in the Reimagining the Civic Commons initiative.*

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CITIES

Revitalizing Community Connection

BY COREY BINNS

A 100-acre glacial lake known in the 1900s as Akron's million-dollar playground sits just a two-mile jog south of the city's downtown. Thousands of Ohioans once spent summer days riding the park's roller coaster and swimming in the lake. But after the area's booming rubber industry contaminated Summit Lake, the nearby neighborhood fell into decades of decay and isolation.

In 2016, a series of meetings with community members led to inexpensive improvements around the lake. Today, families from all over the city sit next to each other on new benches under shade umbrellas, grill hot dogs, and paddle canoes. For Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan, the process revealed the critical role that public spaces play as a platform for equity: "It's allowed us to reevaluate how we view city parks and view our citizens as cocreators of public land."

Akron is one of five US cities involved in a three-year, $40 million initiative launched in 2016 that has developed a measurement system for parks, trails, and community centers to model how cities can restore their civic commons. The goal is to create, or re-create, public spaces that matter. "Libraries and parks and recreation centers have historically served the purpose of amplifying citizenship," says Carol Coletta, a fellow at The Kresge Foundation, one of the four funders of Reimagining the Civic Commons in addition to the JPB, Knight, and Rockefeller foundations. "We're trying to reclaim their legacy as institutions."

Communities, especially disinvested ones, need a boost, says Coletta. We no longer know our neighbors, and our belief in institutions has dwindled. She and her colleagues set out to pinpoint hiking trails and civic spaces they might repurpose to rebuild capital and trust in disenfranchised neighborhoods.

The team claims it has built the first comprehensive set of metrics that connect the impact

WHAT'S NEXT

of revitalization to things such as trust between people; perceptions of safety; and a community's ability to draw together people of different incomes, races, and backgrounds.

Treating plazas and hiking trails as a linked portfolio tied to social outcomes marks a simple yet significant shift, says Bridget Marquis, director of the Civic Commons Learning Network. She urges city officials to recognize the value of existing parks and libraries that communities invested in a century ago, rather than building anew: "Every city, and almost every neighborhood, has civic assets that if reimagined could connect people of all backgrounds, cultivate trust, and counter the trends of social and economic fragmentation."

Marquis and her colleagues developed a set of indicators, collected from a combination of focus groups, surveys, and police and real estate records. Trust, for example, is measured in part by asking if people trust their local government to do what is right. Public life is gauged by the number and duration of times people visit a public space.

The initiative also studies socio-economic mixing by measuring the diversity of race and income levels among visitors to each site, the time people spend with their neighbors, and the opportunities people have to meet someone new. Despite mounting research espousing the benefits of diverse, mixed-income communities, socio-economic mixing doesn't appear on many city agendas. People working with the initiative can bridge divides, starting with the civic commons as places that make it convenient and pleasant to be in the company of strangers.

In Philadelphia, the Swim Philly program lured more swimmers to its public pools with bright lounge chairs and umbrellas, free water aerobics, and poolside yoga. The pools' popularity inspired Mitchell Silver, commissioner of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, to launch five freshly painted "Cool Pools" in each borough. Silver believes the civic commons program can revitalize communities—if leaders manage expectations and build public trust. The Learning Network will continue to share resources with other cities.

"If all cities were making strategic investments in our civic assets to connect people of all backgrounds, cultivate trust, and counter these trends of social and economic fragmentation, I believe we would see stronger, more equitable cities," Marquis says. "Places that finally live up to the American ideal that we are all created equally and that we all can share equally in public life." ∎

FIELD REPORT
PROFILES OF INNOVATIVE WORK

Strength in Numbers

StrongMinds looks to break the cycle of depression for women in Uganda and beyond.

BY AMY YEE

Harriet Nakalyango sells water and farms a small plot of land to make a living on the outskirts of Kampala, Uganda's capital. After she married at age 16 and had four children, her husband "started boozing and beating [her] from morning to evening," she says. The physical violence took an emotional toll. "I was sincerely sick. I was crying every day. I was not eating. I wouldn't let my kids go out," she says. "They used to cry and I used to cry. I wasn't working and stayed at home. I was almost dying with kids. That was the end of me." Nakalyango fell into an eight-year depression.

In 2015, a friend told Nakalyango about StrongMinds, a US-based nonprofit that launched its pilot program in Uganda in 2014. StrongMinds trains mental health facilitators to lead peer-group therapy sessions for women with depression in poor communities in Kampala.

According to the World Health Organi-zation (WHO), depression affects 322 million people worldwide and is also the leading cause of disability globally. But fewer than half of the people suffering from it receive treatment—especially in countries lacking a solid understanding of mental health. In developing countries like Uganda, up to 90 percent of people who suffer from depression don't seek treatment. Social stigmas and lack of awareness, resources, and health-care providers are just some of the barriers they confront. In Africa, people with mental health issues are often ignored or ostracized, and resort to being "treated" by witch doctors. In Uganda, where less than 1 percent of GDP goes to mental health care, reports estimate that approximately 30 psychiatrists exist among a population of more than 44 million.

Discouraged by the lack of options for people with mental health issues in Africa, Sean Mayberry founded StrongMinds in 2013. Mayberry had worked in Africa for a decade on implementing AIDS/HIV and malaria programs. Prior to starting StrongMinds, he was country director for Population Services International in Democratic Republic of the Congo. He also served as chief operating officer of VisionSpring, an eye-care nonprofit serving developing countries, and as chief executive of FXB, a global poverty-alleviation nonprofit based in New York City.

A life-changing encounter in Uganda with an "adolescent boy with a mental illness," Mayberry recounts, "finally galvanized me to understand that someone had to do something about creating mental health access in Africa. If I didn't do it, who would?"

He continues, "I worked in the Congo for years to improve physical health—in malaria programs, HIV prevention, and clean water. I saw over and over my African friends, colleagues, and clients who suffered from mental illnesses [unable to] access care—and I could do nothing as a leader of a public health organization to help them. ... I found this incredibly frustrating."

Mayberry also had a personal connection to mental illness. "I grew up with parents suffering from depression, and I have very close family members today who suffer from depression," he explains. "I understand what depression does to individuals, to mothers, to children, to families—I understand that depression is truly a debilitating disease that, left untreated, tears people down and in many ways stops them from living to their full potential."

THE STRONGMINDS MODEL

StrongMinds uses the interpersonal group-therapy technique—also known as group interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT-G)—to help group members identify and manage their problems without medication. During weekly sessions of approximately 90 minutes over three months, groups of about a dozen women talk through their problems with a facilitator trained in IPT-G. The first few sessions focus on building rapport with group members to establish trust and emotional comfort. In the second of the program's three phases, women make suggestions to one another and begin to understand the triggers of depression. In the third phase, facilitators teach them to

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recognize and respond to those triggers. Women who want to join StrongMinds take the PHQ-9 survey, the standard patient questionnaire used to assess depression, to receive a preliminary diagnosis. Those found to be severely suicidal are not a good fit for peer-group therapy and are referred to clinics with mental health facilities.

StrongMinds focuses on women—who suffer unipolar depression at twice the rate of men, according to WHO's report on gender disparities and mental health. Potential causes for this difference include gender-based violence, and economic and social inequalities. In Uganda, these range from poverty to women's shouldering the responsibility of caring for their children and families. StrongMinds also piloted programs for men, but, because attendance was low, the programs were subsequently cancelled.

When StrongMinds launched in Uganda, people were suspicious of a new organization coming into their community. Some feared it was a religious cult. Some women who wanted to join faced resistance from their husbands and other family members who did not want them to talk to others about their problems. To overcome these barriers, mental health facilitators spent time with community leaders and held public events to raise awareness about depression and explain their work. Mental health facilitators stress confidentiality, even though women often come from different nearby communities and don't necessarily know one another. According to Dena Batrice, executive director of StrongMinds Uganda, about 20 percent of women drop out of the program, although she says the reasons for this rate remain unclear.

For Juliet Nsubuga, the facilitators' continued presence in her community convinced her to join a meeting after she originally dismissed the program. Nsubuga was married at 14 and then widowed after having seven children. Her deceased husband's family took most of her property and told her to remarry. Instead, she eked out a living as the owner of a small shop, but thieves robbed the store and took everything. She reached a breaking point

when her 27-year-old son died in an accident and her three daughters—ages 17, 15, and 13—became pregnant. Nsubuga used to serve as an informal leader in her community, but her daughters' unplanned pregnancies made her feel ashamed and caused her to withdraw and fall into depression. "I hated myself. I thought my life was over," she says.

In Nsubuga's group, women talked through their problems. One woman was distraught because her husband harassed her because she couldn't get pregnant. Lack of money was a common challenge among the women. Group discussions covered possible financial solutions, including earning money from selling vegetables and braiding hair. In therapy, Nsubuga admitted she "hated her children," but the group encouraged her to resume communication with them.

Nakalyango's experience is similar to Nsubuga's. By sharing their own stories of depression, the women in her group affirmed that she wasn't alone in her struggles. She learned to communicate better with her husband, which improved her relationship with him. Nakalyango recalls something the facilitator told her group: "One stick is easy to break. But many sticks together are difficult to break."

After their sessions ended, both Nsubuga and Nakalyango completed 14 weeks of training from StrongMinds to become peer-group therapy facilitators. "I was in the deep," explains Nakalyango. "If I [hadn't gotten therapy], I'd be dead now. I know many people who are suffering. It was medicine for me. What they did for me, I also have to do it."

TWO MILLION WOMEN BY 2025

Starting StrongMinds was no easy task. Because mental health is more difficult to quantify and explain than physical health interventions, such as vaccinations, Mayberry faced the initial challenge of attracting donors, who were more focused on highly visible health crises like HIV/AIDS and malaria.

"Until StrongMinds started, mental health programs and illnesses were viewed as complex, complicated, slow to work, and even mysterious," Mayberry says. "Donors

thought treating them would take years and massive investments in hospitals, doctors, and nurses, and that even then there would be no clear deliverables."

Mayberry launched StrongMinds with family savings and worked unpaid for the first two years. Today, financial support for StrongMinds comes from private donors and philanthropies such as Mulago, CRI Foundation, Elmo Foundation, and Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation.

"Our first donors came on board because I knew them—they supported VisionSpring, so they knew me and believed in me," says Mayberry. "They also were forward-thinking and understood that mental health was a neglected health area that needed support."

Kristin Gilliss, a senior investment partner at Mulago, explains that Mayberry is "a proven implementer—he built teams and scaled operations for organizations ranging from Intel to VisionSpring across Asia and Africa. We look for people who are irrepressible."

Both StrongMinds' effectiveness and its future expansion plans are due to its group-therapy model, which is inexpensive to scale. In its first year, 514 women in Kampala participated in group therapy. In 2017, more than 15,000 women were treated. Since the 2014 pilot program, more than 25,110 women have successfully gone through StrongMinds treatment, and approximately 86 percent of those who completed the program say they are no longer depressed. StrongMinds also reports that about 80 percent of groups continue to meet informally after their program's conclusion.

The nonprofit now aims to reach two million women by 2025. It wants to expand to other countries in Africa and work with governments and big NGO partners to meet its ambitious goals. Mayberry sees this objective as integral to development in general. If women are struggling with depression, they "are held back, and development efforts are wasted," he says. "By reducing and eliminating depression in Africa, we pave the way for all other behavioral change efforts to be more efficient and impactful." ▪

FIELD REPORT

A New Local Movement

Benefit Chicago demonstrates how place-based impact investing transforms a community by seeing the investment potential in everyone.

BY SARAH MURRAY

L ike most parents, Dave Friedman approached his son's graduation with pride. But he also worried. He knew that with valuable skills but high-functioning autism, his son would find few companies prepared to hire him. Friedman's response was to create AutonomyWorks, which employs people with autism spectrum disorder to provide marketing operations support—work that, because of its detailed, repetitive nature, makes it hard for companies to retain staff in positions in which people with autism excel.

"It's really good for our clients," says Friedman, who spent 25 years in marketing before launching AutonomyWorks. "Our teams' minds are wired to solve these kinds of problems—and because they're good at it and it fits with the way their brains function, they love it."

It was tough, however, to secure the capital needed to expand the business and meet its goal of hiring more than 330 employees in the next decade. Traditional investors struggled to assess the company's potential financial return, while philanthropic institutions were unable to fund a for-profit entity. Then Friedman heard about Benefit Chicago—a fund established in 2016 to mobilize $100 million to provide loans to impact enterprises in the Chicago region. "We applied on the first day, went through the process, and got funded," he says.

A collaborative initiative of the MacArthur Foundation, the Chicago Community Trust (CCT), and Calvert Impact Capital (formerly Calvert Foundation), Benefit Chicago uses Community Investment Notes (fixed-income securities paying interest annually) issued by Calvert Impact Capital as an impact investment vehicle. Investments can be made online, through an investment broker, or through a donor-advised fund at CCT.

Benefit Chicago is among a number of "place-based impact investing" initiatives emerging across the United States that harness private investment to finance impact enterprises building affordable housing, schools, and health centers, as well as creating local jobs and economic growth. Not only do these initiatives raise funding for social impact, they also enable local residents to become investors in their own communities.

"The borrower need was only one-half of the equation that drove the innovation," Julia Stasch, president of the MacArthur Foundation, says of Benefit Chicago's dual purpose. "We wanted to bridge the gap between people who love Chicago ... and impact enterprises that need this kind of capital."

FILLING THE GAP

In Englewood, on the southwest side of Chicago, empty storefronts and lots bear witness to the neighborhood's woes. In 2008, the foreclosure crisis accelerated decades-long decline, prompting the departure of residents and businesses, the loss of jobs and critical services, and a rise in crime. In 2016, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Chicago (LISC Chicago) created the Southwest Corridor Collaborative to revive the neighborhood by working with local community organizations. The challenge was finding the funding to make loans at concessionary rates to small businesses and developers.

A $3.5 million loan from Benefit Chicago was the answer. The funding enabled LISC Chicago to achieve its mission through lending to businesses and other organizations capable of generating jobs and economic activity in Englewood. These include a health center, a Belizean restaurant looking to expand and offer a catering service, and E. G. Woode, a company that stimulates economic growth by supporting local entrepreneurs in the retail sector.

LISC Chicago is one of a number of financial intermediaries and community development finance institutions (CDFIs) that Benefit Chicago considers for loans. Along with for-profit companies and nonprofits using strong financial models, these are the kinds

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of organizations that, like AutonomyWorks, would find it hard to access capital without Benefit Chicago's loans. In fact, "Bridging the Gap," research that the MacArthur Foundation commissioned, put the impact-capital deficit in the Chicago region at between $100 and $400 million.

Borrowers' activities tend to fall within three broad themes: building community wealth through economic development, the growth of community assets, and support for entrepreneurs; creating jobs, particularly for those who have a hard time accessing employment; and enhancing job readiness and skills.

However, beyond these themes, Benefit Chicago takes a relatively agnostic approach. Borrowers range from Sweet Beginnings, which employs formerly incarcerated people to make honey-based products, to Garfield Produce Company, a hydroponic vegetable farm that creates local employment. "What that does is acknowledge the diversity of an economy," Stasch says. "We want to be open to the variety of organizations that can contribute to the vitality of a place."

If Benefit Chicago is flexible in selecting borrowers, it conducts rigorous vetting through a process it calls "underwriting," rather than "evaluating," to distinguish it from grantmaking. "We are looking to understand the impact the organization is trying to have and how it's measuring that," explains Will Towns, executive director of Benefit Chicago. "But then we have the revenue and business lens that we have to look at as well."

In assessing borrowers' financial viability, Benefit Chicago is no different than any commercial lender. However, taking a patient capital approach, it structures loan time frames and milestones to accommodate enterprises whose primary goal is impact, not profit.

For AutonomyWorks, this flexibility has been critical. "Our business is something no one has ever done before; there's no map," says Friedman. "I don't want to commit to being a $5 million business in three years if that's not right for the business."

Being a Benefit Chicago borrower has other advantages. For AutonomyWorks, the

$600,000 loan will allow it to spend more on marketing to attract more clients, which will in turn enable it to continue hiring. A Benefit Chicago loan is also a stamp of approval that helps borrowers win more business, grants, or investments.

The loans also equip enterprises to build a repayment track record, which demonstrates that impact enterprises can be valuable clients and ultimately may help them secure capital from mainstream lenders. This is another of the goals of those behind Benefit Chicago. "The traditional market doesn't like things that are new and different," says Jennifer Pryce, president and CEO of Calvert Impact Capital. "We're creating systematic change in the market."

With a minimum loan amount of $500,000, borrowers must be relatively well established. However, by offering loans to CDFIs that in turn lend to smaller organizations, Benefit Chicago can provide funding for a wide variety of enterprises. "We look to fill the gaps in the financial ecosystem," Towns says. "We believe that when that ecosystem is strong, our communities are strong and businesses can thrive."

A NEW KIND OF IMPACT INVESTOR

For the institutions behind Benefit Chicago, the fund offered not only the potential to provide critical loan capital to impact enterprises, but also a way of extending impact investing beyond high-net-worth individuals and institutional investors to ordinary investors.

While the MacArthur Foundation and CCT believed they could unlock locally motivated capital, they needed an investment vehicle. "It was really a plumbing problem," Pryce says. "There aren't many products that can bring that capital to communities."

The solution was to make Calvert's Community Investment Note accessible to people with donor-advised funds housed at CCT. "There was an opportunity through this collaboration to bring three different types of organizations together to be more than the sum of their parts," says Pryce.

While the concept of investing in for-profit organizations as a way of generat-

ing impact might be new to some donors, the fact that Calvert's note was a well-established vehicle helped and, importantly, enabled people to make very small investments. "The Calvert note is an easy on-ramp to impact investing," says Lori Scott, chief credit officer for impact investments at the MacArthur Foundation.

Helene Gayle, president and CEO of CCT, sees plenty of enthusiasm for the idea among the institution's donors, more than 600 of which have invested in Benefit Chicago. "It's a large pool, and it speaks to the beauty of something like this," she says. "Someone can buy a $20 note, and someone else can buy a $1 million note, and everyone can invest knowing they'll be getting a [financial] return—but the big return is knowing they're all helping these businesses."

The extent to which place-based impact investing can transform social financing will depend partly on what motivates investors, some of whom may care more about issues such as education or homelessness than about a geographical location or community.

"The real test is whether people will feel sufficiently passionate about a place that they're willing to pool around that," says Erika Poethig, vice president and chief innovation officer of the Urban Institute, which in May 2018 published "Investing Together," a MacArthur Foundation-funded report on place-based impact investing.

Stasch believes people's commitment to their local communities will fuel the growth of place-based impact investing. "Investors want to have a return on their money," she points out. "But sometimes just as important to them is that their money actually matters and is making a difference in the lives of people or the vitality of the community."

If she's right, financing models such as Benefit Chicago could pave the way for many more companies like AutonomyWorks to increase their impact. "This type of capital is a game changer," Friedman says. "People's lives are being changed much sooner, and more often, because this capital exists." ■

FIELD REPORT

When Rapid Equals Urgent

The Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights has pioneered a rapid-response grantmaking model connected to global grassroots activists.

BY MICHAEL SEO

Nearly 7,000 miles separated sexuality and gender activist Mariam Gagoshashvili in Tbilisi, Georgia, and the Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights (UAF) offices in Oakland, California. But in a matter of hours, the rapid-response grantmaker was able to mobilize and provide her organization, the Women's Fund in Georgia, a lifeline during a time of dire need.

Like many LGBT rights organizations, the Women's Fund in Georgia experiences frequent opposition and harassment. In 2013, the fund's landlord served the organization an eviction notice following an interview in which Gagoshashvili spoke out against the sexist traditional practice "virginity institute," which demands women remain chaste before marriage. During the following weeks, a crowd of Orthodox Christian fundamentalists and right-wing nationalist extremists verbally harassed staff and visitors coming in and out of the office.

Upon learning of the situation, UAF staff encouraged the women's fund to submit a rapid-response grant request. In fewer than five days, the Women's Fund received $5,000 to support the preparation of a complaint for the public defender of Georgia, relocation assistance for a new office space, and an upgrade of its security equipment and protocol.

In response to the complaint, the public defender warned the landlord to cease its behavior toward the WFG—the only action available in the absence of national antidiscrimination legislation. (In 2014, Parliament unanimously passed the first broad antidiscrimination law in Georgia.)

Since its founding in 1997, UAF and its consortium of sister funds have provided more than 1,800 rapid-response grants to women and transgender human rights defenders around the world. During this time, as civil societies worldwide have experienced a reassertion of restrictive regimes and policies followed by waves of civic activism, the UAF model has endured as an effective way to swiftly mitigate the detrimental impacts of unforeseen events.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace reports that nearly 100 governments introduced laws that restrict freedoms of association and gathering between 2012 and 2017. And many restrictions target women and transgender rights advocates who find themselves working in increasingly volatile settings.

About 65 percent of UAF grant requests relate to safety and security, including support to move to a safer community or country, hire guards, put up security cameras, or install bulletproof glass. This number is up from approximately 35 percent in 2012, says UAF Executive Director Kate Kroeger.

Grantees "are pushing things like gender norms and marriage equality—traditional aspects of society that are very ingrained," she says. "Because of who they are, the communities in which they work, and what they are fighting for, they are at a much higher level of physical risk."

Others in the field say the UAF is filling a critical need. "There's a general lack of resources going to locally led women's rights organizations and even fewer quality, flexible sources of funds," says Leila Hessini, vice president of programs at the Global Fund for Women.

While the Global Fund for Women works to address systemic issues that undermine women's human rights, the power of the UAF model lies in its quick response to urgent needs and life-threatening situations, Hessini says. Such funding enables local groups to pivot and shift, define their priorities, and advance solutions that reflect their realities, she says.

In 2017, the UAF, working with University of San Francisco graduate students, analyzed impact data from its 2016 grantees. Three months after receiving a grant, 85 percent of security grantees reported feeling somewhat or much safer, and 94 percent said they were able to partially or fully return to or continue with their activism. The USF team reviewed 50 randomly selected grantees and found that everyone had been able to use the funds for an unforeseen advocacy opportunity within three months of receiving the grant and 90 percent had been able to scale their work in that moment.

THINK FAST, ACT FAST

In 1997, in response to feedback from activists who expressed a need for quicker and more responsive funding during times of crisis,

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UAF cofounders Ariane Burnet, Margaret Schink, and Julie Saw developed a new philanthropic model they called Rapid Response Grantmaking. The model used technology and the explosive growth of the Internet to build processes focused on assessing grant requests with very little bureaucracy and to find ways to disburse grants in days, rather than months. Today, rapid-response organizations widely use many of these processes.

The UAF's rapid-response grant model has evolved but still relies on streamlined, processes. Funding requests arrive via the UAF website, text messaging, phone calls, and secure e-mail to protect applicants whose online activity may be under surveillance. Prospective grantees submit an application (designed to require just 10-15 minutes to complete) in their native language, succinctly describing their organization, their situation, and how funds will be used. In each of UAF's five offices, staff or external consultants translate and process submissions.

The UAF has also worked with local activists to create independent UAF sister funds, which now operate in Africa, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. Each fund is registered independently, hires its own staff, appoints its own board, and is responsible for fundraising. Each fund has an extensive network of regional advisors who are engaged in the activist movements UAF supports and are often previous grantees. Because the funds operate on such compressed timelines, advisors serve as a validation filter in the application review process while making it more participatory and reflective of on-the-ground efforts.

In 1999, the Women and Armed Conflict Working Group, which included representatives from nearly three dozen Colombian grassroots female-advocacy organizations, used a UAF grant to help peasant, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and displaced women testify to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights' special rapporteur on violence against women. This led some working group members to launch the UAF Latin America in Bogotá in 2009. New sister funds have been introduced every five to seven years; the Asia Pacific offices opened in Australia and the Philippines in January 2018.

UAF aims to create grantee-centric processes that contrast with grantmakers' often-unwieldy requirements. Staff respond to requests within 48 hours and disperse funds within 5 to 10 days—significantly faster than the typical grant disbursement time in the rapid-response sector, according to UAF staff. Grantees submit short reports three months later on how the money was spent, whether it helped, and whether they have recommendations to improve the grantmaking process. This "realistic reporting" is designed to avoid burdening the grantee, says Director of Programs Shalini Eddens. "An organization seeking a rapid-response grant is likely facing more pressing concerns," she says. The shorter reports inform UAF's internal grantmaking review processes and help to efficiently inform UAF donors.

"We are in a movement moment, and that's exactly what rapid-response grants are intended to address," Kroeger says. "When the context is shifting rapidly, activists have to pivot and restrategize to advance their advocacy agenda." Sometimes that means holding the line to ensure that rights are not revoked, and other times that means asking more of policymakers and community members. "Being adaptive means being able to work with the unanticipated," Kroeger says. "Rapid funding supports activists to do just that."

UAF's grants also support programming. In 2016, UAF Africa helped an Egyptian organization lead a "training of trainers" for 13 women artists, activists, and storytellers. The idea was to develop a larger network of storytelling workshops in Egyptian cities where both women and men could contribute to the discourse on gender-based violence and inequity. The training employed concepts from the Theatre of the Oppressed, which uses audience engagement to explore, analyze, and promote social and political change, and covered self-care and security measures for facilitators and workshop participants.

COMING BACK

Today, Mariam Gagoshashvili, the Georgian activist, is a senior program officer for the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice and a UAF board member. Such ongoing relationships with former grantees are common. Grantees might become board members at sister organizations, get involved in the grantmaking process, or refer other colleagues or organizations, Eddens says.

Before joining the UAF board in the spring of 2013, Gagoshashvili had already served on the UAF's advisory committee for two years, providing advice to groups applying for rapid-response grants from Georgia and neighboring countries. "I knew how critical their work around Eastern Europe and Central Asia is, and I wanted to make a contribution to deepen and strengthen this work," she says. "I also wanted to bring a perspective as a grassroots activist and a fellow feminist grantmaker."

She continues to provide advice to UAF staff about women human rights defenders, activists, and feminist and queer movements in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Today, movements such as #MeToo and Time's Up, and the global push for gender equality and parity, reinforce why a rapid-response fund would focus on women human rights defenders. But when Kroeger first joined the UAF in 2012, funders and advocates frequently questioned its focus.

"There is a very clear resource argument for focusing on women," Kroeger says, pointing to Human Rights Funders Network data. Only 19 percent of foundation grants go to women and girls, and less than 2 percent of global funding reaches locally led women's rights organizations. UAF's staff of 37 requires more than nimbleness to support a global movement—it relies on its network of supporters working together.

"Feminism is about achieving equality for women and men, but it's also about challenging power structures," Kroeger says. "Women and LGBT people on the front lines of human rights struggles are doing that on a daily basis. We need to do the same thing within philanthropy in order to help them succeed." ■

Funding Feedback

Fund for Shared Insight is pooling the cash and convictions of 13 philanthropies to build the field of end-user feedback. The collaborative aims to help nonprofits and funders learn from and empower those they seek to help. Can its leaders become role models for the positive change they seek to create?

BY KATIE SMITH MILWAY

Fay Twersky and Lindsay Louie of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation were stumped. Less than a year into forging a coalition of funders that was briskly moving grants out the door, they realized that they might have a flaw in their approach to fostering change. The collaborative they helped to create, Fund for Shared Insight, aimed to help funders and nonprofits become more effective by listening intently to the people they strove to help—their end users. Although gathering user feedback is common in the corporate world, where consumer preference informs strategy and makes or breaks sales, in the charitable sector, consumers too rarely get asked if the hours are convenient or the services are advancing their life goals.

The potential for user feedback to improve funder and nonprofit decisions and offerings, as it does commercial entities', seemed obvious. But it became clear to Twersky and Louie, after a January 2015 visit to nonprofits piloting ways to listen, that it was going to be hard to capture that potential. "There was no existing platform that could scale," says Twersky, "and the approaches that nonprofits were using seemed artisanal and very complex."

Twersky, Louie, and Fund for Shared Insight's story of finding simplicity on the other side of this complexity—of collaborating with other funders not to scale a proven approach, but to design a solution with nonprofits and their end users that could be adopted far and wide—is fairly unique in the world of philanthropy.

For one, the collaborative has knit itself together with uncommon principles. Whereas many collaboratives have a lead funder whose staff manages meetings, Shared Insight has an independent structure with its own dedicated staff. Its funders share leadership with equal voice, despite unequal stakes. And they buy into cultural norms such as talking out differences and engaging deeply and in person with grantees. Whereas collaboratives that invest in third-party evaluation (not all do) typically receive retrospective assessment, Shared Insight gets outside perspective in real time, embedding an evaluator at each funder meeting who holds up the funders' theory of change and flags both adherence and drift.

For another, the sheer number of partners Shared Insight has recruited to develop approaches to feedback is striking: The coalition began in 2014 with six funders pooling $6 million a year with a goal of making philanthropy more effective. Four years later, Shared Insight has granted $21.1 million and counts 78 funders collaborating with 184

Fund for Shared Insight cochair Fay Twersky (right) moderates "The Future of Feedback" panel at the May 2018 Shared Insight Gathering of grantees and co-funders in Houston, Texas.

nonprofits to develop and test a signature feedback tool that by 2020 any nonprofit with a SurveyMonkey account should be able to use.

Finally, Shared Insight's theory of change itself is audacious: It seeks to build the core capacity we all have to listen, empathize, and respond into a norm that meaningfully connects nonprofits, foundations, and the people and communities they seek to help. This goal is challenging funders' capacity to listen to diverse voices of surrounding communities and make changes themselves that advance equity and inclusion both inside their organizations and across their grantmaking. And it's challenging them to move beyond building a tool for listening to building the field of feedback.

FORMING THE FUND

When Twersky became director of the Effective Philanthropy Group at Hewlett in 2013, she brought decades of experience in social impact strategy development and measurement, including four years as a director at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Twersky, her newly hired program officer, Louie, and Hewlett's new president, Larry Kramer, reviewed Hewlett's grantmaking to strengthen its philanthropy with fresh eyes. They identified an initiative ripe for exit that was receiving grants of about $2 million annually—funds that would need a new strategy for deployment. They also found that funding for sector supports such as expert convenings, field associations, and measurement tools had lagged growth. "I had a strong sense that it would be good for more funders to be supporting infrastructure … and if we wanted to change the sector, we needed to do it together," Twersky says.

At the time, annual US charitable giving surpassed $300 billion to more than 1.4 million nonprofits. "While $2 million is a lot, it's not much per year relative to the sector we're trying to influence," Twersky says. But, she reasoned, one funder's commitment could draw other philanthropies to combine resources.

That insight led Twersky and Louie to call peers at funders around the country and convene exploratory conversations. One such peer, Darren Walker, then a vice president at the Ford Foundation (and today its president), quickly became a close ally. Based on these conversations, Twersky and Louie commissioned third-party research on four themes that had surfaced as potential common cause: beneficiary feedback, foundation openness, learning from big data, and building a common measurement system for those seeking philanthropic dollars.

Ultimately, representatives of six interested funders gathered at the Ford Foundation in February 2014 and zeroed in on the first two themes: strengthening beneficiary feedback and encouraging foundations to share their approaches, successes, and failures more openly so that others could learn from them. Most important, they committed dollars—from $250,000 to $2 million annually for each of three years—to a collective fund. Core funders included Hewlett and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation from the West Coast; and Ford, the Rita Allen Foundation, The JPB Foundation, and fintech company Liquidnet from the East Coast. Within months, a Midwest funder, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), completed the founding coalition. Some who declined joining the core contributed lesser amounts for specific projects or general operating expenses, dubbed "sidecar funding."

With funding assembled, Twersky and Louie moved to share leadership. Darren Walker's vice president at Ford, Hilary Pennington, stepped in to cochair the fund with Twersky. And they sold core funders on an uncommon operations strategy: forming a separate entity with its own management team, fiscally sponsored by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA).

Today, core funders attribute Shared Insight's ability to cycle rapidly from decision making to implementation to its independent structure and dedicated staff. Whereas many collaboratives function as coalitions of foundation representatives, the RPA perch allowed Twersky and Pennington to recruit an able and energetic managing director, longtime collaborator Melinda Tuan. A former grantmaker and foundation consultant, Tuan in turn recruited

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a tight constellation of expert contractors to manage grantmaking and grantee support, plan core funder meetings, and act on decisions.

Tuan, with Louie's help, planned a July 2014 launch meeting to address three big goals: naming the fund, agreeing on its overarching objective, and determining its founding initiatives. At that session, Brian Walsh, who leads Liquidnet's social impact arm, Liquidnet for Good, pointed to the commercial world's understanding of the value of customer insight. The idea caught on, and with additional discussion, the name "Fund for Shared Insight" emerged. The funders also developed a goal statement of creating a "greater culture of openness in foundations characterized by more sharing and listening," with constituent feedback being one expression of that openness. Finally, they agreed on an agenda for making grants, and an intent to spend 80 percent of grant budget on feedback proposals and 20 percent on foundation openness.

Within two months, Tuan and Louie designed and launched a Shared Insight website, as well as designed and posted requests for proposals (RFP). With little promotion, 187 proposals swept in for consideration at the next meeting, in November 2014. This tide ultimately informed a narrowing of focus: The proposals for grants in feedback practice were particularly strong. "Getting 128 feedback practice proposals and being able to fund just [a few]," Louie says, "was one of my least happy days as a funder."

Tuan developed a common rubric to enable all funders to assess and compare assessments on those first proposals. "We worked very consciously on our norms and codes of behavior," Pennington says. "Sometimes funder collaboratives are almost like a parallel play— you don't even put money in a common pool; you just align on what you're trying to accomplish." Instead, Twersky, Pennington, and their coalition wanted to work and learn together. They debated the language of the first RFP, and all pitched in to review grant requests. In the end, they made a total of 14 grants: seven large, multiyear grants of $300,000 to $700,000 to the impressive pool of feedback-practice proposals; two to feedback research; and five to an admittedly weaker pool of proposals to improve foundation sharing and listening.

Those early experiences of working together created the kind of trust that allowed the collaborative to navigate difficult decisions. Indeed, as founding cochairs Twersky and Pennington strove to foster a culture of openness and equity, they facilitated extended discussions of tricky issues until most votes became formalities. But if opinions remained split, no matter what one's stake in the fund, every funder got one vote and majority ruled.

For example, one contested proposal in the feedback-practice category came from the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP). It sought a major grant to continue CEP's national student survey program, YouthTruth, a pioneer in gathering end-user feedback. The request generated heated debate about "survival" funding. Cochairs Twersky and Pennington, who had been involved years earlier in founding YouthTruth *and sat on CEP's board*, decided to recuse themselves from the vote but stay in the room for a time to answer questions about YouthTruth's history. But then they realized that their very presence was wielding influence at odds with their norm of shared leadership. "It was a tricky moment," said Twersky, "but for the group to fairly make a decision, we needed to step out, knowing the vote could go either way. As cocreators and cochairs of the fund, it was an important signal that we trusted the group to make the best decision and that we would stand behind it."

The funders remaining in the room approved a smaller-than-requested grant by a 3-2 vote. Ultimately, the one-funder/one-vote norm held. This both strengthened core funders' belief in the process and paved the way for future high-risk/high-return investments. Phil Buchanan, president of CEP, reports that the bet gave YouthTruth breathing room to grow fee-based revenue to more than 70 percent of budget, a sustainable model.

At the same meeting, Shared Insight introduced another element of governance consistent with its goals: formal and continuous self-scrutiny to enable quick detection of what was and wasn't working. It hired ORS Impact evaluator Sarah Stachowiak, who began attending staff and core funder meetings. There, she reports on how Shared Insight is performing vis-à-vis stated goals. "[Being embedded] helps us to be an effective partner because we are hearing how Shared Insight members' thinking is evolving," Stachowiak says.

LISTEN FOR GOOD

Big foundations, like many represented at Shared Insight, can spend millions of dollars to achieve clarity on the change they want to foster and a strategy to achieve it. But it can take years to figure out whether their theory of change holds. With embedded evaluation and dedicated staff seizing on each indicator, Shared Insight detected a problem and revised its approach to grantmaking within the first year.

Important clues came from market response. For one, more organizations wanted funding for feedback practice than anything else. For another, the quality of feedback grant proposals was higher on average than for foundation openness. But it soon became clear that even the feedback grants were not panning out as hoped.

Some feedback-practice grantees pursued big, expansive concepts to develop resources for any nonprofit to use, but struggled to scale. For example, Feedback Commons, a tool for nonprofits and their funders to collect and share feedback data, was designed by David Bonbright and Keystone Accountability, proponents of constituent feedback since the early 2000s. While Bonbright's ideas, which blended participatory evaluation from the nonprofit world with corporate tools for customer feedback, influenced many, Feedback Commons won few users. Meanwhile, Feedback Labs, a brainchild of Dennis Whittle, was developing a global learning network on feedback method and practice with more than 400 organizations, but it faced challenges in expanding its funding base.

Other feedback-practice grantees—those providing direct service—faced a different problem. All were leaders in their fields. They included Habitat for Humanity in affordable housing and

Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) in criminal justice. These grantees were listening to constituents and learning how to improve services. But their path to change was multiyear and limited to their organizations. Although Shared Insight anticipated that changes at marquee nonprofits could create a domino effect, it appeared that making big grants to single organizations, however influential, still led to counting by ones.

That insight—that they needed a means to reach multiple organizations at once—came during that seminal January 2015 field trip by Twersky, Louie, Tuan, and founding funders Walsh and Elizabeth Christopherson of the Rita Allen Foundation to Washington, D.C., nonprofits. Twersky was rereading *The Ultimate Question* by customer-loyalty expert Fred Reichheld of Bain & Company, which introduced a one-question survey: "On a zero-to-ten scale, how likely is it that you would recommend us (or this product/service/brand) to a friend or colleague?" The resulting metric, called a "net promoter score," became part of the Net Promoter System (NPS) that many commercial organizations use to improve customer retention and revenue growth.

The idea of NPS got them all thinking. They ultimately reset their sights on a version of the approach, but for nonprofits, to be based on an existing survey platform that would allow any nonprofit to subscribe.

It also revived a suggestion of Twersky's to scale funder involvement. Early on, she thought that Shared Insight might offer co-funding opportunities on every grant. But the idea of integrating another wave of funders in year one made some Shared Insight cofounders nervous. Nonetheless, an NPS adaptation, which Shared Insight branded Listen for Good (L4G), opened a linear and logical path to revisit co-funding, with a structure that the founding core could embrace. Shared Insight staff imagined an RFP that would enable any funder to nominate grantees but ask the funder to chip in a portion of the L4G overall cost in the bargain. Moreover, L4G would come with a requirement that would prove important to future deliberations about the connection between feedback and social impact: Grants would target listening to "voices least heard," such as youth, people of color, and vulnerable populations.

Not all solicited for input were enthusiastic. CEP's Buchanan, an experienced survey developer, initially thought a social sector NPS made no sense given power dynamics between nonprofits and their clients. "Of course you'll recommend anyone who can provide [resources]," he says. Others asked how one could benchmark a nonprofit-service experience, when the users often lacked choice and weren't the payers.

Shared Insight's staff and funders determined to implement their revised strategy, mindful of warnings. They stopped making large grants to single organizations and reallocated dollars to design an online feedback tool that could scale. They planned to learn from the early adopters, aiming at a viable, open solution by 2020.

With that in mind, Twersky, Louie, and feedback consultant Valerie Threlfall attended an April 2015 NPS Forum led by Reichheld and Bain's Social Impact practice. Shared Insight representatives also interviewed existing survey platforms such as Satmetrix (which codeveloped NPS), Salesforce.com, and SurveyMonkey. They ultimately favored the last for its ease of use and large nonprofit client base. By mid-2015, Tuan contracted Threlfall, former executive director of YouthTruth, to develop a tool and a technical assistance (TA) program to help L4G grantees.

L4G may have been born on that D.C. field trip, but it came out a toddler, having grown through Shared Insight's grantmaking to marquee nonprofits. Take, for example, the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO), which helps men and women returning from prison to find jobs and transition to stable, productive life. CEO piloted text surveys to clients and garnered a solid 50 percent participation rate, consistent across subsequent surveys. CEO also employed two feedback channels that allowed for in-person listening and response: focus groups and caseworker check-ins. In addition, CEO used part of its total $600,000 in Shared Insight grants over three years to support a customer advocate, Nate Mandel, who grew CEO's feedback practice and ensured that participants who gave suggestions heard the results. The role of customer advocate, and technical assistance to implement this role, is an important part of the L4G vision, with its emphasis on "closing the feedback loop" by relaying to clients how their input led to change, to reinforce the power of self-advocacy.

Shannon Revels, a 37-year-old survey participant, saw the effect of his own feedback. He suggested that CEO provide information in their waiting rooms on renewing drivers' licenses. "It's just something [helpful] for guys in my situation who are trying to get their life back together," said Revels in an interview. California Department of Motor Vehicles literature, complete with practice tests, soon appeared. The experience gave Revels an idea for his new job as a resident service counselor for Community Housing Partnership in San Francisco: "I was supposed to run [enrichment] sessions three times a week … and I saw attendance was very low. So I decided to ask residents what sort of courses or events they wanted me to offer." Suggestions led to sessions on baseball analytics, game nights, and pop-up barbershops and hair salons, with up to 30 percent of his building's 50 residents turning out, according to Revels. Next, Revels asked residents to critique his performance, via a 2018 residents survey. According to Revels, his building returned 92 percent satisfaction.

Empowering clients like Revels is the biggest benefit of feedback loops, says CEO's chief impact officer, Brad Dudding: "One thing about starting to collect feedback and about raising the voices of constituents in your organization: You start to think about power relationships; you start to think about ways to increase participants' influence; about the relationship between employees and constituents. You ask, 'How can we create a model that is inclusive of the needs of participants and gives them a greater role in making decisions? Why can't we have alumni on our board at CEO?'"

Marrying the basics of NPS with the experiences of marquee grantees like CEO led to L4G's five-step process and five-question

survey, which gets at intangible aspects of any service experience: Were you treated with respect? Empowered to achieve personal goals? (See "The Tool: Listen for Good" below.)

By July 2015, Louie, Tuan, and Threlfall created L4G's landing page on Shared Insight's website and posted an RFP with Shared Insight's offer to fund two-thirds of the $60,000 cost to each nonprofit implementing L4G over the course of two years. With modest public promotion, the RFP in two months drew 53 nonprofit proposals nominated by 25 cofunders, in fields ranging from workforce development to health care. Funding eventually went to 46 of them. At the same time, legacy grantees, such as CEO, chose to add the anonymous L4G survey to their feedback mechanisms. CEO offered it via tablets in its waiting rooms. "Anonymous ratings were about 20 percent lower," says Dudding, "which helped us understand the courtesy bias in open ratings."

For the 2017 and 2018 rounds of L4G grants, Tuan and Louie offered info sessions at nonprofit and funder convenings across the country, leading to another 112 grants. With embedded evaluator ORS Impact tracking progress and surfacing lessons along the way about what was and wasn't working well with L4G, and with feedback from Threlfall's TA team, Shared Insight rapidly prototyped the tool. Threlfall and Louie figured out from round one that implementation costs fell in year two: They could reduce funding per grant by a quarter, to $45,000; lower the match for cofunders; and stretch L4G's budget over even more grantees.

TIME TO EVALUATE

By 2017, nearing the end of the core funders' original three-year commitments, Shared Insight was ready to evaluate the effectiveness of grantmaking and specifically the value of L4G.

A three-year review of Shared Insight's effectiveness by ORS Impact affirmed the fund's agility—its willingness to bet boldly, learn, and course-correct—and found that it had demonstrated value

The Tool: Listen for Good (L4G)

L4G is a simple system, powered by SurveyMonkey, that enables nonprofits to gather feedback from people whom they and their funders seek to help; use it to inform service delivery and strategy; and let those who gave the feedback know that their voices were heard and led to change.

At the heart of L4G is a semi-standard survey instrument, which incorporates the Net Promoter System, or NPS, a tool developed by Fred Reichheld of Bain & Company that has been employed widely in commercial customer-feedback circles. NPS uses a statistically significant correlation between repeat customers and the following calculation: the number of respondents that rate their likeliness to recommend a company to a friend at 9 or 10 out of 10 (promoters), minus the number that rate it 0-6 (detractors), divided by total survey respondents. An NPS score of more than 40 percent is considered high. However, the NPS system builds customer loyalty by having companies reach out to both promoters and detractors to let them know how their suggestions are influencing change. NPS calls this a "feedback loop."

Consistent with the spirit of creating high-quality feedback loops, the L4G

adaptation of NPS guides organizations to do five things:

Design a client survey with the following core questions:
- How likely is it that you would recommend this organization to a friend or family member?
- What is this organization good at?
- What could this organization do better?
- Overall, how well has this organization met your needs?
- How often do staff at this organization treat you with respect?

The first three questions are L4G's version of the Net Promoter System. In addition to the core questions, L4G allows organizations to ask four optional demographic questions and add as many as five custom questions to their survey.

Collect client feedback via the brief L4G survey: The survey can be translated into multiple languages, including English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese. Responses can be gathered using kiosks, tablets, texts, phone calls, paper surveys, and in-person interviews.

Interpret client feedback: Organizations analyze client feedback to identify reasons for celebration and areas for improvement. To assist with this analysis, SurveyMonkey offers benchmarks that anonymously compare the survey responses of organizations that are doing similar work.

Respond to client feedback: Organizations determine which areas identified for improvement can be addressed in the near term and which are longer-term challenges, and then take action to improve services in line with client feedback where possible. Organizations also share client feedback with their funders, who may provide resources to help organizations address areas for improvement.

Close the loop with clients: The feedback cycle doesn't end with simply implementing changes. Rather, it lets those who provided feedback know what is being done in response as we saw at CEO. By "closing the loop" in this way, L4G organizations are building stronger relationships with clients and sending the message that their clients' voices hold power.

in its portfolio of feedback grants, which appeared to be helping nonprofits improve services. "Shared Insight realized and achieved most of what it set out to do," the ORS report said.

But the evaluator also found that grants related to foundation sharing and listening had created little momentum for change. "Only a small number of foundations are known to have changed practice as a result of Shared Insight's first round of funding," the report concluded.

On the heels of this finding, Shared Insight changed its goal statement from creating a "[g]reater culture of openness in foundations, characterized by both more sharing and listening," to ensuring that "[f]oundations and nonprofits are meaningfully connected to each other and to the people and communities we seek to help, and more responsive to their input and feedback." Stachowiak says, "There were some who thought feedback was part of foundation openness. But you have to hear and respond to feedback to be open, so now we talk about, 'How do you get foundations to use feedback?'"

To further assess L4G, Shared Insight hired Harder+Company to mine survey data from 29,000 L4G survey respondents. Harder's job was threefold: to identify patterns and differences in respondent feedback—both quantitative and qualitative—by segmentation criteria such as race, gender, and age; to assess the effectiveness of the survey questions; and to judge the efficacy of NPS in the nonprofit context. What they learned gave both heart and pause, and led to Shared Insight's next pivot.

GRAPPLING WITH EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Long before the Harder analysis landed, a conversation brewed among Shared Insight's core funders around addressing equity (racial, gender, and more), diversity, and inclusion, or EDI.

Core funders represented diverse backgrounds on a number of dimensions, but of their reps to Shared Insight (one or two from each of the eight funders at the table by 2015), only three identified as people of color: Alandra Washington and Arelis Diaz of WKKF, and Chris Cardona of Ford. Each came from foundations grappling with EDI—particularly issues of race. Washington notes, "You can have equity without having racial equity. We're hopeful the conversations about race can enter into the analysis. ... How are we seeing feedback from people of color? And how can we address it?"

She and Diaz wanted to articulate a grantmaking lens sensitive to power structures and imbalance, one that went beyond L4G's focus on voices least heard. But talks weren't always comfortable. "I probably made some rookie mistakes ... in terms of how I chose to bring the discussion forward," Cardona says. He and Diaz frequently pushed for Shared Insight to take on EDI explicitly, based on Ford's and WKKF's experiences rethinking their own practices and staffing with an EDI lens.

The JPB Foundation's president and chair, Barbara Picower, another strong proponent of EDI, strove to foster EDI dialogue at her office. Others at the core funders' table had less authority to act, and it was unclear whether much was happening at their diverse

set of organizations. One seminal meeting in March 2016 held at Hewlett saw each person at the core funder table describe his or her foundation's stance toward EDI. "It was maybe a three-hour conversation," recalls Kathy Reich, at the time representing Packard. "The Black Lives Matter movement had been born. It was all raw and new. I mean, issues of race have always been with us, but they were at the top of the national agenda."

From that meeting forward, with funders' blessing, Shared Insight staff began to make changes. Within the year, Tuan had contracted EDI consultant Gita Gulati-Partee to join her team as a thought partner and advisor. By 2017, Threlfall began to diversify Shared Insight's growing technical assistance staff, which coached L4G grantees. In parallel, Tuan and Louie stepped up L4G outreach in the Deep South, garnering more proposals from the region. In 2018, Shared Insight formalized a funder subcommittee to convert commitment to EDI into practice.

The year 2017 also marked the third round of L4G grants. As these grants rolled out, Shared Insight voted to extend the fund for another three years and open its doors to more core funders. With an influx of six (and exit of one) came more voices for EDI. All 13 met on November 30, 2017, in Palo Alto, California, for the unveiling of Harder's L4G data findings at the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, which had joined the core funders in 2015.[1]

A number of Harder's findings heartened: Two thirds of respondents ranked the organizations that served them a 9 or 10 out of 10 with regard to how likely they were to recommend them. However, every organization had some clients who gave low marks, and a few organizations received very low ratings overall. This distribution bore out the method, as those lagging could learn from those leading. Moreover, analysis by Harder found strong alignment across the survey questions, indicating that NPS made sense to its respondents.

But there was disturbing news, too. The segmentation showed that, on average, youth respondents gave much lower service ratings. Most troubling was a first-blush finding that people of color on average rated services less positively than whites, but with variability by race and service. Deeper data mining showed a strong overlap between respondents of color and youth, blurring correlations. The real insight was that every organization would likely find racial, gender, age, and ethnicity insights if it disaggregated its data. "It was not that a particular group was consistently having a better experience than others," Threlfall says. "The picture was more complex."

The data also sounded a wake-up call for marquee grantees such as CEO, which, according to Dudding, hadn't prioritized looking beyond its aggregate NPS data.

Another new core funder, The James Irvine Foundation, based in San Francisco, had just completed a community listening tour with the people it wanted to help: working Californians struggling with poverty. The foundation used first-person insights to further inform strategy and grantmaking. Irvine representatives Kim Ammann Howard and Kelley Gulley shared their experience

at the Moore gathering. Coincidentally, this took place two days after Black Lives Matter announced its holiday boycott of stores run by white people and as another set of overlooked voices, those of exploited women, swelled to a crescendo with the #MeToo movement. Against this national backdrop, the Harder data and Irvine testimony reaffirmed the push by Shared Insight members to make EDI an explicit priority.

Core funders present stated how each could commit to the goals of equity and inclusion at its own foundation. What they didn't discuss was the potential to learn from their 60 L4G cofunders. Yet one of them, the Boston Foundation, was already seeing how feedback connected to empowerment at its L4G nominee, Union Capital Boston (UCB). UCB was founded by siblings Anna and Eric Leslie, a former charter school teacher and principal, respectively. It aims to help adults in lower-income neighborhoods of Boston get involved in local schools and communities. The Leslies saw 20th-century citizen movements give way to a disconnect between people and local organizing and wanted to draw parents more deeply into students' lives and community spaces. They began to adapt the concept of consumer loyalty cards to promote community loyalty. Today UCB's more than 1,100 members in urban Boston can earn gift cards of up to $500 per year for hours spent going to a school Parent-Teacher Association meeting, a neighborhood meeting, or a rally at City Hall. The cards more than offset the cost of getting there.

Diana Garcia, a single mother of four, got involved with reward-eligible activities including parenting classes and a trip with her kids to the nation's capital. But her loyalty to the program skyrocketed when her first gift card arrived. "My kids had asked for a ridiculous Christmas present, character bed sheets, and I couldn't afford it," said Garcia in an interview. "Lo and behold, in the mail there was a $150 gift card. I was hooked." By the time UCB began implementing its L4G grant, it had helped Garcia, who has cerebral palsy, to gain the confidence to transition from public assistance to employment as a network leader in Boston's Roxbury and Jamaica Plain neighborhoods. She took the survey and also promoted it to others.

"I learned a lot through the survey," said Garcia. "We have a lot of really educated [members] at UCB. They have bachelor's degrees or master's degrees. That told me I could do more educational outreach. Anything that you can get a certificate in, our members are on it." Garcia also learned that many had gained employment, as she had, since joining UCB.

For Eric Leslie and UCB colleague Laura Ballek, who oversees measurement, L4G responses exposed a gap in their program model: a lack of peer-to-peer learning. So they initiated "network nights," which bring members together at least twice a month to get to know one another, talk about information, and share resources they've found. "We had people who have talked about the opioid epidemic in Massachusetts ... about gun violence in schools," Ballek says. "I think we're at another inflection point. It's time for us to implement another listening survey to say, 'What do you want this space to become?' The biggest thing that we received from [L4G] is this mind-set of continually listening for feedback."

Like Brad Dudding at CEO, Eric Leslie realized that the next step in EDI should be changes to governance. He set in motion a process for network members to join the board.

UCB's and CEO's experiences may hold part of the answer to Shared Insight's quest to connect feedback to EDI, a quest whose urgency grows. A year ago, Ford halved its stake in Shared Insight to $1 million per year to pursue additional priorities. Meanwhile, Pennington took on the role of executive vice president at Ford and rotated her cochair role to Reich, who had joined the foundation from Packard in June 2016. Despite the demands of her new role, Pennington prioritized remaining at the Shared Insight table, asking tough questions about whether Shared Insight's agenda pushed hard enough on EDI. "I've come to believe that feedback alone does not get to fundamental issues of structural inequality, and discrimination and racism or any -ism," Pennington says. "Feedback without also working toward those shifts—even feedback that would cause improvement of services—is necessary but not sufficient."

BUILDING THE FIELD

On March 7, 2018, Pennington and other Shared Insight funders gathered in New York at the Rockefeller Foundation for their triennial meeting. There, members wrestled with tough issues in preparation for a major milestone: making L4G publicly available through SurveyMonkey as part of a larger hope to build the field of feedback. The main challenges they faced were fourfold: to engage funders more deeply; to apply an EDI lens more consistently to their work in all contexts; to adapt L4G and other feedback tools to more fields, such as advocacy and international development; and to scale L4G to reach thousands of nonprofits.

Cochair Reich guided the group through a packed agenda, including how to spend the L4G budget in the coming year. Louie presented options and debate ensued. What should they do? Invite another

round of grantees? Focus on building for the publicly available version of L4G on SurveyMonkey? Coalesce the 60 cofunders of L4G into an allied force for feedback? Opening up the tool for any nonprofit to use could scale the approach, but would it also dilute their focus on vulnerable populations?

Jennifer Hoos Rothberg and Jon Gruber of Einhorn Family Charitable Trust joined the core funders in 2017. They learned about this focus the hard way, when the L4G candidate EFCT nominated in 2017 failed to make the cut because the organization did not specifically serve disadvantaged populations. "I totally get it," Rothberg said. "It now makes much more sense to me that we're prioritizing where and how we're spending our limited resources … with the goal that we'll extract lessons to build a robust field of feedback for the broader sector later."

Others pressed stubborn questions: How could Shared Insight catalyze a field of feedback without first working on openness within and between its own foundations? Without first applying the EDI lens to themselves? Without putting feedback squarely in the service of righting inequities and eradicating discrimination?

"Is the goal to get funders to give money to nonprofits to collect beneficiary feedback? Or is our goal for funders to change their own behavior in ways that would model two-way, open, honest feedback practice in our everyday actions, including with our grantees?" Rothberg asked. "There are inherent power dynamics that are keeping funders very far away from the people who we are trying to help."

As core funders mulled L4G's future, they also reflected on their own: Tuan taped posters on the wall listing the November commitments each had made to live Shared Insight's updated goals and asked members to indicate their progress with red (none), yellow (some), or green (significant) stickers. New core funders, such as Irvine, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation (EMCF), and Rockefeller had begun their relationship with Shared Insight as L4G cofunders or sidecars, and brought fresh perspective. "Our team is charged with building the listening practice at the foundation," said Gulley, a senior program officer at Irvine. "It's actually about making sure we 'walk the talk' of using feedback to better understand those whom we seek to help."

Lissette Rodriguez of EMCF expressed the importance of one more round of L4G grants before beta launch to motivate more cofunders to adopt and promote the approach. When Reich called for yeas and nays, the L4G budget and plan for a final L4G round of grants before taking L4G public passed by a wide margin. (That final round closed in June 2018.)

THE ENDGAME

Shared Insight members increasingly envision an endgame that will see the coalition evolve from grantmaker and implementer to field builder, making listening and responding a critical method by which nonprofits and funders can advance equity and inclusion. It's a tall order. "It's a much harder problem to fix than coming up with a scalable feedback mechanism," Reich says.

Everyone recognized the challenge. Once again, lessons from grantees provided insight. The day before the March 2018 meeting, funders visited L4G grantees in New York City. One, a member of the NYC STEM Education Network, was distinguished by its determination to figure out customer experience by race. The after-school provider had surveyed just 27 students as part of its L4G pilot. While the sample was tiny, disparities by race were enormous: White students rated the program more than twice as highly as Latinos, four times higher than black students, and more than six times higher than Asians.

The candor with which the nonprofit shared this bad news embodied Shared Insight's goal of openness and meaningful connection. "The whole reason we do evaluation is to share the good stuff and the bad stuff," the nonprofit's director of evaluation says. Her colleague adds: "We're trying something we've never done before … and will make recommendations [based on] what we've learned."

Her words echoed the ethos of Shared Insight: Exploring something untried. Learning and improving. And anchoring change in an unchanging culture of creating solutions together.

And that's what has made Shared Insight's story of funder collaboration different from many. It began with a conviction that it could design a solution at scale—not to address one social problem, but to elevate nonprofit and funder effectiveness in addressing *any* social problem. The collaborative kept correcting course until it landed on L4G; then, through a grants program, it persuaded scores of funders and nonprofits to adopt L4G, with hopes that their results would propel paid subscriptions by 2020. Today, Shared Insight continues to move from course correction to redesign to bully pulpit, with sights set on developing versions of L4G for advocacy organizations and international NGOs and devising more ways to connect funders and nonprofits to community.

Yet some wonder if Shared Insight needs to invest in other aspects of unlocking change. Should it hire a counterpart to Threlfall, focused on building a shared understanding among *foundations* of the benefits of listening to voices least heard? Could it identify the best intermediate milestones that will lead to a win for feedback loops?

"Feedback is, of course, not everything, but it has the potential to pay big dividends in respect and tangible improvements," Twersky says. "We can fight for equity—for women's health rights, for example—but if those women who have won rights enter a clinic and are not treated with quality care, respect, and dignity, what have we achieved?" ◾

NOTE

1 The Fund for Shared Insight's funding partners for 2017-20 are: Rita Allen Foundation, Barr Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Einhorn Family Charitable Trust, Ford Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The JPB Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the David & Lucile Packard Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. The sidecar funders are: Liquidnet, MacArthur Foundation, Omidyar Network, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and Walton Family Foundation.

→ Effective communication is not simply about getting your message out. It requires you to strategically tap into what shapes people's feelings and values. Here we share five principles pulled from social science that will help you connect your work to what people care most about.

The Science of What Makes People Care

n March 10, 1748, John Newton, a 22-year-old English seaman who had worked in the slave trade, was traveling home on a merchant ship after a series of misadventures, including being captured and enslaved in Sierra Leone. On that day, a violent storm struck just off the coast of Donegal, Ireland. Rocks ripped a hole in the side of the ship, and it seemed unlikely that the vessel would make it safely to shore. Newton prayed and committed to devote his life to Christianity if the ship was spared. At that moment—the story goes—the ship's cargo shifted, covering the hole and allowing the ship to limp to port.

Newton kept his promise, eventually becoming an Anglican priest. Most famous perhaps for composing the hymn "Amazing Grace," the former slave trader dedicated himself to ending the slave trade. In 1787, he joined efforts with others to found the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Their members included Olaudah Equiano, a former slave whose storytelling abilities and autobiography made the horrors of slavery real. Josiah Wedgwood, an industrialist, created a logo for the campaign that inspired empathy and connected with the horrifying inhumanity of slavery. The emblem pictured

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Illustration by Shonagh Rae

an enslaved man on his knees, in chains, encircled by the words "Am I not a man and a brother?" It appeared on snuffboxes, cufflinks, and jewelry throughout Europe. Newton himself wrote a pamphlet titled *Thoughts Upon the African Slave Trade*, which detailed conditions on slave ships, and which he sent to every member of parliament.

Together they created what is often regarded as the world's first infographic: a cutaway map of the Brookes slave ship, showing how slaves were stacked and chained. They posted these images in taverns and pubs throughout Europe. (See image opposite.)

As part of their campaign, they launched a boycott of sugar, a product purchased mostly by women, who made most decisions about the foods and products their families consumed. The campaign reduced the demand for sugar by 30 percent, showing that the tie between economic dependence on slave labor and products in demand across Europe could be severed.

Their work eventually succeeded. In 1807, parliament passed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, which banned British ships from engaging in the slave trade. Their efforts are widely regarded as one of the first social justice campaigns.

What these men accomplished contains the hallmarks of any effective campaign and conveys lessons we can apply today.

In what follows, we delve into the science behind what makes people care. We've identified five principles that are supported by research from a range of academic disciplines. Collectively, these rules offer a framework for building and assessing your communication strategy and designing efforts more likely to result in belief and behavior change. But, as with any effort to apply research findings to strategy, we have to be cautious not to overstate or oversimplify what the research tells us.

Perhaps most important, applying these principles doesn't require you to make a massive investment in new communications efforts. Rather, they offer a way to make the work you're already doing more effective. Since they are also easily mastered, people throughout your organization can embrace their roles as communicators regardless of their title or role.

FROM FEELINGS TO CHANGE

Social service organizations collectively spend millions of dollars each year on communications that focus on informing people. Sadly, these kinds of efforts ignore the scientific principles of what motivates engagement, belief, and behavior change. Consequently, a lot of that money and effort invested in communications is wasted.

We are required to do better, because challenges such as poverty, homelessness, and racial and gender inequity have endured in the face of lasting and robustly funded efforts. In our Spring 2017 article for *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, "Stop Raising Awareness Already," we implored organizations in the social sector to move beyond awareness objectives in their work, because awareness-raising efforts are expensive, labor intensive, and unlikely to result in better outcomes. Such campaigns typically have one of three kinds of results: They reach the wrong audience and therefore have little to no effect; they cause backlash; or, in the worst cases, they cause harm. The science of communications argues against it.

The corporate sector has long taken advantage of science to market products from tobacco to alcohol to dish detergent. For the most part, the social sector has not made the same shift. Social service

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organizations may conduct their own research through focus groups and surveys, but most lack the resources to root their communications strategies in published academic research. Scholarship that can help you understand attention, motivation, and emotion may be the most powerful and affordable tool you're not using.

When people working on behalf of social causes have rooted their strategy in science, intentionally or not, they have tended to be highly successful. In the last several decades, we've seen significant social change: the fight for racial and gender equity, the reduction of smoking and drunk driving deaths, and the passage of marriage equality laws. You might look at these changes and see them as a reflection of a naturally changing society. But in fact, these changes were designed by thoughtful communicators who used practices that we now see are supported by behavioral, cognitive, and social science, and that you can apply to enlist people in your cause.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel," poet and writer Maya Angelou once said. Research backs her up. To gain influence on your issue, you'll need to understand what compels people to invest their attention, emotion, and action. If you're going to make a difference, you have to use the science of what makes people care as the foundation of your strategy.

Before we jump in, one more point: The research we share reflects years of study and the themes that emerged from our exploration of the science of strategic communication. Even though these recommendations are supported by studies from a range of academic disciplines, it is important to note that what we share here is our interpretation of the research theory and findings. Research can never claim to be conclusive. The recommendations here reflect suggestions of the scientists based on their work, and our perspective on how you may apply or experiment with some of those insights.

PRINCIPLE #1: JOIN THE COMMUNITY

When you walk into a crowded cocktail party, you do not loudly introduce yourself and spout facts and opinions from the middle of the room. Instead, you grab a drink, scan the room, and look for a conversation or group that interests you. You sidle up, listen for a while, and—when you have something to add—join the conversation. Organizations often aim their communication efforts toward building their own profile with messages and tactics that are more about them than about the issue they've set out to address and the audience they are addressing. They are essentially walking into a party, announcing their presence, and asking people to pay attention.

Research from multiple disciplines tells us that people engage and consume information that affirms their identities and aligns with their deeply held values and worldview, and avoid or reject information that challenges or threatens them.[1] This requires

advocates to move beyond a focus on building and disseminating a message to stepping into the world of their target community. Think of communication less as a megaphone and more as a gift to your audience. Does it help them solve a problem? Does it make them feel good about themselves or see themselves as they want to be seen? Does it connect to how they see the world and provide solutions that are actionable? If we want people to engage and take action, we have to connect to what they care about and how they see themselves.

When information is perceived as threatening or contradicting how people see themselves and their deeply held values (which are often shaped by their community), they will find a reason to ignore that information or rationalize why it is wrong. Researchers have found that people who are more conservative tend to have an individualistic worldview. They value respect for authority, preserving the sacred, and protecting their own group. By contrast, people who are more liberal tend to have an egalitarian worldview and value justice, fairness, and equality.

On the other hand, when messages are framed in a way that connects to their deeply held beliefs, people are more open to changing their stance or taking action. This has been found to be true on a range of issues, including marriage equality, solutions to climate change, and health care.[2]

At the same time, people also consume and engage with information that affirms identities that are important to them. Being a nature lover, activist, scientist, or bodybuilder may be a better indicator of what people engage with than the information itself. Our social networks, or social groups, instill the norms and taboos of the group. On a psychological level, people seek to affirm and prove that they are who they say they are by engaging in the norms of their groups. Information that asks them to question or go against these norms and values will likely be ignored.[3]

People seek information that makes them feel good about themselves and allows them to be a better version of themselves. If you start with this understanding of the human mind and behavior, you can design campaigns that help people see where your values intersect and how the issues you are working on matter to them.

For example, climate experts believe that one of the best ways individuals can make a difference is to reduce meat and dairy in their diet. Nutrition experts also believe a plant-based diet rich with natural whole foods is best for your health. Yet diets rich in meat and dairy are deeply ingrained in American habits, so asking people to give up their favorite foods for the survival of the planet is unlikely to be effective. Science tells us that people will ignore your information, justify why it is wrong or irrelevant to them, or give in to the immediacy of their own cravings rather than work toward the preservation of a future that is abstract and far away.

If you wanted to get people to eat less meat and dairy, you could develop a communication strategy that taps into the deeply held values and identities of a community with the power to affect the beliefs and norms of others in their social group. *The Game Changers*, a new documentary film that follows elite athletes, ultimate fighters, weightlifters, and bodybuilders, is seeking to do just that. The film undermines the myth that meat consumption is critical for building a strong athletic body. It shows that many of the strongest men and women in the world are vegans and that the viewers too can achieve their fitness goals by eating a plant-based diet.

Copies of this cutaway map of a slave ship, created in 1787, were posted in taverns across Europe. Regarded by some as the world's first infographic, it made a powerful case against slavery.

Approaching a group of bodybuilders and asking them to stop eating meat because it is good for the planet is unlikely to result in success. Eating meat, for this community, after all, has historically been recommended practice and a sign of masculinity.[4] But if influencers in their world tell stories about the power that veganism has played in their own lives and how it has helped them build strength, those who aspire to be like them are likely to pursue veganism, too. The filmmakers acknowledge the group's values and goals, and show how eating a plant-based diet can help. This approach doesn't obligate viewers to sacrifice something; it gives them the control to become a better

DESCRIPTION OF A SLAVE SHIP.

FIG. III.

FIG. II.

FIG. VII.

FIG. VI.

FIG. V.

FIG. IV.

FIG. I.

version of themselves. It's possible that these influencers and their followers will share this new norm within their community and spread the perspective that veganism is the path to strength.

How to apply this insight: Find your vegan bodybuilders. Identify a group whose change in behavior could make a profound difference for your issue or inspire others to take action, and figure out how to bring that group value.

PRINCIPLE #2:
COMMUNICATE IN IMAGES

People in the social sector work on complex issues that are fairly abstract: justice, equality, wellness, fairness, and innovation. One of the challenges with these abstract concepts is that they leave space for people to make assumptions about what these terms mean to them. For example, someone hearing the term "innovation" might worry about how innovations in tech could make their job unnecessary, while another might interpret it as a way to apply fresh thinking to stubborn challenges.

But concrete, visual language engages the visual and emotional areas of our brains. "We are primates, with a third of our brains dedicated to vision, and large swaths devoted to touch, hearing, motion, and space," Harvard cognitive scientist Steven Pinker writes in *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century.* "For us to go from 'I think I understand' to 'I understand,' we need to see the sights and feel the motions. Many experiments have shown that readers understand and remember material far better when it is expressed in concrete language that allows them to form visual images."

A study by Princeton University linguist Adele Goldberg suggests that "metaphorical sentences may spark increased brain activity in emotion-related regions because they allude to physical experiences." Her study showed activity in the emotion area of participants' brains when they heard metaphors that connected to experience. "Sweet" drew a stronger response than "kind." "Bitter" drew a stronger response than "mean." Goldberg's coauthor, Francesca Citron, a psychologist at Lancaster University, suggests that figurative language creates a rhetorical advantage.[5]

One could hardly find a better example of this principle at work than Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, delivered August 28, 1963, in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Nearly every sentence includes vivid imagery, from "Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred" to this stirring visual: "I have a dream that one day in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, one day

Five Principles for More Effective Communications

Join the community: Identify a group whose change in behavior could make a profound difference for your issue or inspire others to take action, and figure out how to bring that group value.

Communicate in images: Use visual language instead of abstract concepts to help people connect with your work.

Invoke emotion with intention: Think about what you're trying to get people to do and how they would feel if they were doing it. Then think about stories that would make them feel that way.

Create meaningful calls to action: Review your calls to action to make sure they ask communities to do something specific that will connect them to the cause and that they know how to do.

Tell better stories: Go beyond simply sharing messages to telling interesting stories with a beginning, middle, and end.

right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers."

We use this speech in class and workshops to help people see just how powerful figurative language can be. In a workshop with senior military officials from countries surrounding the Lake Chad region in central Africa, one of the men said after watching an excerpt of King's speech, "All I can see is freedom, but if you had asked me what that looked like before I listened, I could not have told you. King gave me image after image after image of freedom, and now I can see nothing else."

How to apply this insight: Are you using abstract concepts to describe your organization, issue, or solutions? Try creating a picture in the mind of your audience of what that concept looks like. Use visual language to help people connect with your work. The next time you write a presentation for yourself or someone else, try printing it out with wide margins. Can you create drawings of the images you're creating in your listeners' minds? If not, go back and add visual language that will keep their attention and stick in their memories.

PRINCIPLE #3: **INVOKE EMOTION WITH INTENTION**
People who work for social change want others to feel as strongly as they do about their cause. And most of us recognize the importance of telling stories that invoke profound emotion. We see many organizations striving to make people empathize with those they're trying to help through sad stories. In some of the work we do with a humanitarian relief organization, staff members often tell us, "I just want people to imagine what it would feel like to leave everything behind and run for your life." The staff care deeply about the organization's mission, and they want the world to care just as much.

But getting people to care requires a more nuanced approach to emotion. Relying on sadness as a way to "pull on heartstrings" may actually result in your community tuning you out entirely. People tend to avoid or remain unmoved by stories and situations that attempt to make them feel bad. If you've changed the channel or gone to make a sandwich when that commercial comes on featuring singer Sarah McLachlan with the heartbreaking images of animals in shelters to the strains of "In the Arms of an Angel," you know what we mean.

Research tells us that people are really good at avoiding information for three reasons: It makes them feel bad; it obligates them to do something they do not want to do; or it threatens their identity, values, and worldview.[6] From lifesaving health information to climate change to mass violence, people avoid information that makes

them feel sad, fearful, or guilty when there isn't a way to resolve those feelings. That's why it can be so hard, for example, to communicate on issues of climate change. If humans are responsible for the warming of the climate, talking about the causes and solutions may leave them feeling guilty. As Ezra Markowitz, professor of environmental decision making at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, told us last year in an interview:

> A lot of the [climate change] messaging we have heard for decades now is each of us needs to take responsibility for the emissions that each of us are responsible for; our use of electricity to driving our cars around makes us all responsible. The implication there is that we should feel guilty about this problem. The problem is we are really good at getting out of feeling badly since nobody wants to feel badly about themselves. We have a guilty bias. People are really good at trying to avoid feeling guilty. And so we downplay the issue, we downplay the loss of victims, we kind of play up the fact that there is lots of uncertainty to get us out of feeling badly about it.

Studies have shown other, similar tendencies. People are more likely to avoid learning about their risk for obesity if it obligates them to have a pill regimen forever. Women are more likely to choose not to find out their risk for endometriosis if it requires a cervical exam. In one study, patients said they would even pay $10 to avoid finding out if they had herpes because of the anxiety they did not want to feel.[7]

Although people avoid information that makes them feel bad, they are attracted to things associated with pleasant emotions. For example, awe—the feeling of wonder that comes with seeing a brilliant landscape or sunset—opens us to connecting with others because we feel smaller and more connected to other humans.

Calls to action that leave people feeling that they will not make a difference on the issue will likely result in inaction.

The film *Human*, by director Yann Arthus-Bertrand, juxtaposes breathtaking landscapes and images from throughout the world with conversations with diverse individuals from different cultures and viewpoints who share their stories. It profoundly demonstrates the power of awe to open us to new perspectives. Research by Melanie Rudd, consumer behavior scholar at the University of Houston, and her colleagues seems to show that feeling awe can increase openness to learning and willingness to volunteer.[8]

Another pleasant emotion, pride, can be exceptionally powerful. Researchers have found that people anticipating feeling pride in helping the environment were more likely to take positive action than those anticipating guilt for having failed to do so.[9]

Several organizations and movements have shifted to invoking pleasant emotions, with great effect. Greenpeace, for example, has focused on hope rather than fear, anger, or guilt. In the early years of their work, Greenpeace was known for angry acts by a small group of champions chaining themselves to trees to demonstrate

their anger toward environmental offenders. More recently, however, they have moved toward a strategy that includes optimism and inspiring others. Their message strategy now includes this passage:

> Now, to save the world, we're going to get a billion other people to smash their own impossibles.
>
> We will tell stories using language that is optimistic, bold and includes a humorous wink. We will rebel against convention and make beauty in the face of dreary and stale.[10]

Communications strategists know they have to be deliberate in identifying their goals and target community. We have to use the same intention with the emotions we choose to invoke. Each emotion can lead people to different actions, and pleasant emotions can be especially effective. As you think about what it is you want people to believe and do, use emotion with intention.

How to apply this insight: Think about what you're trying to get people to do and how they would feel if they were doing it. Then think about stories that would make them feel that way.

PRINCIPLE #4: CREATE MEANINGFUL CALLS TO ACTION
"Sign our petition." "Follow us on Facebook." "Click here for more information." Do these calls to action sound familiar? As common as they are, they don't tell anyone how to make a difference. They may leave people feeling like their efforts will be mere drops in a bucket. They don't inspire.

It is also easy to conflate goals with calls to action. But they are not the same thing. The 1955-56 Montgomery Bus Boycott aimed at Jim Crow laws in public transportation sought to end segregation of the bus system as a step toward ending racism. But the call to action was not "end segregation" or "end racism." How would the community even begin to know how to do that in an organized and strategic way? Instead the call to action was "Don't ride the bus." People knew how to do that: They rode bikes, set up carpools, or walked.

So how do we create calls to action that motivate people to take action and will make substantial progress toward our goal? Effective calls to action follow three rules: They are specific; the target community sees how the solution will help solve the problem; and they are something the community knows how to do.

First, make your call to action concrete and super-specific. In one study, marketing professor Melanie Rudd and her colleagues provided two different calls to action to two distinct groups. One group was asked to "support environmental sustainability." The other group was asked to "increase the amount of materials or resources that are recycled or reused." The 70 participants had 24 hours to complete their tasks. In a follow-up survey, the researchers assessed how happy the participants were with their action. Participants who had the concrete goal of increasing resources for recycling reported greater happiness. They conducted similar experiments for "make someone happy" versus "make someone smile," and "give those who need bone marrow transplants greater hope" versus

"give those who need bone marrow transplants a better chance of finding a donor." Rudd and her colleagues argue that concrete calls to action make people happier because the gap between their expectations and reality becomes smaller. They are left feeling good about what they were able to accomplish. The researchers theorize that when people are more satisfied and happy with their action, they are more likely to help again.[11]

Second, people need to see how their action will help solve the problem. Calls to action that leave people feeling as though they will not make a substantial difference on the issue will likely result in disengagement or inaction. Paul Slovic, social psychologist at the University of Oregon and president of the Decision Science Research Institute, and his colleagues argue that when people feel as though their actions will not make a difference, they are less likely to take action. The negative feelings outweigh any positive feelings they might have had from the action. The researchers refer to this as "pseudo-inefficacy." In one study, Slovic and his colleagues found that people were more likely to give to one child in need than to a group of children because as the number of children increases, people's sense of efficacy and impact decreases. In another study, when people were asked to donate to a single child facing starvation, the number of donations decreased as they were made more aware of millions of children who would still be in need of aid.[12] "Beliefs of personal efficacy constitute the key factor of human agency," writes Stanford University social psychologist Albert Bandura. "If people believe they have no power to produce results, they will not attempt to make things happen."[13]

Third, people need to know how to do the thing you are asking them to do, and be able to easily incorporate it into their daily routines and habits. If your call to action is not easily incorporated into your target community's everyday life or is not easily achieved, they may not take action. When you're designing calls to action, it will be important to understand the habits and routines of your target community. The Ice Bucket Challenge—a viral social media campaign that persuaded people to post videos of themselves pouring ice water over their heads to raise money for additional research about ALS—did this well. People habitually scroll through their social media feeds. Asking people to post videos of themselves dumping ice water on their heads or donating money to ALS and nominating others in their social network taps into these habits. Sander van der Linden, a social psychologist at the University of Cambridge, argues that this campaign went viral because it taps into the psychological habits of the mind, including engaging in behavior to fit in and follow the norms of your social group, and the desire to feel good about one's actions—both internally for participating and externally through likes and comments.[14]

How to apply this insight: Review your calls to action. Are you asking communities to do something specific that they value, that will connect them to the cause, and that they know how to do?

PRINCIPLE #5: TELL BETTER STORIES

Storytelling is the best tool we have for helping people care about issues. People are more likely to remember information they get in narrative form.[15] Stories have the unique power to convey new perspectives and thereby lower counter-arguing, increase perspective-taking and empathy, and capture and maintain people's attention.[16]

Gregory Berns, a neuroscientist at Emory University, and his colleagues suggest that reading a novel creates new connections in the brain, which leave us thinking about the story long after it ends. When we experience a captivating story, we emerge from it changed and often remember the events and experiences in the story as if they were our own.[17]

While the social sector has embraced the importance of storytelling, many people are not actually sharing stories. Instead, they use vignettes or messages. Stories have characters; a beginning, middle, and end; plot, conflict, and resolution. If you do not include these elements, you are not telling a story.

Scholars and data scientists have studied thousands of stories to understand universal themes. When we tell stories to help people care about our issue, we should figure out which plot structures we wish to use. In his 2004 book *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*, journalist Christopher Booker outlines some basic plot structures, such as "Overcoming the Monster," "Rags to Riches or Riches to Rags," "The Quest," and "Voyage and Return."

Leaving some specific details out of your story creates an empty space for your readers to insert their own experience.

As people hear a story, they seek cues about how the story will unfold and who the protagonist is. Familiar plot structures—such as "rags to riches" ("Cinderella")—help orient the audience's expectations about the events to unfold and whose team they should be on. This is particularly important for communicating with audiences that may not be familiar with the issue you are working on. But for audiences that are very familiar with the issue, playing with plot structures that break expectations and surprise them may be more important for capturing their attention and avoiding fatigue from hearing the same story one too many times.

But simply using these different plots doesn't guarantee that people will engage with the tale you want to tell. Organizations that have adopted a strategy of incorporating stories in their work frequently reuse the same plot structures, emotions, and types of characters. As a result, many organizations tell stories that just aren't that interesting. Gain your community's attention and engagement with unexpected twists, less-used plot structures, and unusual characters.

Keith Bound, media scholar at the University of Nottingham, studies horror films and consults with the movie industry to make horror films scarier. "People want stories that operate just at the edge of expectation," he says. In other words, we enjoy the comfort of knowing where a story is headed, but surprise keeps our attention. Similarly, computer scientists at MIT recently found that false news stories can travel faster than true stories because they defy expectations. They found that stories were more likely to be shared when they included a surprise or caused disgust.

Despite what you learned in your high school writing classes, the most powerful stories aren't necessarily the most richly detailed. Great stories leave space for the audience in two ways.

One is allowing people to put the pieces together for themselves. "The audience actually wants to work for their meal," says Andrew Stanton, a Pixar director and screenwriter, in his 2012 TED talk "The Clues to a Great Story." "They just don't want to know that they're doing that. That's your job as a storyteller, to hide the fact that you're making them work for their meal. We're born problem solvers. We're compelled to deduce and to deduct, because that's what we do in real life. It's this well-organized absence of information that draws us in." Stanton's observation finds support in academic literature. For example, a study that offered readers the opportunity to experience three different stories found that the one that forced them to put the story together for themselves was seen as most interesting of the three.

Because we fill in missing details with what is familiar to us, leaving some specific details out of your story creates an empty space for your readers to insert their own experience—what is known and familiar to them. When Aylan Kurdi's tiny body washed ashore on the Greek island of Kos on September 2, 2015, after his family fled the Syrian conflict, his image was captured by a photojournalist. The image and story went viral, and donations to support the Syrian refugees spiked. Why did his image capture the world's imagination? It may have been his universality. In his simple red T-shirt and blue shorts, with his face obscured and the absence of identifying details—we couldn't see his face, and his clothes were so simple that we might see them on any child—it was possible for us to imagine a child we loved in his place.

Detail is important, however, when you're working to use the power of storytelling to help people look at something in a fresh light. Adding specific, visual details about a character or situation where your readers may have bias, prejudice, or a set of assumptions helps get them to see things in a new way. When you're telling stories about social issues, the social forces shaping that problem should be the context of your story—a problem to overcome or a setting that shapes the decisions of the protagonist. The recently deceased chef, writer, and television journalist Anthony Bourdain was a master of this device. In his CNN show *Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown*, which was ostensibly about food and travel, he went on quests to find delicious dishes and unique cultures that most people could only imagine, and uncovered injustice, poverty, conflict, and triumph along the way.

How to apply this insight: Are you telling stories with a beginning, middle, and end, or simply sharing messages? What new insights will your audiences gain from hearing these stories? Are your stories interesting enough in their own right to merit a listen—even if the listener isn't passionate about your issue? And are you using the empty and full spaces of your stories to help people gain new insights on topics and issues they assume they know well?

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

If you're finding that your communications strategies aren't working, consider this: People fail to act not because they do not have enough information, but because they don't care or they don't know what to do. If you start with this perspective as the foundation for your work, you can craft a strategy that helps people care and tells them exactly what you want them to do.

In your work to make the world a better place, you don't have a moment or penny to spare. Investing your communications resources simply in spreading information will not inspire anyone to get behind your cause. If you want people to get on board, you have to make them care, and you have to show them how they can make a difference. ∎

NOTES

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Organizations are increasingly turning to system change to tackle big social problems. But systems are complex, and mastering the process requires observation, patience, and reflection. To begin, here are two approaches to pursuing system change.

Mastering System Change

Gone's for once the old magician with his countenance forbidding;
I'm now master, I'm tactician, all his ghosts must do my bidding.
Know his incantation, spell and gestures too;
By my mind's creation wonders shall I do.

from "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," by J. W. von Goethe[1]

BY CHRISTIAN SEELOS & JOHANNA MAIR

Illustration by Kevin Mercer

In J. W. von Goethe's poem "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," an old sorcerer leaves his young apprentice behind to clean the house. The boy soon tires of his chore and uses a magic spell to enlist the help of a broom. The broom, however, starts pouring pails and pails of water on the floor. The boy is unable to control the broom, and the house is flooded. When the sorcerer returns, he quickly breaks the spell, cleans up the water, and warns the boy not to use forces he doesn't understand and can't control.

The poor young fellow had what we might call today an unfortunate encounter with complex causality. Instead of creating "wonders" by commanding a bewitched broom whose powers he neither understood nor could control, the apprentice's actions caused chaos and damage.

We were reminded of the apprentice's story when reflecting on the growing interest and sometimes outright infatuation with system change. Like the sorcerer's broom, any system that prides itself on some minimal complexity is difficult to understand or to control. Do we—like the sorcerer's apprentice—ask for trouble when we intend to change systems? Yes, we do!

But that doesn't mean that we shouldn't attempt to change complex systems for the better. What it does mean is that we must be respectful of the difficulty and dangers of trying to do so. In this article, we want to arm you with effective "spells and gestures" to ward off some of the troubles you may encounter when undertaking system change. We will also offer two different approaches, or archetypes, for pursuing system change that we have identified during the course of our research,

and by doing so provide examples of how organizations can master the cause-effect architecture of systems and enact effective change.

THE APPRENTICE'S DILEMMA

Despite the best efforts of policymakers, foundations, NGOs, and social enterprises tackling issues like poverty, preventable disease, and poor education, these seemingly intractable problems persist. In response, many are turning to the idea of system change as a way to solve the root causes of these problems.

Recent articles in *Stanford Social Innovation Review* reflect the hopes and ambitions inherent in efforts to promote system change as a defining approach of social innovation. Reviewing these articles reveals that many people see system change as a silver bullet for increasing the effectiveness of social innovations to create better services by making health-care organizations more capable and agile;[2] integrating the voices of beneficiaries in defining what success means;[3] and transforming the education system into a learning ecosystem.[4]

Another set of system change articles seeks to solve complex social problems more effectively and efficiently by creating space for collective wisdom and action to emerge;[5] understanding the system in which social problems sit;[6] and supporting system entrepreneurs that overcome resource constraints to change systems.[7]

And a third set of system change articles seeks to help foundations and funders make positive social gains sustainable at scale by following five simple rules;[8] employing an "ecosystem of tools";[9] taking into account all aspects of a problem from the start;[10] and coordinating the assets of several funders.[11]

Measured in terms of motivation and ambition, the time is no doubt ripe for system change. But most authors also agree that we are far from competent in dealing with systems. Sara Farley, cofounder of the Global Knowledge Initiative, says that "there is real excitement about systems right now and many are willing to say 'systems matter' even with little understanding what that means." In a recent article about system leadership, the authors expressed similar concerns: "There is a widespread suspicion that the strategies being used to solve our most difficult problems are too superficial to get at the deeper sources of those problems."[12]

But what is even more concerning than the lack of competence is, as Dan Vexler recently pointed out, that the adoption of the systems discourse signals a stark expansion of the social sector's ambitions by aiming higher.[13] Dietrich Dörner, a pioneer in studying how professionals engage with system change, warns about ambitious people with good intentions who lack adequate competence. "Incompetence that would otherwise have remained harmless often becomes dangerous, especially as incompetent people with good intentions rarely suffer the qualms of conscience that sometimes inhibit the doings of competent people with bad intentions,"[14] writes Dörner.

In system work, small mistakes add up because cause and effect are separated in time and are difficult to observe. This dynamic hinders ongoing adaptation, and people may not realize their errors until it's too late. Dörner reminds us that social evils, atrocities, crimes, and even wars may be triggered not by bad intentions but by the inability to deal with the causal complexity of systems. "When simple inability begins a causal series, extremely brutal actions can result in the end."[15]

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This is the story of the sorcerer's apprentice applied to system change. But it's not just the complexity inherent in systems that makes change efforts difficult. We also need to pay attention to how those doing system change experience this dynamic and how they decide and learn from this experience over time.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DYNAMICS OF TRYING TO CHANGE A SYSTEM

Psychologists like Dörner have studied the struggles of thousands of professionals from different backgrounds trying to change complex systems, such as a declining region or a whole city, for the better. These psychologists observed predictable patterns of pathological behavior. Experienced professionals with high ambitions tended to quickly decide on system interventions but spent little time trying to understand system dynamics and characteristics. Expecting success rather than learning caused frustration and emotional stress when their efforts produced early failures and unintended consequences.

To quickly regain a sense of control, participants frequently jumped from one topic area to another. They might, for example, begin by investing in affordable housing, but when challenges emerged, they prioritized agriculture, schools, or community health workers, hoping that some intervention would eventually work. And finally, instead of adequately reflecting on prior decisions, participants resorted to making big bets in single, "no-risk" areas such as job creation or education to create the illusion of success. A negative feedback cycle of ineffective behavior coupled with increasing ambitions and loss of control was the fate of many efforts to make a system "better."

Intervening in complex systems requires keen attention to two issues: to avoid making systems worse by creating unintended negative consequences; and to protect the mental sanity, motivation, and emotional strength of those who aspire to change systems. In other words, steering system change requires that we nurture and develop our levels of competence and ambitions in sync.

UNDERSTANDING AND CHANGING A SYSTEM'S ARCHITECTURE

More than 2,000 years ago, Aristotle understood that comprehending the world requires knowledge of the causes that make it spin. In our research, we have adopted the perspective that the systems people target for change are causal architectures that have social problems as their effect.

The architecture of social systems is fundamentally shaped by the characteristics of people, their beliefs and ambitions, their skills and access to resources, and the norms and rules by which they relate to each other and their environment. Different systems have different architectures and thus generate different patterns of behavior.

This causal architecture also generates the characteristics and dynamics of social problems, or what one might think of as undesirable system effects. In other words, systems themselves are not

problems, but their architecture may create and sustain social problems. System change efforts therefore require spelling out which sets of problems are targeted and determining how system change is an effective way to do something about these problems. System change does not replace problem solving but instead challenges us to couple both dimensions.

Because of the complexity of system architectures, many change proposals rely on collaborative initiatives.[16] But collaboration introduces additional complexity and requires aligning resources, competencies, strategic priorities, and ideologies about effective and legitimate means and ends across partners from different sectors. Whether this complexity can be mastered effectively is an open question. There is much to learn from collaborative system change efforts over the next decades.

But we think there is also much to be learned from looking at how single organizations can change systems by finding ways to operate at lower system complexity and to overcome the apprentice's dilemma. In this article we examine two organizations—Sekem and Gram Vikas—that have made great strides toward changing seemingly intractable problems in Egypt and India, respectively. We believe that they provide two archetypes for system change that improve the odds of mastering causality—of understanding and transforming systems to generate intended outcomes.

The first archetype, exemplified by Sekem, is "changing a system by building a system." In this archetype, an existing system is not directly transformed but rather lured toward a new trajectory by the

System change does not replace problem solving, but instead challenges us to couple both dimensions.

attracting forces of a newly built system with desirable properties. The second archetype, exemplified by Gram Vikas, is "changing a system by isolating a subsystem." This archetype directly transforms the architecture of a lower-complexity subsystem to alter behavior that generates more desirable outcomes. There may well be many more effective archetypes for system change, but the purpose here is to introduce the principles and practices of effective system change archetypes by focusing on these two types.

SEKEM: CHANGING A SYSTEM
BY BUILDING A SYSTEM

Systems theory has developed the idea of attractors, particular states, toward which systems gravitate. Social scientists adopted the term "attractors" to denote forces that make systems evolve into and get stuck in unfortunate situations, such as high levels of poverty and inequality. Attractors can also mobilize a system—for example, when a powerful idea resonates deeply within a system and shifts its trajectory toward new possibilities. When President John F. Kennedy articulated the vision to put a man on the moon, his idea acted like a magnet that attracted and reconfigured a large system of research and development across many public and private initiatives to create something that was not considered feasible at that time.

Looking at Sekem allows us to explore the idea of attractors for changing systems in a development context. The organization built a complex system composed of several commercial, social, and educational entities. This system created such radically different and desirable outcomes that it became an attractor with the potential to shift Egypt's trajectory. Sekem is doing this in three ways. It provides such a stark contrast to reality that it acts as a mirror showing Egypt that a desirable future and new possibilities can already be enacted today. Its bold vision has become a welcome symbol of pride and ambition against a background of pessimism and hopelessness in the rest of Egypt. And the fact that Sekem designs, owns, and controls all aspects of the system it is creating provides it with the resilience to withstand the tensions and threats that Egypt (as a transitioning system itself) poses.

Sekem was started by Ibrahim Abouleish, who was born in 1937 into a Cairo manufacturing family that was culturally open-minded and Muslim. The family lived in the city's Jewish quarter, and Abouleish attended a Christian kindergarten and a French elementary school. After graduating from high school, Abouleish moved to the small town of Graz, Austria, to fulfill his dream of studying in Europe. At the University of Graz, he earned a PhD in pharmacology and became a research director at a pharmaceutical company.

In 1975, Abouleish made an extended visit to Egypt and confronted a dysfunctional system. The economy was broken. Businesses had been nationalized and ran deficits. Most people seemed to have jobs that neither inspired them nor provided sufficient income. Rural areas were abandoned for urban centers and urban slums were growing. Waste was piling up everywhere. Health-care and education systems were ineffective. And misguided agricultural policies resulted in water, land, and crop contamination with diseases and pesticides. What a contrast to his memories of a mostly joyful childhood. Abouleish was devastated. "On my return journey I sat in the plane and thanked Allah that I did not live in Egypt, but in beautiful Austria with my wife and two children and my successful career," he says.[17]

But Abouleish's urge to do something about Egypt's problems grew. Many reasons for Egypt's system failure were obvious. Corruption, inefficient economic reforms, lack of accountability for bad services, and inconsistent legal procedures all conspired to attract a system toward a state of painful hopelessness. But how to change this system?

In 1977 Abouleish made a radical decision: He quit his job in Austria and moved with his family to Egypt. He bought 70 hectares (roughly 7,000 acres) of desert land that no one wanted and started an initiative that he called Sekem. His dream was to build a garden in the desert as a basis for comprehensive development of people and the land. Rather than changing the system of Egypt and its many problems, he aspired to build his own system, in the form of a parallel world that people could come see and touch. Sekem would become a mirror for Egypt to show how a healthy system could be realized today.

Many supporters, mainly from Germany, were attracted by this bold vision and came to leave their footprint: Architects designed beautiful houses, cows were shipped from Germany to help build up soil fertility, a medical doctor organized and helped build medical facilities to earn the trust of local communities. Sekem's economic support was based on biodynamic agriculture and enabled the growth of Sekem companies selling organic textiles, foods, and herbal teas as well as biopharmaceuticals. Kindergartens and schools were built, and Sekem's Heliopolis University—which deeply integrates sustainable development into its research, teaching, and outreach activities—opened in Cairo.

Sekem transformed desert land into an oasis, beautifully landscaped with artistic touches and a large amphitheater, plentiful shade trees, and flower gardens at every turn. "I wanted beauty and grace not just in addition to the companies, but as an integral part from the start, spreading its influence over everything," Abouleish wrote.[18]

It took time for local communities and public servants to change their initial reservations and outright hostility into a more supportive relationship with Sekem. Today, Egyptian politicians proudly bring foreign visitors to Sekem, and many countries have invited Sekem to replicate its model. Convinced by Sekem's development of biological pest controls, Egypt changed its agricultural policies to radically limit pesticide use. The farmers surrounding the Sekem farms have imitated and adopted the methods of replacing chemical fertilizers with compost for improving soil fertility. Sekem thus kick-started an Egyptian market for healthy biologically grown food that is now increasing by 15 percent annually.

Sekem also became a preferred employer, due to its emphasis on providing safe, healthy, and dignified work conditions. Sekem encourages every employee to spend about 10 percent of her time on personal development by participating in the many artistic and scientific courses, events, and discussions that are offered. Abouleish had always believed that arts encouraged people to be more open and respectful toward their environment. He considered this spirituality essential for the development of ecological consciousness and social change. New Sekem staff members often resist these activities but soon experience how their participation creates trust and respect and connects people into a community.

The Sekem schools and university also include training in environmental sustainability, the arts, movement, and music, which is quite exceptional in Egypt. Many state-run schools are now inviting Sekem to teach courses in sustainable development. Sekem's female management and the many young female employees who received training in traditional male jobs are acting as role models for the schoolchildren who spend time during their summer break on the Sekem farms or at the Heliopolis "children's summer university."

Helmy Abouleish, who after the death of his father, Ibrahim, in 2017 became CEO of Sekem, created the Egyptian National Competitiveness Council to develop strategies for innovation, green transformation, and education and to influence government policies for sustainable development. However, shifting the trajectory of a large system like Egypt is a slow process. The Egyptian revolution of 2011 put a screeching halt to the transformation of Egypt. About 75 percent of Egyptian private businesses collapsed because of the crisis, but Sekem did not lay off a single employee.

Sekem's organizational resilience and spiritual strength enabled the Sekem community to re-engage with its mission, what its founder called a "200-year plan"—three generations working on attracting people, resources, and policies to lure the system of Egypt onto a new trajectory. Indeed, Egypt's 2014 constitution for the first time emphasized topics such as sustainable development and the protection of workers' and women's rights. The United Nations called this constitution and Egypt's Vision 2030 (its sustainable development strategy launched in 2015) "unprecedented in its scope and significance at the national level."[19]

GRAM VIKAS: CHANGING A SYSTEM BY ISOLATING A SUBSYSTEM

We often hear that in today's hyperconnected world, everything is linked to everything. Consequently, every action has system-wide effects. But if this were really the case, either complex systems would be in a frozen state where no part could make an independent move, or the radical ongoing change in systems would preclude any hope for understanding and intervening in its causal structure.

> In many ways, system change resembles an innovation process—an investment in learning with uncertain outcomes.

Fortunately, the Nobel Prize-winning economist Herbert Simon reminds us that complex systems are hierarchical.[20] They consist of layers of subsystems that have lower levels of complexity and that are connected to some, but not all, other subsystems. Consider a human body as a complex system. It consists, for example, of organs, functional subsystems that are much less complex than the entire body. If we could not isolate and intervene in these subsystems, medicine as we know it would not be possible.

Can we use this insight from medicine for social systems too? Our own research indicates that subsystem isolation might indeed be an effective change archetype. "Relational" subsystems such as individuals within a group or families with strong relational bonds, "spatial" subsystems such as remote villages or islands, and "functional" subsystems such as education or health care might all be considered as lower-complexity subsystems of a larger social system. In fact, specialized functional subsystems in developed countries can sometimes be considered almost in isolation.

Mature functional subsystems like health care are the results of decades of improvements and specialization. They are composed of dedicated staff, have clear codes of conduct, and often colocate with distinct infrastructure such as a clinic. All these characteristics of functional subsystems facilitate mastering causality: understanding and transforming their causal architecture.

This mastery, for example, enabled health professionals to transform Nova Scotia's public health-care system.[21] Staff, processes, and infrastructure that were a part of Nova Scotia's health-care

subsystem could be identified and its behavior could be studied. People were trained, information flowed more freely, decision-making processes were improved, and a new vision was articulated to this specialized group of professionals. Prior analysis of the causal architecture of such subsystems is possible and therefore valuable, and design-driven approaches are useful.[22] And the transformation of a functional subsystem like health care can improve the lives of everyone in the larger social system.

The example of Gram Vikas illustrates how spatial subsystems, in this case remote villages, can be isolated and transformed. When Gram Vikas set out to tackle the problem of inequality in rural India, it set itself up for a tough and drawn-out learning curve.[23] Initial efforts were plagued by some of the pathological system change behaviors previously mentioned. Over several years, the organization intervened in various subsystems in rapid succession, driven by high ambitions to make a difference.

In the beginning, Gram Vikas focused on seemingly simple functional subsystems such as small-scale agriculture, dairy, and education. But in developing countries, functional subsystems are harder to isolate and understand. They lack dedicated staff and infrastructure, clear codes of conduct, and stable patterns of operating that facilitate understanding and reconfiguring these systems. As a result, Gram Vikas' tactics frequently resulted in mis-specified and thus ineffective solutions that made vulnerable communities sometimes worse off.

Almost by accident, Gram Vikas (now desperate for some positive action) learned how to provide solutions that had lower risk of failure and generated quick benefits. By providing effective medicines, electricity from biogas, and simple water infrastructure, the organization earned the trust of rural villagers and enabled the organization to learn about the multiple causes of inequality. But this approach also drove Gram Vikas into a pure problem-solving mode where targeting one problem opened up a whole new box of problems. The constant change of focus was overwhelming and left the organization exhausted, and at risk of losing a sense of progress and motivation. Many early members of Gram Vikas left.

Leaders of the organization then had an important insight: Instead of focusing on functional subsystems that were hard to isolate, it would focus on spatial subsystems. A rural village is probably the smallest subsystem that contains all the dimensions of gender and caste inequality in India—economic, cognitive, normative, and power issues. Gram Vikas had learned from prior engagements that the causal architecture of a village is still complex, but its cause-effect dynamic is sufficiently stable to be observed and understood. Villages are also sufficiently isolated from unpredictable environmental influences. These characteristics open an opportunity to learn how to transform the architecture of a village.

Armed with this insight and with the accumulated knowledge from years of studying village life, the organization adopted a new approach, whereby it motivated villagers to engage in a joint effort with Gram Vikas to build water and sanitation infrastructure. The prospect of having a toilet, a shower, and a water tap in the kitchen for every household reduced the villagers' attention and resistance to the reorganization of the village social life that slowly took place in the background.

Taking clues from their prior problem-solving interactions with villagers, Gram Vikas now focused on the causal architecture of the village as a subsystem.[24] Gram Vikas insisted that people from all households in a village were formally elected into a general body and executive committees. Women and lower-caste people participated at equal levels with men, and higher-caste villagers in subcommittees focused on issues like sanitation, water, and education. For the first time, women and many lower-caste people engaged in economic activities and collective decision-making processes. Women were also trained in traditional male crafts such as masonry and fish farming.

Over a period of three years, a village was completely restructured, and Gram Vikas was able to phase out its engagement. At this stage, villagers owned their own transformation through the process of equal membership in all decision bodies. These villagers were also much more confident. They started to collectively bargain with external agencies such as banks, traders, and contractors and demanded support and resources from the government.

Over the course of a decade, Gram Vikas replicated this approach in more than 1,000 villages. This focus on spatial subsystems potentially indicates an alternative approach to the often-voiced ambitions of changing entire systems at the level of the total scale of a problem—for example, inequality in India or even globally. While engaging in large system change may rarely be feasible, one can carve out smaller subsystems that enable organizations to learn and to master causality for effective interventions.

At some stage, these small steps add up to create positive feedback cycles that drive change in the larger system. For example, women from transformed villages do not allow their daughters to get married into a nontransformed village with high levels of inequality and no running water. The hopeful husband-to-be then becomes a powerful change agent for that village and often succeeds in getting the village elders to start talking to Gram Vikas. Transformed villages offer such a desirable contrast to traditional villages in their area that they increasingly become role models and an aspiration for whole regions.

The two archetypes we have described do not exhaust the possibilities for system change. Wars, revolutions, and social movements, for example, are all archetypes that can fundamentally reconfigure the causal architecture of large and complex systems and put them on a new trajectory. But it is unlikely that one could master the complex and unpredictable causality inherent in these archetypes (although some have tried).

Another interesting archetype involves the current efforts to scale up existing solutions to the size of their addressable problems. The causal logic of this archetype partly resides in the expectation that increasing scale will eventually shift a system.[25] Recently, a group of prominent donors have launched the Co-Impact initiative to invest up to $500 million in support of this archetype.[26] All of these initiatives provide important opportunities for learning about effective archetypes, their potential and limits, and when and how proposed change mechanisms such as system entrepreneurship[27] and system leadership[28] work best.

THREE WAYS TO MASTER CAUSALITY

An important challenge for system change initiatives is that learning curves tend to be flat and drawn out. Enacting system change requires observation, careful probing, and reflection. In many ways, system change resembles an innovation process—an investment

in learning with uncertain outcomes.[29] One may not be able to get better fast, and research indicates that expectations of quick results may be counterproductive because our ambitions tend to vastly outgrow our competencies.

Those managing system change work need to pay extra attention to helping stakeholders to remain motivated and committed, to suppressing pathological behavior, and to improving stakeholders' capacity to accumulate relevant knowledge and other resources that increase the number of options for productive action.

Our research indicates that there are three important things organizations can do to help achieve these goals: do things right before doing the right thing; climb system peaks to get a better view; and hire and nurture people with a commitment to learn.

Do things right before doing the right thing | Russell Ackoff, a prominent systems thinker, strongly believed that it was better to do the right thing wrong than the wrong thing right because the former may be improved by learning, but the latter reinforces ineffective behavior. Our data, however, suggest that engaging with a system may be facilitated by doing the "wrong" thing first. In other words, by engaging in activities even if they are not in line with one's mission and learning to do them right—that is, getting good at doing them.

Joe Madiath, the founder of Gram Vikas, shared with us his organization's many initial failures when trying to do the right thing by directly attacking inequality despite having few relevant competencies. The failures took a toll and severely threatened the survival of the organization. "We learned the hard way that we need to fulfill the fundamental needs of villagers first before we win their hearts and minds," says Madiath. When Gram Vikas instead began providing tangible benefits like medical services and electricity, it created the trust and good will that motivated local communities to reveal issues of power and dependency, chronic alcoholism, and indebtedness, the buried causal system architecture that sustained high levels of inequality.

Sekem allocated scarce resources early on to provide services that created quick benefits for communities. It built a medical facility and infrastructure for water, electricity, and transportation that earned it the trust and support of local communities.

The benefits and momentum created by providing concrete services enable organizations to dive deeper into a system's architecture. When people begin to trust the organization, they start to share the hidden system elements that prior analysis or observation alone couldn't unearth. Without this deeper understanding of how a system ticks, there is little hope of engaging with systems effectively.

Initially, organizations should avoid decisions and actions that are hard to reverse or that irritate central actors in the system, such as village elders or officials with power. Services that seem to be compatible with this strategy include simple medicines, access to water, energy sources such as biogas, microfinance, and housing.

To sum up, the goal for system change apprentices is to make small, safe steps and to learn how to walk before picking up momentum and starting to run. Perhaps it's best if we swallow our pride, ambition, and beliefs in our own competence. Instead, let's do something simple first, learn a lot about a target system, and re-engage with our mission later.

Climb system peaks to get a better view | Doing things right—such as effectively delivering basic benefit-creating services like clean water—enables an organization to occupy a temporary privileged position within a system, like a peak in a complex landscape. Systems have many such peaks, possible interventions that change some aspect of a system for the better and in return provide an organization with valuable resources and insights to plan its next moves.

Most peaks are very small. When Gram Vikas delivered medicines to villages, it gained some insights about the nature of inequality. This was helpful, but it also showed the organization that it lacked the competencies to tackle such a complex problem. However, one of the small peaks that Gram Vikas occupied in its early years— buying cows to provide milk—opened the way to a much larger peak: providing biogas and electricity from cow dung in a financially sustainable manner. Climbing that peak took several years and involved serving more than 8,000 villages and building up an effective and well-managed organization. This success created tremendous good will, a reputation as a can-do organization, and the appetite and confidence for operating at large scale.

Gram Vikas now had deep insights into the structure of villages as subsystems, and its reputation provided access to resources from the private, public, and philanthropic sectors. Providing biogas did little to fulfill the organization's mission to tackle inequality. But climbing this peak unlocked the insights and tangible resources required to plan and enact their ultimate intervention, the transformation of villages to lower inequality. Now Gram Vikas could competently re-engage with its mission.

Sekem's initial peak—investments in infrastructure such as roads, water, and electricity that could also be used by local communities—turned out to be a very big peak and one that they are still climbing today. Infrastructure also provided a space that Sekem controlled and could be shaped into a reality that was different from its environment. How system change unfolds is hard to plan, which is why it is important that organizations accumulate resources such as trust, good will, positive reputation, and infrastructure to seize opportunities that arise during system change work.

Climbing system peaks also creates positive momentum and a feeling of success for those working in the organization and their beneficiaries. This experience reduces the emotional stress associated with early failure that otherwise might generate pathological behavior. Organizations also become more ambitious and bolder if they experience success, and in that manner they grow this ambition in sync with developing system competencies.

Hire and nurture people with a commitment to learn | The system change strategy that we propose has implications for how to build an effective change team or organization. Studies on complex

The term "system change" may not, it turns out, be a good way to articulate our ambitions and potential for improving systems.

problem solving indicate that contrary to what one might think, prior expertise or general intelligence may not help much in enacting system change.

Systems refuse to behave like the models we hold in our minds based on our experience with other contexts. And intelligence matters mostly to the extent that we define it as a capacity for learning. After all, system work is not so much about doing a lot of the right things but about being willing to do simple things while minimizing harm, persisting in muddling through, and learning along the way. Thus, local knowledge acquisition through deep engagement, patience, and long-term commitment becomes a fundamental success factor.

All of the social enterprises in our research sample that were able to transform systems have senior staff members who have been with the organization for a long time. They have been able to accumulate knowledge that is effective in local systems, a requirement in mastering causality. In its early years, Gram Vikas had to let go of many team members who could not deal with the difficulties of system work or who grew frustrated about climbing peaks that were not directly related to the organization's mission. But the core team then stayed on for almost four decades. This long tenure matched the learning curve of the organization, time that was required for mastering causality. And the core team ensured that the accumulated knowledge about the causal architecture of villages and how it could be transformed did not get lost.

Sekem now has a third generation of managers, many of whom are related to or married to someone from the founder's family. The first children who attended Sekem's kindergartens in the 1970s have often finished their education and gained work experiences abroad. They return to Sekem with new ideas and much-needed competencies to continue the organization's mission of changing Egypt's trajectory. They also know from the founder of Sekem that it will take 200 years of learning to succeed.

AIM FOR TRANSFORMATION, NOT SYSTEM CHANGE

The term "system change" may not, it turns out, be a good way to articulate our ambitions and potential for improving systems. Complex systems change all the time in a dynamic manner without our interventions. Therefore, change per se is neither interesting nor difficult to achieve. In fact, creating a temporary change by providing food, schooling, loans, and medicines or changing the behavior of some actors is often relatively easy. But if an intervention withdraws without having robustly transformed the causal system architecture, things may be as bad as or even worse than before.

Our interventions need to match the particular trajectory that a system is on: the pace and direction of ongoing change. Some systems may be on a positive trajectory that generates better outcomes over time. Potentially, these trajectories can be accelerated to speed up progress for the better. Some systems may be on a negative trajectory with worsening prospects. These trajectories need to be reversed or altered. And other systems may be stuck in trajectories that perpetuate unfortunate outcomes and misery. These systems often need to be mobilized and steered toward positive trajectories.

Our proposed system change archetypes constitute two effective approaches for transforming systems that are on a negative trajectory (Egypt/Sekem) or that are stuck (Indian villages/Gram Vikas). These trajectories are the most difficult to engage with because they require substantial transformations of the systems' causal architectures.

We are hopeful that the many ongoing system change initiatives will help us to uncover other effective archetypes and smart strategies for mastering causality—and that by doing so, we can avoid the misfortune that befell the sorcerer's apprentice. ∎

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→ Progress in dealing with the problem of climate change will require that the institutions of government, business, and community work not in isolation from each other, let alone at cross-purposes, but by reinforcing each other's efforts through consolidation.

Worldly Strategy for the Global Climate

BY HENRY MINTZBERG, DROR ETZION & SAKU MANTERE

→ Sierra Club members paddle past the TVA's Allen power plant on McKellar Lake in Memphis, Tennessee, on July 26, 2013, to protest its use of coal.

What can Elon Musk, Naomi Klein, and the previous king of Bhutan possibly have in common? All are effective organizers in addressing climate change, albeit each in his or her own way. Musk, an entrepreneur in the private sector, founded and heads Tesla, which manufactures electric cars that challenge the carbon-fueled dominant design. Klein is a writer and social activist, working in what we call the plural sector—comprising associations that are neither public nor private, many rooted in communities.[1] Her 2014 book, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*, was written to influence climate change through movement building. And the previous king of Bhutan, Jigme

Singye Wangchuck, a visionary in the public sector, has arguably had the most tangible impact of the three to date, albeit limited to his small country. Under his tutelage, the forest cover of Bhutan increased from 40 to 60 percent, sequestering more carbon in the process.

Technological solutions matter in dealing with climate change, as do economic considerations. What requires more attention, however, is the organization of efforts by the three sectors of society, locally and globally, and the consolidation of strategies across the sectors, in a process we wish to call "worldly," rather than global, to encourage bottom-up learning more than top-down planning.[2]

We examine 12 existing climate change initiatives—some well-known, others not—to show that they amount to a collection of separate strategic positions more than an integrated strategic perspective. These positions suggest three forms of organized action: *orchestrated planning*, which tends to be characteristic of many efforts in public sector governments; *grounded engagement*, most common in plural sector communities; and *autonomous venturing*, which is favored especially in private sector enterprises. While there is merit in each position, it is through consolidation of the three that significant progress will likely be made in addressing the problem of climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES

Consider the following 12 climate change initiatives, the first four in the public sector, the next four in the plural sector, and the final four in the private sector:

1. The Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) came into force on November 4, 2016, following the 11th meeting of parties to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. It calls on the almost 200 signatories "to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase ... to 1.5 degrees Celsius" above preindustrial levels, through "ambitious" but "non-binding" "nationally determined contributions."[3]

2. Carbon taxes and cap-and-trade markets have been implemented, or are scheduled for implementation, at transnational, national, state, and local levels—for example, in the European Union, Chile, several New England states, and Tokyo. Together, these efforts address 14 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.[4]

3. Sixty percent of the forests of Bhutan have been preserved by decree, through the work of its Gross National Happiness Commission, established by the previous king. The commission has also prohibited private road traffic one day a month.

4. The United States, the European Union, Canada, Japan, China, and Brazil, among other countries, have adopted fuel economy standards for passenger vehicles sold in their jurisdictions. (Road transportation accounts for 10.5 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.[5]) In the European Union, the target is above 26 kilometers per liter, compared with the year 2000 target of just over 15 kilometers per liter.

5. Residential buildings account for 10.2 percent of global carbon emissions, and commercial buildings an additional 6.3 percent. The US Green Building Council is a nonprofit organization that promotes sustainability through its green building certification program (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED). Buildings receive points for features such as energy effi-

Photograph by Brandon Dill, The Commercial Appeal / AP Photo

ciency and on-site energy production (micro-generation). These buildings typically sell or are rented out at premium rates.[6]

6. In 2015, the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign celebrated the retirement of the 190th coal-generation facility in the United States since its 2010 launch. In the summer of 2018, the number of closures grew to 270. Coal power is a particularly emission-intensive form of electricity generation, responsible for 25 percent of global emissions. It is the largest US contributor to climate change.[7]

7. Because children can capture the attention of their parents, the Girl Scouts of the United States has engaged its members in learning about energy-saving behavior. One study calculated that the Scouts' education campaigns have reduced energy usage in these households by 5 percent on average.[8]

8. Wind power has become one of Denmark's leading industries. Its growth began in rural communities during the energy crisis of the early 1970s. Simple turbines were made with local materials, using designs developed by Christian Riisager, a carpenter, and Karl-Erik Jørgensen, a mechanic. This knowledge was shared and refined through locally organized "wind meetings" (*Windmøde*); eventually 10 wind energy manufacturers were established, among them Vestas Wind Systems, currently the world's largest wind-turbine producer.[9]

9. Tesla has developed vehicles, batteries, and chargers that have positioned electric cars as not only a viable choice of vehicle, but also a prestigious one. When a Tesla is charged with electricity generated from renewable wind and solar power, driving it can be significantly emission-free.

10. Philips, the electronics company, sells lighting as a service. Customers pay only for the light generated; Philips supplies, installs, and maintains the equipment at its expense. According to its management, installations in Singapore, Buenos Aires, and elsewhere are reducing energy costs and associated emissions by 50 to 70 percent, resulting in particular from the superior, long-term energy efficiency of LED lighting.[10]

11. A vegetable protein called Pulled Oats was the phenomenon of the 2016 Finnish food market, riding the global wave of demand for sustainable as well as animal-free foods. Vegetarian food products reduce the use of livestock, which contributes 5.5 percent of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions.

12. Communauto is a car-sharing company in Montreal that provides personal vehicular transport to its members on an as-needed basis. According to its calculations, each car in the fleet displaces at least four privately owned vehicles from the road.[11]

Some of these initiatives have achieved significant success, and some others show the potential to do so. Certain ones have been decidedly deliberate, as in the Paris Agreement that emanated from a meeting of heads of almost all the governments of the world, and others have emerged locally, from grounded learning in communities, as in the Danish wind meetings. Then there are the initiatives developed in the private sector to capitalize on competitive advantages, as in the Philips example. Most notably, all of these initiatives tend to exist apart from each other. Each occupies an isolated strategic position.

We have listed these 12 initiatives by sector—four in each—because the public, plural, and private sectors seem to favor different

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processes. We label these processes *orchestrated planning*, *grounded engagement*, and *autonomous venturing*, respectively, and discuss the tendencies for them to be used in particular sectors.

ORCHESTRATED PLANNING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

In the public sector, especially in large national governments (compared with municipal ones, closer to local concerns), we find an inclination to favor *orchestrated planning*. Government climate change initiatives tend to be centrally conceived, analytically driven, and strategically deliberate. Because governments often need to legislate before acting—in other words, to formulate before implementing—their policy-making processes are inclined to be deliberate, explicit, and prospective.

Orchestrated planning is thus usually enacted in government in top-down fashion: to pledge, plan, and police, from the political leadership to the civil service, and then sometimes out to the broader society, as in the example of carbon pricing. This may rely on imposed controls of one kind or another—mandates, constraints, regulations, decrees—or else on incentives to encourage desired behaviors. Among our four government initiatives are state regulations and multilateral agreements as well as the decree concerning the forest cover of Bhutan.

Given the immensity of the climate change problem, it is not surprising that many concerned people call for this kind of orchestrated planning. As inspiring examples, they can perhaps point to the 1961-72 Apollo project, which landed human beings on the moon for the first time, and the Marshall Plan, which gave American economic assistance to Europe after World War II. But Leviathan societies are not currently favored, at least in Western contexts, and the experience of the Kyoto Protocol, signed in 1997 and subsequently ignored by most of the world, illustrates the obstacles facing state planners.

Yet some efforts related to the global climate have succeeded, even beyond expectations, albeit with a narrower scope. The 1989 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer called for industrialized nations to stabilize and then reduce the chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) production and consumption that was causing the problem. Although it is now widely and justifiably heralded as a breakthrough, in 1989 scientists and many signatories knew that its initial provisions were insufficient. Thus the treaty was designed to be flexible, to allow more ambitious targets as new science came to light. In other words, here, and perhaps more often than is widely recognized, the protocol facilitated emergent learning alongside the centralized planning of the public sector.

In this case, however, the political and economic stakes were lower and the ideological differences less stark than they are for climate change today. The Kyoto Protocol attempted to address this problem in one fell swoop, with a comprehensive accord—a deliberate strategy, immaculately conceived. Its failure suggests that relying on governments alone to take the lead in combating climate change may be wish-

ful thinking. The world is a rather messy place for those who believe that problems can be worked out by clever analysis in sterile offices.

GROUNDED ENGAGEMENT IN THE PLURAL SECTOR

The plural sector includes those formal and informal associations that are neither publicly owned by government nor privately owned by investors. Some are owned by members, such as cooperatives, while others are owned by no one, such as the Sierra Club and the Girl Scouts. A decade ago, in his book *Blessed Unrest*, Paul Hawken put the number of such efforts at more than one million worldwide.[12]

Plural sector associations tend to favor *grounded engagement* over orchestrated planning, although the philanthropists and foundations that support some of them may not always be sympathetic to this tendency, let alone understand it. Here strategies often emerge from the experiences of learning, which means that all kinds of people can be strategists. Think of this as thousands of flowers blooming, thanks to all kinds of social entrepreneurs. And just as flowers bloom in local fields, so too do social initiatives tend to appear in local communities, usually in response to local concerns, even if some eventually develop into global institutions, such as in the case of Greenpeace.

The success of these initiatives usually requires intensive commitment, personal as well as communal. When this is present, change can be abrupt and sizable, as was the case with the anti-fur movement, which became a global phenomenon in the 1980s and changed the habits of many toward wearing fur coats. The potential of the plural sector to drive change in society should therefore not be underestimated, even though such change can be unpredictable.

AUTONOMOUS VENTURING IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Businesses, as independent enterprises in the marketplace, are most inclined to favor autonomous venturing. This can be especially true for those businesses led by creative entrepreneurs, who develop new products, services, and technologies that address societal needs, such as in the examples of Tesla and Pulled Oats, discussed earlier.

Private sector mind-sets about climate change have been shifting over the years. What was initially considered by many executives to be unrelated to business later became viewed by some as a threat to business and is now more widely seen as a font of opportunities for business—as in the example of Philips. In a 2017 survey conducted by *MIT Sloan Management Review* and the Boston Consulting Group, 90 percent of executives saw sustainability as a priority for their business.[13] Of course, many smaller companies are also so engaged—for example, in developing new types of solar panels, software to manage energy distribution, and carbon-trapping building materials. Governments can provide incentives to stimulate such venturing, but never with the assurance of what will result.

Strategy here tends to combine the characteristics that we have described in the other two sectors. Large established corporations may naturally favor top-down, deliberate strategies, while entrepreneurial ones may be more inclined to adapt on the fly, as Musk has done repeatedly at Tesla. He has taken the company from luxury car manufacturer to mass producer of batteries and provider of electrical infrastructure. That novel ideas can emerge anywhere in such enterprises, as well as in large corporations for that matter, suggests the presence, indeed a natural combination, of deliberate and emergent strategies in the private sector—in other words, a kind of top-down, bottom-up hybridity within enterprises.

THE LIMITS OF ISOLATED ACTION

As suggested, many people look to government to face the problem of climate change: Let the ultimate authority in society manage the threat. Certainly government has to set constraints, to protect the citizenry, and can provide incentives to encourage multiple solutions for public problems. But government alone cannot do it, nor sometimes can it even lead the effort to get it done, as was indicated by the Kyoto Protocol's failure and may be further illustrated by the Paris Agreement, negotiated at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21).

Others favor business to take the lead, expecting that corporate enterprises will save the planet from global warming. Businesses can certainly contribute solutions, but progress so far does not support this position. Companies such as Tesla may captivate the public imagination, yet the number of electric cars on the roads remains small—just over 0.1 percent of the global stock. Meanwhile, some powerful energy companies have been discouraging a meaningful shift away from carbon-based fuels. On the whole, the response of many companies appears to be marginal—for example, greening the office while carrying on with business as usual. There is little reason to see business as taking the lead.

This leaves the plural sector. As suggested earlier, grounded engagement has sometimes created groundswells that have led to profound social change. But plural sector efforts cannot accomplish this alone. Businesses are usually necessary to produce the products, services, and infrastructures that bring needed new practices into daily life, albeit sometimes after being urged to do so by the activism of plural sector associations and by the regulations or incentives enacted by governments. And such government legislation may result from plural sector pressures to legitimize new norms—in other words, to render deliberate what has emerged from civil society. Thus, while the plural sector may play a key role in initiating significant action, no one sector can resolve the problem of climate change in isolation from the other two.

COLLISION OR CONSOLIDATION?

Can action on climate change be driven by pressures, if not outright confrontation, between the sectors? Yes, to some extent. But substantial progress toward attaining a strategic perspective beyond what has so far amounted to a collection of strategic positions will require substantial consolidation of efforts across the three sectors. Working across sectors, let alone across institutions within them, is hardly simple, but it must happen.

Too often the sectors have worked at cross-purposes—for example, when advocacy campaigns in the plural sector drive businesses to become defensive instead of constructive, or when business pressures marginalize potentially beneficial efforts by NGOs. Likewise, government planning can stifle commercial innovation—for example, with regulations that negate potentially good ideas, just as corporate lobbying can block regulations that are essential. And believing that business or government must take the lead can discourage the plural sector, which lacks regulatory and financial power but has the advantage of being close to communities.

When the sectors work at cross-purposes, the danger is a downward spiral, toward implosion. (See at right "When Organized Efforts Collide or Consolidate.") As illustrated counterclockwise in the left figure, activists protest, boycott, and sometimes sabotage the efforts of businesses, while businesses lobby governments to loosen regulations and governments carry on with pledging and planning detached from private and plural activities on the ground.

By contrast, when the three sectors work together to constructively reinforce each other's efforts, they can generate an ascending spiral of consolidation.

When Organized Efforts Collide or Consolidate

A downward spiral of counterproductive activity (left) results when the three sectors work at cross-purposes. By contrast, an ascending spiral of constructive activity (right) results when the three sectors work together.

Activism in the plural sector encourages governments to enact legislation for regulating and incentivizing private enterprises, and these provide the citizenry with the goods, services, and infrastructure needed to combat climate change. Each activity can thus spawn more activities in the other sectors as well as in its own, so that, together, they can feed this ascending spiral of consolidation. Perhaps more significantly, there can also be constructive *networks* of consolidation, as the organizations of the three sectors interact with each other in many different ways—alliances, partnerships, joint ventures, and so on. Of course, some confrontation alongside cooperation can be useful, such as when one NGO protests irresponsible corporate activities while another supports responsible ones.

In any event, addressing the problem of climate change will likely require that each of the sectors attends to what it does best, in conjunction with the other two. In general, communities engage, governments legitimize, and businesses invest. We believe that this is how healthy societies progress. To illustrate this point, let us consider three examples, at the global, national, and municipal levels, respectively.

CONSOLIDATION AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL:
B LAB FOR B CORPS

B Lab started as a plural sector initiative that "serves a global movement of people using business as a force for good." It was established as a US nonprofit organization in 2006 by two ethically minded entrepreneurs who had sold their athletic apparel company and subsequently saw much of its commitment to social responsibility dissipate. Recognizing that the tendency toward social indifference was endemic to corporate governance systems worldwide, they promoted legislation for a new corporate form, responsive to all stakeholders.

B Lab uses the strengths of all three sectors. It works directly with governments to introduce a new corporate charter, called a "B Corporation," with explicit attention to a triple bottom line of financial, social, and environmental results. This frees corporate executives from judicial precedents and norms that have forced them to maximize shareholder value—a fiduciary duty that has hobbled many
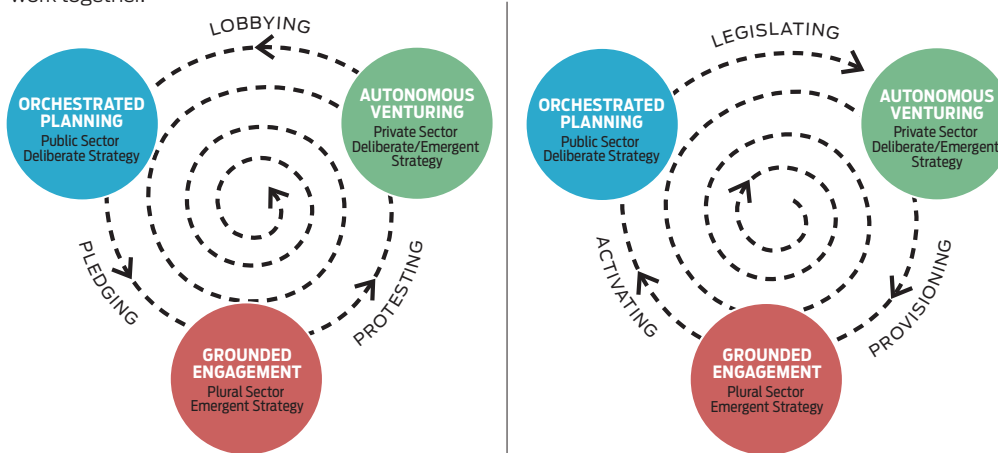
efforts to work climate change mitigation into strategy. B Lab certifies standards that enable companies to become B Corporations and provides a rating system that supports the growth of impact investing for sustainability. The consolidation of efforts across the B Lab NGO, the supporting governments, and the B Corporation members exemplifies what can happen when the three sectors collaborate.

As of 2016, 31 American state governments had passed legislation providing for the new corporate charters, while a similar movement, Sistema B, was created in Latin America, as were initiatives in Canada and the United Kingdom. More than 1,800 firms in 50 countries and 130 industries have successfully completed B Lab certification, among them a handful of publicly traded companies such as Natura in Brazil and Etsy in the United States.[14]

CONSOLIDATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL:
THE DANISH EXPERIENCE

Efforts by the three sectors in Denmark to boost the use of wind power exemplify a consolidated perspective on renewable energy. As noted earlier, Danish wind power originated primarily in community efforts—led at various stages by actors such as Riisager, Jørgensen, and others who contributed to adapting a 1947 turbine design by Johannes Juul. As initial prototypes were deployed, owner-users of the turbines banded together to form the Danish Wind Turbine Owners' Association, to cooperate in designing for safety and reliability. Small entrepreneurial firms participated in this learning process, based on trial and error.

By the end of the 1980s, several hundred wind turbines had been installed. This groundswell was supported by the orchestrated planning of the Danish government: As a consequence of the oil embargo of the 1970s, it developed the country's North Sea oil and gas resources while promoting a green energy transition to get itself off fossil fuels entirely. The government provided research and development funding for companies in the wind industry, and subsidized farmers who used wind turbines. It also created a certification system for turbines, which boosted interaction between governmental and business actors.

The Danish efforts have been notably decentralized, cooperative, and inclusive. There are policies in place to compensate homeowners for lost value from nearby generation, and each power project is required to set aside a certain percentage of its shares for ownership by the community, which also has the power to veto projects. Consequently, the benefits of new power facilities are widely shared, thereby muting opposition. Moreover, 40 percent of the carbon tax that Denmark introduced in 1992 goes to environmental spending, while 60 percent goes back to industry to reward innovations for fighting climate change. By 2020, Denmark expects to get half of its electricity from wind power and 35 percent of its total energy consumption from renewable sources. By 2050, all of its energy consumption is expected to be carbon-free.

CONSOLIDATION AT THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL: CURITIBA AND C40

Consolidation can also occur at the municipal level—perhaps more easily, because municipal governments tend to be closer to people and their communities (as are many local businesses), where the problems of climate change tend to be most emphatically felt. It is one thing to read about the melting of distant polar ice caps, quite another to deal with flooding in one's own neighborhood. Moreover, municipalities are the first line of public response—the home of fire brigades, hospitals, and police.

The Brazilian city of Curitiba, for instance, has for decades been at the forefront of sustainability efforts. In the plural sector, Curitibanos have embraced urban agriculture and expansive green spaces, while in the public sector, they have invested massively in rapid transit. Their schools reward recycling with supplies, toys, and tickets for shows provided by private sector businesses.

A more conspicuous example is the C40 initiative. Launched in October 2005 by London's then-mayor, Ken Livingstone, C40 is a coordinated network of 91 cities on all habited continents. Its Deadline 2020 program is intended to implement the Paris Agreement. As major buyers of electricity, C40 cities exert influence on electricity markets to comply with a low-carbon agenda and on the construction industry to build energy-efficient buildings while encouraging car-sharing and sustainable use of materials.[15]

In municipalities, sustainability issues such as traffic congestion are close at hand—and so are activists, who can move fast and expect local officials to follow suit. This can be divisive, but it can also encourage creative interaction across the three sectors—for example, by opening up possibilities for social as well as commercial enterprises.

BECOMING WORLDLY

We began our case for consolidating efforts across the sectors by calling our strategy "worldly" instead of "global." The term "global" tends to be associated with the economic activities of multinational corporations. It has also come to imply a kind of cookie-cutter conformity. The term "worldly," by contrast, is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "experienced in life, sophisticated, practical." This suggests the ability to venture beyond our own world, to appreciate the worlds of people in other cultures, whether geographic or institutional. Worldly businesspeople appreciate the pressures on government officials; worldly community actors understand that businesses

need to be driven by commercial interests; worldly politicians realize the need for constructive consolidation of the efforts of all three sectors; and worldly people in all the sectors know how much they can learn from their counterparts in other parts of the world, poor as well as rich. We need to cultivate such worldly attitudes to work together to formulate collaborative strategies that address climate change.

The cycle of consolidation we propose is not about the alignment of goals, or about consensus as a prerequisite for action. Different actors can pursue the same end for different reasons, but in a manner supportive of each other's efforts. In climate change, health professionals worry about the spread of infectious diseases, diplomats may see it as a destabilizing threat to security, and insurance companies fear the financial risk of extreme weather events. More broadly, Pope Francis focuses on the world's poor while conservationists warn of the extinction of species. Yet all find some common ground in embracing a goal such as "a safe operating space for humanity," in the words of the Stockholm Resilience Centre.[16]

When institutions and sectors compete with each other for local or global power, they are disinclined to see, let alone solve, their common problems. We have certainly experienced enough of this. Climate change has no invisible hand to reconcile differing views, only the visible claw of a creeping warming threatening the globe. A worldly mind-set can prepare actors to appreciate their differences, and thereby work together toward consolidated ascension, from group to globe. ∎

NOTES

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➡ Most global development programs still segment people by demographics when trying to change their behavior. We must learn from the private sector and segment people based on the reasons behind their actions, so that we can talk to them in ways they will listen.

Time to Scale Psycho-behavioral Segmentation in Global Development

BY SEMA K. SGAIER, ELISABETH ENGL & STEVE KRETSCHMER

Illustration by Robin Hursthouse

Two momentous and unexpected political outcomes defined 2016 for many Americans and Europeans: the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States and the United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union. Both events had one thing in common: The winning campaign used Cambridge Analytica, a then-obscure communications firm. Its secret? Sophisticated consumer segmentation.

The firm divided large populations into nuanced groups based on personality traits that could be inferred from each individual's online data, such as Facebook activity. With that information, it could send tailored campaign messages to people that resonated with their most personal biases, fears, and desires. Academic studies of the algorithm underlying Cambridge Analytica's work have shown that it was more successful at judging the personality traits of an individual than her own friends or colleagues.[1] While the company's true impact on voter behavior remains uncertain and may be exaggerated,[2] the story thrust consumer segmentation into the spotlight as more than just a marketing tactic.

The private sector has long understood that people buy or reject products and services for different reasons. In the 1960s, market-research pioneer Daniel Yankelovich noted that segmenting customers only by demographic factors, such as age, income, or geography, is not enough, and argued for differentiating people by their behaviors and the drivers behind them.[3] In what became known as *psycho-behavioral segmentation*, companies began dividing people into groups based on *what* they do—in other words, their behaviors—and on their motivations, beliefs, and other factors influencing *why* they behave the way they do.[4] Psycho-behavioral segmentation has been shown to be superior to demographic segmentation at creating distinct, meaningful segments.[5] This is important because segmentation must capture clear, discrete (as nonoverlapping as possible), relevant (to the behavior of interest), and actionable differences within populations. Only then do targeted messages or interventions have the best chance of success.

Marketers nowadays invest a significant amount of time and money to deepen their understanding of their customers, including their behaviors, beliefs, emotions, unconscious biases, and social norms. For instance, Red Bull tailors its drink offerings to people differentiated not only by demographics, but also by level of brand loyalty, drinking habits, and lifestyles. Companies have made segmentation core to their approach because it improves their bottom line.

In developed countries, psycho-behavioral segmentation has also shown promise in several policy areas. In 2017, the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London divided the European public into six distinct segments based on their attitudes toward refugees. This has enabled researchers to track these segments over time and characterize their key drivers, including real-world concerns about economic, cultural, and security issues, as well as the emotions and attitudes influencing them.[6] In Switzerland, consumer researchers have used psycho-behavioral segmentation to better understand consumer habits and attitudes around energy consumption, with an explicit call that this kind of research should inform policy.[7]

In the United States, public health researcher Edward Maibach used psycho-behavioral segmentation to create detailed insights and messaging for climate-change campaigns. To illustrate, a segment called Alarmists "tended to be religious, low SES [socio-economic status], minority women who were politically disaffected" and perceived high levels of risk. Conversely, Optimists "tended to be high SES, white, nonreligious, conservative, Republican urban men" who considered the hazards of climate change as relatively low risks to the United States. This profiling could then be used to target messages and suitable channels to each segment. For example, Optimists are likely to respond to messages about energy independence and the economic benefits of conservation, and are best reached through newspapers and the Internet.[8]

While these studies have, to our knowledge, shaped discussions among policymakers, their findings have not been adopted by large-scale programs, and so we consequently lack a rigorous evidence base demonstrating their impact on behavior change. What's more, quantifying the impact of psycho-behavioral segmentation is notoriously difficult, for several reasons: The link between segmentation approaches and behavioral outcomes is difficult to disentangle experimentally; the private sector does not typically disclose impact evaluations; direct comparison between segmentation approaches

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is not the main priority of public health programs; and such evaluations need larger sample sizes than academia typically handles. But signs of promise are available. The clearest demonstration of the effectiveness of psychological targeting recently came from experiments in the online purchase behavior of millions of people. When purchase appeals were matched to personality-based characteristics of individuals, purchases increased by up to 50 percent compared with mismatched or nonpersonalized appeals.[9]

By contrast, psycho-behavioral market segmentation is largely missing from global development programs, despite calls to adopt it from public health researchers and social scientists.[10] Segmenting the customers of programs offering health interventions such as contraceptives, vaccines, or circumcision is usually limited to socio-demographic characteristics such as age, religion, race, and geography. Broad divisions between such groups as "adolescents" or "pregnant women" are the norm, but who would argue that all adolescents or all pregnant women are driven by the same motivations? This question is especially poignant today, as most development programs have been successful in developing such solutions as new drugs or vaccines, and in delivering health services even to the most remote locations, yet falter when faced with people who don't access services or adopt behaviors that will improve their lives.

This deficiency needs to change. In what follows, we address this surprisingly sparse use of psycho-behavioral segmentation in global development. We describe and analyze the few examples where this approach has been implemented in large-scale programs, including our own, and distill the lessons learned. Then we provide a set of recommendations for how to scale the use of psycho-behavioral segmentation and call on the global development community to invest in building the evidence base to apply what we already know from the private sector: that understanding why people make decisions is the most effective way to change their behavior and improve their lives.

CASE STUDIES FROM GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

The use of psycho-behavioral segmentation in global development programs is still nascent, and the impact of many programs has not yet been collected or fully analyzed. But the studies that do exist provide important insights. Below, we provide an overview of major case studies, collated from literature reviews and discussions with stakeholders in the sector.

HIV in Tanzania | *Stanford Social Innovation Review* has recently published qualitative segmentation approaches developed by Aarthi Rao at CVS Health and Sandra McCoy at the University of California, Berkeley.[11] The authors use qualitative methods, such as observation and "journey mapping"—tracking behaviors and attitudes over time—that are influenced by design thinking, market research, and behavioral science. That way, differences in barriers to and drivers of HIV treatment in rural Tanzania, as well as potential target channels of influence, can be identified. The work generated imaginative

solutions tailored to some specific drivers. For example, where social stigma impeded taking medication, more unobtrusive pillboxes could ensure greater privacy. However, the small-scale qualitative nature of the research limited the patterns that the segmentation could detect.

Female health in multiple countries | The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funded segmentation studies of women between 15 and 30 years old in seven countries that sought to develop strategies to drive six priority female health behaviors. They were knowledge of HIV status, use of condoms, delay in sexual debut, use of modern contraceptives, giving birth in a health-care facility, and seeking modern medical care for sick infants. But the segments generated could not be translated to effective segment-specific programmatic strategies to drive the relevant behaviors. The study's design was flawed: Rather than developing segments for a specific behavior (e.g., use of condoms), researchers developed general segments for "female health" that lumped together several behaviors, with each behavior likely to have a different set of drivers. For example, it is unlikely that segments for the use of modern contraceptives are the same as those for institutional delivery.

HIV in Malawi | A well-designed quantitative study was done in Malawi to target HIV-prevention interventions more effectively. Quantitative studies are needed because they make population-wide patterns visible through statistical and machine-learning segmentation methods. The study asked 1,000 people about their perceptions of risk and their self-efficacy, defined as the belief in their personal ability to take action. Both of these concepts have been shown time and again to influence many health behaviors. Demographic variables, knowledge of HIV, and behaviors such as condom use were also collected.

The study produced substantial actionable insights. When looking at these two variables—risk perception and self-efficacy—people fell into one of four groups: low-low, high-high, low-high, and high-low. Each combination had implications for other attitudes and behaviors. For example, someone with high risk perception and high self-efficacy is more likely to act. The study demonstrates how behavioral, attitudinal, and demographic variables interact: More than half of female respondents were "avoidant" (high risk perception but low self-efficacy), whereas males were predominantly "proactive" (low risk perceptions, but a healthy dose of self-efficacy).[12] Implementers could therefore use such data to create different types of messages for men and women (in this case, differences in attitudes happened to align with demographic differences) or conclude that some segments would benefit from more awareness about HIV.

This research influenced Malawi's BRIDGE project, a mass media communication campaign funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to encourage HIV-prevention behaviors such as condom use. But the work has not, to our knowledge, been extended to other programs or contexts, even though it offers relatively generalizable lessons in how to design the research and the resulting messaging. The field of HIV communication is ripe for segmentation: A few years before the Malawi study, a systematic review of mass media interventions on HIV-related behaviors showed that not a single communications campaign segmented its audience.[13]

In addition, two global development areas are currently at the leading edge of integrating psycho-behavioral segmentation into their programs: family planning and voluntary medical male circumcision in Africa.

Family planning in Niger | A recent study aimed to encourage Nigerien women to adopt family planning practices in a particularly difficult context. Niger ranks lowest on the human development index, yet both women and men desire large families and the country has the highest fertility rate in the world. Conducted in collaboration with government, donors, and NGOs, the project discovered wide variations in women's needs, attitudes, and behaviors around family planning, and made the case that in this highly resource-constrained setting, focusing on women most willing to change their behavior would provide the greatest return on investment.[14] A quantitative survey of 2,000 respondents funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and designed by Camber Collective generated five psycho-behavioral segments. These groups of women differed from each other in their use of contraception, how proactive they were in obtaining information or products, their perception of social norms, their levels of autonomy, and other attitudes and beliefs.

The program determined that three of the segments presented the best opportunity, based largely on how program leaders with knowledge of the population estimated their propensity to change behavior. In contrast, a segment of "conservative passives" could be de-prioritized. Their barriers to action were more difficult to address, because they concerned perception of religious prohibition, a deep desire for permission from their partners, and a general passivity toward seeking such services, despite being very aware of the different options available. The research findings provided a rich base for understanding each of the segment profiles, and helped direct government and local implementing partners to priority segments with tailored communications and programming.

As in the Malawi study, the Niger program did many things right: Segmentation incorporated a variety of demographic factors, behaviors, and drivers that influenced behavior. Both studies focused on prioritizing segments to target, based on how likely they would be to change their behavior. In addition, the large-scale quantitative study in Niger was informed by previous in-depth qualitative research featuring men, women, and health-care providers. The government of Niger with its partners has also started translating these findings into strategies at two levels. Nationally, they are using the results to develop a behavior-change communication campaign with different messages directed to different segments of the population. In clinics, health workers are identifying which segment women fall into and providing appropriate messaging. The program is currently evaluating whether these strategies are leading to more women using contraceptives. This study is also now being extended into Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.

Circumcision in Zambia and Zimbabwe | The other most comprehensive example of psycho-behavioral segmentation applied at national scale is in the voluntary medical male-circumcision programs in Zambia and Zimbabwe, where segmentation provided a nuanced understanding of why men decide whether or not to get circumcised.[15] In that study, we (the authors of this article and colleagues) used validated concepts from behavioral science to create the basis for segmentation.[16] In the qualitative phase, we used a variety of methods such as journey mapping and group decision-making games to identify biases, emotions, motivations, and beliefs, which informed

a national quantitative survey. As a result, we were able to create a simple "segment typing tool"—a short decision tree, using simple rating questions with a high level of predictability for categorizing people—to help frontline workers classify men while speaking with them and then engage in real time with the appropriate messages and interventions.

The insights from the research revealed the underlying drivers (often psychological barriers) behind a man's decision to get circumcised or not. Using these deep insights, we developed specific interventions to target each driver. For example, some segments of men wavered because of fear and uncertainty about the pain of the procedure and healing process. Previously, the programs tried to avoid communicating with men about the pain for fear of scaring them away. However, men needed honest communication about the procedure and conceptual anchors for understanding what type of pain was felt and with how much intensity at each point of the surgical and healing processes.

Each of the programs in Zambia and Zimbabwe developed a "pain-o-meter" concept to be used by the frontline workers with men in the field. Each of these interventions provided picture-based conversation starters for the frontline workers to use as they talked men through the pain that would be felt: The initial anesthetic injection would feel like a thorn prick of moderate intensity; during the surgery, almost no pain; immediately after the surgery, moderate throbbing pain; and during the salt wash, moderate burning pain (like hot peppers). By dampening the uncertainty, the communication lowered their risk perceptions and provided concrete expectations, including ways to cope with the pain at each stage.

Other interventions developed in Zambia included an updated flip chart with segment-targeted messaging, a "true-or-false wheel" (like a game-show wheel) to discuss myths about circumcision, a "procedure walk-through" game to dispel uncertainty about the process for those segments plagued by doubts about the procedure, and a jar with a level marker at 60 percent full, used to show that circumcision is 60 percent effective against HIV. An integrated approach using these interventions is currently being piloted and evaluated.

In both Zambia and Zimbabwe, segment-targeting messaging and intervention have been adopted into their national circumcision-communications strategies, including mass media campaigns. Both programs have started to pilot the segment-typing tool, along with targeted messaging and communications, with encouraging (but so far unpublished) results. Segments are also used to reset programmatic targets based on factors such as ease of conversion of the behavior and potential impact gains. In Zimbabwe, for example, a segment we called "Enthusiasts" represented a big opportunity, as they were still uncircumcised but believed in the benefits of the procedure and so were likely to choose it. They just needed a little extra support to assuage their concerns.

OBSTACLES TO ADOPTION

Collectively, the handful of examples above provide valuable lessons to the field. Just as important, they highlight key challenges that stand in the way of making psycho-behavioral segmentation a common approach for driving behavior change. Why, despite robust academic research and private sector evidence that it works, is the development sector not integrating psycho-behavioral segmentation into large-scale public health programs? There are several reasons.

Limited understanding at the highest levels | First, governments, donors, and program managers generally don't appreciate the enhanced value of psycho-behavioral segmentation. Development partners, and especially governments, are accustomed to thinking about populations in terms of demographic and regional segments. Demographic data such as age, occupation, and education are routinely collected, and such visible divisions are easy to segment further. Geographic segmentation is also easy for them to implement because it aligns with existing administrative and programmatic divisions.

From our experience, partners often struggle to understand the upside of the approach. If they have never seen it implemented before, they find it difficult to see how to translate insights into program strategies that can be implemented on the ground. Selling the idea to first-time users can take time. In Niger, for example, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and their partner Camber Collective had discussions with governments and partners for more than three years before the research could be implemented.

Limited skills on the ground | Another barrier is the limited number of people with experience in the segmentation process, including the steps and resources needed. Few have knowledge about the types of variables and data needed to measure attitudes and behavior. Most important, there is a lack of technical skills needed to apply the methodical approaches to collect suitable data and analyze it. It is a challenge—especially in more resource-poor countries such as Niger and Zambia—to find local capacity to collect the type of data, at the scale needed, to do psycho-behavioral segmentation (in both countries, surveys were at the national level). Local agencies, especially those more oriented to marketing research for companies, are often not experienced or equipped to collect sensitive data such as sexual behavior for family planning or HIV prevention. They are also unfamiliar with more novel qualitative methods such as journey maps and decision games. In both cases, the international team leading the segmentation study labored over quality control and capacity building.

Burden of translating insights into action | Generating psycho-behavioral segments and developing programmatic strategies and recommendations are not enough. There is also the challenge of transferring the findings into large-scale programs. There are several reasons for this. First, the right stakeholders—donors, implementers, and eventual users of a segmentation solution—need to be engaged from the very beginning, so that they eventually see value in using the insights and recommendations in their programs. These are often those responsible for designing and implementing the programs. In the case of the female health segmentation study, government workers and implementing organizations on the ground were not engaged until the results were finalized. As a result, the segmentation design did not incorporate their specific programmatic needs, and they did not feel ownership of the work.

Second, the insights and program strategies need to be very specific, easy to implement, and scalable. Otherwise, programs cannot design focused solutions, will encounter large obstacles in deploying them, and will have only small-scale impact. In the female health segmentation study, the segments were not differentiated enough

to home in on female health behaviors, and so no solutions were deployed. Designing the segment-specific interventions is not trivial —it requires time and design.

Third, programs need continued support beyond the initial design phases to ensure adequate implementation. We found that we needed to work closely with the program partners to privilege segments based on their programmatic priorities, design specific interventions to be implemented, and develop tools to ensure that the interventions worked.

LESSONS FOR PROGRAMS

Segmentation is a realistic approach for any program, but it requires a team of people with several important qualities: deep knowledge of the behavior in question; expertise in behavioral science, diverse research methods, and advanced statistical analysis; and experience in translating insights into practical interventions on the ground. Based on the available case studies, we have discerned five general lessons to help ensure a robust and impactful segmentation project.

Engage people early on | We recommend rigorous, directed, and persistent engagement with the right stakeholders from the very beginning of the process, including donors, governments, and implementing partners. We found it especially important to work closely with the key decision makers and the implementers who would use psycho-behavioral segmentation on the ground in their programs, to aid the design of instruments and surveys. Aligning on priorities and goals early on helps ensure the buy-in of decision makers, the timely building of capacity, and the eventual adoption of the program.

In Zambia and Zimbabwe, we invested many months of discussions with the government and implementing partners to explain the study and persuade them. As a result, other countries and programs have started requesting the approach; for example, segmentation is now being applied in South Africa for HIV prevention. For circumcision, segmentation is now being planned in several countries. After seeing the family planning example in Niger, neighbors Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire requested implementation in their countries.

Decide whom and what to segment | Any group of customers whose behavior we want to understand can in principle be segmented (unless the demographics, behaviors, and attitudes of each person are identical). For example, in our research in Zambia and Zimbabwe, we segmented men eligible for voluntary medical male circumcision on the factors that influenced how likely they were to agree to the procedure.[17] In our ongoing reproductive, maternal, and child health program in Uttar Pradesh, India, we are segmenting women based on what drives them to use contraceptives and which ones, and segmenting households on their attitudes and behaviors regarding lifesaving interventions for mothers and babies, such as prenatal care and institutional delivery.

Not all providers are the same; they also fall into segments. Behavioral drivers such as motivation or beliefs play a significant role in how they engage with and influence customers. Therefore, to provide more targeted and effective support to providers (e.g., through training, motivational nudges, and management support), we are segmenting frontline workers in Uttar Pradesh, nurses within government facilities, and informal providers. To our knowledge,

this is the first time that psycho-behavioral segmentation is being applied to providers in the context of global development.

After choosing whom to segment and what you want to understand about them, you should consider the basis for your segmentation: What are the most likely attributes that differentiate groups from each other? In the female health segmentation study, women were segmented based on behavioral drivers that influence healthy or unhealthy decision making. But the segmentation was applied across too many outcomes that likely had common but also unique behavioral drivers. This lack of specificity over "what" they were segmenting produced segments that were essentially useless.

Decide how to segment | To start the segmentation process, it saves time to use existing data to your advantage. Mine the literature and any qualitative or quantitative data sets available that can help fill in the gaps of what you want to find out. If you need to start from scratch, we recommend going into qualitative depth first and quantitative breadth second. Qualitative research enables you to experiment with different ways to ask a question and to listen to responses in real time. Therefore, you can use it to get to know better whom you are segmenting before designing a large-scale survey.

We recommend using a mixture of several qualitative methods to counterbalance their strengths and weaknesses. Journey mapping tracks behaviors and attitudes over time but does not allow for easy testing of "what if" scenarios; in-depth interviews can give detailed insights but are prone to many biases; and focus groups are time- and cost-effective but obscure individual differences. Direct self-reporting can be supplemented by observations and decision-making exercises.[18] Observations track people's behavior in their natural environment, and decision-making scenarios aim to test underlying drivers of behavior by analyzing hypothetical choices that people make under controlled conditions. The deep insights emerging from a mix of qualitative methods can then form the basis of a robust quantitative survey or experiment, through which meaningful patterns can be detected.

After collecting a rich data set of quantitative responses, you can construct segments using machine-learning techniques such as cluster analysis, which reveals which data points are close to each other (forming a segment) or far apart. It is tempting to pass this task to a competent data scientist or statistician to manage. But even at this stage, input from the designers and implementers is invaluable, because analysis benefits from knowing the real-world context of what the segmentation tries to achieve and how it is to be used. For example, there is no unambiguously optimal number of segments; often, a population will split into 2 groups just as readily as 3, 5, or 20. However, 20 groups might be useless if the differences between them are small, or if implementers already know they will not have the means to target people in that many different ways.

Prioritize | The value of segmentation resides partly in the ability to prioritize which people to target, since programs do not have unlimited resources. We have found the following three criteria for choosing between segments useful:

Ease of conversion. Segments of people who are on the fence, have easily addressed concerns, or are simply unaware of what to do are more likely to act on a message than those who are held back by structural obstacles or are extremely hostile to

the behavior. For example, in the Niger study on family planning, it was hardest to persuade a segment of women who said contraception went against their fundamental values.

Segment prevalence. Segmentation analysis will allocate each respondent to a segment. If segment A consists of 60 percent of the population and segment B consists of 2 percent, programs would probably waste their money trying to address segment B before others.

Segment impact. Would changing one segment likely have a disproportionate effect on the entire group of potential customers? For example, would influencing a segment of highly connected social advocates also influence other segments? If so, there is reason to prioritize that segment. Similarly, targeting the segment of people engaging in the riskiest behavior could have greater impact overall.

Translate insights into interventions | Once you understand why people in your priority segments behave the way they do, the next step is to develop messages and interventions suited to those reasons. In Zimbabwe, for example, we found six different segments of men based on whether they would get circumcised and why. In the segment we called "Enthusiasts," men tended to believe in the health and sexual benefits of voluntary medical circumcision, emotionally associate it with a sense of achievement, engage in a relatively high level of risky sexual behavior, and require social support to overcome some fears and go for circumcision. In contrast, men in a segment we called "Embarrassed Rejecters" were, as the name suggests, only weakly motivated to get circumcised.

Such insights can then be translated into messages that ring true. This can be done through mass communication campaigns or one-on-one conversations using segment-typing tools that, through a series of questions, help field workers allocate a person to a likely segment. For example, if members of the segment fear that a surgical procedure will fail, a simple step-by-step description of the procedure could be enough to encourage action. Conversely, if the main driver is a fear of violating social norms, a communication campaign could emphasize how easy it is to keep the new behavior private.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FIELD

Development sector leaders are not adopting psycho-behavioral segmentation, despite case studies from both the private and development sectors indicating that it could help them be more effective. Even in developed countries, demographic segmentation has stubbornly persisted. Comparing the promising case studies with the obstacles present in the field shows that we need governments, donors, and implementing partners to come together to make psycho-behavioral segmentation a common practice. There are a number of critical steps that should be taken.

Build the evidence case | Donors need to step up and invest in more case studies that apply this approach at scale and highlight its impact. As we've observed with family planning and circumcision, countries that see segmentation being used successfully elsewhere are quick to ask for support in applying it as well.

We also recommend building the evidence to demonstrate how this approach can lead to better results. For organizations in the development sector, it's not feasible to measure impact based on health outcomes, because so many factors go into achieving better health that it would be nearly impossible to attribute any change in impact to psycho-behavioral segmentation. A more pragmatic approach to evaluation needs to be taken, and one option is to develop and measure interim milestones. In the same way that a primary care program would measure the number of infants immunized, program leaders can structure measurement and evaluation to focus on such elements as the number of people who changed their behavior and took the action needed in response to a segment-based intervention versus a one-size-fits-all campaign. Another important suite of milestones could be changes in the drivers of this action, such as knowledge and beliefs.

Create demand | In many ways, we need to change the behavior of the leading actors in the sector. Among governments, donors, and implementing partners, this needs to happen both from the bottom up, originating in project proposals from implementers, and from the top down, as governments and donors request implementers to use this approach. Memorable case and evaluation studies are one way of promoting the value and impact of segmentation in a resource-constrained setting, but an active and targeted advocacy strategy is also needed, especially by stakeholders who have applied this approach and who can speak from their experience. The application of psycho-behavioral segmentation and its value should also become part of the global-development discourse—for example, through a push from donor organizations, who are likely to be more innovative and who fund and oversee programs across multiple geographies and development areas.

Prepare the sector | Frameworks and tools are needed to facilitate, streamline, and enable the scaling of psycho-behavioral segmentation—from the initial design of the study to the design and implementation of segment-specific interventions. These tools should focus on three key components: helping programs select the right variables to segment on, making it easier to utilize existing data for new programs, and translating findings into actionable interventions.

The design of a robust segmentation study needs to be grounded in sound behavioral science. The lack of a common, comprehensive, and translational behavioral framework that determines the full set of reasons why people behave the way they do, how to measure them, and how to link them to suitable interventions makes it challenging. While there are many robust behavioral theories, most focus on only a few key aspects of behavior change or do not provide guidance on the most suitable methods to measure the drivers of behavior.

An example of a useful evidence-based standard is the Integrated Behavior Model, where intention is the final step toward whether a person acts or not, and is in turn driven by beliefs about whether a behavior would result in a good or bad outcome, how strongly one would be judged for taking an action, and whether one has the self-efficacy to achieve it. However, there is little emphasis on unconscious biases or habit building. Another instructive standard is the Transtheoretical Model, which divides the path to a behavior into stages over time: from becoming aware of an action, to con-

templating the pros and cons, to forming an intention, to acting, and finally to maintaining the new behavior or not. Distinct factors are important at each stage, so touchpoints and messaging would be different as well.[19]

We need a framework that integrates all critical components of behaviors—the decision-making path, internal drivers, and contextual drivers—and that accounts for differences between individuals. To address this, Surgo Foundation is developing a comprehensive model of behavior, based on a synthesis of the best available evidence, as well as methodological guidance on how to collect the variables to feed into a segmentation study.

Scale up | Once a segmentation study is implemented in a development area, such as family planning, we recommend using the existing surveys to enable scale-up in other geographies. Differences in context, population characteristics, and program strategies and implementation to date make it necessary to develop country-specific segmentation solutions, based on quantitative data. However, previously developed segmentation surveys could be adapted for the new context by considering any contextual differences and need not be designed *de novo* each time. The circumcision segmentation surveys in Zimbabwe and Zambia, for example, formed the basis for making minor necessary updates and then collecting and modeling the data for any other country. Sharing of full surveys is often limited between programs; we recommend a platform to expand sharing.

We also recommend developing tools that would enable the translation of segmentation results into programmatic interventions. In circumcision, for example, portfolio-mapping tools were developed to provide programs with an efficient way to map their current program intervention portfolios against the key drivers (facilitators and barriers) for adoption identified by the research. The result of this process provides a simple map showing which drivers are currently being addressed by the program and where key gaps remain. With the segmentations in hand, we provided simple persona tools to help programs efficiently profile each of their segments on key reasons why men will or won't get circumcised, to better target those drivers.

Build local capacity | Finding the right people with the right skill sets for psycho-behavioral segmentation in development programs is exceedingly difficult. Segmentation requires knowledge of behavioral science, quantitative and qualitative research methods and analytics, and deep expertise in the field. Therefore, we need to actively connect development experts with the people who have the requisite skills in behavioral science and help them speak each other's language. To make this approach truly scalable, over time we need to build local capacity in countries. This requires that the center of gravity for psycho-behavioral segmentation eventually move to developing countries. At Surgo, we are building tools and a network of partners to help programs find the expertise they need and become better consumers of this approach.

ACCOUNTING FOR PEOPLE

Development programs are woefully underutilizing the potential of psycho-behavioral segmentation that can help people live healthier lives. It's time to recognize the extraordinary advantages of accounting for differences in what drives people to act as they do. Resources can then be targeted to the groups of people who are most likely to

change or whose change has the biggest overall impact, using interventions that will most effectively induce behavior change.

Our recommendations combine the strengths of an evidence-based approach with the focus on pragmatic implementation already perfected by the private sector. They do not demand too much of programs. On the contrary, we encourage them to utilize the resources and knowledge that we have distilled here to understand their customers not as one homogeneous audience, but as people driven by varying contextual factors and social norms, beliefs, emotions, and unconscious biases. In all global health and development issues we are tackling today, shifting human behavior is critical. Doing this in a smart way where we account for differences between people is essential. ∎
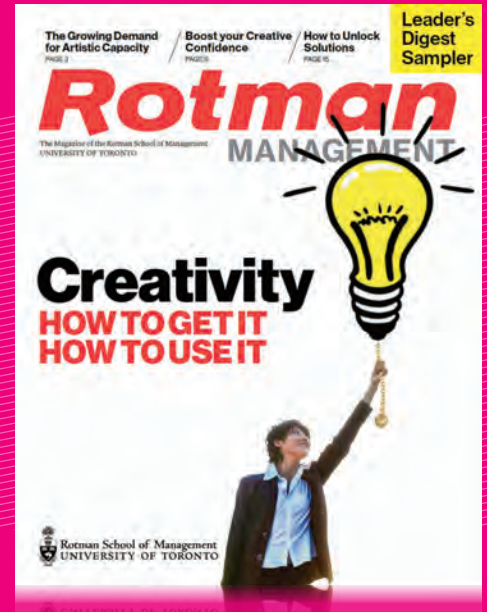
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VIEWPOINT
INSIGHTS FROM THE FRONT LINES

The Missing Politics of Female Empowerment

Humanitarian nonprofits unconsciously reinforce the very conditions of women's oppression they seek to eradicate.

BY NIMMI GOWRINATHAN

P ower is universally difficult for women to access. For women in the developing world, the term "empowerment" seeks to remedy this. The definition, as most often used in the world of aid and development, is the transfer of power from the powerful to the powerless. This broad definition has stretched to cover everything from the interventions of Save the Children, to educate young girls, to the recruitment of women into the Islamic State group.

But does empowerment programming actually shift power?

In August 1984, a group of feminists from the Global South gathered in Bangalore, India. Now known as Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era, or the DAWN feminist collective, the group was instrumental in introducing the word "empowerment" into the development sphere. Among them were a reproductive rights expert who founded the first women's center in Brazil, a pioneering anthropologist from Mexico who highlighted the exclusion of indigenous women, and an activist for Dalit rights.

These feminists, emerging from a history of women who fought for power against colonial interests and cultural repression, centered their discussion on the political forces responsible for the conditions of women's oppression. For them, the term "empowerment" was the foundation of an explicitly political project intended to incite collective mobilization around the distinctive politics of marginalized women.

Nearly 50 years later, empowerment programming for women in the Global South ranges from impoverished indigenous women in Bolivia crocheting string bikinis (so that Westerners can "shop with a purpose") to ex-combatants in Sri Lanka being offered training in icing cakes, hairstyling, and sewing classes. This re-feminizing programming not only limits the women's ability to partici pate fully in social and political spheres of society, but also does nothing to address the very real political grievances that led to their collective marginalization in the first place.

Today the term "empowerment" is omnipresent, particularly in the gender-programming language of Western humanitarian organizations. As it entered the lexicon of the United Nations and other international bodies, it quickly morphed from a tool for the powerless to challenge the forces of power that create inequality to an umbrella term describing development strategies that offer women limited technical solutions to issues of poverty, health care, and education. From the time of its introduction to its use in contemporary interventions, power for women has been deliberately de-linked from politics.

Through this language, powered by a billion-dollar industry of aid, governments and donors alike were now able to answer women's demands for political power with small-scale economic promises of empowerment, often in the form of livestock handouts: a few chickens and cows. What began as an overtly political feminist project has since become the linchpin of an anti-politics.

The Global South feminist agenda for collective political power has been exchanged for individual livelihood and income-generation projects, and political education toward systemic change has been diluted by the increased construction of girls' schools. While both alleviate some aspects of social inequality and benefit individual women, neither addresses the structural issues that perpetuate the marginalization of the communities they serve. The concern is not in these initiatives themselves, but in how they are used to release forces of oppression from their political accountability.

THE INSIDIOUS SEWING MACHINE

As both a disaster aid worker and a scholar researching the motivations of female fighters in conflict zones, I have continually encountered an approach to women in the Global South that denies both their distinctive politics and their desire for political power.

In November 2017, I visited Bogotá, Colombia, and met with Sandra, a senior female combatant in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the recently disarmed Marxist guerrilla movement. The year before, as the peace process began, the first interveners to visit her and other female ex-combatants were

ILLUSTRATION BY HANNA BARCZYK

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international organizations. They offered her something for ex-combatant livelihoods: sewing machines. But Sandra, like many other female cadres, had no interest: "We will do what we have to for the peace process, but I will never be de-mobilized."

She rejected her sewing machine, she said, and elaborated that she feared these programs are partially responsible for active female FARC members slowly "losing their politics" and being forced into the traditional gender roles they had escaped in the movement. "Today, these groups continue to apply for funds in our name to do these types of projects," she said. "It's not what we want."

Similarly, the experiences of female ex-combatants in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka also represent some of the starkest examples of women who have engaged in overtly political forms of resistance only to be de-politicized through empowerment programming. As they complete the sewing courses required of their de-radicalization, these women see the goal to push them away from political life and into traditional gender roles. One Tamil ex-combatant in Sri Lanka recently told me, "I have no use for sewing, nor any interest in it. It's only when I finished training that the government considers me de-radicalized."

In a recent report, *Emissaries of Empowerment*, my coauthors and I argue that empowerment programming fails to grapple with non-Western women as full subjects, instead de-politicizing them by reducing their identities to the circumstances of their victimhood. Their deepest trauma becomes their identity, and perhaps the only identity that comes with benefits in deeply divided societies. The report interrogates the Western feminist ideology driving this kind of programming and the political structures keeping it in place. We also argue that NGOs *reinforce* the subjugated position of women—often through the very programming designed to "empower" them.

Sandra's experience, by no means isolated, reveals the uncomfortable position of the female fighter in the humanitarian aid world. She is neither fully a legitimate victim to be saved nor a political agent that the West is comfortable supporting. Though her presence should push the development industry to reckon with women first and foremost as political actors, it is a challenge the NGOs are not prepared to meet.

The female fighter is the latest example of the female "victim" in the Global South, another beneficiary of empowerment programming unable to reckon with her political agency. Alongside "rape victims," "war widows," and "mothers of the disappeared," the "ex-combatant" is reduced to abject victimhood. To these women, interveners most often offer "empowerment" construed in the narrowest sense of providing disadvantaged or traumatized women with individual livelihood projects for small-scale businesses.

Defining individuals through their trauma, tying their identity to sexual violence, allows for interventions into their lives to be justified as a moral obligation. Consequently, a moral intervention is neither subject to critique nor obliged to reckon with the politics that surround victims of trauma. This narrative can be seen in many guises— from the testimonies of Democratic congresswomen who cite the evils of the hijab to justify US military objectives in Afghanistan to media celebrations of young white women on personal journeys to save women in the Congo from the "rape epidemic."

NGOs focus on local culture to highlight marginalized women's oppression: dowry payments, sati practices, and sharia law. Beyond a convenient cover for the political agendas of intervention, this particular construction of the traumatized woman and the community she inhabits determines the programming that will save her.

ACKNOWLEDGE COMPLICITY, SCRUTINIZE PROGRAMMING

A woman seen only through her experience of gang rape has no politics; she is simply the product of the violence that entrenches her victimhood. My own research reveals that moments of sexual violence have a distinctive impact in shaping a woman's politics, often in ways that can mobilize into radical movements. Empowerment programming fails to acknowledge this. Instead, its solution de-links power from politics.

What follows from this approach to empowerment is a limited understanding of women's agency. Western feminists often can see the power of women in the Global South only if they act in opposition to social expectations and challenge repressive norms and traditions. This singular perspective serves to re-inscribe the cultural tendency to deprive women of their own distinctive politics and overlooks their capacity to resist the broader structures of inequality and oppression.

This programming may succeed in providing individuals the ability to earn a meager income. In its construction of the victim, however, it cannot shift the structures of inequality that have prevented women in the Global South from obtaining power.

A testament to the desire for simple solutions over complex conversations, the challenge most readily offered to critiques of empowerment has been posed as a question: "What is the solution?"

The solution begins with an uncomfortable conversation within the development industry on the complicity of various actors in the pattern of de-politicizing marginalized women in the Global South; a dismantling of the guise of empowerment in order to reveal the funding, incentives, colonial legacies, and political agendas driving the design of programs. In Sri Lanka, Colombia, and elsewhere, female activists are wary of both the political elites in their own country and the ideological strings tied to Western NGOs. As these collectives eke out their own political spaces, they each offer distinctive ways forward to address the deep-seated causes of inequality.

If donors and practitioners are serious about greater access to power for marginalized women, the entire framework of contemporary empowerment programming needs to be examined and restructured to allow women to find the cultural, economic, and political space required to address inequality in all its forms. ■

VIEWPOINT

The #GivingTuesday Model

The social sector has a lot to learn from the innovation network that has emerged from the post-Thanksgiving global giving movement.

BY ASHA CURRAN

The social sector has faced the same basic challenges for a long time now: the endless chase for funding, the struggle to attract talent and maintain basic operations, and the constant need to lobby for itself in the public sphere. For all their good intentions and sense of purpose, sector leaders still complain of low levels of collaboration and innovation in confronting these stubborn problems. A 2017 survey by The Bridgespan Group and the Rockefeller Foundation found that although 80 percent of nonprofit leaders agree that innovation is an "urgent imperative," just 40 percent of those leaders think their organizations are actually set up to innovate. All of these issues pose a significant danger to progress and sustainability.

For the last seven years, I've been one of the leaders of the giving movement #GivingTuesday (GT). Created as a day of popular giving following two days of post-Thanksgiving consuming—Black Friday and Cyber Monday—GT is now a global, year-round movement that drives hundreds of millions of dollars in giving annually in the United States and continues to spread to dozens of other countries on every continent in the world. Through this work, I have seen how social sector leaders from across the globe are responding to our shared challenges. The examples they set help us all to understand the changes we need to make.

GT offers such potential as a learning experiment because it is an adaptable idea that serves different needs at different times within different communities. It's more than simply a day of fundraising, though it is raising significant funds for nonprofits. It's an online and offline movement, within which ideas and resources are built and shared, and cultures of generosity, the bedrock of a healthy civil society, are flourishing.

THE POWER OF THE NETWORK

GT was created in 2012 at the 92nd Street Y, a prestigious New York cultural institution (with no history of creating social media movements). At the time, Twitter was just taking off; memes such as #MeToo and #NeverAgain were years away. In its infancy, GT was an experiment to answer a series of open questions: Could social media be used to spread generosity and make giving go viral? Could it change cultural norms and behaviors around giving? Would people want to post about the issues they cared about as much as how many miles they ran that morning or what they ordered for lunch?

The answers turned out to be yes. GT created a surge of enthusiasm in its first year both in the sector and among the public. In its first year, $10 million was donated online, with 2,500 nonprofits signing on to the idea. The number of dollars donated in the United States increased by double-digit percentages every year. More than $300 million was donated in 2017, again, online only, in just the 24 hours of the day itself.

What's more, we can be certain that these numbers are underreported, since online giving is roughly 10 percent of all giving and the dollar number is the aggregate total of only some of the roughly 150 giving platforms. Of people who give on GT, roughly 75 percent are existing donors and 25 percent are new ones, demonstrating that the day offers potential to engage both an existing constituency and flocks of new, interested givers. GT doesn't take money away from other days of the year, either: Similar to disaster relief campaigns, GT creates a giving spike but with no corresponding dip in giving the rest of the year.

GT has become ubiquitous. In the United States, more than 100 local community campaigns have formed, from entire states such as Illinois and New York to tiny towns such as Bethel, Alaska, and Boothbay Harbor, Maine. Perhaps most remarkably, it has spread across the world, with official movements in 46 countries and unofficial activity in dozens more. The leaders of these movements, representing nonprofits, nonprofit alliances, giving platforms, marketing companies, fundraising associations, and community foundations, come from every corner of the globe, speak more than 20 languages, and operate within vastly diverse cultural, philanthropic, and historical landscapes.

Despite this diversity, these leaders have formed a thriving, highly interconnected network to address

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these common problems. They communicate year-round—via WhatsApp, through e-mail, and at in-person meet-ups and convenings—about the progress of the movement in their regions, mistakes made, lessons learned, and best practices discovered. The informal principles guiding the network are generosity, transparency, humor, iteration, and mutual reinforcement and encouragement. They question conventional nonprofit wisdom, and they are frustrated by stagnation and repetition. Giving is the common thematic interest of the network, but they also share a broader commitment to social justice and democratic values.

LESSONS LEARNED

So what can we learn from GT's results so far, from its network of leaders, and from the global giving innovation lab they are building together? I would highlight seven lessons.

Think about the social sector as a global solutions network. It is extraordinary in this age how rapidly a great new idea can spread across borders. Given the common challenges we are all facing, even if our work is hyper-local, we should challenge ourselves to think about how broadly we can share ideas that might benefit others. If we can learn from, and mimic, the way GT's global leaders share best practices year-round, we will see at scale the uptake of ideas and experiments spreading through different spheres, as quickly as one colleague leaning over to the adjacent desk and saying, "Hey, try this …"

Become fluent in data. Formed in 2015 by GT's leadership team, the #GivingTuesday Data Collaborative is committed not only to growing the movement, but also to measuring and learning all we can from the available data about the movement, giving trends, and behaviors more broadly. We don't all need to be data scientists, but we do need to be, or have access to, "code-switchers" —those who can translate data from those who know it best to those who need to understand its applications, perils, and possibilities. We should understand how to best use our own data—productively, safely, responsibly—and also how and when to pool

it for collective analysis and understanding. There is a risk in sharing, but greater potential for reward.

Rethink "branding." #GivingTuesday is an intentionally "unbranded" idea. It's a movement that can be adapted and co-owned by diverse communities, organizations, or individuals, and changed to reflect diverse identities. This idea of co-ownership is key to its growth; it is made by many, governed by many, and changed by many. The way people interact with causes (and everything else) in the digital age is fundamentally different from a generation ago. We can't expect donors to be unquestioningly loyal to a logo anymore; their relationship to giving is intimate and fast-moving. GT resonates because giving is collective, celebratory, and transformational, rather than transactional.

Adapt to rapidly changing technology. Facebook disrupted #GivingTuesday in 2017 by processing $45 million in donations and, the following day, announcing that it was permanently waiving any fees on donations and setting up an annual matching fund. Other major tech platforms have pursued or will soon enter the online giving game. The implications of this—and of direct person-to-person giving, workplace giving, recurring monthly giving, and soaring online and mobile giving, not to mention the overall effects of social media itself—are far from clear yet. But they are happening, and while we may parse the negatives and positives, we must be agile enough to use available tools to our benefit.

Switch from a scarcity mind-set to a collaborative mind-set. In the run-up to #GivingTuesday 2017, many predicted lower levels of giving due to "donor fatigue." We'd just concluded a season that included huge spikes of giving after hurricanes Harvey and Maria, as well as record donations motivated by politics and activism. But 2017 GT giving rose nearly 80 percent over the previous year. For too long, nonprofits have seen each other as competitors for the same finite pool of donor dollars. But what if that pie is far bigger than we have assumed? Givers

are ready and willing to give, and nongivers are just waiting to be invited to the table. Particularly with the massive younger generations of Millennials and Generation Z becoming the next generations of givers, a mind-set shift here is critical. When we work together, and when we tell a meaningful collective story about the things we are trying to achieve, we can tap into more and better giving—perhaps more than we ever assumed possible.

Reimagine the nonprofit leader of the 21st century. #GivingTuesday creator Henry Timms is coauthor of the 2018 bestseller *New Power*, a body of thinking about new and emerging leaders that was informed by #GivingTuesday's growth. Such leaders, he writes, will be able to harness the passions of grassroots communities and to "structure for participation"—that is, to build organizations, movements, and initiatives that are designed to be shaped by the many. This means being a leader who not only creates many other leaders but also cultivates and supports inclusive, generative networks of them. If GT's network of leaders is any indication, the sector's most high-potential leaders are empathetic, entrepreneurial, collaborative, transparent, peer-driven, data-fluent, and eager both to innovate and to replicate what is already being done well. Even though they are visionaries and can be charismatic, they are peer-driven and low-ego.

Understand how movements matter. #BlackLivesMatter, #NeverAgain, and #MeToo are ushering in real changes. #GivingTuesday has generated hundreds of millions of donated dollars and global philanthropic collaboration. It's time to stop arguing about whether social media can have material impacts and start harnessing and channeling their flows of communication and power.

We must also realize that these movements and their leaders won't look the way we've expected them to in the past. But their voices and skills matter more than ever—as much as they should have before—and the more prepared we are to hear them, the better off we will all be. ∎

VIEWPOINT

Two Approaches to Advocacy

Proponents of charter school expansion in Massachusetts thought that a ballot initiative was the obvious bet. They were wrong.

BY LIAM KERR & JOHN A. GRIFFIN

In February 2016, proponents of charter school expansion in Massachusetts were optimistic. A ballot initiative that could put the issue to voters in November was up by 28 points in the polls, a national advocacy group had declared that it would spend record sums of money to ensure victory, and Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes had released a report showing that Boston's charter schools were the best in the country.

Nine months later, the ballot box proved that optimism unfounded. The measure lost by 24 points in November, a 52-point swing from its polling advantage earlier in the year. Opponents of the proposal were so emboldened by their victory that they set their sights on rolling back the entire framework of education reforms that had first catapulted Massachusetts to the top of national rankings in the 1990s. The chief opponent of charter school expansion, teachers' union president Barbara Madeloni, said, "I want to thank the 'yes' campaign for bringing the fight to us because it gave us the opportunity to build the movement" opposing reform.

The cause that produced some of the country's best public schools had lost its biggest public test. How could a sector so effective at building great organizations have faltered so badly? The answer lies in a failure to apply "nonmarket strategy," a field developed to help firms—and their market-oriented leaders—navigate the more complex world outside of the marketplace.

LONG AND WINDING ROAD

Many influential philanthropists and likeminded grantees think primarily in terms of markets, due to their business experience and academic training, and often adapt for-profit frameworks to social sector challenges. This market-oriented approach focuses on tangible metrics and direct competitors to design a linear path to achieving short-term results.

Modern philanthropists have often used this narrow lens to improve the efficiency of nonprofits that provide discrete services or products. When it comes to the straightforward task of defining an outcome and then driving down the price of that outcome, such as the effort to provide mosquito bed nets to prevent malaria, business-oriented philanthropists have seen tremendous success with this mindset. But political advocacy does not follow the market-based model of defining an outcome and making the solution more efficient. In fact, adopting a market-based approach to advocacy can be detrimental.

Leading nonmarket frameworks from business management professors such as Stanford University's David Baron and Yale University's David Bach have been applied to prominent businesses—and should be used to bridge the gap between business instincts and political reality in advocacy. A nonmarket approach uses a broader lens that emphasizes qualitative progress and a wider range of actors to evaluate both short-term and long-term results—as well as potential adverse effects. While the market approach focuses on quantifiable metrics, such as money spent, the nonmarket approach looks to qualitative metrics, such as the strength of relationships. Whereas market thinkers analyze direct competitors, the nonmarket approach looks to third parties whose relationships and political incentives may draw them into a fight in which they have no direct stake. A nonmarket thinker takes greater account of potential negative outcomes and may often choose a less direct path to the same goal than a market-oriented counterpart, who searches for the fastest, cheapest, and most straightforward route.

Using only a market lens, it is clear why the Massachusetts ballot initiative looked so appealing: High poll numbers and a financial advantage were the most quantifiable measurements of strength, and proponents had both. In a similarly straightforward analysis of actors, the opposition's strengths appeared surmountable: The direct competitors appeared to be pro-charter advocacy groups and charter school parents on one side, with unions on the other. The linearity of the plan was also appealing to market-oriented thinkers: Unlike in the legislature, charter proponents could write the law and simply have voters approve it at the ballot box, with no chance of adverse amendments. The investment horizon was

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bright, with the vote occurring on a fixed date just months away. For around $20 million, the charter cap would effectively be abolished once and for all on November 8, 2016.

The linear, controllable, and high-return proposition was especially appealing in light of the long and winding road that led up to the state's showdown over charter expansion. Like many advocacy issues, charter school growth in Massachusetts had followed an unpredictable course—and in early 2016, the future looked equally uncertain. In 1993, a school-funding lawsuit provided billions of dollars that greased a legislative compromise for more accountability and innovation in education, including the creation of public charter schools. In 2010, the Obama administration's Race to the Top initiative provided both political and financial incentives for a legislative compromise that brought new accountability measures and more charter schools, coupled with $250 million in federal grants. In both cases, the major teachers' unions signed on to the final deal. But legislative efforts to raise the cap in 2014 and 2016 were mired in differences between the Massachusetts House and Senate.

Market-oriented charter proponents tired of waiting for opaque, legislative dealmaking to provide an opportune moment decided to take their cause directly to voters. Nothing could match a ballot measure's linear process, clear timeline (with a set election day), and unambiguous result.

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

From a nonmarket perspective, there were significant problems with the core assumptions of the market-driven case for going to the ballot box. First, they placed too much confidence in initial polls showing voter approval for charter schools. The linear, benchmarks-oriented thinking consistent with a market mindset encouraged proponents to underestimate voters' susceptibility to new information and negative messaging.

Proponents also believed their clear financial advantage would carry them to victory, but failed to see the unions' counterbalancing strength in less quantifiable factors, such as

long-standing relationships with other political organizations, which could be leveraged without spending large sums of money. The union could also deploy powerful negative messages, which they developed through national union networks and experience with other campaigns and initiatives, and they could deliver those messages through cultivated spokespeople such as teachers and local school committees—a unique asset not as easily quantifiable as money in the bank. Proponents placed a high value in the effectiveness of expensive TV ads, which have a mixed track record of success and little long-term value. Opponents, by contrast, had already invested a great deal of money and political capital over a long period of time— well before the ballot question had even been conceived—to develop relationships with school committees, advocacy groups in other sectors, and political party interests.

These other actors factored less into the pro-charter calculations on pursuing the ballot initiative, but they represented the most trusted sources of information for the public. Voters elect school committee members precisely to make education policy decisions. While fewer than 10 out of the 351 cities and towns were near the existing cap on charter schools, 211 school committees around Massachusetts held votes opposed to the ballot measure, providing hundreds of local news stories tailored directly to voters.

It is easy to see why this would puzzle a market-oriented thinker, since these districts were not directly impinged by a potential expansion of charter schools; the proposal would affect urban areas that had already reached the state-imposed cap. But a nonmarket approach, with a broad lens toward actors that could influence political advocacy, guided the union effort to organize school committees and other seemingly uninvolved entities that were nevertheless effective messengers.

The nonmarket approach also takes a longer-term view. In investment parlance, a market-oriented approach to funding advocacy has a high discount rate that deemphasizes future returns for short-term

results. A nonmarket approach, by contrast, has a comparatively stronger emphasis on the long term, leading the union to place many small bets, such as on relationships with young activists and legislators that may not yield a return for a decade or more.

This longer investment horizon for advocacy programs extends to a lower risk tolerance. For most financial investors, any specific investment has unlimited upside but limited downside. A market approach to advocacy takes the perspective that you can lose only what you put in. The case for going to the ballot used a calculation that focused almost exclusively on the upside of the investment. Risking $20 million for thousands of students in high-performing charter schools seemed like a smart bet.

The union, by contrast, took a nonmarket approach to the risks of the ballot initiative: The campaign and results could bring significant nonfinancial downside for reformers. By defeating education reformers decisively enough, the union could inflict brand damage that would cost millions of dollars to repair. Similarly, the union could build relationships—and harm reform relationships—with key individuals and organizations such as school committees, superintendents, non-education interest groups, and elected officials.

Even the most patient entrepreneurs and philanthropists may not be accustomed to the long and unpredictable slog of winning in advocacy. This is especially true of the social entrepreneurs and venture philanthropists for whom urgency and focus have been key to building and growing highly effective nonprofits.

The solution lies not in simply abandoning an approach that has built organizations worthy of advocating for, but in compensating for its weaknesses. The disciplined thinkers who dominate philanthropy will likely always need some structured frameworks to evaluate advocacy. In this vein, a nonmarket lens— and its approach to metrics, actors, flexibility, investment horizons, and risk tolerance—can overlay a market approach and compensate for its blind spots. ■

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RESEARCH

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

JUNIOR SCHOLARS FORUM

June 18 through 20, 2018, the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (Stanford PACS), the academic home of *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, hosted the annual Rockefeller Foundation Junior Scholars Forum at Stanford University. The event, now in its fifth year, brings together new researchers, including graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and junior faculty, whose work covers civil society, the nonprofit sector, and philanthropy. Its purpose is to promote the scholarly community and to enhance the overall quality of research in the field. Since *SSIR*'s inception, the magazine has sought to make research findings from a broad range of scholarly work accessible to our readers. In this vein, we offer reports on four research papers by scholars who participated in the forum. Their work on the effectiveness of partnerships between NGOs and governments in India, the differences between old and new foundations' support of state education agencies, the increasing policy involvement among philanthropic foundations in higher education, and a turn toward impact focus by US foundations' giving in international development not only represents state-of-the-art theoretical research in the field but also provides important practical insights.

—JOHANNA MAIR

ADVOCACY

Foundations as Interest Groups

BY MARILYN HARRIS

Foundations have traditionally signaled their favored causes merely by donating money to organizations. Over the past few decades, however, a new wave of foundations led by a new generation of wealthy philanthropists has adopted more pronounced advocacy that resembles the work of political interest groups.

Leslie K. Finger, a lecturer on government and social studies at Harvard University, wanted to understand how the new foundations choose their recipients. Because education is the most frequently cited issue priority among the largest US foundations, she focused on foundations' support for the education sector.

"New philanthropy" is defined as the hallmark of foundations with living, hands-on donors whose fortunes were made in modern industries, such as retail, tech, or finance.

In contrast, older, pre-1980 foundations were established by now-deceased benefactors who accumulated their wealth from manufacturing or printing, and they have historically focused on capacity-building and political mobilization rather than on specific outcomes.

Finger's research centered on state-level education funding. Even though state agencies account for only a tiny fraction of total foundation giving, they are "important but understudied actors in shaping state education reforms," says Jeffrey Henig, professor of political science and education at Teachers College of Columbia University. Finger's study "provides an interesting empirical test of whether giving is targeted at states with the greatest need or those where the political conditions for influence are most propitious."

Both old and new foundations give generously to education, but their objectives diverge. Old foundations typically support traditional public-school institutions. By contrast, new foundations seek to reshape or bypass the public-school system through a specific set of choice- and accountability-oriented education policies under the rubric of "education reform." Representative reform programs include school vouchers, alternative certification programs like Teach For America, and charter schools.

Further, recent national initiatives such as No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top require state education agencies to implement them. The agencies' involvement presents an opportunity for foundations to shape local policy through assistance at the state level. New philanthropists see these programs as higher-leverage, because, Finger explains, they fundamentally change the structure of the school system, channeling the flow of dollars rather than simply adding to it.

Through a combination of data analysis and fieldwork, Finger discerned clear patterns. She analyzed grants to state education departments that exceeded $10,000, as reported to the Foundation Center by the 1,000 largest foundations between 2003 and 2014, plus IRS-listed grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and The Wallace Foundation, the two largest grantmakers to state education agencies. She then correlated this information with political and social factors in the recipient states.

The analysis showed that states with higher poverty rates are not more likely to receive grants from either new or old foundations, suggesting that need alone doesn't necessarily drive grant strategy. In fact, education agencies were more likely to receive funding in states where there was strong support

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for school reform and where teachers' unions—generally not amenable to new teacher-certification proposals—were weaker. States with collective bargaining were about 10 percent less likely to receive grants.

Such political considerations were less critical for older foundations. Finger found that they tended to give money to states that spent a larger percentage of the budget on education, were more urban, and had Democratic governors. Taken together, "the state-level analyses suggested that new foundations target states with weaker teachers' unions for grant receipt but give more where there are education reform groups present and higher levels of poverty," she writes.

For example, in 2008, the Gates Foundation sought to encourage changes in teacher policy. The organization looked for states with at least 45 percent of students receiving free and reduced-price lunches and without prohibitions on tying teacher evaluations to student test scores. The Gates Foundation also looked for states with "auspicious political conditions for bold teacher reform" and found them in Kentucky. The state had a strong education reform advocacy organization, it did not have collective bargaining, and fewer than 60 percent of teachers were union members. Moreover, education resources were getting cut, and the state didn't receive Race to the Top funding.

Gates targeted its assistance to Kentucky at reforming how teachers' performance was assessed, through both funding and training. This approach, Finger writes, was "interest-group-like" in that it took into account the constellation of interests already present in the state. "The extra funding increased the capacity of the state to design and enact a new teacher evaluation system, and most people I spoke to, from bureaucrats to union leaders to teachers, welcomed the help." ■

Leslie K. Finger, "Giving to Government: Are New Foundations Interest Groups?" working paper, 2018.

NONPROFITS & NGOS

When NGOs Confront Bureaucracy

BY MARILYN HARRIS

Nongovernmental organizations are key actors in developing countries, where they frequently collaborate with governments to help deliver basic services. Such partnerships typically seek not simply to boost government resources but, more important, to effect reforms that survive after aid workers depart. But all too often, such collaborative efforts, while initially successful, eventually sputter and die. The question is why.

According to **Emily Clough**, a postdoctoral fellow at the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, the answer can often be found by examining factors of political economy. She has studied an educational reform initiative in Punjab, India, that involved a partnership between the state government and an NGO offering literacy programming. Through interviews, data, and on-site observation, she examined the NGO's efficacy in the context of the region's institutional and political environment.

The program launched in 2008 in Punjab's 13,500 primary schools, where teacher absenteeism and lagging basic skills were endemic. Although income in Punjab was above average for India, the school system suffered from understaffing, lack of training, and outdated teaching materials. Even more concerning, according to Clough, was an entrenched pattern of shirking, absenteeism, and corruption among teachers and principals. Professionally motivated educators were in the minority, career advancement was not tied to performance, transfers were frequent, and "the mechanisms of accountability and oversight of the 'last mile' of the state have tended to be dysfunctional," Clough writes.

The NGO collaboration was approved, thanks to an earnest, reform-minded official named Krishan Kumar, who had been appointed head of the state education department a year earlier. Kumar was already instituting an accountability system and brought the NGO on board to improve student literacy and help him transform the education establishment. The partnership program trained government teachers to use a new methodology and materials for reading that had been developed by the NGO. The NGO hired about 1,000 coordinators at various levels plus 10,000 volunteers assigned to the schools.

Improvements didn't go far enough at first, and early results were disappointing. As much as the NGO employees were integrated into the schools, they were perceived as outside the system and lacking authority. Some professionally minded teachers implemented the methodology and reported good outcomes, but widespread shirking remained a serious impediment to wider success, due to a lack of accountability. In response, Kumar constructed a new line of government supervisory posts, located away from local patronage networks, reporting to him, and charged with ensuring compliance and monitoring teachers via unannounced visits.

The new regime of transparent accountability improved bureaucratic behavior, and the program from 2009 to 2011 entered what some program officers called the "Golden Period." Third-grade students in Punjab increased their reading levels by 16.4 percent compared with an overall decline in the rest of India.

"This case confirms the presence of benevolent public servants, even when least expected, in what are otherwise rent-seeking public bureaucracies," says Jennifer Brinkerhoff,

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professor of public administration and international affairs at George Washington University.

The golden period was short-lived. As statewide elections approached, anti-reform political forces mobilized against the partnership program and used influence to transfer Kumar and others on his leadership team. "Government-involved cross-sector partnerships never occur in a vacuum," Brinkerhoff observes. "Change agents like Kumar require institutional support, which requires not just connecting like-minded reformers but, at a minimum, benign neglect on the part of challenging political economies."

Without an administration willing to enforce the rules from the top, the program slid downhill. Monitoring ceased to operate effectively, corruption reestablished itself, and teacher motivation and performance declined for all but a relatively few self-motivated professionals. Learning levels reversed their climb. After the program's dissolution in 2013, its methodology and tools remained in use in the few schools that continued to be professionally run, but few traces were left elsewhere.

Recently, however, the political winds shifted: Kumar returned to Punjab as education secretary and is restoring the program. Consequently, Clough will be extending this study. "I am entering this next phase of research much more optimistic, given these developments," she says. ■

Emily Clough, "The Inadequacy of Resources Without Reform: The Case of Partnered Provision NGOs," working paper, 2018.

How Foundations Make an Impact

BY CHANA R. SCHOENBERGER

When nonprofits around the world seek funding from foundations, they write grants based on what they think are the foundations' motives for providing money. Instead, they might do better to emphasize what kind of difference the foundations could make, should they fund the grant, a new paper suggests.

Emily Bryant, a doctoral candidate in sociology at Boston University, examined how major US foundations make their decisions on which organizations and projects to fund. Researchers usually ascribe motives to foundations—altruism, self-interest, or a drive to be seen as legitimate—but Bryant found that another main driving force is how much impact the foundation could make toward solving a specific problem.

"This compels them to distribute funding in ways that produce sizable change and so employ various mechanisms of evaluation that allow them to assess where their impact can be greatest," she writes.

For her research, she conducted 70 interviews with grantmakers at foundations and program officers at nonprofits, visiting them and attending industry conferences to meet with attendees.

She found that funders tend to use three sets of criteria to determine whether they will be able to make an impact if they allocate money to a particular cause or project. First, they look around to see which other grantmakers are putting money toward the cause, and whether it is over- or underfunded. Second, they consider whether there are geopolitical concerns, such as restrictions on foreign funding of nonprofits in countries such as India, China, and Egypt. Third, they make sure the groups and people seeking funding are dedicated and suited to the type of work the funders think will make a significant impact.

"Importantly, there must be sufficient qualified and capable organizations that can carry out the type of change foundations seek," Bryant writes.

Looking at foundation grantmaking through the lens of impact marks a departure from the academic work of previous generations. Earlier foundations followed the Carnegie model, she says, with their giving "driven by whatever the benefactor's interests are." As the larger foundations have become more professional and bureaucratic over the years, the field has also shifted toward impact and related ideas, including impact investing, strategic philanthropy, and effective altruism.
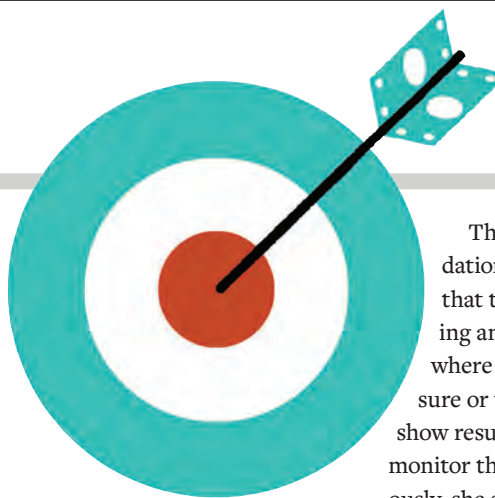
The challenge for foundations is how to prove that their funding is having an impact in situations where it's difficult to measure or takes a long time to show results. Some funders monitor their impact continuously, she says.

"You can have a long-term time horizon and still want to see where change is being made, knowing it's going to take a decade or two or more," she says.

While foundations might find that Bryant's research confirms what they already know about their practices, "this might help potential and current grantees gain insight into how foundations make decisions," she says.

Bryant's work contributes to the field's understanding of how money flows from funders to grantees, says Michael Moody, the Frey Foundation chair for family philanthropy at the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University. "The decisions they make will have a great impact on the lives of people around the globe," he says.

Bryant's research, according to Moody, also takes the challenging approach of conducting interviews with people who work for foundations, who aren't always transparent about exactly how funding is allocated. "Her focus on decision making is brave, because it's analytically and methodologically difficult," Moody says.

The study will also change our understanding of how foundations give out money. Academics thought for years that foundations made grants

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based on their networks, watching other foundations whose work they respected and giving money to the same organizations and causes, Moody says.

"She's showing that primarily what's important is their assessment of how much difference they're going to make, and that points to a trend in the field of major grantmaking," he says. ▪

Emily Bryant, "More Than Simply Motive: International Grantmakers and the Pursuit of Maximal Impact," working paper, 2018.

EDUCATION

When Funding Moves Away From Universities

BY CHANA R. SCHOENBERGER

Major US foundations are shifting the way they fund higher education, moving away from giving money directly to universities and instead donating to outside organizations to promote initiatives they favor. Between 2006 and 2012, these foundations began to focus on carrying out policy ideas, specifically involving getting more students to graduate from college, a new paper finds.

Nabih Haddad, a PhD candidate at Michigan State University's College of Education, examined data on $1 billion worth of educational grants, modeled funding flows, and interviewed officials from foundations and representatives from outside organizations.

"Higher-education funders have increasingly relied on

intermediaries to engage in policy-focused grants," he says.

Part of this change can be attributed to a new generation of foundations making grants in different ways. Traditionally, funders would help universities build capacity by giving money for new buildings or programs under the school's aegis. But new funders, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation, are more likely to donate money to intermediaries dedicated to higher education policy, he says.

"There's been an increase in funding organizations that operate outside traditional universities as well as membership organizations like think tanks, advocacy organizations, media outlets, and more for-profit firms," he says.

Haddad looked at six foundations: Gates, Lumina, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. All are family-founded philanthropies, except Lumina, which was created in 2000 after USA Group, a guarantor and administrator of student loans, sold most of its assets and used the proceeds to form an endowment.

He filtered data from the foundation's Form 990 tax filings, using information from 1,700 grants to create a snapshot of grantmaking in 2006 and 2012. That allowed him to track the shifting priorities.

"These dates were important because they represent a policy shift in higher education, in which the completion agenda displaced the goals of advancing postsecondary access," he writes about the move toward a focus on college completion rates.

The paper is notable because of its methodological ambition, combining three approaches, which is "a really unusual and sophisticated thing to do," says Patricia Bromley, of Stanford's Graduate School of Education.

"It has the regression to look at statistical associations between the funding sources, trying to show there's more policy-advocacy funding; the interviews to help explain why those associations exist; and the network analysis of the types of organizations that are being funded," she says.

The paper extends the findings of other researchers who have looked at the role that wealthy philanthropists increasingly play in setting

educational policy in the K-12 arena, Bromley says. Just as foundations have supported ideas such as school choice for younger students, they are supporting college-completion programs for students in higher education. This sparks the question of whether elites are driving the shift of focus from access to college education to degree acquisition.

Haddad's work doesn't claim causation, "but it's an interesting correlation," Bromley says.

The paper is also in line with research that has studied how foundations have adopted a more neoliberal approach of shifting giving away from institutions and toward outside organizations, says Carrie Oelberger of the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs.

What's novel about his paper, Oelberger says, is his finding that foundations are now enabling a human-capital approach to advancement, rather than building institutions. "I don't think I've seen work that has approached it in particularly that way before," she says.

These findings go along with the overarching crisis of confidence that institutions face in society today, she says. This is evident everywhere from Haddad's work to her own students, who increasingly look for private routes toward a public-service career.

"We're seeing much less interest and commitment to public institutions," Oelberger says. ▪

Nabih Haddad, "Philanthropic investments and higher education: Is funding moving away from the university?" working paper, 2018.

BOOKS
REVIEWS OF NEW AND NOTABLE TITLES

MARK KRAMER is cofounder and managing director of FSG and a senior lecturer at Harvard Business School. He is the author of numerous articles in *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, including "Collective Impact" in the Winter 2011 issue.

Are the Elite Hijacking Social Change?

REVIEW BY MARK KRAMER

This is an exciting time for social innovation. Billions of dollars are flowing into philanthropy, market-driven solutions and social entrepreneurship are flourishing, and social impact consulting and impact investing have become established professions. Yet, in *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World*, Anand Giridharadas, a former *New York Times* foreign correspondent, explains why we should not be so quick to celebrate these advances.

"Business elites are taking over the work of changing the world," Giridharadas observes. "Many believe they are changing the world when they may instead—or also—be protecting a system that is at the root of the problems they wish to solve."

Giridharadas uncovers the internal contradictions of those who work for social change from positions of privilege and wealth. He also delves into the shortcomings of strategy consultants who bring McKinsey-style analysis to social issues; the limitations of venture capitalists who fund social solutions; and the problems with thought leaders who give well-paid speeches preaching win-win opportunities for business and society.

It is an important book that challenges those of us working for social change within existing systems of power to consider whether we are inadvertently perpetuating the problems we seek to solve. It is also a very personal challenge to me, as I represent the very type of person who so worries Giridharadas: I am a former venture capitalist, cofounder of a social impact consulting firm, and a proponent of for-profit solutions to social problems. From my perspective, it is a highly engaging yet sobering experience to read this book, and it imparts new insights into the limitations and compromises inherent in the way I and many of my friends and colleagues have chosen to work for social progress.

If this book were an uninformed diatribe against capitalism, it would be easy to dismiss. But Giridharadas understands both sides of these issues. He is a former McKinsey consultant who once embraced the approaches he now rejects. He knows the scene at Davos, Aspen, and the Clinton Global Initiative, and he is friends with many of the philanthropists, foundation presidents, venture capitalists, and social entrepreneurs whom he profiles.

This book, Giridharadas writes in the epilogue, is intended as a personal letter to his well-intentioned friends to wake them up to dangers they may not see. That empathetic tone gives the book its persuasive power to touch the hearts of even those readers, like myself, who are the targets of its criticism.

Giridharadas raises thought-provoking questions that have made me think long and hard about my life's work. Are the winners of our capitalist system—intentionally or not—redefining the world's problems in ways that avoid questioning their own business practices, power, and wealth? Have we lost the essential premise of a just society when we substitute private action by individuals for government policy and public debate?

Quoting the writer Audre Lorde's dictum "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house," Giridharadas suggests that we will never achieve social justice through "a system that perpetuates vast differences in privilege and then tasks the privileged with improving the system." The problem, as he sees it, is not just that those with privilege cannot truly understand the needs of those without, but rather that the mechanisms inherent in creating economic inequality cannot be used to reverse the imbalance.

And he has a point. Capitalism may be credited with lifting 500 million Chinese people out of poverty, but its recent effects in the United States have been far less beneficial. While US productivity rose 72 percent from 1973 to 2014, worker pay rose during the same period only 9 percent. The wealthiest have seen their incomes triple in recent years, while the incomes of more than 117 million Americans grew only from $16,000 to $16,200. Globally, wealth has increasingly concentrated: A few years ago, 300 people had the same resources as half the world's population. Today, only eight people control that much wealth. The

> *We can talk about what the victim can do to fix the problem, but not about what the perpetrator must do to avoid perpetuating the problem.*

widespread prosperity that capitalism once promised no longer seems to happen.

Giridharadas makes his case by sharing the stories of many different people who struggle with the subtle compromises inherent in working for the public good without giving up their own privilege. The dilemma comes in many guises. Hilary Cohen must decide between a career at McKinsey and a small nonprofit; both promise social impact, but how is she to compare the purity of the nonprofit's mission against the power and money of McKinsey? Laurie Tisch is a major philanthropist who has given away millions but still can't overcome ambivalence about her wealth. Harvard Business School professor (and FSG cofounder) Michael Porter believes that profit is a powerful incentive to scale social impact but sees many companies optimizing profit at the expense of their employees and customers. Whoever tries to reconcile wealth with social justice lives a life of contradiction and unease.

The same issues face thought leaders who, in Giridharadas' estimation, offer "an easy idea that gives hope while challenging nothing." For example, Amy Cuddy, a Harvard University social psychologist whose 2012 TED talk on how women can use powerful body language to overcome gender bias went viral, has learned that her popularity depends in part on not blaming men for having created that bias in the first place. Social impact consultants are equally compromised because they cannot afford to displease their clients. Many of Giridharadas' stories share the same theme: We can talk about the victim and what she can do to fix the problem, but not about the perpetrator and what he must sacrifice to avoid recreating and perpetuating the problem.

As for market-driven solutions, Giridharadas interviews Silicon Valley's "rebel-kings" of venture capital—who are ready to disrupt any system other than their own engines of wealth creation. Consider the example of Even, a VC-backed app designed for the millions of people with unpredictable incomes due to erratic shift schedules. For an annual fee of $260, the app calculates a person's average earnings and reserves any excess earnings for the weeks when they earn less. Even is helpful when it comes to managing unpredictable cash flow, although it doesn't solve other problems caused by erratic work schedules, such as scrambling to find last-minute childcare. Yet, isn't something wrong when investors hope to make millions by asking those on the edge of poverty to spend their own money to fix a problem caused by the profit-maximizing choices of wealthy corporations? Would it not be better to enact labor laws that prohibit this "dynamic scheduling" in the first place?

"No one will say what could be said," Giridharadas concludes, "that these precarious lives could be made less precarious if the kind of men who donated to [philanthropy] made investments differently, operated companies differently, managed wealth differently, donated to politicians ... [and] lobbied differently." Even Darren Walker, president

WINNERS TAKE ALL:
The Elite Charade of Changing the World
By Anand Giridharadas
304 pages, Knopf, 2018

of the Ford Foundation, has learned that he must "inspire the rich to do more good but never ever tell them to do less harm; inspire them to give back but never ever tell them to take less." It is always the victims who are told by the winners that they must change, never the other way around.

What is the alternative? Giridharadas, quoting a Baha'i saying, contends that "[s]ocial change is not a project that one group of people carries out for the benefit of another." Instead, he continues, we must solve problems "together in the public sphere through the tools of government and in the trenches of civil society ... that give the people you are helping a say in the solutions [and] offer that say in equal measure to every citizen."

Certainly, government ought to be the answer. Yet, the very same winners Giridharadas criticizes have co-opted government to advance their wealth, plunder the Earth, and destroy the safety net depended upon by millions.

Giridharadas is right about the dangers of letting the winners shape solutions and the paradox of helping those who suffer from our economic system without changing that system. But not all winners are the same. We must remember that there

are winners who act ethically, too—those who acknowledge the need for higher taxes, better labor laws, and environmental protections. Today's short-term, exploitive, unregulated, and highly inequitable form of capitalism isn't the only model. The two decades following World War II, for example, produced genuine increases in well-being, at least for a majority of white Americans, supported by strong antitrust and bank regulations, unionization, stable employment, environmental protections, and tax rates as high as 91 percent.

In my own experience, there is a better answer to the systemic problem that Giridharadas exposes. Approaches such as cross-sector coalitions using the collective impact framework, "positive deviance" problem-solving strategies, and human-centered design all bring the insights of those we hope to help to those who have the power to make change in ways that circumvent at least some of Giridharadas' concerns. Besides, we must acknowledge that activist mega-donors from Silicon Valley, global corporations, social entrepreneurs, strategy consultants, and impact investors have brought dynamic and powerful new ways of achieving social impact. It would be an immense loss if we completely rejected the innovations they have brought.

Yet, we must also heed Giridharadas' warning: If we are blind to the self-interest that delimits their innovations, if we dare not offend these new masters by acknowledging their conflicts of interest and hypocrisies, if we pretend that social justice can be achieved without changing the government corruption or the cruel and exploitive version of capitalism that exists in our country today, then we are deluding ourselves with false hope. We cannot have our cake and give it away too. We must keep the winners engaged, but we must also hold them accountable.

Winners Take All has given me due reason for reflection. I will continue to use the tools I have but with a new appreciation for their inherent biases and limitations. It is too tempting to redefine problems in ways that please the winners and burden the vic-

BOOKS

KATHERINE FULTON has been involved with philanthropy for more than 40 years as a giver, fundraiser, board member, consultant, speaker, and writer. She now works as an independent strategic advisor after more than a decade leading and building Monitor Institute, now at Deloitte.

tims. We must be willing to name and oppose the tendencies of business that perpetuate injustice, regardless of how much it costs or who we offend. We must enable the victims to help shape the solutions. We must hold government accountable to serve the public good. And we must be alert to those subtle but crippling compromises that enable us to combine a life of wealth and privilege with the pursuit of social justice. ∎

Strategic Philanthropy Reconsidered

REVIEW BY KATHERINE FULTON

Paul Brest and Hal Harvey's substantially revised second edition of *Money Well Spent* shows they have listened to their own new experiences, their critics, and many other scholars and practitioners.

In 2008, when their first edition was published, Brest was well into his tenure as the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation's president, and Harvey was a seasoned Hewlett grantmaker and environmental advocate. They combined forces to explain and defend what had come to be called "strategic philanthropy"—grantmaking that improves the odds of achieving results by focusing relentlessly on goals, evidence, and outcomes.

But where they (and other strategic philanthropy proponents) saw a common-sense need for rigor and discipline, others found plenty to criticize, worrying about top-down strategies that too often ignore the firsthand knowledge of leaders on the front lines. When Susan Berresford, a former Ford Foundation president, reviewed the book's first edition in these pages, she praised the authors but chided them for imparting "little understanding of what it is like to be on the other side of the table."

By 2016, Harvey himself joined the debate, offering an apology in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* titled "Why I Regret Pushing

Strategic Philanthropy." He had moved on from Hewlett to lead ClimateWorks Foundation and then to direct a policy advisory firm, where he experienced the damage done by arrogant funders who assumed they knew best, insisting on overly precise strategies and rigid accountability structures. Meanwhile, Brest left the Hewlett Foundation in 2012, joined the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (the publisher of *Stanford Social Innovation Review*) as a faculty codirector, and incorporated his own additional learning into his teaching.

It's no surprise that the two authors teamed up to produce this update, which showcases how much they—and the field—have learned from an additional decade of practice, debate, and reflection. The second edition covers the same basics, but in an even richer and more nuanced way. Every major decision a funder must make is explained, from framing problems and developing solutions, to combining tools and structures, to using data and designing evaluations. Particularly enlightening are the expanded examples, including the skillful extended case study on homelessness across several early chapters, and many recent illustrations depicting advocacy strategies.

One highlight is their new chapter on "Impact Investing and Mission Investments," a field that has rocketed into prominence since the first edition. They have somehow managed to distill a complicated subject into a concise and forceful argument that will guide newcomers while challenging experienced investors to set higher standards for success and impact.

Again and again, I found Brest and Harvey stretching beyond the easy stereotypes of past debates. They seem determined not to be misread as providing a simple recipe
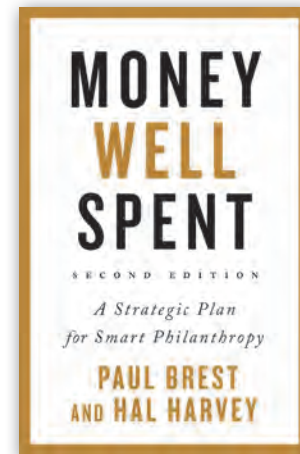
**MONEY WELL SPENT:
A Strategic Plan for Smart Philanthropy, Second Edition**
By Paul Brest and Hal Harvey
392 pages, Stanford Business Books, 2018

for complex decision making, arguing that there is no substitute in the end for judgment and wisdom. And they are clear that good nonprofit leaders should be given the benefit of the doubt.

Readers may still feel, as I did, that the authors' tone can at times feel too pedantic, like a lecture from a professor who can't hide his condescension. For instance, the authors can't help but scold those who "cite the supposed wickedness of problems as an excuse

Whatever happened to "giving" as a way to approach some of philanthropy, rather than always insisting up front on "money well spent"?

for avoiding the hard work of strategic problem solving."

My heart longed for the creativity and imagination of the humanist sensibility to go with the social science rigor of *Money Well Spent*. I have learned the hard way that character and courage often matter as much or more than strategy. I have watched as circumstances shift and shift again, making a mockery of linear theories of change. And I

ALYSON COLÓN is associate director at the Institute for Gender and the Economy (GATE), at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto.

have witnessed funders foolishly waste time and money as they hold tight to strategic control. I sometimes wonder: Whatever happened to *giving* as a way to approach some of philanthropy, rather than always insisting up front on "money well spent"?

Brest and Harvey wisely do not try to relitigate these and many other doubts about strategic philanthropy. Instead they focus on making their own updated case in the most compelling way. By all means, take the time to understand the context surrounding their work, which was thoroughly presented in an April 2015 "Up for Debate" package on *SSIR*'s website, "Strategic Philanthropy and Its Discontents." But also give Brest and Harvey the benefit of the doubt. The second edition of *Money Well Spent* is an indispensable addition to the growing genre of philanthropic advice. ■

Domesticity's Gross Product

REVIEW BY ALYSON COLÓN

In *Equality for Women = Prosperity for All*, Augusto Lopez-Claros and Bahiyyih Nakhjavani explore the many economic and social implications of global gender inequality. They delve into the current precarious position of women, who endure extreme rates of violence and reduced access to education and employment, and caution that the rapidly worsening effects of inequality will have devastating consequences for everyone if they continue unabated. Moving beyond purely ethical arguments, the authors contend that gender inequality is not just a moral failing; it is a waste of resources. In doing so, they lay out the case for making gender inequality a serious focus of economic planning.

Lopez-Claros and Nakhjavani address numerous modes of women's subjugation, including population growth and female infanticide; violence against women in its many forms; work; the role of culture; rights, freedoms, and the legal system; and educa-
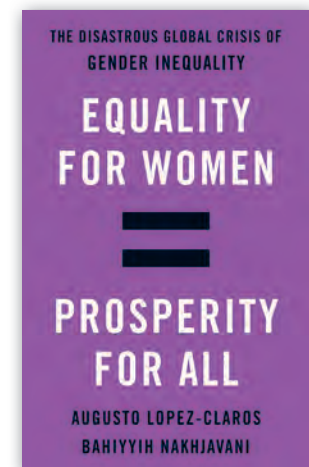
tion for girls. In the final chapter, they connect the pieces of this puzzle to explore the true costs of these deficiencies.

The strength of *Equality for Women = Prosperity for All* is that it pushes the reader to think of economic efficiency from a new perspective, and to see the significant contributions that women make to the health and well-being of their countries. The book argues that costs to our global economy and our society "will mount calamitously" if we continue to ignore the oppression of women, a central barrier to economic prosperity. The authors explore the implications of leaving women out of the equation and quantify the costs, both social and economic, of the injustices waged against women.

While it may seem crass to put a price tag on sensitive issues such as female genital mutilation, domestic abuse, or murder, the authors cogently argue that quantifying the real cost impact of such atrocities can motivate the adoption of larger budgets to address these issues. To be sure, the book could have provided richer, more nuanced examples of the experiences of individual women to illustrate the subjects covered. But in the absence of individual accounts and experiences, it provides a more comprehensive, global view of policy and practice.

In a chapter titled "The Culture Question," Lopez-Claros and Nakhjavani challenge skepticism about interventions relating to gender and culture. Here they unpack the fear of confronting the cultural origins of gender inequality that so frequently silences any push for progress.

As so often happens, when a discussion of human rights is linked to women, the focus shifts to the preservation of culture. The authors deconstruct this tendency, offering insights into how we can redefine culture through a lens of economic incentives, and cite the diaspora experience as an example. Once removed from country-specific economic constraints, many diaspora communities flourish, with women taking the lead in social and economic positions. This phenomenon demonstrates the important role that economic incentives

play in shaping cultural expressions of gender norms. Lopez-Claros and Nakhjavani's arguments in this chapter can empower policymakers to push back against the culture argument when attempting to institute system-wide change.

The authors do not provide a how-to guide for making change, nor do they delve into solutions for the issues that they articulate so effectively. I would very much like to read a follow-up that examines the various policy interventions that can create the transformation that Lopez-Claros and Nakhjavani are championing, in order to unlock the economic potential they herald.

This is an ideal book for policymakers who need to understand the broader picture of gender inequality and its impact. The authors use clear and expressive language, peppering the text with examples and cases from around the world. For individuals who may not have experience applying a gender lens to development issues, this book provides insights into the many ways that the oppression of women is tied to economic stagnation and too often shielded from policy interventions by arguments of national or cultural sovereignty. ■

EQUALITY FOR WOMEN = PROSPERITY FOR ALL: The Disastrous Global Crisis of Gender Inequality
By Augusto Lopez-Claros and Bahiyyih Nakhjavani
320 pages, St. Martin's Press, 2018

LAST LOOK
IMAGES THAT INSPIRE

Diversifying the Conservation Movement

America's conservation movement has been justifiably criticized for being too homogenous—predominately suburban, middle class, heterosexual, and white. The National Audubon Society, one of the world's oldest and largest conservation organizations, is trying to change that. One of the ways it is becoming more diverse is by creating special Let's Go Birding Together walks for the LGBTQ community. During this year's Pride Week Audubon sponsored walks in seven cities across the United States (Seattle; Los Angeles; Denton, Nebraska; Columbus, Ohio; New York; Greenwich, Connecticut; and Audubon, Pennsylvania). This photo was taken in New York City's Central Park where 35 people went birding on June 23. Creating these special birding walks is just one of the ways that Audubon is increasing the diversity of its membership and its programs. To guide these efforts, in July the 112-year-old organization hired African-American environmental justice pioneer Deeohn Ferris to be its first vice president of equity, diversity, and inclusion.   **—ERIC NEE**

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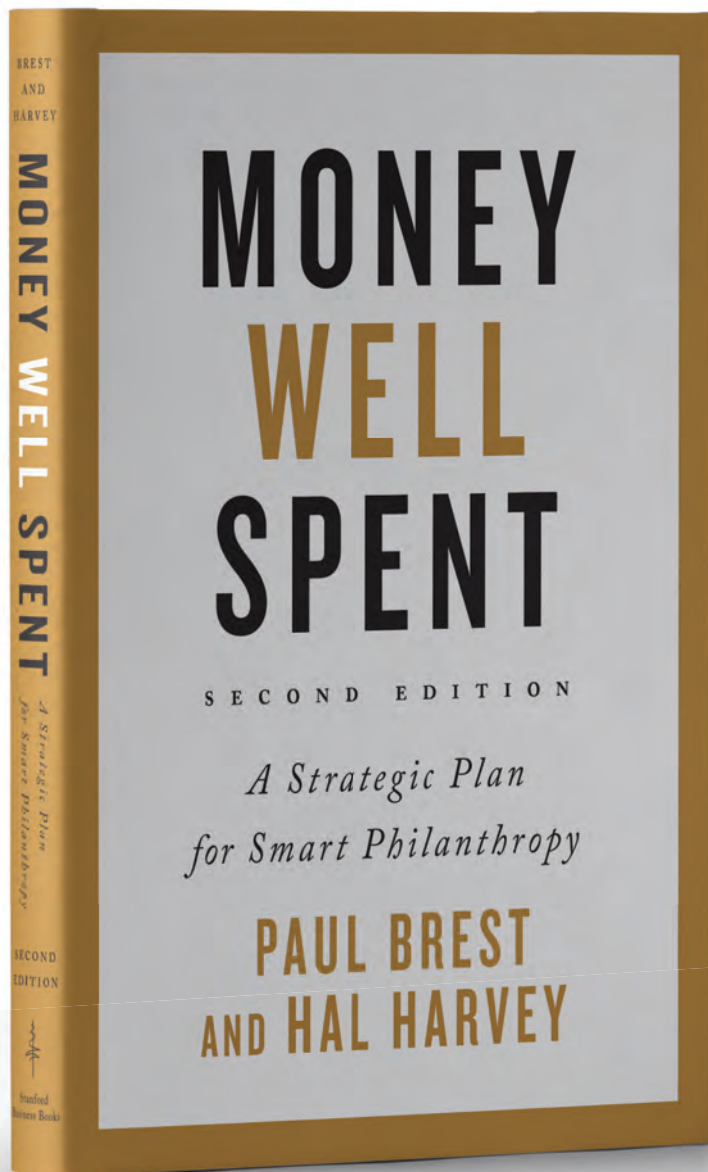
MONEY WELL SPENT

SECOND EDITION

A Strategic Plan for Smart Philanthropy

PAUL BREST AND HAL HARVEY

The 21st Century is becoming the "century of philanthropy." *Money Well Spent* offers a comprehensive and crucial resource for individual donors, foundations, nonprofits, and scholars who work in and teach others about this realm.