Dialogic Approaches to Global Challenges: Moving from "Dialogue Fatigue" to Dialogic Change Processes

A Working Paper

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I. Introduction

The phenomenon of "globalization" has been accompanied by a growing number of issues that require a global response. The tools and approaches that have developed in response to traditional international concerns related to trade and peace appear inadequate to address this new set of challenges. The evidence for this is widespread. For example: international negotiations on measures to forestall or mitigate climate change have been bogged down in incremental strategies which, despite heroic efforts at engagement, the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases continues to reject; after the expenditure of hundreds of billions of dollars of development aid, per capita income in Africa is lower than it was four decades ago; inequity between rich and poor countries continues to grow; corruption appears intractable; provision of water and sanitation and other basic services for billions in the world remains an unsolved challenge; and environmental degradation is increasing.

There is wide recognition of the need to develop more effective ways of dealing with these challenges and that these ways must engage a wider range of actors than the traditional processes of intergovernmental negotiation. We call these *dialogic* approaches because they involve people coming together seeking to make positive change through conversation and agreement. Already we see evidence of dialogic approaches working across sectors. Intergovernmental organizations are committing themselves to working through multi-stakeholder partnerships and dialogue. Nongovernmental organizations once dedicated to opposition and advocacy are making cooperation with government and business a central element of their strategies. Transnational corporations are forming alliances and partnering with other sectors on key issues. (We use "sector" in this document to refer to the three broad organizational sectors of business, government, and civil society.)[1]

Yet, in the midst of all this activity, there is a growing feeling that problems are overtaking our ability to respond. The new mechanisms emphasizing collaboration and dialogue have so far produced disappointing results. In 2002, the Helsinki Process on Globalisation and Democracy described the situation this way:

> *"It is obvious that there is an urgent need for new global problem-solving approaches. It seems that the current global problem-solving setup—with the various institutional elements—is not up to the task. At the same time there are alternative global problem-solving approaches [and] there are several inherently global issues without an adequate method of addressing them effectively."*[2]

The Generative Dialogue Project team's conversations with people engaged in addressing global issues, conducted during 2004 and 2005, confirm this view. The Rockefeller Foundation is searching for "breakthrough strategies" for issues that still seem stuck after years of focused attention. The international relief organization, CARE, has concluded that, although millions of people have benefited from its work, the stark reality of rising poverty indicates the need for a fundamentally different approach.

Transparency International, seeing no substantial impact upon corruption after a decade of work, is similarly reevaluating its strategy.

This sense of frustration with lack of concrete results is also strongly evident in the "dialogue fatigue" experienced by a growing number of people in civil society, especially from the global South. Disillusioned by numerous multi-stakeholder processes that have had negligible impact on either the issues at stake or established power relationships and patterns of decision-making, they question the degree to which global institutions are truly committed to change. They are rightfully asking those institutions to take greater accountability for results.

This is the context within which the Generative Dialogue Project (GDP) has arisen. The Project is based on two premises, that (a) fundamentally new strategies are needed to address global challenges effectively, and (b) the seeds of these new strategies are already present within the emergent phenomenon of what we call *dialogic change processes*. In this phrase, *change* establishes the overarching objective of transforming people, relationships, and systemic patterns, while *dialogic* captures the central role of human interaction through conversation in achieving those transformations. The term *processes* expresses the idea of setting in motion a number of interrelated activities that may occur across a broad geographic expanse and over a relatively long period of time, as is appropriate for the challenges that global issues present.

The concept of dialogic change processes came out of the investigation reported here in this paper, in which we looked at a broad range of initiatives that are seeking innovative, truly collaborative, approaches to global challenges. We observed that the work of these initiatives is not really about "problem solving," even though it is typically organized around specific issues that are perceived by many to be problematic. Problem solving is a concept that often implies a discreet, expert-led process to fix whatever is considered broken and allow people to get back to business as usual, without necessarily addressing critical underlying dynamics. In contrast, we see these initiatives addressing issues by promoting change in human behaviors and the systemic relationships they create, and mobilizing a broad range of system actors as issue owners and decision makers in the change process.

Significantly, these initiatives are working across sectors to address issues *outside* the existing international framework of intergovernmental negotiation. They are filling an institutional gap where, in many global issue areas, there are no precedents for addressing the issues and no actors who are clearly responsible for managing them. Within that space, they are establishing norms and coordinating action without the coercive power or hierarchical forms that are characteristic of government-led institutions or initiatives. And, in pursuing their strategies, they are establishing patterns of activities that have, or point toward, the characteristics of dialogic change processes.

Yet there is still much room for development of the practices that are needed to realize the potential of these new ways of addressing complex global issues. One goal of the Generative Dialogue Project is to support that development. A related goal is to

contribute to building capacity within the global community to deal collaboratively and *effectively* with globalization challenges, using dialogic change processes.

In this report, we aim to provide a foundation and framework for our effort by looking at the broad context of global problem solving and assessing the current role of cross-sectoral collaborative approaches within it. To set the stage for this overview, we briefly examine in the following sections several topics that are central to our analysis: the distinction between change and problem solving as it relates to global issues; the requirements for deep change at the societal level; and the qualities of dialogue that distinguish it from other forms of conversation and give it a central role in bringing about societal change.

Change vs. Problem Solving

As stuck as people feel today, we know that there are examples of intractable problems where breakthroughs have occurred. One of the clearest in recent times is the ending of apartheid in South Africa. This sea change in South African society required redefining the role of a significant part of humanity and totally reorganizing the social, economic, and political systems of the country. Certainly, the international community brought much external pressure to bear on the apartheid regime in order to obtain this result. But the fact that it happened peacefully through democratic transition had much more to do with the change process within South African society in the critical period between early 1990, which brought the release of Nelson Mandela from prison and the granting of legal status to his African National Congress and other anti-apartheid political parties, and the first all-South African election in late 1994. In those five years, amid confusion, uncertainty, and continuing violent protest, there were formal and informal conversations at every level about the future of the country. People who never would have even met under apartheid came together and opened themselves to the deep learning and change required for a peaceful transition.[3]

> A white businessman, participant in the Mont Fleur Scenario Project:
> *"Tito Mboweni [an economist from the African National Congress, who later became Governor of the South African Reserve Bank] was the last sort of person I would have talked to a year before . . . very articulate, very bright. We did not meet blacks like that normally. [And what was new for me] was how open-minded they themselves were. These were not people who simply said, 'Look, this is how it is going to be when we take over one day.' They were prepared to say, 'Hey, how would it be? Let's discuss it.'"*
> **Quoted in Mont Fleur Learning History**

In many cases, the people who are working on the issues confronting the global community today have made it clear that they require deep change of the kind that took place in South Africa. For example, the UNAIDS project has pointed out that halting the spread of HIV/AIDS in many countries will depend as much on the empowerment of women in sexual relations as on the development and distribution of new medicines.[4] Likewise, nutritionists investigating persistent child malnutrition in India and other Asian countries despite adequate food production recognize that addressing the problem calls for improving the status of women within the family.[5] In the area of sustainable development, pioneering industrial ecologist John Ehrenfeld makes the case that the path of environmental and social sustainability will require

nothing less than confronting modern society's addiction to consumption. To do this, Ehrenfeld urges, "We need to shift from our reductionist, problem-solving mode to one that is driven by a vision of a sustainable future we all share."[6]

In shifting out of the reductionist mode of problem solving, it is useful to think more explicitly about change. In a seminal article on "revolutionary" change, Connie Gersick looks at theories of what causes transformation in stable systems across six different disciplines—individual adult development; organizational development; the history of science; evolutionary biology; and the study of self-organizing systems. The defining characteristic of transformative change in any realm, Gersick shows, is that it occurs at the level of "deep structure," which she defines as "the set of fundamental 'choices' a system has made of (1) the basic parts into which its units will be organized and (2) the basic activity patterns that will maintain its existence."

Systems governed by deep structures tend to be highly stable, because those fundamental choices guide behavior into patterns that sustain the system and discourage behavior that would disrupt it. This does not mean they are unchanging. On the contrary, there can be quite a bit of turbulence, and the system can change in response to internal and external pressures while the deep structures remain unexamined and intact. Revolutionary change involves dismantling the deep structures to open up a space in which fundamental change can be considered and a new deep structure developed: "a subset of the system's old pieces, along with some new pieces, can be put back together into a new configuration, which operates according to a new set of rules." The difference between these kinds of change, Gersick suggests, "is like the difference between changing the game of basketball by moving the hoops higher and changing it by taking the hoops away."[7]

Steve Waddell connects the work of Gersick and other analysts of systemic change to the realm of global change to construct a concept of "societal learning and change."[8] He points out that the kind of transformation that occurred in South Africa is sometimes called "third-order" change, a term that derives from theories and observations of single-, double- and triple-loop learning.[9] Single-loop learning, or first-order change, involves adaptation within the current rules of the game. For example, addressing declining fish populations by changing the quantities in a fishing quota system describes a single-loop learning model of change. Actors in the system do not question the quota system or the method for establishing quotas. Double-loop learning, or second-order change, involves redefining the rules of the game. In the fishing example, this might involve applying quotas to a wider variety of fish in order to avert over-fishing before it happens. Participants in the system have acted to improve and adapt it to changing realities, but still without examining its underlying assumptions or the roles they play in sustaining it.

In contrast, triple-loop learning or third-order change, redefines the game itself. In the fishing case, participants in the system would open the whole concept of quotas to reevaluation and thereby create the possibility of inventing a new and different way to achieve the desired outcome. To do this, all the system actors (fishermen, regulators, wholesalers, retailers, consumers) would have to participate and everyone would have to

reexamine and rethink their roles—including their roles in sustaining the problem of declining fish populations.

Learning and change of this scale occurred when people concerned about ocean fisheries shifted from thinking about "species management" to regional oceans management. Similarly, it occurred in the climate change field when people shifted from thinking about global warming as a product of population growth to thinking in terms of "ecological footprints," a concept that focuses on overall resource consumption and pollution. These are third-order changes. When they happen across a society, we refer to them as "societal learning."

What does societal learning and change require?

Simply looking at the complexity and seeming intractability of most global problems suggests that we are sorely in need of third-order change. The challenge is how to bring it about. In concluding her study, Gersick asks "whether there are ways to help" stuck systems bring about deep change when it is needed. We think this is the essential question facing the world today. We developed the criteria presented in Table 1 as a framework for addressing this question and a guide in analyzing our findings as we surveyed the current landscape of dialogic approaches to global problem solving.[10]

Table 1: Criteria for Distinguishing Orders of Change in Problem Solving Initiatives

Criteria	First Order Change	Second Order Change	Third Order Change
Desired Outcome	"More (or less) of the same."	Reform	Transformation
Purpose	To improve the performance of the established system.	To change the system to address shortcomings and respond to the needs of stakeholders	To address problems from a whole-system perspective
Participation	Replicates the established decision making group and power relationships	Brings relevant stakeholders into the problem solving conversation in ways that enable them to influence the decision making process	Creates a microcosm of the problem system, with all participants coming in on an equal footing as issue owners and decision makers
Process	Confirms existing rules. Preserves the established power structure and relationships among actors in the system	Opens existing rules to revision. Suspends established power relationships; promotes authentic interactions; creates a space for genuine reform of the system	Opens issue to creation of entirely new ways of thinking about the issue. Promotes transformation of relationships toward whole-system awareness and identity; promotes examination of the deep structures that sustain the system; creates a space for fundamental system change

In *Societal Learning and Change* (2005) Waddell examines eight cases that show this kind of change already happening at the community, national, and global levels. His analysis encapsulates the basic criteria for distinguishing change initiatives that have the possibility of achieving transformation.[11]

- The initiatives proceed with an openness to fundamental change. Waddell expresses this as acceptance of the principle "death is natural." For example, "push" power based in coercion or ability to refuse to change must die in order for "pull" power that lies in visioning, knowledge and information to take hold. Operationally this means that reliance on hierarchy as the dominant organizational form with decision-making elites must give way for networked structures and participatory processes to emerge. This observation informs our criterion of **Desired Outcome** in Table 1.

- They embrace the full range of system actors. For change at the global level in particular, Waddell emphasizes the need for collaboration across the three societal sectors—business, government, and civil society. Similarly, in the criterion of **Purpose** in Table 1, we take "whole-system perspective" to mean both multi-stakeholder and explicitly cross-sectoral.

- They proceed through human interactions based on mutual respect. "Unequal power is common," notes Waddell. "But if relationships are a function of unequal power, the innovative potential of initiatives will never be realized." We base our third-order change criterion for **Participants** in Table 1 on this principle.

Waddell's work does not address the **Process** criterion for third-order change in depth. Traditionally change of the transformation scale is associated with violent revolution, but change over the past two decades in locations as different as the Soviet Union, South Africa, South Korea and Brazil suggest that large-scale violence (as distinguished from conflict) is not a necessary ingredient in transformation. In general, this is an underdeveloped area of understanding in the literature on global problem solving. For that very reason, it represents an area of opportunity for making dialogic approaches to global challenges more effective. As we will describe in subsequent sections of this report, our investigation of change initiatives clearly suggests both the need for and the potential leverage in paying more attention to process development centered on the role of dialogue.

The Role of Dialogue in Dialogic Approaches

A central focus in the Generative Dialogue Project is on the human interactions that occur within the conversations taking place in dialogic change processes. We start from the premise that the nature of those interactions is a fundamental determinant of people's ability to make the kinds of changes they seek.

Human beings rely on language as our primary means of interacting and communicating. There are many different forms of language exchanges, which we engage in for a variety of reasons, and with a range of motivations. Many people are pointing to a particular form of human interaction—dialogue, especially multi-stakeholder dialogue—these days for its potential to address tough global challenges.

There is a large body of practice and a large literature on the subject of dialogue.[12] Yet we found in our investigation of global change initiatives that people are pursuing dialogic approaches without much explicit consideration of what dialogue is or why they believe it is a useful way to work toward change. This means, for example, that the

concept of "dialogue" is often mischaracterized as "consultation," where other stakeholders are solicited for their input, but remain outside the core decision-making process.

We use the Four Fields of Conversation diagram presented in Figure 1 to help us think and talk about dialogue. In this framework, developed by Otto Scharmer, the four fields of conversation move from the least authentic and open, in the lower left-hand quadrant, counterclockwise to the most authentic, open, and creative in the upper left [13]

We find this framework valuable because it allows us to make distinctions among processes that might be officially labeled dialogues, but in reality might have very different qualities of interaction. And it enables us to see more clearly how other interactions not formally considered dialogues—with people sitting in a room talking— might become more dialogic.
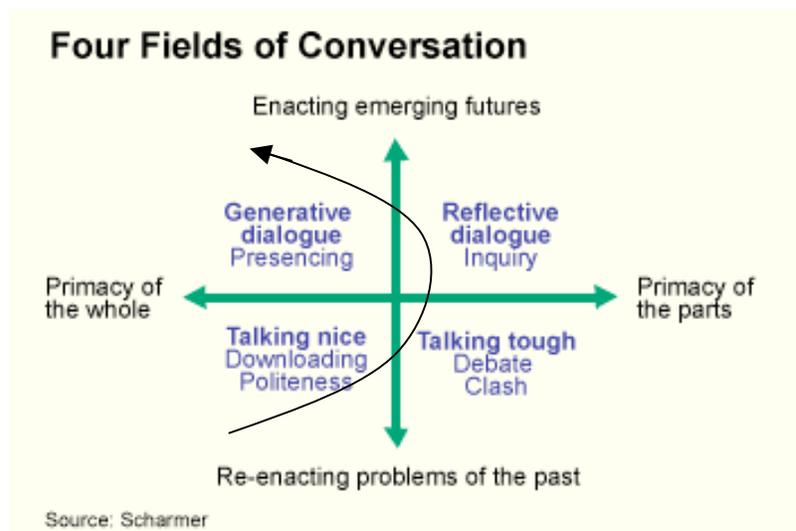
- **Talking nice:** This quadrant represents the most common form of conversation and communication. Scharmer defines this kind of interaction as "rule repeating." We say what we're expected to say in a specific situation: "how are you? I am fine."[14] The kind of listening that corresponds to this is not listening at all, but just playing the tape in our heads.

- **Talking tough:** The rule-repeating game of talking nice might be interrupted when the conversation moves into a debate. In debate we say what we're really thinking, so, in that sense, it is progress toward greater authenticity. It creates energy in the conversational field, though it doesn't really produce anything new. A debate is about making a point and winning. We listen to what confirms or disconfirms our point of view.

- **Reflective dialogue:** Often, however, debate can lead to reflective dialogue, since it allows its participants to be authentic and to confront reality. In a reflective dialogue, as participants in the conversation, we begin to see the other person's perspective. We might not necessarily agree with what the other person has to say but we begin to understand where he or she is coming from. At the same time, in a reflective dialogue we begin to reflect on our own perspectives. We start observing ourselves while we are talking and listening. And our listening begins to be empathetic—we are not just listening to others' ideas to decide whether we agree or not, but also to try to understand where they are coming from. In his work on dialogue, Bill Isaacs identifies four capacities people exhibit when they engage in this kind of conversation: *voicing*—speaking the truth of one's own perspective; *listening* without resistance; *respecting*—demonstrating awareness of the impossibility of fully understanding others' positions; and *suspending*—letting go of assumptions, judgments, certainty.[15]

> **Reflective Dialogue**
>
> *"I was with a group called . . . Women in Security Conflict. We [agreed we had to] look at breaking the silence on the conflict in Kashmir. These were groups of women who always continued to blame each other, each other's community for their predicament. For example, the Muslim women in the valley blamed the Hindu community for what had happened to them. The Hindus who fled the valley blamed the Muslims for having driven them out of their homes and for ethnic cleansing and so on.*
>
> *But when they came together in a safe place, which was [away] from their immediate environment, and they began to hear each other's narratives and pain, they realized their pain does not cancel out somebody else's pain. In other words, they both are going through a certain level of deprivation. . . .*
>
> *Now, at that moment, something happened where the women who were listening to each other's narratives . . . their whole body language changed, and a couple of them shed tears when they listened to what had happened to what were their erstwhile adversaries. And they found that there was a commonality of human experience. I think that was a very moving turning point. . . [Where] they never used to make eye contact with each other, [they] began to acknowledge each others' presence. And so the 'othering' process which had translated into body language and the kind of guarded adjectives that were being [used], all that began to melt. I won't say they hugged each other and embraced each other, but the walls of antipathy [came down]."*
>
> **Meenakshi Gupinath, interview with Katrin Kaeufer, January 2005**

- **Generative dialogue:** In a generative dialogue our perception as participants shifts again. This time it moves from seeing the other person's perspective towards seeing the "whole." John Paul Lederach calls this shift into awareness of the whole the emergence of "moral imagination."[16] The interaction becomes more intense, the boundaries between participants become blurred, and our perception of time slows down. Scharmer describes this deeper form of dialogue as "presencing," which is a creative experience of bringing forth that sense of the whole that is trying to come forward.[17] Our definition of generative dialogue is grounded in our understanding of this quadrant of the conversation matrix: *generative dialogue is conversation that brings forth creative energy and collective intelligence out of a personal sense of connection to the whole.*

Thinking in terms of the quality of conversation enables a broader framing of dialogue, one that embraces the quality of *any* conversation—not just those that are formally organized as dialogues. The examples we provide here deal with violent conflict and post-conflict situations. Yet a great deal of investigation of dialogue has taken place in work settings. There the illustrations of dialogue experiences describe the space that opens up when business executives admit to each other they don't have answers to the questions before them, or when doctors and nurses begin to talk openly about the emotional burdens of working with the sick and dying and through that conversation start to help their hospitals make better decisions about the purchase and use of technology. These are the kind of spaces out of which innovations emerge.[18]

Generative Dialogue

"Ochaeta [director of the Guatemalan Archdiocesan Human Rights Office, which was documenting the atrocities of the civil war] said he had a story that he wanted to tell. . . . [He] had gone to a Mayan village to witness the exhumation of a mass grave—one of many—from a massacre. When the earth had been removed, he noticed a number of small bones. He asked the forensics team if people had had their bones broken during the massacre. No, the grave contained the corpses of women who had been pregnant. The small bones belonged to their fetuses.

When Ochaeta finished telling his story, the team was completely silent. . . . I looked around the circle and caught the eye of an old man, who simply nodded at me slowly. The silence lasted a long time, perhaps five minutes. Then it ended and we took a break. . . . In interviews years later, many members of the team referred to it. In the words of one member:

> *'The group gained the possibility of speaking frankly. Things could be said without upsetting the other party. I believe this helped to create a favorable atmosphere in which to express, if not the truth, certainly each person's truth. . . . In the end, and particularly after listening to Ochaeta's story, I understood and felt in my heart all that had happened. And there was a feeling that we must struggle to prevent this from happening again.'"*

From Adam Kahane, *Solving Tough Problems, 116-117.*

As we surveyed the landscape of global problem solving and particularly the phenomenon of multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral collaboration, we asked: What is the nature of the challenges facing global society? What are the structures and strategies that have emerged as alternatives to the established system of international negotiation to address those challenges? And what role does dialogue play in their activities? These are the central questions posed in this investigation. The concept of societal learning and change, the criteria for third-order change, and the definition of dialogue emerging from the conversation matrix have shaped both the questions and our analysis of our findings.

II. The Landscape of Global Problem Solving: The Case of Climate Change

To provide context for our investigation of dialogic approaches to global problem solving, we use the issue of climate change as a lens though which to survey the broad landscape. Global warming is one of the most vexing issues facing the world today and one of the most incontestably global. Both its sources and impacts are transnational. And, while local and national efforts are required to address the problem, no locality or nation can expect to have a meaningful impact on it own. Climate change has engaged the attention and energy of the international community with increasing intensity for twenty-five years. Its history thus reflects the way that community itself has evolved, for example, with the rise of the civil society sector and the increasing engagement of the corporate sector in social issues. Sadly, the climate change issue also reflects the extent to which the global community remains stuck in its efforts to develop a collective approach to issues that require significant change at the societal level.

For all these reasons, we offer the climate change issue area as a useful illustration of the state of the global community's capacity to address its most pressing challenges. Our overview of the activity in this area reveals four key elements that are part of a general pattern found in most global issue areas:

- A central stream of problem-solving activity anchored in the traditional mechanisms of intergovernmental negotiation

- Since the early 1990s, an opening up of this traditional stream of activity to non-governmental participation

- At the same time, a proliferation of diverse actors responding to this pressing global issue and exhibiting a great variety in approach, all attempting to fill the gaps left by the ineffectiveness of the intergovernmental stream

- In the past decade, the emergence of cross-sectoral partnerships and global action networks—new forms of issue-focused entities that embody key criteria for third-order change

Intergovernmental Negotiation: the Kyoto Protocol Process

The Kyoto Protocol is part of an international treaty that commits its signatory nations to reduce emissions of key of greenhouse gases identified as contributors to global warming. It came into force in February 2005, having been ratified by 141 countries representing over 61 percent of global emissions. The levels of negotiated emissions reductions are low relative to estimates of the reductions needed to have a significant impact on global warming. Indeed, the Protocol's supporters see it as only the necessary first step. Yet countries with some of the highest emissions levels, including the United States and Australia, have not signed on to participate in the Kyoto Protocol, and prospects are uncertain for its continuation past the current expiration date of 2012. Thus, there is limited concrete achievement to show after more than fifteen years of serious engagement of the intergovernmental system. Thus, despite the best efforts of the international community over the last fifteen years to negotiate the Protocol, it is at best

an incomplete agreement that only postpones the major changes that are needed to alter the trajectory of increasing greenhouse gas emissions.[19]

After a decade of growing awareness of global warming, the World Climate Conference in 1990 issued a call for a treaty to create a framework for intergovernmental action on the issue. [20] In response, the UN General Assembly initiated a negotiation process that led to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, adopted by agreement of 154 countries at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development—better known as the Earth Summit—in Rio de Janeiro. The Framework Convention set forth only general guidelines for reductions in key greenhouse gases, leaving more concrete agreements to be worked out in succeeding conferences of the parties (COPs). The third COP, in 1997, produced the Kyoto Protocol. Hammered out in a lengthy negotiation process, this amendment to the Framework Convention sets out legally binding targets for reduction of greenhouse gases by developed countries. The Kyoto Protocol also established a set of mechanisms designed to provide flexibility in how nations achieve the reductions, for example, emissions trading.

In subsequent negotiations (COPs 4-10, 1998-2004), working out the details of the Kyoto Protocol has proven extremely difficult. The negotiations have been hung up by the complexity of the issue and of the flexibility mechanisms. But in the main, it is the deep geopolitical fault lines separating blocs of nation states that have made the Kyoto more a forum for international negotiations than a "global" process. The European Union has advocated for the precautionary approach of taking early action to avoid irreversible climate change, while another group of developed countries (Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, and Iceland) has aligned itself behind the United States in favoring incremental action based entirely on market-based flexibility mechanisms. A third major bloc is made up of the developing countries advocating that the developed countries must take major steps toward emissions reductions before asking them to do so. The oil producing countries are united in opposing action to reduce the use of oil, and the Alliance of Small Island States seeks to draw attention to the impacts of climate change, to which its members are particularly vulnerable.

At COP 10, in December 2004, there was cause for celebration of progress: Russia's ratification meant that the Protocol would enter into force in February 2005. Yet two years before, the Bush administration had declared its intention not to seek U.S. ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, keeping the largest emitter of greenhouse gases out of the regulatory system.[21] Other issues remained unresolved, such as that of climate change impacts, and even continuation of the Protocol beyond 2012, when the commitments to reduce emissions are set to expire. After an all-night, closed-door, negotiation session that extended beyond the scheduled closing of the meeting, most of the outstanding issues remained in stalemate. The most the parties could agree to was to hold one Seminar of Government Experts in 2005. Coming from a pro-Kyoto perspective, the *Earth Negotiation Bulletin* authors were bleak in their assessment of its prospects for success in the aftermath of COP 10: "For now, the best that can be hoped for is that [the developed country] Parties will begin to comply with their emissions reduction commitments and implementation of Protocol mechanisms."[22]

Opening up to broader participation

Intergovernmental negotiations on climate change have taken place in an era of unprecedented openness to participation and influence from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) from both the business and civil society sectors.[1] In this period, the concepts and language of "multi-stakeholder partnership" and "dialogue" have entered the common parlance of global problem solving, and NGOs have become important to intergovernmental institutions as representatives of key stakeholder groups. Yet, practically speaking, the opening up has mainly involved greater access for information sharing and advocacy. The "real" global negotiations, out of which key decisions emerge, remain just that—negotiations among nation states, ultimately shaped by the existing geopolitical divisions and power relationships.[23]

The Rio Earth Summit was a watershed event for non-governmental participation in global problem solving processes. In addition to 172 government representatives, it included 2,400 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and another 17,000 participants in a parallel NGO forum. In one sense, this was nothing new. Since its founding in 1948, the UN has granted "consultative status" to nongovernmental, non-profit public and voluntary organizations. Under this arrangement NGOs provide technical expertise, advice, and consulting to UN working groups and secretariats—attending meetings, providing both oral and written commentaries on UN agendas, and sometimes proposing new agenda items for consideration.[24]   What was quite new at the Earth Summit was the dramatic expansion of the number of NGOs engaging with the UN on environmental and development.

Just as dramatic was the expansion of their role, articulated in Agenda 21, the manifesto and action plan for sustainable development that emerged from the Rio Earth Summit. Stating that "non-governmental organizations play a vital role in the shaping and implementation of participatory democracy," Agenda 21 called for "genuine social participation and dialogue" in order to forge the "sense of common purpose" required to address the major challenges facing the world community.[25] In line with this philosophy, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, included provisions for accrediting NGOs that are "legally constituted not-for-profit entities competent in matters related to the Convention." At the time of COP 10, there were more than 600 NGOs accredited to participate in meetings related to the Convention.[26]

This change opened up intergovernmental negotiations as never before to input and observation by others, and powerful actors have emerged on both sides of the global warming debate to step into the space created. In 1989, nearly 300 NGOs banded together to form the Climate Action Network (CAN), dedicated to promoting "governmental and individual action to reduce human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels." The Network's membership is diverse, ranging from large international groups such as the World Wildlife Fund, Greenpeace, and Friends of the Earth, to small local groups in developing countries, such as Terre Vivante in

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[1] In the complicated UN language, any organization other than national governments is considered a "non-governmental organization"—business, local government, and the not-for-profit organizations that most people (including the authors of this paper) refer to as NGOs.

Mauritania and the Green Coalition in the Philippines. CAN is accredited to the Framework Convention and attends its meetings, where it lobbies negotiators, puts forward position papers and recommendations, and creates real-time progress reports for publication in its newsletter, *Eco.*[27]

Throughout the 1990s, the most influential actor on the other side of the debate, opposing action on climate change, was the Global Climate Coalition. Much like CAN, the Coalition brought together like-minded organizations. In this case, they are U.S.-based trade associations interested in advocating a cautious, long-term approach to developing a response to the evidence on climate change that will "address concerns of climate change without harming the U.S. economy." The influence of the coalition has diminished since 2000, following the defection of a number of high-profile corporate members, many of which joined the more moderate International Climate Change Partnership, which both accepts the precautionary principles and advocates for business-friendly approaches.[28]

The organizations accredited to the Framework Convention have made a number of important contributions—bringing resources to bear on key scientific and policy issues; providing a conduit for diverse stakeholder voices to be heard; making the proceedings more transparent. They have also been able to exert influence over the process, for example, by participating in the all-important "corridor diplomacy" at COP meetings and workshops.[29]

However, having invited NGOs into the established round of convenings, government negotiators created a separate track of "informal" meetings, "to escape NGO scrutiny when they address delicate issues [and] when the details of essentially fixed positions are being hammered out."[30] At COP 10, for example, NGOs were involved in many parallel events as well as a plenary session at which some NGO spokespersons addressed the delegates. But the most critical decisions were reached in closed door sessions, and the resulting agreement called for a workshop with government specialists only—an outcome that caused some NGOs to fret publicly about the lack of transparency.[31]

These realities suggest the limits of the opening up of the intergovernmental stream of global problem solving. As one observer notes, this "change in the substance, participation, and process of international environmental cooperation," though significant, has not altered the system's "reliance on the core norms of the sovereign states system."[32] While those norms prevail, the notion of dialoguing to develop a collective sense of the common good as the basis for policy agreements can make little headway against the established pattern of negotiating from "essentially fixed positions" and established power relationships. There is little hope that breakthrough solutions will come from this arena.[33]

The global public stepping into the gap

Climate change activities outside of the halls of traditional intergovernmental organizations suggest outlines of new approaches arising in response to this situation. Business and NGOs will remain engaged in the Kyoto process, even though they might be critical of it, because nation states will be the enforcers of any initiative of sufficient

scale to have an impact on global warming.[34] But at the same time, faced with the slow pace and limited responsiveness of the intergovernmental system to this looming problem, other societal actors have mobilized to address it in their own ways. Business, civil society, and government actors have—separately and together—developed a separate stream of initiatives aimed at collective action on climate change.

These initiatives are taking place within all sectors at all levels. For example, individual companies are developing energy efficient products and programs for reducing their own carbon emissions. National-level civil society organizations like the country chapters of Friends of the Earth are active both in lobbying governments and raising public awareness. City and state governments are taking initiatives to reduce automobile traffic and promote non-polluting forms of transportation. In the United States, nine states on the east coast are in the final stages of negotiating an historic agreement to limit greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. The government of Norway has levied a tax on carbon emissions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has organized the EPA Climate Leaders program to encourage businesses to set goals and record their progress on greenhouse gas emissions.

Global networks have also emerged, which leverage many local and national-level efforts to achieve greater impact. For example, Cities for Climate Protection, a network of 500 cities all over the world, supports municipal governments in mounting emissions reduction projects. In the corporate sector, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development has marshaled its membership to become an important force in the climate change arena. In addition to its involvement in the Kyoto process, the Climate Action Network provides coordination for civil society organizations at both national and regional levels.

Mobilization of forces across sectors is also a significant aspect of this alternative stream of problem-solving activity. For example, the U.S.-based non profit Pew Center on Global Climate Change has organized a number of global corporations into the Pew Business Environment Leadership Council, which among other activities hosts conferences and workshops to promote cross-sectoral dialogue and develop innovative ways to reduce emissions. The World Wildlife Fund Climate Savers Program has a similar structure and approach. The Carbon Disclosure Project is a joint effort of the British government, a coalition of private foundations, and an investors group including global asset management groups and reinsurance companies. It surveys the 500 largest global corporations each year on their policies and plans related to climate change—both mitigation and impact—as a way to raise awareness among investors and bring pressure to bear on the business sector.

All of this activity is part of the broad phenomenon that John Ruggie describes as "the new global public domain: an increasingly institutionalized transnational arena of discourse, contestation and action concerning the production of global public goods, involving private as well as public actors." This emerging domain is not a substitute for the intergovernmental system of nation states. Rather, its effect is "to embed systems of government in broader global frameworks of social capacity and agency that did not previously exist." As an illustration, Ruggie describes the upsurge in activity in response

to the Bush administration's rejection of the Kyoto protocol, including actions by companies, investor alliances, large reinsurance firms, and state governments, among others. "No central mechanism coordinates these actions, but they do play out in an interconnected manner within and across different social sectors, and in domestic as well as transnational arenas," says Ruggie. "Moreover, while none of these moves is a substitute for a viable climate change treaty, they do affect the structure of incentives and the political balance of power in this space." [35]

Emergence of collaborative approaches

Ruggie emphasizes the impact that actions within the new global public domain have on intergovernmental processes. We are interested in this domain as a potential source of more powerful problem solving approaches, that is, approaches that may lead to deep change. In this regard, we think the emergence of cross-sectoral partnerships and global action networks is especially significant. These new structures embody the inclusiveness of system actors that is a key criterion of third-order change approaches.

Over the last fifteen years, researchers have been documenting the innovative potential of cross-sectoral processes.[36] They have shown that these collaborations can engender reflection and create the opportunity for co-producing possible futures that no subset of stakeholders could achieve alone.[37] Studies such as those conducted by Wolfgang Reinicke and Francis Deng on Global Public Policy Partnerships have contributed significantly to the analysis of the role and potential of multi-sectoral networks, identifying them as an "institutional innovation in global governance" and highlighting many of the key challenges and organizational implications.[38] In the climate change arena, two examples—one focused on mitigation and one on adaptation—illustrate this phenomenon.

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol came into being in 1998 with a mission, "to develop internationally accepted greenhouse gas accounting and reporting standards for business and to promote their adoption." Sponsored initially by the U.S.-based NGO World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development—a membership organization of 170 companies that has made a broad commitment to public-private partnerships on a range of issues—this initiative now engages numerous nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations as well.[39]

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol has used the convening power of its two sponsoring organizations to draw in large global companies ready to take leadership in working to reduce emissions. Its premise is that for regulatory regimes and emissions trading schemes to work effectively, companies must have agreed-upon standards of accounting for their emissions. An underlying assumption is that the development of standards through collaborative processes involving key actors in the system can produce significant change. The initiative produced the first GHG Protocol Standard for companies in 2001 and an updated version in 2003. Its approach was to develop the standards initially through the collaboration of hundreds of "leading experts in greenhouse gas emissions" drawn from NGOs, business, government, and the accounting industry, then to "road test" them on scores of companies in many different countries

around the world, and finally to invite input from a wide range of organizations in all sectors in a "structured feedback" process.

One of the most significant aspects of the Standard is that it sets "reporting boundaries" for companies broadly, to include accounting for both "direct and indirect" emissions. Direct emissions are those produced by the use of resources, such as electricity; indirect emissions are those produced by the products companies sell, such as automobiles. When we talked to Janet Ranganathan, coordinator of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, she pointed to these boundary definitions as one of the main achievements of the multi-stakeholder process: "We changed how the companies thought about their greenhouse gas emissions responsibilities. And we changed how people think about multi-stakeholder processes, which they now highly value." This is a good example of third-order change.[40]

The Cooperative Program on Water and Climate came into being as a dialogue initiative under the sponsorship of a wide range of governmental and intergovernmental organizations engaged in climate, water, and development issues. Providing a platform for bridging the information and knowledge gaps between the experts on climate and the experts on water resources management, the Program has participated actively in the intergovernmental stream of conversations on climate change impacts, for example, by hosting a side event on the issue at COP 10. Yet an important part of its agenda has been to engage a wide range of stakeholders at multiple levels—regional, national, and river basin-level—in developing strategies for coping with climate change induced impacts on their water resources. These conversations have brought together representatives of communities with others from local and national governments, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses—"camps that do not commonly interact," notes Program director Henk van Schaik. And they "have shown that committed and empowered dialogues can develop impressive self-help ideas for adapting to climate variability and change." Their work has provided the basis for awareness raising and advocacy, for sharing best practices on a global basis, and for continuing cooperation among the participants.[41]

The pattern we are seeing in these kinds of collaborations is one of diverse societal actors coming together to address the climate change challenge in novel ways. Clearly, conversation that creates change—whether it takes place in a convening called a dialogue or in a meeting of experts to develop new standards—is a central part of this phenomenon. We have made these cross-sectoral collaborations a focal point of our investigation as we have pursued our core research questions:

- What are the structures and strategies that have emerged as alternatives to the established system of international negotiation to address those challenges?

- And what role does dialogue play in their activities?

- How is third order change being achieved?

III. Data Gathering

We began our data gathering early in 2004 with a dual purpose: to better understand the role of dialogue in global problem solving activities; and to build a community of dialogue practitioners who would work to develop the potential of dialogue for addressing global challenges. We were interested in three different kinds of actors in the global dialogue arena: *process experts* who are individuals working as facilitators, consultants and action researchers; *dialogue promoters* such as the UNDP Democratic Dialogue Project, which are organizations encouraging use of dialogue to address issues; and *issue owners*—organizations that use dialogue to address specific issues—such as youth development and forest sustainability. We identified these through on-line research and personal networking.

   In identifying process experts, we looked as broadly as possible across various disciplines, such as peace building, negotiation, mediation, participatory action research, and leadership development. We also looked in various fields of endeavor, such as global network development, inter-sectoral collaboration, conflict prevention, democracy building and development, as well as multi-stakeholder dialogue. We were looking for people who, whether they call their work "dialogue" or not, are taking approaches that use the transformative power of dialogic conversation to generate the creative energy and collective intelligence that emanate from a personal sense of connection to the whole— what we call generative dialogue. Our community-building conversations have run concurrently with our research on global problem solving processes and have informed our research agenda. Since January 2005, we have been working with a core group of practitioners who are helping us build toward a community launch meeting in October 2005. (See www.generativedilaogue.org for more information on these community building activities.)

   To identify the dialogue promoters and issue owners, we looked for organizations that met the criteria of being 1) global and 2) active with dialogue processes. Through a process of continuing desk research and extensive interviewing we explored more than seventy global dialogue promoting and issue-focused initiatives (see GDP interview list at http://www.generativedialogue.org/resources/). We focused in particular on initiatives that are engaging stakeholders across sectors in addressing global challenges such as poverty, climate change and corruption. This choice is based upon our understanding of the criteria for societal learning and change, which suggests that global third-order change requires intersectoral stakeholders working collaboratively. We investigated more closely thirty-six initiatives that seemed to have the most robust and impactful activity, creating a matrix aimed at understanding the nature of these initiatives across four key variables: strategy; structure; mission; and activities (see GDP Analysis Grid at http://www.generativedialogue.org/resources/).

IV. Analysis of Global Change Initiatives

Our criteria for third-order change initiatives, presented earlier in Table 1, emerged as our data gathering progressed and have shaped our analysis of the global problem solving initiatives we investigated. We link the criteria to key variables in the following way:

- **mission** suggests the extent to which these initiatives are seeking outcomes that require transformational change

- **strategy** suggests the extent to which—and how—they aim to address issues from a whole-system perspective

- **structure** indicates the potential for engaging all the relevant stakeholders as true partners

- **activities** indicate the potential for interactions that lead to third-order change

Mission: aiming for third-order change

Looking across the mission statements of the thirty-six initiatives in the analysis grid, one sees clearly that there is a widespread feeling of commitment to making deep change happen. This commitment emanates from all three societal sectors, cuts across a wide range of issue areas, and animates a variety of approaches, as expressed in strategies and structures of the initiatives. Of course, these thirty-six examples are merely a subset of the initiatives that make up the global public domain—yet they are significant and suggestive. Like the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and the Cooperative Program on Water and Climate within the climate change arena, within their respective issue areas, these initiatives represent a stream of global problem solving that is fundamentally different from traditional approaches based on the paradigm of formal negotiation among nation states.

Some missions state third-order change goals quite directly. For example:

- Search for Common Ground: "to transform the way the world deals with conflict"

- The Global Compact: "to advance responsible corporate citizenship so that business can be part of the solution to the challenges of globalization."

- Transparency International: "to create change towards a world free of corruption"

- The World Water Council: "to promote awareness, build political commitment, and trigger action on critical water issues at all levels, including the highest decision-making level, to facilitate the efficient conservation, protection, development, planning, management and use of water in all its dimensions on an environmentally sustainable basis for the benefit of all on earth."

- Tellus Great Transition Project: "to share a vision and build a movement around an alternative form of global society over the next 50 years"

In other cases, the deep change agenda is implied, by virtue of what would be required to achieve the goals set forth. Sometimes such statements read as deceptively bland and innocuous. For example, the mission of the Global Reporting Initiative is "to develop and

disseminate globally applicable Sustainability Reporting Guidelines" for corporations. In fact, if it succeeds it will have revolutionized the way corporations work. Since its guidelines integrate the triple bottom line—people, planet, and profits—de facto, new rules of the game for corporations will have emerged once those guidelines are accepted. The Marine Stewardship Council and the Forest Stewardship Council both aim to advance "responsible management" of natural resources through certification programs. Yet, as Chris Grieve of the Marine Stewardship Council notes, "A lot of fisheries management is not about managing fish *per se*, but about managing people, managing human behavior."[42] To the extent that "responsible management" means conservation and sustainable use of forests and fisheries, it will require a fundamentally different relationship between society and the eco-system.[43]

Sometimes the transformational implications are in the *combination* of mission, organizational structure, and strategy—in the change required just for people to work together. This is certainly true of all of the initiatives following a strategy of promoting cross-sectoral collaborations or for which such collaboration is central to their approach, regardless of this issue area. Simply to get engagement in these collaborations often requires shifts in attitudes among the participants, for example, for corporations to accept responsibility for problem solving, or for nongovernmental organizations to sit down with company representatives who they have spent years criticizing.

Beyond engagement, collaborative strategies assume a continuing openness to learning and change among the participants. For example, as Ken Caplan of Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation points out, a vision statement for a partnership could refer to the "provision of sustainable water and sanitation services." Everyone might agree that, in essence, sustainability of the service signifies an ongoing supply, but the underlying assumptions about what ensures that supply might very well differ from partner to partner.

> *"For a nongovernmental or civil society organization, 'sustainability' suggests that there will be a grievance and complaints mechanism that works when there is a problem with the water system. For a company or provider, 'sustainability' of the service suggests that there will be sufficient cost recovery to ensure appropriate operations and maintenance. For the government sector, 'sustainability' probably implies a combination of those two elements but with other implications around the on-going satisfaction of the electorate and the inter-relation between water supply and other development goals, such as health, education, environment, etc. These are not mutually exclusive concepts, but they must be recognized as significantly different starting points."[44]*

Thus, the mission of Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation—"to demonstrate the value of strategic partnerships"—seems relatively modest in scope, but in reality calls for significant realignment in the goals and priorities of participants.[45]   This is true of all of the initiatives aspiring to a kind of change that involves significant reconfigurations of relationships among system actors. Whether they name it explicitly as such or not, this is third-order change.

Strategies: addressing global issues from a whole-system perspective

In our analysis, we focused on the concept of "strategies" to illuminate the thinking of the people engaged in these initiatives about *how* to create the change they seek. Following our third-order change criteria, we were particularly interested in determining the extent to which they seem to be working from a whole-systems perspective—that is, encompassing all the system actors with a particular focus on including all three societal sectors. In contrast to the readily available mission statements of the thirty-six change initiatives we investigated, for the most part we had to infer their strategies from our research data. This was not always an easy task, as many of the initiatives can be said to operate with more than one strategy. Yet we were able to discerned seven major categories of change strategy, summarized in Table 2, based on what seemed to be the primary approach of each initiative. Each of these strategies is explained more fully in the text below the table.

Table 2: Global Change Strategies

Change Strategy	Focal Challenge	Initiatives
Bridging Adversarial Positions	To transform patterns of conflict that divide key actors in a system and help them identify common concerns	Bridge Initiative International; International Institute for Sustained Dialogue; Mining, Minerals, and Sustainable Development Project; Search for Common Ground; World Commission on Dams
Brokering	To coordinate the resources and activities of actors in a system	GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition); International Youth Foundation
Building Learning Communities	To foster peer-group learning and knowledge creation and build new knowledge about how to address the issue	Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation; The Global Compact
Consensus Building	To develop agreement on norms, standards for behavior	Forest Stewardship Council; Global Reporting Initiative; Greenhouse Gas Protocol; Marine Stewardship Council; One World Trust Accountability Project; Transparency International
Promoting cross-sector collaborations	To create new forms of cooperation across sectoral divides in a society and harness public and private capabilities in addressing societal challenges	International Business Leaders Forum; Partnership for Child Nutrition; UNDP Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships; United Nations Fund for International Partnerships; USAID Global Development Alliance; World Bank; World Business Council for Sustainable Development
Strengthening Actors	To build the capacity of key actors in a system to play a role in changing the system	Alan B. Slifka Program on Intercommunal Coexistence; Caribbean and Central America Rights Council; Global Alliance for Workers and Communities; Globenet3; International Land Coalition; UNDP Democratic Dialogue Project
System Organizing	To build awareness of community among actors who do not see themselves as being in a system together	Cooperative Program on Water and Climate; E-Parliament; Forests Dialogue; Global Knowledge Partnership; Global Water Partnership; Tellus Great Transitions Project; World Water Council/World Water Forum; Youth Employment Summit

Commonalities in approach

At the most basic level, all of the initiatives in this analysis share a fundamental commitment to what Oran Young calls a "*social practice*" approach. The social practice approach focuses on engaging people in processes that will induce them to make conscious decisions to change their behaviors and to comply with rules by virtue of having participated in the rule making. These are processes such as participation in

"communities that share a common discourse," "social learning," and even practices that "affect the identities of actors by influencing the way in which they see their roles in social interactions." This contrasts with the "*collective action*" approach, which relies on prescribed rules, norms, and principles, and on measures for ensuring compliance with them, such as incentives and enforcement regimes.[46]

In the collective action approach, Young suggests, theory is primary in the sense that governments collectively define the rules of the game based upon their vision of how the world *should* work (which of course leaves those governments in a controlling position). The challenge in this perspective is to align governments behind a regime and convince them to abide by and enforce the rules. In contrast, in the social action approach experience is primary in the sense that it depends upon purposeful experiments to determine what *does* work. The challenge in this approach is to integrate diverse experiences around the world into a useful over-arching framework.

Young emphasizes that these are complementary, not mutually exclusive, ways of effecting change—addressing complex global challenges will ultimately require both together. He notes that the collective action approach is the dominant paradigm in the mainstream of the international system. Our investigation suggests that the social practice approach is one of the key features of the global public domain. In the sense that it focuses on behavioral change that emanates from shifts in people's perceptions of self and others and in relationships, it is also fundamentally aligned with the third-order change goals captured in the mission statements of the initiatives we analyzed.

A second key commonality in the strategies of these change initiatives is the emphasis they all place on interdependence, which is the foundation of multi-stakeholder and inter-sectoral approaches. This emphasis suggests that all of the strategies are grounded in a systemic view of global challenges, a perspective that avoids thinking linearly, in terms of simple cause and effect, and looks instead for multiple influences, feed-back loops, and reinforcing patterns. It is also a perspective that acknowledges shared responsibility for both problems and solutions, as opposed to framing issues in polarizing terms: right versus wrong, or good versus evil. Operating from this foundation also involves working across differences—"collaborating with the enemy"—as both a hurdle and a source of creative tension.[47]

Bridging Adversarial Positions

The strategy of Bridging Adversarial Positions focuses on transforming conflict. It is characterized by relatively short-term engagements to get players to a point where they can move ahead more productively. For some initiatives—in this study sample, Search for Common Ground and the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue—conflict itself is the global problem, as it is replicated in places around the world. These initiatives play a supporting role in catalyzing efforts toward conflict resolution or prevention by providing consulting, research support, building capacity within society for dealing with issues non violently, and often dialogue facilitation. They have process expertise that they can apply to many different situations.[48] Ultimately, the goal is to

develop in the constituent stakeholders the capacity for a complete transformation in the ways they interact with one another.

In contrast, other initiatives pursuing this strategy address specific issues, in which conflict is perceived to be a barrier to forward movement. They may be formed by stakeholders getting together to figure out how to resolve the conflict—and their activities often include engaging researchers and consultants to help them. The Mining, Minerals, and Sustainable Development Project is another example of the Bridging strategy. It was of a limited duration two-year project of research and consultation seeking to understand how the mining and minerals sector can contribute to the global transition to sustainable development. It was unusual because it was a partnership between the mining industry represented by the World Council for Sustainable Development and one of its great critics, the International Institute for Environment and Development.

The World Commission on Dams is another example of this strategy played out on an international stage and within a particular issue area. In the late 1990s, noted Sanjeev Khagram, senior policy advisor to the Commission's secretariat, the breakdown of dialogue on the construction of dams worldwide—between nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, governments, and international organizations, such as the World Bank—was imposing considerable costs on all parties. "The World Bank and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) realized that no group involved in the conflict could resolve the stalemate alone." Their solution was to bring the major stakeholders in the dam issue together in a two-year process (1998-2000) aimed at defining a framework for addressing the key issues related to large dams. "The theory was that a leadership group (the Commission of 12) could undertake a series of activities that would result in a consensus position. The model was public commissions established by governments, but on a global level."[49]

The Commissioners were all recognized leaders from government, the private sector, and civil society who also brought significant experience and expertise with big dam projects. And they represented the spectrum of positions on dam building: one-third were proponents; one-third opponents; and one-third moderates on the issue. They were all "powerful advocates" for their respective positions, said Khagram, but they were also people who could "let down their guard a bit." They built a significant level of trust in each other over the course of ten meetings and by virtue of the fact that the proceedings provided a "safe space" where, for example, an anti-dam activist could acknowledge that not every dam displaces indigenous people "without that being public."[50]

Creating that "safe space" that allows people holding adversarial positions to get in contact with each other is a cornerstone of the Bridging Adversarial Positions strategy. In the Bridge Initiative, it is a space where people from global institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization can converse with people from nongovernmental organizations who are their harshest critics. The conversations that occur in such spaces can be "de-demonizing," notes Evelyn Messinger, co-founder of the Bridge Initiative.[51]

Significantly, however, conflict-resolution activities are important in these initiatives mainly as a necessary first step toward addressing the larger issue at hand. The Mining and Minerals Project progressed beyond conflict resolution to a form a new international body of mining companies to integrate the Project's findings into their activities. The stream of work from the World Commission on Dams evolved into the United Nations Environment Programme Dams and Development Project, which is now pursuing more of a what we call a Consensus Building strategy. Similarly, the participants in the Bridge Initiative, having worked through their mutual suspicions and hostility, have moved into a new phase of undertaking joint projects on globalization issues of common concern. Of course, conflict is a key element in many stuck global problems, and in initiatives with other dominant strategies, creating that safe space for bridging adversarial positions is often a first step toward change.

Brokering

A Brokering initiative provides liaison and match-making services to connect other entities. This is typically a strategy aimed primarily at pooling and disbursement of large sums of money. The importance of the financial model can be seen in the language the initiatives use to describe their work. For example, William Reese, chief operating officer of the International Youth Foundation (IYF) often uses the words "investing" and "assets" to explain the foundation's strategy. IYF plays the role of broker in the field of youth development, where financing from private companies plays a particularly important role—in fact, it initially made a point of not taking government money. The companies involved in IYF, like Nokia and Goldman Sachs, are active through their philanthropic and community outreach arms and there is little effort to integrate their core business with the forty-one NGO partners working on youth issues under the IYF umbrella.[52] "We see ourselves as promoting a dialogue among donors—all of them including government, foundations, business and individual donors," says Reese. "We aren't trying to capture the money for IYF, but we're trying to see that all those donors engage youth in a positive development fashion and make it more central to their plans and priorities."[53]

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition is likewise an entity that pools and channels donor money. In this case, the effort is directed at a specific nutritional challenge—micronutrient deficiency—and is promoting a specific intervention—fortification of food. Created in May 2002 at a UN General Assembly special session on children, the Alliance's founding donors include the Gates Foundation, USAID, Canadian International Development Agency, the Micronutrient Initiative, and the Dutch and German governments. With a secretariat and staff of fifteen, the Alliance issues requests for proposals and awards grants for National Fortification Alliances—it had funded fifteen by the end of 2004, with twenty more to be funded in 2005. Its goal is to have alliances in up to forty countries by 2007, with a potential impact on 600 million people.[54]

Although in our analysis we locate the World Bank in the strategy group Promoting Collaborations, it plays a key brokering role in several of these types of initiatives, in association with its country representatives.[55] The Global Environment Facility, for

example, pools donor country money that is then disbursed among developing countries. The World Bank, the United Nations, and UNDP also participate in brokering initiatives that have multi-stakeholder leadership, such as the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Describing itself as a "financial instrument," the Fund's financiers are governments, inter-governmental agencies, and foundations—most notably The Gates Foundation. Like the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, the Fund's main function is to channel donor money to worthy initiatives in the field.[56]

Building Learning Communities

Building Learning Communities is an example of what might be called a "system mobilization" strategy. The key element of such an approach to global change lies in creating a basis for ongoing connection among disparate system actors to promote and enable coordinated action. The "system" in this case refers to those organizations that are stakeholders in a particular issue such as water, youth employment or forests. The strategic choice lies in how to bring about the kinds of connections that will lead to action for societal change. In this case, the strategy is to build the foundation for sustained interaction on a common learning agenda. While all of the initiatives we investigated place value on learning, to those pursuing this approach it is a central organizing feature of their work.

Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation promotes a single learning agenda—to develop understanding of how partnerships work—within a single issue area—providing water and sanitation services to the poor—at multiple levels. At the local level, the small Building Partnerships secretariat supports the participants in partnerships with an action learning approach. "What we do," says program director Ken Caplan, "is try to inject more critical analysis into a partnership situation—that is encourage people to experiment. We throw questions into the partnerships to try to stimulate a higher level of thinking. For example, we ask them to define themselves, and ask, what if you did things this way, what if you included a different type of partner? That in and of itself pushes the boundaries. That's the notion of action research."[57]

Building Partnerships has created a learning community at another level by linking local initiatives. For example, with an initial group of eight focus projects, it organized four separate workshops: one for project participants from nongovernmental organizations; one for participants from business; one for participants from government; and one that brought together participants from all three sectors. Each workshop produced a report on partnership issues and challenges.[58]

At the global level, the initiative focuses on sharing information and fostering dialogue among the stakeholders in water and sanitation issues. "In theory, partnership is simple as anything, but in practice, it's very complicated because it involves people and contexts," says Caplan. "The main function of Building Partners for Development is to disabuse people of the myths of glory of working in partnership. We want to tell people how difficult these things are in practice, to help bring understanding of the reality of the situation, and to help make partnerships more successful in the end."

The Global Compact presents a somewhat different example of Building Learning Communities. Called into being by Kofi Annan's 1999 challenge to the corporate sector to join with government and civil society in promoting universally accepted principles regarding human rights, labor, the environment, and corruption, the Global Compact has become "by far the world's largest voluntary corporate citizenship network.."[59] As of May 2005, it linked some 2,000 participants including companies, labor organizations, and civil society organizations with the UN, representing the world's governments. In addition, it includes some forty local networks that, by one estimate, engage another 1,000 companies.[60]

The Global Compact lists learning, dialogue, and partnerships as its "primary instruments of participant engagement."[61] We characterize this as a Building Learning Communities strategy because dialogue is fundamentally a learning activity, and because all of this activity, taken together, constitutes "learning" in the action-oriented sense that the term is used in the Organizational Learning field.   As outlined by Peter Senge in his seminal book on organizational learning, *The Fifth Discipline,* the key elements are building shared understanding as a basis for developing a shared sense of purpose and, ultimately, shared commitment to a course of action.[62]

Under the umbrella of "learning," the Compact invites companies to develop reports, case stories, full case studies, and project reports, both as tools for their own reflection, and as a means of developing awareness within the network of approaches to enacting the principles. Issue-focused Learning Fora at the local, regional and global levels create opportunities for sharing the knowledge emerging from these efforts. The Compact also organizes Global Policy Dialogues, for example, on "The Role of the Private Sector in Zones of Conflict," "Supply Chain Development," and "Business and Sustainable Development." These dialogues bring together issue experts with Compact participants from different sectors, engaging them in both global meetings and more intensive interactions in working groups. They produce reports and recommendations, and they germinate joint projects—the partnership element of Compact engagement. The structure and activities of the Compact's policy dialogues, though far stronger in cross-sectoral composition, are otherwise quite comparable to the Sustainability Consortium and other initiatives that have emerged within SoL (the Society for Organizational Learning).[63]

Consensus Building

Consensus Building is another system mobilization strategy. In this case, the impetus for network building is the development of standards of behavior—for sustainable fishing or forestry, for ethical conduct in business or government, for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. We call this "consensus building" because of the emphasis these initiatives make on developing these standards in an inclusive and collaborative way that will create legitimacy and broad acceptance. Cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholder engagement is a critical piece of this approach.

In contrast to the World Commission on Dams strategy of working with adversaries or the Global Compact, which accepts any company with more than ten employees that commits to its 10 Principles, these initiatives often focus on organizations which might be

thought of as "early adapters" of new approaches. For example, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol initiative engaged companies wanting to take a lead in reducing their emissions, organizing them into groups by industry, scale, and geography, to develop mutually agreed upon standards and approaches to measurement. The Marine Stewardship Council came into being in 1997 as a partnership between WWF (the World Wide Fund for Nature) and Unilever, a global producer of food, and cleaning and personal care products that is the world's largest purchaser of seafood.[64]

Also in contrast to other change strategies, this approach includes at least an implicit focus on enforcement of norms, once they have been developed consensually. Exactly what "enforcement" means is often unclear, however. In many cases it is "voluntary" through peer pressure and the reputational risk of not following through on commitments. For example, Simon Burall of One World Trust noted that the role of the Accountability Project was to "demonstrate consensus around where the biggest accountability gaps are." Then, Burall suggests, "the harder edge of advocacy" by nongovernmental organizations can begin to promote change by targeting those gaps.[65] Certification programs developed by the Marine Stewardship Council and Forest Stewardship Council rely on the power of "consumer preference" and the pressure that can be brought to bear on retailers in the supply chain for standards enforcement.

Other initiatives have worked to have the standards incorporated into legislation—something implicitly supported by the companies in these initiatives since it levels the playing field for all. The Greenhouse Gas Protocol tries to give its measurement standards teeth by working to have them adopted by "any climate program that emerged," according to Janet Ranganathan: "the California Climate action Registry, WWF Climate Savers, the UK Emissions Trading Scheme, Respect Europe, State registry programs—you name it, we were there!" Yet ultimately, she suggests, compliance is only "mandatory" to the extent that the Greenhouse Gas Protocol is a credible standard. "If [companies] lie—and we don't check—their stakeholders can check." [66]

Promoting Collaborations

Promoting Collaborations has emerged as a core strategy in key global institutions in the last fifteen years. Not only have these institutions adopted "partnership" as a preferred *modus operandi* for their own activities, they promote it as a way of working at all levels. We think of Promoting Collaborations as a meta strategy, in the sense that it produces issue-focused initiatives that then pursue some of the other strategies we describe here. Although the emphasis in the approaches we studied is on corporate sector engagement, Promoting Collaborations initiatives play a critical role in setting the standard for considering issues from a whole-system perspective. The Collaborations approach also leads to many global networks that develop their own strategies and identities, like the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and the Global Corporate Governance Dialogue.

The actors pursuing this strategy derive their credibility from different sources. The International Business Leaders Forum, founded in 1990, has one of the longest records of commitment to the partnership approach. It and the World Business Council for

Sustainable Development (WBCSD), which was created in 1995, are significant players because they are large business associations dedicated to corporate social responsibility that include many leading global corporations, In contrast, the UN, UNDP, World Bank, and USAID are established powers in the global problem solving domain, although they have only taken up the Promoting Partnerships strategy in the last five or six years. The Partnership for Child Nutrition draws on a different source of authority. It is itself a collaboration, formed at the global level for the purpose of pursuing a change agenda by promoting national-level partnerships for change.

We also note there are some significant actors pursuing this strategy that we did not include in this analysis. Coming from the business sector there is the World Economic Forum and its Institute for Partnership and Governance, which has spawned a dozen on-going dialogues. Although fewer in number, there are also some civil society organizations that are promoting this meta-level strategy. One is the World Resources Institute, the principle partner with the WBCSD in the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. To promote good environmental decision-making processes, World Resources Institute has established The Access Initiative and Partnership for Principle 10.

All of these institutions are active participants in partnerships, and they have sponsored scores of partnership initiatives on a wide range of issues, including a number of those we examine in this study.   The institutions also bring significant social and reputational capital to convene the actors. And each typically has its own "specialty" resources. For example, the World Bank has its financial resources and expertise, the UNDP has its global network of country offices, WBCSD has is corporate membership base, and the World Resources Institute has its scientific capacity.

Some of the initiatives we studied have also made significant investments in developing knowledge about *how* to partner—again, often collaborating with others in the process. The International Business Leaders Forum has been the leader in this capacity development effort. It has provided technical support to emerging partnerships, produced numerous publications, and co-developed courses on partnership, including an accreditation program for partnership brokers and a post-graduate certificate program in Cross-sector Partnerships. One of its most recent publications, *The Partnering Toolbook*, by Ros Tennyson (2004) is being translated into sixteen languages.[67] Another significant capacity development initiative was the World Bank's Business Partners for Development program, a three-year action research initiative—conducted in partnership with numerous organizations—on partnerships in four issue areas. The initiative we examine, Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation, originated in this program.

Strengthening Actors

The Strengthening Actors strategy is grounded in a systemic perspective but focuses on a particular set of system actors, seeing leverage for change in strengthening their ability to play a role in the system. In many cases, the purpose behind this approach is to help a relatively weak, underprivileged group—low-wage workers, the rural landless poor, unemployed youth—develop the capacity to assert itself and take charge of its own

destiny. This is a common activity of some globally oriented foundations such as the Ford Foundation, donor agencies like the United Kingdom's Department For International Development, and some research organizations like the International Development Research Centre in Canada.

In our study sample, the Youth Employment Summit Campaign (YES) is providing an organizing infrastructure for youth groups to articulate and develop their own opportunities, share knowledge about their approaches, and gain recognition by key global institutions. This initiative came into being, notes its founder and director Poonam Ahluwalia, because "the traditional development-beneficiary approach ('we do for them') has failed." YES is built on an alternative vision: "that young people are recognized as powerful individuals capable of being change agents" on their own behalf.[68]

In contrast, some initiatives working to strengthen system actors focus on gaps or imbalances in the system, rather than on the specific needs of the actors themselves. For example, after playing an influential role as advocate for tri-sector engagement at the global level, Philippine activist Nicanor Perlas has turned to strengthening civil society at the national level as the core concern guiding both his work domestically in the Philippines and his global organizing activity, which has produced Globenet3. "Civil society is strong at the local and the global level but very weak at the level of the nation-state," says Perlas. "The state cannot function if there is no autonomous power outside of the political domain, especially if [the state] is weak. The tendency is to become authoritarian with no accountability." Globenet3 is a network of national organizations following Perlas's model for developing awareness within civil society so that it can serve as a full partner with the business and government sectors.[69]

Another initiative with this type of Strengthening Actors strategy is the Alan B. Slifka Program on Intercommunal Coexistence. This program trains mid-career professionals, mainly from government and civil society organization, in the latest conflict prevention theories, practices, and tools. "We realized that democratic governments lack the skills needed to manage the diversity they have in their countries and that bringing in academics to inform policy making was useless in terms of teaching them how to make interventions to prevent conflict," notes program founder and director, Mari Fitzduff. "This space is there to prepare the people that governments need in order to prevent or manage the conflicts in the world."[70]

System Organizing

Just as system organizing may be said to be part of Building Learning Communities or Consensus Building, learning and consensus building are integral to system organizing. Yet, here the primary focus is on creating connections and a "system consciousness" among diverse actors who either are not aware of their relationships or do not have sufficiently developed relationships to work together in addressing common issues. System Organizing is explicitly a system mobilization strategy.

The World Water Council, established in 1996, exemplifies this strategy. As Daniel Zimmer, its chair person explains, the council came into being to address the problem of fragmentation in decision making about water. "There are twenty-three UN agencies

dealing with water," he notes. "That's a reflection of how things happen in any water system." Moreover, the relevant actors include many more than the governing agencies involved. Says Zimmer, "I think of the different stakeholders as follows: "the people who make the decisions, that is government authorities; the professionals, the experts, who embody knowledge and know-how about systems (business is included in this area); and civil society, the users."[71]

To address this situation, the World Water Council organized the World Water Forum, a triennial event aimed at raising consciousness, making connections, and building common understanding of the challenges posed by water issues. "Everyone thought that we needed some sort of common understanding about water issues, and now after three fora we're finally there," says Zimmer. "People agree that we've developed this common understanding. Now we're in a place where we can start moving beyond discussion and into action." For example, in response to the report of an independent panel on financing water infrastructure services, the World Bank convened a meeting of international financing institutions to discuss how they should change their policies to direct funding to government agencies at the regional and local levels. "Normally, water agencies only give money to governments at higher levels of organization," notes Zimmer, "but they're seeing that government agencies at sub-sovereign [nation state] levels are becoming more important."[72]

Among the initiatives we investigated using this strategy, there is great variety in the nature of the systems they are trying to organize. E-Parliament, for example, envisions 25,000 democratically elected parliamentarians linked together in issue-oriented "Action Networks" that might one day produce a legislative initiative coordinated across national boundaries—de facto, global governance.[73] The Cooperative Program on Water and Climate came into being to raise awareness in the water sector about the potential impacts of climate change by bringing policy makers and experts in the two areas together. Tellus Institute's Great Transitions Project seeks to organize agents of change, as described by Tellus president, Paul Raskin:

> *"We concluded that a multitude of people were active in a breathtaking range of initiatives, but that these were highly fragmented. There was a readiness for people to understand their efforts as expression of a common global project. Equally importantly, there were many others who were deeply concerned about global directions but for whom the current civil society movement did not offer an easy way for becoming engaged. We concluded that it was time to discuss a common framework and vision for global citizenship that could begin to crystallize this energy."[74]*

These differences notwithstanding, the initiatives pursuing this strategy share a fundamental assumption that system awareness is a catalyst for action toward systemic change. Henk van Schaik, director of the Cooperative Program on Water and Climate, described a similar trajectory from talk to action that occurred in the World Water Council. "Our workshops were about bringing people together," said van Schaik in 2004. "The proposals we're developing now are about moving towards action"—in developing water-climate partnerships, in supporting capacity building for coping with climate

change impacts on water in existing development partnerships, in applied research, in awareness raising.[75]

Discussion: an emerging consensus

Taken together, the seven strategies make a strong statement about the nature of alternative approaches to dealing with globalization and its challenges that have arisen within the global public domain. This brings us back to our original observation about the core similarity among these global dialogue and change strategies, all of which emphasize the centrality of the social practice approach—as they must, given that they are operating without the coercive force of governmental institutions. Clearly, in these initiatives that rely on voluntary participation and coordination, it is the human connection with its potential for development of a shared sense of common destiny and shared responsibility that is the perceived lever for change in all of these strategies. Making a definitive statement about whether the initiatives are indeed achieving third order change of substantial scale is beyond the capacity of this investigation. However, we see a growing awareness of the need for third-order change, expressed not just in mission statements, but also in the strategies for enacting them.

At the same time, we discerned a subset of three of the seven strategies that seem to be more clearly focused on what we have called system mobilization. This involves assembling a microcosm of the system and building system self-awareness as a way of catalyzing collective action. The initiatives following the System Organizing strategy are most explicit about this approach to change, but we see it embodied in Building Learning Communities and Consensus Building as well.

Our point is not that system mobilizing strategies are good and others not. What we have described is really a map of the different strategies, roles, and activities in global dialogue change processes that emphasize the role of dialogue. There is a great deal of overlap among the strategies, as we have described, and there are significant ways in which one strategy enables another. The meta-strategy of promoting collaboration plays an enabling role at a high level, for example. Another example is the way in which the bridging activity of the World Commission on Dams opened the way for consensus building in the arena of dam building. For the most part, the strategies are complementary and not mutually exclusive.

Rather, our point is to suggest it is significant that a large number of these initiatives—sixteen out of thirty-six—are consciously working toward engaging whole systems in making change within specific issue areas. Combined with the mission statements expressing commitment to societal change, we think these strategies represent an emerging consensus within the global public domain about how to promote deep change globally. By naming the strategies and exploring their similarities and differences, people engaged in this work can think and talk with greater clarity about what they are doing and how it is working—both to do the work better and communicate more effectively about it. This is a vitally important area of investigation given the urgent need for effective change strategies in global issue areas, the relative lack of understanding about change processes within the global public domain (compared to knowledge about

the realm of international relations, for example), and potential for activity in this domain to play a significant role in addressing global challenges.

Structures: engaging stakeholders as true partners

Organizational structures tend to evolve in response to organizational missions and strategies.[76] We are therefore interested in structure as another facet of understanding how the initiatives we are studying approach the task of creating change that will have long-term impact on critical global issues. Our focus is on two aspects of the forces shaping these structures: the ambition to have a global reach; and their third-order change missions.

Network structures as a response to global strategies

The question of structure is significant for these initiatives, given their ambition to have global reach. Operating on a global scale involves distinct coordinating challenges—to have impact, it is necessary to take action that is effective at various levels—locally, nationally, regionally, and globally. Notably, there is no government that has global authority with power of enforcement—the distinctive capacity of government. Also at a global level the cultural-social-economic differences and jurisdictional challenges are extreme.

Even the definition of what constitutes a global issue is complicated by global-local distinctions. Jean-Francois Rischard's widely cited list of twenty global challenges distinguishes among three types of global issues: those that concern the planet's environmental commons; those that concern our common humanity; and those that require a global regulatory approach.[77] Within these categories, there are some issues that clearly transcend geography, such as climate, and others that clearly require global coordination for success, such as trade and epidemics. More often, however, when people use "global" they really mean "multi-local"—issues grounded in geographic-specific conditions but also replicated in many communities around the world. They are global largely by virtue of globalization, which has provided the communication and transportation technologies that make a global response possible and at the same time made the success of local actions increasingly dependent on global organizations and policy frameworks.

Both historically and in the current era of globalization, the organizational response to these challenges has been to adopt the network form, defined as organizations with ten or more participants and active processes for accepting new ones. Intergovernmental organizations like the United Nations and its agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, such as the World Bank, are networks of governments that arose in response to the globalization challenges of the post-World War II era. Thus the network is an integral part of the basic structure of traditional approaches to global challenges.

Likewise, the emergence of multi-stakeholder networks—including ones that explicitly exclude government participation—is a central feature of new change initiatives within the global public domain. Like their intergovernmental counterparts, these multi-stakeholder networks are distinguished from traditional organizations by less

hierarchy and the lack of direct command and control. They are part of the "governance without government" phenomenon, noted in the 1990s,[78] and the "government as networks" phenomenon,[79] noted more recently. From a political science perspective, Wolfgang Reinicke has referred to these multi-stakeholder networks as "global public policy networks."[80] From a global problem perspective, Rischard has labeled them "global issue networks."[81] And, from focus on societal learning and change, Steve Waddell has described them as global action networks (GANs: www.gan-net.net).[82]

In part because we set out to investigate global problem solving efforts taking a dialogic approach—which implies some level of multi-stakeholder engagement—most of the initiatives in our study are network organizations. (See Table 3.) Of the thirty-six cases, two (USAID Global Development Alliance and the One World Trust Accountability Project) are projects of national governments; one (the Mining, Minerals, and Sustainable Development Project); and five (the Alan B. Slifka Program on Intercommunal Coexistence, Bridge Initiative International, the Caribbean and Central America Rights Council, the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue, and Search for Common Ground) are, or are part of, stand-alone nongovernmental organizations. The remaining twenty-eight are networks of various types.

Table 3: Network Initiatives

| Sectors	#	Initiative Name
Business-Government-Civil Society	15	World Commission on Dams – *Bridging Adversarial Positions* Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition – *Brokering* International Youth Foundation - *Brokering* Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation - *Building Learning Communities* Global Compact – *Building Learning Communities* Marine Stewardship Council – *Consensus Building* Transparency International – *Consensus Building* Partnership for Child Nutrition – *Promoting Collaborations* Global Alliance for Workers and Communities – *Strengthening Actors* Cooperative Program on Water and Climate – *System Organizing* Forests Dialogue – *System Organizing* Global Knowledge Partnership – *System Organizing* Global Water Partnership – *System Organizing* Youth Employment Summit – *System Organizing* World Water Council/World Water Forum – *System Organizing*
Government-Civil Society	1	International Land Coalition – *System Organizing*
Business-Civil Society	3	Global Reporting Initiative – *Consensus Bldg.* Greenhouse Gas Protocol – *Consensus Bldg.* Forest Stewardship Council – *Consensus Bldg.*
Government	4	UNDP Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships – *Promoting Collaborations* United Nations Fund for International Partnerships – *Promoting Collaborations* World Bank – *Promoting Collaborations* UNDP Democratic Dialogue Project – *Strengthening Actors*
Business	2	International Business Leaders Forum – *Promoting Collaborations* World Business Council for Sustainable Development – *Promoting Collaborations*
Individuals	3	Globenet3 – *Strengthening Actors* E-parliament – *System Organizing* Tellus Great Transitions Project– *System Organizing*

Since we did not inquire about strategy and structure with our interviewees, we are not in a position to draw firm conclusions about specific patterns in this table. Yet the larger pattern—the predominance of the network form in the study group—fits with the picture that has emerged from looking at missions and strategies. Aiming for societal change on a global scale, they have adopted a structure that, on one hand, has a proven track record of being suited to dealing with the challenges of transnational action and global-local interaction, and on the other, holds the promise of enabling social practice approaches that emphasize broad participation and social learning. It is for this reason that observers of the network phenomenon—"the decentralized, pluralistic networks that seem to define the contemporary zeitgeist"—see in it the best hope for the development of a system of global governance in which the governed can influence the decisions that affect them.[83]

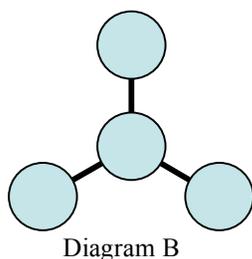### *Engaging stakeholders as true partners: evolution of the network form*

There is still much work to be done, however, both to understand the implications of this organizational form and to develop its full potential. In the case of the organizational networks we investigated, we found a remarkable variety of institutional structures and even ways of identifying leadership. At the international levels some have formal stakeholder groupings that elect Board members, other Boards are mainly self-appointing, while some are determined by "at-large" elections within the membership. The regional and national leadership structures are even more varied. This suggests an early stage of experimentation with "how we want to be together" by the participating stakeholders.

We also observed differences in internal structures that seem to have implications for the degree to which stakeholders can participate on an equal footing. We considered in particular how information flows within networks and the locus of decision-making. Three different network structures emerge from this perspective.

One pattern is associated in particular with the intergovernmental organizations in our sample. Though networks in outward form, internally these are traditional government bureaucracies with hierarchical reporting structures (Diagram A). The dominant information flow is from the bottom-up, and decision-making is top-down. Like managerial hierarchies in business, the form holds great potential for effective establishment of global reach. This dynamic is important in the UNDP, for example. It supports dialogues in Argentina and Central America, but they form part of a global set of activities of the UNDP. A dialogue activity may take place only in one sub-part of the organization, but the organization as a whole has a global expanse of activities covering a wide range of topics. This gives the activity a particular potential to spread to other parts of the globe and other issues.
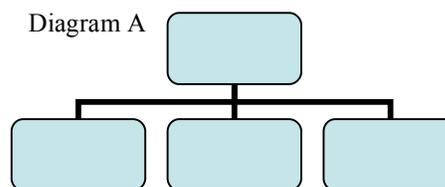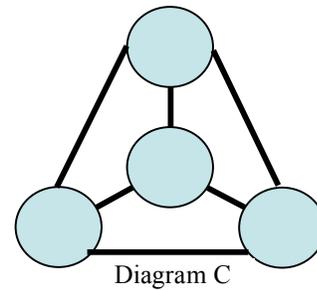
Diagram A

Another pattern among the network structures can be characterized as "hub and spoke" as shown in Diagram B. In this network form little information flows between the different parts of the periphery without first going through a global center. It is distinguished from the pattern in Diagram A by the fact that there is no accountability or connection between the center and the periphery. This connection to the hub is voluntary and the existence of the participants at the end of the spokes (organizations) is not dependent upon the hub. The lack of connection may result either from a specific design choice where the hub is a coordinator or convener rather than "in control". This can be driven by concerns about "standards" and "branding," such as with the Global Reporting Initiative, which has chosen *not* to have government formally involved because government is associated with legal regulations whereas the GRI is emphasizing collectively defined standards.

Diagram B

The third type of network structure is shown in Diagram C. This model is a network in which different nodes in the network may have specialized functions (like communications) or operate in a restricted geography (like a country), but the nodes' interactions occur without mediation through a center. Of course these nodes can be combined in various forms. The function-geography distinction is similar to the "matrix" structure often found in global corporations, but in that case a global center of control is maintained.

Diagram C

From discussions with those in the study examples, it appears that Diagram B is an early stage of development of the structure in Diagram C. In our dialogue cases, Transparency International and the Forest Stewardship Council are two examples evolving from B to C. They are notable because they engage literally hundreds of organizations, if not thousands.

The study organizations often mix these three dynamics, although one usually dominates. Most often the "hubs" appear to work more in accordance with Diagram A although in terms of the dialogue activity they work in accord with Diagram B and aspire to Diagram C.

Activities: interactions with potential for third-order change

In analyzing the activities of our sample of thirty-six initiatives, we are particularly interested in the extent to which they seem to be creating opportunities for third-order change, and in the role that dialogic conversation plays in doing that. We did not attempt to catalogue activities exhaustively but explored them as another step in our inquiry into how people working in these initiatives think about how to bring about change. Table 4 provides an overview of the activities we found in the different strategy groups.

Table 4: Strategies and Activities

Strategies	*Activities*
Bridging	Dialogues; reports; public events
Brokering	Projects (Requests for Proposals, funding, coordination); learning events; meetings
Building Learning Communities	Action research; issue dialogues; reports on best practices
Consensus Building	Development of standards through research; multi-stakeholder dialogues; expert meetings; evaluation of adherence to standards
Promoting Cross-sector Collaboration	Participation as a partner in projects; building and dissemination of knowledge, and capacity development in how to do partnerships; promotion of corporate social responsibility; initiation and/or support of national-level partnership projects
Strengthening Actors	Capacity development training; research; public advocacy; dialogue; networking
System Organizing	Dialogues, meetings, and forums at local, regional, and global levels; publication of reports, newsletters; creation of member databases; creation and coordination of issue networks; drafting and circulation of documents; coordination of projects by network members

One point that emerges clearly from this overview is that while "dialogue" as a formal activity is part of most strategies, it is nested within a broad range of other activities. Many of them such as meetings forums training and networking are—to return to Oran Young's framework—"social practice" activities. These are the kinds of activities that by bringing people together can provide experiences that may change their sense of themselves and their relationships to others-"social learning." [84]

We have defined third-order change processes as those which open issues to rethinking, promote transformation of relationships toward whole-system awareness and identity, and create a space for fundamental system change by stimulating examination of the deep structures that sustain the system. (See Table 1.) By this definition, all of these social practice activities, including dialogue, hold the *potential* for third-order change. Many of our informants noted the significant changes that occur simply by virtue of bringing people together across geographical, sectoral, or other boundaries to think, work, and learn together. "When you're out there learning about someone else's systems, you tend to think differently, and you learn more about your own culture, too," says William Reese of International Youth Foundation. "Put that in the context of thirty- and forty-year-old corporate executives from a global company [coming] together with people from the rest of the world to talk about how their company works with IYF around youth issues—it's not surprising that people will learn from that. If you're going to promote improvement, its about getting people together."[85] Daniel Zimmer of the World Water Council describes a similar phenomenon:

> *"For me, at least, it is very clear that going to the [World Water] Forum and meeting people—people from Amazonia, for example—is very rich. You get to meet a great variety of people and see what the human experiences are in our whole world. Anyone attending the World Water Fora has this perception of the diversity of human experience. And this exposure changes your perspective and how you relate to the group of people you work with back home."[86]*

Ken Caplan of Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation succinctly states the assumption underlying this widely shared sense of value in activities that promote social learning: "Change happens through exposure to new ideas, and generally in face-to-face interactions."[87] In other words, to use our analytical framework, the activities that promote those kinds of interactions are those that create the possibility for third-order change.

Interaction among first-, second-, and third-order change activities

At the same time, we observe that many of these initiatives' activities are *not* of this type. Yet, in most cases, first- and second-order change activities either set the stage or build on others that promote third-order change. Dialogic approaches may be nested in a range of activities that are not dialogic, or are even confrontational, such as boycotts, demonstrations, and counter-events like those associated with global meetings of the World Bank and World Trade Organization. Many people believe that this "harder edge of advocacy" is essential to bring powerful parties to the dialogue table. Hazel Henderson for example talks about the "ecology of strategies" that is necessary to realize change.[88]

Initiatives pursuing a Consensus Building strategy offer many examples of this kind of interaction among different kinds of activities. For example, Michael Conroy, who played a key role in developing the Forest Stewardship Council and serves on its board, has pointed to the unique power of "advocacy-led certification systems" such as that developed by the Council to move large corporations to change their practices. Advocacy—a second-order change activity, focused on reform—plays a critical part in creating an environment in which corporations feel the need to change and in holding them accountable once certification standards are in place. But it is only part of the formula. Says Conroy: "The creation of a credible certification system requires the development of standards by a diverse set of stakeholders in an inclusive process designed to build consensus." Out of this mix of activities have come some remarkable results—for example, the aggressive branding of sustainably harvested wood products by Home Depot and a number of surprising partnerships between advocacy groups and corporations they once attacked to promote certified products.[89]

In the Bridging Adversarial Positions or Promoting Collaboration strategies, rolling out a successful model for peace building or for partnership and applying it to different conflict situations or challenges is a second-order change activity (first order would be increasing the amount of effort with the same conflict issue). Yet, on the ground, the application of the model may require or produce third-order change. Most of the

strategies involve dissemination activities, such as creating and circulating reports or publishing newsletters. These may broadcast conclusions or agreements that result from deep change processes, and they may inspire deep change as the best practices or new knowledge are taken up by other. But for the initiative undertaking them, they are second-order change activities.

In short, we find a vital interplay among different types of activities in the way these initiatives go about their work of making change on a global scale. Significantly, it is the first- or second-order change activities that produce the tangible outputs and often define the initiatives: the publication and promotion of outputs such as Transparency International's corruption index, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, or the Cooperative Program on Water and Climate's *Climate Changes the Water Rules*, in book and video form; the dissemination of best practices through curricula and reports; the proliferation of new initiatives using proven models of partnership or approaches to conflict resolution. As our informants have made clear, however, the processes that have produced these outputs have often involved deep change in the people that participated in them.

Moreover, we see that in the rollout of products from the global level, what is a comparatively simple first- or second-order dissemination activity at the center may trigger or require a more challenging third-order change process as part of the uptake at the local level—in industries or companies, in communities, and in the home institutions of people who participate in global change initiatives. Our sample of thirty-six initiatives suggests that this is part of the complexity of working at global scale. Just as there are structural challenges in organizing to promote change globally, so there are significant process challenges such as this one: recognizing the kind of change called for in different kinds of activities and managing appropriately to achieve it.

The role of dialogue

In only a few of the network initiatives we looked at closely, did key personnel consider dialogue to be a core activity. Our interviewees rarely used the word dialogue to describe their activities or thought about their work as being dialogue-based, and references to dialogue theories, critical concepts, or experts were rare. In many cases, this seemed to be related to the firm distinction they make between dialogue and action, or what they consider to be the real work. For example, Ken Caplan of Building Partnerships for Development said this:

> *"Partnerships are completely different from dialogues. I see dialogues as being more about innovation. . . . They're about changing the way people think, sharing ideas, having a discourse. In a dialogue there is less emphasis on accountability and legitimacy. We focus on partnerships, which are more about accountability, tasks, and delivery."[90]*

Sanjeev Khagram described how, in the deliberations of the World Commission on Dams, it was not an option to introduce "dialogue" as a process because "the Chair didn't believe in that kind of stuff." Instead, the Secretariat developed a three-level framework for being clear about the kinds of conversations the Commission needed to have at a

particular time: at the highest level, about values, ideals, or principles; at the mid-level, about norms; and at the bottom level, about facts or tools.[91] Similarly, Gary Dunning, director of the secretariat of the Forests Dialogue—one of the few initiatives in which "dialogue" is front and center—described a "spectrum," with talk on one end and action on the other:

> *"There are two ends of the dialogue spectrum. Some [dialogues] are*
> *about being together on a veranda in Tuscany, having a brandy, relaxing*
> *together, in a club-like atmosphere, where leaders get together on an*
> *informal basis, and get to know each other personally, and share*
> *experiences. The other end of the spectrum is dialogues where people*
> *want to have structured, negotiated, sessions that lead to concrete action*
> *by leaders. They want to fly into a hotel in Frankfurt, spend 1.5 days, and*
> *leave knowing what they can do."[92]*

For various reasons, this action-vs.-talk orientation of people engaged in building issue-focused networks is quite understandable. In contrast to those in our study who pursue a strategy of Bridging Adversarial Positions, their initiatives are framed in terms of the issues, not in terms of transforming people or relationships. Committed to making significant change on a global scale, they are intensely outcome focused. They want their initiatives to be judged and known by actions, not processes. It is therefore not surprising that they would place less value on and pay less attention to process issues than people in the conflict prevention area, where dialogue is owned and intensively developed as a core process.

At the same time, our informants made clear that they do think of their work as involving conversation, and that they fully appreciate the importance that the quality of interactions and relationships plays in their success. Some noted the importance of "team building" or "bonding" and the value of social activities like eating and drinking, and even physical activities such as canoeing, in helping bring groups together. And they shared a variety of experiences of what can keep groups from coming together and working well.

For example, Melissa Powell of the Global Compact noted how difficult it can be to get people to let go of familiar meeting formats and conventions—such as formal panel presentations and plenary discussions on the UN General Assembly model.[93] Janet Rangathan said that in her experience with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol process, the critical challenges are rooted in personality: "Business can't stand the 'navel gazing.' They want to keep moving once they've got it, and it's easy to leave people behind."[94] Chris Grieve of the Marine Stewardship Council described a problem in the central Stakeholder Council where a few people tended to dominate the meetings, and the way they resolved it. During a recent breakthrough meeting, the group paid attention to its own dynamics and actually began to redesign itself. "Some members of the Stakeholder Council thought this was the best meeting they'd been to so far," said Grieve. "There was a lot of passion and energy for making their own council work."[95]

When we described the distinctions in Scharmer's matrix (Figure 1) between Talking Nice, Talking Tough, and Reflective or Generative Dialogue, most interviewees recognized all four types of conversation as present in their initiatives and expressed the goal of fostering generative dialogue. "Generative dialogue is what we are trying to encourage," said James Lenahan, communications director of the Global Water Partnership. "Our work is not just about a set of rules, it's about changing the way people work together."[96] Similarly, Poonam Ahluwalia described her aspiration for the meetings of the Youth Education Summit in terms strongly resonant with Scharmer's definition of generative dialogue: "I aim for suspending opinions and see if a common vision can be created, if conversation can take place that is not based upon personal identity but on what we want as a group."[97]

Dialogic change processes

In fact, it was through exploring these issues more fully with our interviewees that we arrived at the concept of *dialogic change processes*. Building Partnerships for Development's Ken Caplan captured the critical distinction most clearly in a written reflection on his interview.

> *"I suppose there is a difference between dialogue as a noun and dialogue as a verb. Dialogue as a noun means an initiative in and of itself—like a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the role of the private sector in water delivery. Dialogue as a verb is an aspect of all relationships."[98]*

When asked how much dialogue is necessary in a partnership setting, Caplan responded, "As much as possible." Partnerships are about accountability and action, but dialogue is necessary for action that leads to third-order change.

> *"If the goal of the partnership is to get 500 water connections, and it's not about changing the rules of the game, then that doesn't require lots of dialogue. It's just about getting on with the delivery of the service. But what we at BPD would say about that is, if they're only looking at creating a partnership that does 500 water connections, they're missing something. They should be working together to influence policy, the discourse, et cetera."[99]*

This distinction between dialogue as an event and dialogue as a quality of conversation in the day-to-day activities of these global change initiatives is perhaps the most important insight to emerge from our analysis. It emphasizes process understanding and capacity building as a leading developmental edge for these initiatives to become more effective. Specifically, we see opportunities in their activities to change, not what they are doing, but the *way* they are doing it to achieve greater third-order change impact.

For example, among all of Transparency International's activities, it is perhaps best known for development of its Corruption Perceptions Index, which ranks countries by levels of corruption as perceived by teams of experts. This index is a powerful second-order change tool: its creation involves developing critical concepts about what comprises corruption; and it is a lever to press for reform. It also has the potential to be a

third-order change activity, for example, as the focal point for conversations among people within corrupt systems about what roles they play in sustaining the system, or might play in changing it.

To make the index creation a third order change process would require substantially broadening participation and on-going ownership of development of the index. This is, in fact, reflected in a proposal for the Ecuador chapter that incorporates cooperative inquiry, community of practice, and systems thinking methodologies.[100] This proposal, scheduled to commence in 2006, will create a national dialogue on the meaning of corruption, how it impacts people, what can be done to address corruption, and eventually implementation of those ideas. We can see how this restructuring of the index development process reflects the elements critical to third order change that are listed in Table 1:

- **Desired Outcome:** It aims for a transformation in relationships and understanding about the issue;

- **Purpose:** It is building a whole systems perspective;

- **Participation:** It is based in creating microcosms of the problem system through a national and numerous local groupings;

- **Process:** It promotes transformational relationships—people will get together who have not traditionally done so, to delve into many issues that include many traditional "undiscussables" in terms of deep structures.

We also see potential value in the development of organizational capacities around the promotion of dialogic conversations, so as to take greater advantage of the extraordinary opportunities for deep change that they create in their activities. Most of the people guiding these global change initiatives have backgrounds in fields such as international relations, science, and engineering, as well as in organizations doing more traditional work. As we discovered in our interviews, they are aware of the significance of differences in quality of conversation yet largely unaware of the considerable knowledge and expertise that exists about how to do dialogue well. We expect this would change if the commitment to dialogic change processes were to become more explicit.

V. Conclusion

This analysis of a diverse group of change and dialogue initiatives provides a basis for deeper understanding of some critical issues in the work of addressing global challenges. What is striking is that the initiatives are institutionalizing change on a global scale in a way that does not rely on the traditional uses of power and hierarchical structures that we find in governmental or economic institutions. They have produced significant innovations—in strategies, structures, and activities—in support of a broad commitment to the social practice approach that relies on the power of human interaction to change people's minds and hearts and motivate them to change their behaviors.

This new model of organizing will not supplant the existing international system but it is an essential complement to it. As the struggles of the Kyoto Process demonstrate, to be able to deal with truly global issues we need new forms of global institutions, of which governmental players are not in charge. There is much work remaining to understand and develop new global change processes, but these initiatives are pointing the way toward a more promising approach to the challenges humanity is facing.

This investigation also indicates an emerging consensus around the idea that the human response to global challenges must be systemic, structural/institutional and dialogic, and we see this as a hopeful omen for the prospects of societal change. We believe that addressing all these dimensions is critical to achieving the necessary change, and that most approaches to "dialogue" and "institutional reform" and "consultations" have failed to grasp this. Consequently we have a dangerous atmosphere of "dialogue fatigue" that can easily produce violence and oppositional stridency if we do not get the change processes right. The urgency of our need to make headway against those challenges remains. In Rischard's dramatic phrasing, we are at "high noon," facing "20 global problems [with] 20 years to solve them." This leads us to ask what our investigation suggests about how to make dialogic approaches more effective in addressing seemingly intractable global issues.

The Challenge of Greater Effectiveness

Are these change initiatives effective in tackling pernicious global challenges? They arise out of substantial experience, and they certainly appear to hold great promise. Yet, it is still too early to respond conclusively, both because more time is required to make a good assessment, and because we still have inadequate ways of measuring their impact. In fact, one important challenge is to create methods for measuring effectiveness that are appropriate for the complex, long-term work of societal change. [101]

Both assessing effectiveness and achieving it, however, first require agreement upon objectives. To that end, we believe there is value in making more explicit the goal of deep change and the strategic options for pursuing it; the differences among first-, second-, and third-order change activities; and the role of dialogic conversation in change strategies. In the act of naming there is considerable power to shape discourse, understanding, and ultimately action. For example, consider the way in which a simple descriptive device—Scharmer's conversation matrix—enables clearer observation and analysis and more conscious choices around patterns that, unless named, remain invisible.

Certainly, the change strategies we describe in our analysis need further study. However, we think that we can strengthen our collective capacity to make change on a global scale through analyses of this sort that compare and contrast strategic choices, examine how they fit with the challenges they are designed to address and the contexts they are used in, and consider how they overlap and may be employed in complementary ways. Similarly, exploration of the distinction among first-, second-, and third-order change activities can have practical value in the field, as initiatives attempt to define their goals clearly and put together a mix of activities that will achieve them. For example, it may hold the key to understanding the sources of effectiveness in mixed approaches like the advocacy-led certification program of the Forest Stewardship Council, and to developing equally effective approaches within other strategies.

Matching methods to objectives also calls for becoming more explicit about the role of dialogic conversation—both in dialogues organized as events ("dialogue as a noun," to quote Ken Caplan again) and in all the interactions that comprise the flow of day-to-day activities over a significant period of time ("dialogue as a verb"). In this regard, further exploration and development of the concept of *dialogic change processes* may provide a helpful framework for thinking about how to integrate first-, second-, and third-order change activities in innovative ways to achieve greater impact. It captures the desired outcome of deep change in people, relationships, and systemic patterns. It focuses attention on the role of human interaction in making those changes. And it conveys the idea of combining a variety of related activities in a stream of change work over an extended period of time. This sets up a contrast, on one hand, to the episodic and meeting-event quality typically associated with "dialogue" in the realm of global problem solving, and on the other, to the specialized, limited-purpose conception of familiar activities such as developing a research report or a evaluation tool such as an index.

In addition to these challenges and opportunities of naming and framing global change work, our investigation has brought to light two other issues of effectiveness. One is the difficulty of establishing and sustaining broad participation in global change initiatives. Another is the need for greater process understanding to support dialogic approaches.

Participation

The dynamics of an inter-*national* order based upon national interests and states immediately gives rise to the question: who will speak for the global interests?   The initiatives aim to create action around global issues by drawing together the necessary stakeholders and resources. Without the voluntary involvement of a broad range of stakeholders, they cannot move forward. Looking ahead, we see a need to develop new ways to significantly broaden participation.

Responding to the participation challenge will require thinking well outside the traditional box of elite global summits as critical events. The initiatives we investigated point to the participation challenge of connecting global and local in a meaningful way, yet there is still a tendency to think of global-national-local as a hierarchy. In a truly participatory system, these "levels" would appear simply as different places in the networked world. To achieve this, however, there must be innovation in process as well as structure. For example, most dialogue methodologies emphasize the need for inter-

personal face-to-face interactions. Yet, the Bridge Initiative and Chat the Planet suggest new directions that media and technology can take us by using satellite television and the Internet to bring people together across great distances for interactive and meaningful conversation. We see a need to develop a much grander infrastructure and repertoire of methodologies to put people in touch with one another around global issues.[102]

Another challenge of participation is to maintain stakeholders' engagement. This requires mutual accountability and commitment, without which stakeholders will drift away as they perceive their investment is unappreciated or not producing results. The difficult but all-important issue of power sharing is part of the daily life of global change initiatives as they struggle to gather the critical mass of diverse supporters needed to create tipping points around key issues. In addition, they must nurture stakeholders' efforts to work together in new ways by creating commitment to the common good and an expanded sense of what is possible through collective action.

Deep change work takes time. Yet, maintaining attention to long-term change efforts is notoriously difficult. This raises important questions about how to sustain the engagement of the variety of stakeholders who are necessary to achieve deep change— funders, policy-makers, business people, activists and local citizens. The strategy of organizing global summits like the Rio Earth Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development as events that will spur substantial activity has mainly produced good-sounding intentions. If such events are to have any value, they must arise out of a much more intricate, participatory and long-term change process with tight webs of mutual accountability and commitment.

Tackling this issue of creating change over time in the conflict prevention arena, Hal Saunders developed the concept of "sustained dialogue," defined as: "a systematic, interactive, open-ended political process to transform conflictual relationships over time." This is explicitly a third-order change process that "focuses on the dynamics of the relationships that underlie conflict and block its resolution."[103] We must learn more about how to carry this out globally.

Process Understanding

We observed an inadequate process understanding to support the use of dialogue within the global initiatives we studied. Yet, substantial process understanding exists and is growing. It is particularly well advanced in the conflict prevention field, which has progressed further than others in conscious development of dialogue methods and tools. But it is also emerging strongly among professionals who support the use of dialogue within organizations and in multi-stakeholder settings. We suggest that a more explicit commitment to the use of dialogue, and to the development of dialogic change processes, might inspire a greater effort to draw on this process understanding to make global change initiatives more effective.

Given the urgency in the need for change around global issues, time is too short for these streams of work to proceed separately, in silos defined as fields or disciplines or professions or brands, on the traditional Western model. If we continue to invest resources, energy, and hope in multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral dialogues that

produce meager results, there is a danger that the "dialogue fatigue" of today will turn into deeper disillusionment and a retreat from such efforts to address issues collectively and peacefully. The need is great for the people promoting collaboration and the use of dialogue to employ those approaches themselves in reflecting on how they can do their work more effectively and have greater impact. In challenging times, perhaps the greatest challenge is the one put forward by Mohandas Gandhi: "You must be the change you seek in the world." In the shift from a model of expert-led problem solving to one of societal change, the "experts" can lead the way by becoming learners open to changing themselves.

About the Authors

Bettye Pruitt -- Bettye Pruitt is co-leader of the Generative Dialogue Project. She is a social historian dedicated to developing practices and tools for collective learning. She is a research member and co-chair of the council of trustees of SoL (Society for Organizational Learning). Since 2000, as an associate of Generon Consulting, she has been part of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Democratic Dialogue Project, helping to design and facilitate practitioner workshops and producing the workshop reports (see Learning Library at www.democraticdialoguenetwork.org). As a continuing contributor to that project, she is a co-author of a handbook for dialogue practitioners currently under joint development by UNDP, the Organization of American States, and International IDEA. Bettye has also led the development of Generon's learning history practice, coaching learning historians in a number of projects, and serving as the historian of the emerging Partnership for Child Nutrition. From 1983 to 1998, Bettye worked as a consulting historian in the field of organizational studies, producing both published and proprietary works of critical history for a diverse group of corporate clients. Since 1998 she has been president of Pruitt & Company, Inc., a research and consulting firm dedicated to realizing the practical value of history in organizations and the world. Bettye holds a doctorate in history. She has two grown daughters and lives in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, with her husband, also an historian.

Steve Waddell -- Steve is co-leader of the Generative Dialogue Project. He focuses upon large systems change and global network development. The issues may be as broad as trade, poverty and sustainable development, or as specific as road-building, youth employment, banking and provision of water and sanitation services. Usually the change strategy involves creating business-government-civil society collaborations and networks; these collaborations may be local, national or global. As well as being Co-Director of the GDP, Steve is Executive Director of the Global Action Network Net (www.gan-net), Senior Associate at Strategic Clarity and the Institute for Strategic Clarity, and an adjunct faculty member innovative executive management program he founded at Boston College. Dozens of publications have been produced by Steve in English and Spanish. His most recent publication is a 2005 book titled Societal Learning and Change: Innovation with Multi-Stakeholder Strategies. Steve has a doctorate in sociology and an MBA. Publications are available through www.thecollaborationsworks.com and www.gan-net.net.

About the Paper Collaborators

Katrin Kaeufer -- Katrin is a research affiliate at MIT Sloan School of Management and a faculty member of the Fujitsu Global Knowledge Institute She is also a founding research member of SoL, the Society for Organizational Learning. At MIT, her recent and current research, conducted with Peter Senge, focuses on dialogue and distributed leadership as means for social transformation and non-hierarchical coordination. She has consulted with various organizations, including a global pharmaceutical company, a learning network of small and middle size companies, a regional physicians' network in Germany, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme.

In 2003, Katrin won the Richard Beckhard Memorial Prize for best article in the Sloan Management Review, 2002, for "The Advantage of X-teams," with D. Ancona and H. Bresman. She also won the innovation award of the "Stiftung fur Industrieforschung" for the development of the Global Studies Program, an integrated study program at twelve universities around the world, which she founded together with Professor Galtung in 1989-90. Katrin earned her doctoral degree in Economics and Business Administration at Witten/Herdecke University, Germany's first private university.

Kate Parrot -- Kate is currently working on a graduate degree in Technology and Policy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her two main areas of work are the role of dialogue in collaborative, cross-sector change and the evolution of the capitalist system in support of sustainable development. Kate began her career in the environmental field, where she worked in water resources planning and environmental impact assessment. Her interests brought her to the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) in Snowmass, CO, where for three years she collaborated closely with Dr. Peter Senge and companies in the Society for Organizational Learning (SoL) Sustainability Consortium. Kate is the co-founder of the Tuesday Dialogue Commons in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which aims to create a public practice field for generative dialogue. She plans to enroll next year in a PhD program to explore the use of dialogic change processes to bring about sustainable business practices.

Endnotes

[1] See the mission statements at www.worldbank.org and www.un.org; on NGO engagement, see *The 21st-Century NGO in the Market for Change* (2203), a report by SustainAbility in partnership with The Global Compact and UNEP, available at www.sustainability.com; on cross-sector partnering, there are many publications available through www.iblf.org.

[2] "New Approaches to Global Problem Solving" at www.helsinkiprocess.fi.

[3] This paragraph and quote draw on Glennifer Gillespie, "The Mont Fleur Scenario Project, South Africa 1991-1992: The Footprints of Mont Fleur," available at www.democraticdialoguenetwork.org. See also, Adam Kahane, *Solving Tough Problems: An Open Way of Talking, Listening, and Creating New Realities* (San Francisco: Berrett-Kohler, 2004); and Bettye H. Pruitt and Katrin Käufer, "Dialogue as a Tool for Peaceful Conflict Transformation," *Reflections: the SoL Journal* 3:4 (2002).

[4] "Women and AIDS: An Extract from the AIDS Epidemic Update, December 2004" available at www.womenandaids.unaids.org.

[5] See, for example, L. Haddad, "Women's Status: Levels, Determinants, Consequences for Malnutrition, Interventions, and Policy," *Asian Development Review* 17:1-2 (1999): 96-131.

[6] John R. Ehrenfeld, "Searching for Sustainability," *Reflections: the SoL Journal* 5:8 (2004).

[7] Connie J. G. Gersick, "Revolutionary Change Theories: A Multilevel Exploration of the Punctuated Equilibrium Paradigm," *Academy of Management Review* 16:1 (1991): 10-36.

[8] The concept of societal learning and change and the fishing quota example draw on Steven J. Waddell, *Societal Learning and Change: How Governments, Business and Civil Society are Creating Solutions to Complex Multi-stakeholder Problems* (Sheffield, UK: Greenleaf Publishing, 2005).

[9] See Jean M. Bartunek and Michael K. Moch, "First Order, Second Order and Third Order Change and Organization Development Interventions," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 23 (1987): 483-500; Bartunek and Moch, "Third-order Organizational change and the Western Mystical Tradition," *Journal of Organization Change Management* 7 (1994): 24-41; and Richard P. Nielsen, *The Politics of Ethics: Methods for Acting, Learning and Sometimes Fighting with Others in Addressing Ethical Problems in Organizational Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[10] The descriptive categories in this table—purpose, participants, process—emerged first within the UNDP Democratic Dialogue Project. See Report of the Third Learning Workshop at www.democraticdialoguenetwork.org.

[11] Waddell, *Societal Learning and Change*, pp. _____.

[12] Some examples include:
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         http://www.muc.de/~heuvel/dialogue/dialogue_proposal.html#0.
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S. Cannon, "Inter-ethnic dialogue as a personal and collective healing process: Examples from the former Yugoslavia," in *Methods of Dialogue and Leadership for Transforming Violent Conflict*, Gripsholm, Mariefred, Sweden (2005); E. Childers and B. Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System* (Uppsala, Sweden, Dag Hammerskjold Foundation, 1994); A. D'Souza, "Theology of Relationship" *in Methods of Dialogue and Leadership for Transforming Violent Conflict,* Gripsholm, Mariefred, Sweden (2005);
Mari Fitzduff, *Beyond Violence: Conflict Resolution Process in Northern Ireland* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2002); Mari Fitzduff and *Cheyanne Church,* eds., *NGOs at the Table: Strategies for Influencing Policy in Areas of Conflict* (Evanston, IL: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004); William Isaacs, *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together* (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1999); W. B. Pearce and K. A. Pearce "Combining Passions and Abilities: Toward Dialogic Virtuosity," *Southern Communication Journal* 65: 161-175; Harold H. Saunders, *A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); Rajesh Tandon, "Dialogue as Inquiry and Intervention," P. Reason and J. Rowan, eds., *Human Inquiry: A Sourcebook of New Paradigm Research* (London: Wiley, 1981).

[13] Claus Otto Scharmer, " Self-transcending Knowledge: Sensing and Organizing Around Emerging Opportunities," *Journal of Knowledge Management* 5:2 (2001): 137-150.

[14] Otto Scharmer, *Theory U: Leading from the Emerging Future (*forthcoming)

[15] Isaacs, *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together.*

[16] John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: the Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[17] Scharmer, *Theory U.*. See also Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Joe Jaworski, and Betty Sue Flowers, *Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future* (Cambridge, MA: Society for Organizational Learning, 2004); and Adam Kahane, *Solving Tough Problems: An Open Way of Talking, Listening, and Creating New Realities* (San Francisco: Berrett-Kohler, 2004).

[18] See Senge, et. al., *Presence*, pp. 94-96 ; and Isaacs, *Dialogue*, 273-76. Isaacs's book, and much other important work on dialogue, came out of the Dialogue Project at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

[19] Jacoby, Henry et. al, "Kyoto's Unfinished Business," *Foreign Affairs* 77:4 (1998): 54-66

[20] This overview draws on Steven J. Waddell, "The Climate Change Policy Domain," a GAN-Net report (February, 2001) available at www.gan-net.net; and "COP 10 Final Report," *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* 12:260 (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2004), available at www.iisd.ca/climate/cop10/ .

[21] "COP 10 Final Report," 15.

[22] Ibid.

[23] For example the *Economist* commented that: "Especially in times of acute crisis, the UN tends to lose any collective identity on its own; everyone involved thinks first and foremost as a national of his or herown country." July 9th – 15th, 2005. Special Report: The Srebrenica massacre. P. 20.

[24] "NGO Related Frequently Asked Questions," at www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/faq.htm; and Kal Raustiala, "States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions," *International Studies Quarterly* 41:4 (1997): 719-740.

[25] Agenda 21, Chapter 27 "Strengthening the Role of Non-governmental Organizations: Partners for Sustainable Development," available at http://habitat.igc.org/agenda21/a21-27.htm

[26] See the web site of the Framework Convention: www.unfccc.int

[27] This paragraph is Based on Waddell, "Climate Change Policy Domain." See also www.climatenetwork.org.

[28] From "The 21st Century Climate Change Agenda," available at www.globalclimate.org.

[29] Raustiala, "States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions," 724.

[30] Raustiala, "States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions," 733. The same pattern is noted in Ann Marie Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001): 62, as cited in Richard Price, "Transnational civil Society and Advocacy in World Politics," *World Politics* 55 (July 2003): 588.

[31] "COP 10 Final Report," 16.

[32] Raustiala, "States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions," 737.

[33] Minu Hemmati, *Multi-stakeholder Dialogue for Governance and Sustainability* (London: Earthscan, 2000) provides a detailed look at twenty dialogue processes and shows that in other key issue areas, for example sustainable development, these "dialogues" within the intergovernmental system involve inviting inputs from the civil society and/or business sectors, while the decision-making authority remains firmly in the hands of government negotiators.

[34] Raustiala, "States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions," 736.

[35] John Gerard Ruggie, "Reconstituting the Global Public Domain: Issues, Actors and Practices," *European Journal of International Relations* (forthcoming, 2005).

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[37] Steven J. Waddell, "Six Societal Learning Concepts for a New Era of Engagement," *Reflections: the SoL Journal* 3:4 (2002): 18-27;" Waddell, *Societal Learning and Change*; Ann Svendsen and M. Laberge, "Co-Creative Power: Engaging stakeholder networks for learning and innovation," *Pfizer Institute - Collective Wisdom Website (Social Innovation)*, 2003.

[38] Quote from Wolfgang Reinicke, *Global Public Policy: Governing without Government?* (Washington, DC USA: Brookings Institution Press, 1998); and see Wolfgang H. Reinicke and Francis M. Deng, *Critical*

Choices: The United Nations, Networks, and the Future of Global Governance (Toronto, Canada: International Development Research Council, 2000).

[39] See www.ghgprotocol.org.

[40] Janet Ranganathan interview with Steve Waddell, August 2004.

[41] Henk van Schaik interview with Kate Parrot, August 28, 2004.

[42] Chris Grieve, interview with Kate Parrot, August 19, 2004.

[43] See John Ehrenfeld, "Designing 'Sustainable Product Service Systems,'" *EcoDesign* (2001).

[44] Ken Caplan interview with Kate Parrot, July 8, 2004.

[45] In a separate study of this initiative, Waddell suggests the dimensions of this change, for example, in construction companies redefining the business they are in from "construction" to "the creation of sustainable water and sanitation systems." Steven J. Waddell, "Emerging Models for Developing Water and Sanitation Systems for the Rural Poor: From Contracts to Co-production," Research and Survey Series, Business Partners for Development, Water and Sanitation Cluster (London, 2001) available at www.bpd-waterandsanitation.org.

[46] Oran R. Young, "Regime Effectiveness: Taking Stock," in Oran R. Young, ed., *The Effectiveness of International Environmental Regimes* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999): 269-71. See Waddell, *Societal Learning and Change*, Chapter 2, for a review of the development of and the distinction between the concepts of "social learning" and "societal learning."

[47] Waddell, "Six Societal Learning Concepts."

[48] Saunders, *A Public Peace Process*; and see www.searchforcommonground.org.

[49] Sanjeev Khagram interview with Steve Waddell, July 16, 2004; and see www.dams.org.

[50] Khagram interview.

[51] Evelyn Messinger interview with Bettye Pruitt, July 30, 2004.

[52] Note that this contrasts with the Global Alliance for Workers and Communities which the IYF had a leadership role in and is classified as a "strengthening actors" strategy.

[53] William Reese interview with Steve Waddell, August 30, 2004.

[54] See www.gainhealth.org.

[55] The World Bank has conducted an in-depth review of its partnerships. For a comparative summary see: Lele, Uma and Chris Gerrard. 2004. "Addressing the Challenges of Globalization: An Independent Evaluation of the World Bank's Approach to Global Programs." World Bank, Washington, DC, USA.

[56] See www.theglobalfund.org.

[57] Ken Caplan interview with Kate Parrot, July 8, 2004.

[58] See www.bpd-waterandsanitation.org.

[59] McKinsey & Company, "Assessing the Global Compact's Impact" (May, 2004), available at www.unglobalcompact.org.

[60] Global Compact, "Governance Discussion Paper," under "GC: Next Stages of Development," at www.unglobalcompact.org; and McKinsey & Company, "Assessing the Global Compact's Impact."

[61] Global Compact, "Governance Discussion Paper."

[62] See Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: the Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday, 1990); and Peter M. Senge, et. al., *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization (*New York: Doubleday, 1994).

[63] For the SoL Sustainability Consortium, see www.solonline.org.

[64] See www.msc,org.

[65] Simon Burall interview with Bettye Pruitt, August 13, 2004.

[66] Raganathan Interview.

[67] Key IBLF publications include Jane Nelson and Simon Zadek, *Partnership Alchemy: New Social Partnerships for Europe* (Copenhagen Centre, 2000); Ros Tennyson and Luke Wilde, *The Guiding Hand: Brokering Partnerships for Sustainable Development* (United Nations Department of Public Information, 2000); and Ros Tennyson, *The Partnering Toolbook* (The Partnering Initiative, 2004), which has been translated into sixteen languages. For information on other activities, see www.iblf.org.

[68] Poonam Ahluwalia interview with Steve Waddell, August 28, 2004.

[69] Nicanor Perlas interview with Bettye Pruitt, August 17, 2004.

[70] Mari Fitzduff interview with Bettye Pruitt, August 12, 2004.

[71] Daniel Zimmer interview with Kate Parrot, August 9, 2004.

[72] Zimmer interview.

[73] William Ury (E-parliament co-founder) interview with Bettye Pruitt, August 26, 2004; and see www.e-parl.net.

[74] Paul Raskin interview with Kate Parrot, August 10, 2004.

[75] Van Schaik interview.

[76] The seminal work on this phenomenon is Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the Industrial Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1962).

[77] See Jean François
Rischard, Jean-Francois. 2002. *High Noon: 20 Global Problems, 20 Years to Solve Them*. New York, NY, USA: Basic Books.

[78] J. N. Rosenau, "Governance, Order, and Change in World Politics," in Rosenau and E. O. Czempiel, eds., *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992; and Wolfgang Reinicke, *Global Public Policy: Governing without Government?* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1998.

[79] S. Goldsmith, Stephen and William D. Eggers. 2004. *Governing by Network: The New Shape of the Public Sector*. Washington, DC, USA: Brookings Institute.

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[81] Rischard, Jean-Francois. 2002. *High Noon: 20 Global Problems, 20 Years to Solve Them*. New York, NY, USA: Basic Books.

[82] Steven J. Waddell, Steven. 2003. "Global Action Networks: A Global Invention for Business to Make Globalization Work for All." *Journal of Corporate Citizenship* 12:27-42,
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[83] Quote from Thomas N. Hale and Ann-Marie Slaughter, "Multitude: the worst of both worlds," review of Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, May 26, 2005, www.opendemocracy.net,.

[84] Young, "Regime Effectiveness: Taking Stock."

[85] Reese Interview.

[86] Zimmer Interview.

[87] Caplan Interview.

[88] Henderson interview.

[89] Michael E. Conroy, "Can Advocacy-led Certification Systems Transform Global Corporate Practices? Evidence and Some Theory," University of Massachusetts Political Economy Research Institute, Working Paper, 2001; and Michael Conroy interview with Bettye Pruitt, March 25, 2003.

[90] Caplan Interview.

[91] Khagram Interview.

[92] Gary Dunning interview with Kate Parrot, August 16, 2004.

[93] Melissa Powell interview with Steve Waddell, August 6, 2004.

[94] Ranganathan Interview.

[95] Grieve Interview.

[96] James Lenahan interview with Steve Waddell, August 18, 2004.

[97] Ahluwalia Interew.

[98] Caplan Interview.

[99] Caplan Interview.

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[100] This project is titled "Gears of Change: Civil Society in Action Against Corruption". It is being led by the Corporación Latinoamericana para el Desarrollo in partnership with Institute for Strategic Clarity, Transparency Mexico, PROETICA, Transparency International – Secretariat for Latin America and GAN-Net.

[101] For perhaps the most substantial attempt to think through this effectiveness question see: Young, *The Effectiveness of International Environmental Regimes*. See also Steven J.Waddell, "Global Action Networks: Building global public policy systems of accountability," *AccountAbility Quarterly* 20 (2003) :19-26.

[102] See www.bridgeinitiative.org and www.chattheplanet.org.

[103] Saunders, *A Public Peace Process.*