CHAPTER 7

Growing the competencies required for success

I once listened to a network leader describe her frustration with a year-long initiative to bring another group of organizations into her established network. There had been seven meetings, and she felt there was little progress. As we talked, I brought up the topic of competencies to investigate particular approaches, skills, and tools that she might use. I referred to a model of eight different competencies that I have identified as key to networks' success. The model proved a great diagnostic tool. By the end of the conversation we had identified four particular competencies key to her initiative:

- communications,
- leadership,
- network development, and
- change.

Analyzing her situation in this way helped pull apart a confusion of issues, and identify strategies and tools to address her situation. In particular, it suggested the need for:

- incorporating the change competency and
- her network to renew its vision.

The work of GANs (Global Action Networks) requires three types of skills, abilities, and expertise. Particularly in their early days they lead with physical or substantive *issue* expertise such as expertise in some aspect of water, forestry, labor, conflict prevention, or youth employment. In early days, a GANs' leaders are usually seen as experts in the issue. This is important to ensure the GAN is grounded in its issue and to build legitimacy of the GAN with key stakeholders.

S. Waddell, *Global Action Networks*

A second type of expertise is *tool* expertise. There are certain activities that GANs elect to realize their vision. These are associated with Table 2.3, What GANs do, and include such tools as certification, resource management, index development, and financing.

But as GANs develop, these types of expertise become less central. GANs do not aim to develop leading substantive issue expertise – that is the work of universities, think tanks, and consultancies that participate in GANs. And after applying tool expertise to create a financing or certification system, simple expansion in detail and maintenance are required. GANs just need to make sure that they have these types of expertise in their network to maintain legitimacy, relevance, and an appropriate level of quality. They usually have a place for issue and tool expertise, such as with a Technical Committee.

As GANs develop, a third type of expertise becomes increasingly important. It is *change process* expertise in applying the tool to the issue arena to enhance social, economic, and environmental outcomes in the issue field using the tools. The type of change process expertise that GANs need is driven by their particular theory of change that, as Chapter 5 explained, is a multi-stakeholder one. The work of developing (1) change through (2) multi-stakeholder processes is what defines the complexion and array of the competencies that GANs need for success. A different complexion of similar competencies is often needed in other types of organizations.

To understand how this change process work distinguishes GANs, consider the tool of "certification and standards." The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) also produces standards that are used in certification. ISO is a business–government network. ISO has an important "system organizing" role. But it is not a GAN. Its goal is not about change, but rather summarizing current standards and ensuring there is some international uniformity and way of translating standards between countries. ISO emphasizes tool expertise rather than change process expertise. It does not have triple-loop change as part of its fundamental purpose – transformational change that includes change in power relationships.

GANs involved with measurement and certification, on the other hand, take a position of leadership by gathering stakeholders who want to *significantly advance the standards in terms of their social, environmental, and economic impact.* Advancing practice for this triple-bottom-line impact is distinctive in GANs across issues. GANs' belief that the certification should be done by embracing diversity and voluntarily gives additional wrinkles to the particular competencies that they have to both develop and integrate for success.

Being clear about these competencies is important for several reasons. As demonstrated in the opening example, they provide a framework for identifying the skills and tools necessary to successfully approach a specific opportunity or challenge. In more traditional management thinking, they connect to operational decisions and priority setting in a number of ways, including:

- Recruitment
- Learning and development
- Performance measurement
- Reorganization and team building
- Career development
- Promotion and succession planning[1]

As we shall see, perhaps the most important implication of the competencies is for the way GANs actually organize themselves.

Core competencies

"Competencies" is a concept usually applied to individuals – what does an individual have to be really good at, to successfully fulfill a role? A competency is usually described in terms of three qualities:

- Knowledge: Through education and experience we gain knowledge about facts and understanding about how something works.
- Skills: This is associated with talent and application of knowledge in an effective way. It can be *vis-à-vis* a technical skill such as use of a software, or an interpersonal skill as in "diplomatic skills."
- Attributes/behavioral qualities: These are about actions in specific situations. Thoughtfulness, reactionary, inventive, and personable are all examples.

The concept of competencies is equally valuable applied to networks and the question: what do GANs have to be able to do really well to realize success? The framework presented in Figure 7.1 aims to be a comprehensive definition of the competencies necessary for a network to be effective. It is sometimes referred to as the "flower" or "petal" diagram – a description more obvious when presented with each competency being a different color. The figure arises from working with network participants and outside experts such as academics and consultants. Experts tend to focus upon

Figure 7.1 Competencies

one of the competencies; when this comprehensive model is presented, they commonly say "Yes, but competency X is the really critical one." In fact, they all have to be developed for a network to be effective. At different periods a GAN may focus on developing only one or two, but true success will only come with development of all.

These competencies are, of course, only distinct conceptually – they interact, and the way they interact is also important. For example, leadership must be skillful at addressing change; people working on learning must also have a strategy to measure their impact.

Although these competencies may appear to be similar to those for traditional organizations, mimicking those organizations' traditions, and basing the competency development upon their knowledge, skills, and attributes can be very problematic. Leadership in a network setting, for example, is very distinct from that in a hierarchical organization. We are still at early stages of understanding how these competencies play out for networks, but following is a sketch based upon best knowledge to date.

Of course each of these competencies connects to a vast literature and set of opinions. I will simply sketch some of the thinking on each that I've found helpful; a proper review of this deserves a book of its own.

I begin discussion of each competency with an overview of the quality of knowledge, and then follow by suggesting three or four important skills and attributes. The goal is to give a taste of the distinctiveness of these competencies for GANs to support their development, and to propose a framework for further discussion and work.

When thinking about these competencies, remember that GANs are complex systems as described in Chapter 2. You might want to refer back to Table 2.4 that describes the difference between traditional approaches and those for complex adaptive systems. The shifts in the table describe differences between competencies that may have the same name in a traditional organization, and those for GANs.

Competency 1. Leadership – Realizing coherent entrepreneurial activity at all levels

Heroic and hierarchical models of leadership do not work for networks. Dispersed, visionary, collaborative, and entrepreneurial qualities and skills must be nurtured amongst network members and staff for networks to realize their promise. How can these skills be nurtured and developed with the diverse stakeholders and experts that networks engage? What are cultural challenges of leaders in a global world that values diversity, and how can the challenges be addressed? How can ambiguity, dilemmas, and paradoxes inherent in much of networks' work be addressed while maintaining visionary direction?

These sorts of question have been at the heart of an innovative Boston College leadership program called Leadership for Change that I had the fortune to initiate. The decade with a wonderful faculty and my decade of work with GANs have made an enormous contribution to my own appreciation of a new approach to leadership that is particularly relevant to GANs.

Leadership knowledge

Grady McGonagill and Claire Reinhelt of the Leadership Learning Community are researchers on leadership.

They write: The following perspectives illustrate the redefinition of leadership to emphasize the importance of shared, collective leadership:

- Leadership is an activity, not a role. It can be enacted by anyone in a system, independent of their role.[2]

- "Heroic" leadership leads to "over-management," defense of turf rather than concern with shared goals, and weak teamwork and coordination; by contrast, shared "post-heroic leadership" releases the potential power of everyone.[3]
- Leadership arises within communities of practice whenever people work together and make meaning of their experiences and when people participate in collaborative forms of action across the dividing lines of perspective, values, beliefs, and cultures.[4]

In a 2010 Bertelsmann Foundation report Grady and Peter Pruyn built upon work by Claire and summarized the knowledge relevant to leadership for GANs. To give greater definition to "collective leadership," they created a matrix that emphasizes distinct capacities are needed at different "levels" of the system and different levels of capacity development.

This matrix is reproduced in Table 7.1 with a row and column shaded to indicate the parts particularly relevant to GANs. Of course GANs have to have capacity in the other boxes as well, but the ones shaded are where GANs should focus on excelling. The bottom row refers to the issue arena that the GAN is working in.

The table helps GANs ask themselves how they are doing with respect to the shaded leadership development challenges in particular, and then set strategies for addressing them. Currently most GANs are "doing" the shaded activities, but without a capacity development strategy to make sure they excel at them.

Another wonderful thing about the matrix is that it suggests interventions that GANs have been working on, but without being as explicit about how their work is distinctive. It emphasizes that "leadership" is not just a characteristic possessed by individuals, but that the GAN itself has leadership and a role in developing leadership.

Some top leadership skills

Probably no skill is as central to networks as the ability to connect. For GANs, this means connecting between individuals and organizations with diverse cultures and ways of perceiving the world. Managing Director for Transparency International (TI) describes this on a very personal level that he experienced when he was in prison in South Africa for his opposition to apartheid. He was 18, and facing the prospect of being raped.

> I don't think you can engage violence with someone you truly love . . . and so I ask "what does this mean?" That if there's a true bond

Table 7.1 Leadership knowledge framework

		Goal of development effort				
		Individual capacity	***Team capacity***	***Organizational capacity***	***Network capacity***	***Systems capacity***
Level of system targeted	*Individuals*	1. Develop capacity of individuals for self-awareness, ongoing learning, and exercising initiative	2. Develop capacity of individuals to work together in groups and lead teams	3. Develop capacity of individuals to understand and lead organizations	4. Develop capacity of individuals to cultivate and leverage peer relationships	5. Develop capacity of individuals to see the big picture, understand root causes, and influence systems
	Teams	6. Develop capacity of teams to develop and elicit the full potential of all team members	7. Develop capacity of teams to define and attain purposes	8. Develop capacity of teams to enhance organizational performance	9. Develop capacity of teams to align their goals and activities across boundaries	10. Develop capacity of teams to prototype systems change
	Organizations	11. Develop capacity of organizations to support staff, volunteer, and board member development	12. Develop capacity of organizations to support effective teamwork	13. Develop capacity of organizations to foster internal collaboration to effectively adapt to challenges	14. Develop capacity of organizations to collaborate with one another	15. Develop capacity of organizational coalitions to lead systemic change
	Communities	16. Develop capacity of communities to support reflective learning and engagement of community members	17. Develop capacity of communities to foster and support inclusive group initiatives	18. Develop capacity of communities to sustain organizations that promote community well-being	19. Develop capacity of communities to learn together and align efforts towards common goals	20. Develop capacity of communities to advocate systems change
	Fields of policy and practice	21. Develop capacity of fields to cultivate innovative thought leaders and practitioners	22. Develop capacity of fields to organize around shared interests and goals	23. Develop capacity of fields to organize and disseminate knowledge and field best practices	24. Develop capacity of fields to find synergies across institutional silos and disciplinary boundaries	25. Develop capacity of fields to generate policy solutions and transform institutional practices and culture

Source: McGonagill, G. and P. W. Pruyn (2010). "Leadership Development in the U.S.: Principles and Patterns of Best Practice". *Bertelsmann Stiftung Leadership Series*. S. Vopel. Berlin, Germany, Bertelsmann Stiftung, p. 113.

> with these people, I won't get raped . . . so I'll have to really work to act on this bond.
>
> You can't act out that you have a bond with somebody . . . if you think that they're a total jerk, racist, then this will fail. I had to overcome something within myself. You have to seek out the common humanity with someone who you dislike, you might disrespect and have very negative feelings towards . . . you can't "act out" that you have positive feelings. You need to truly believe it. For me that was my own biggest achievement because I had to overcome all my own prejudices. The process to social justice is in many ways more challenging to overcoming your own prejudices than the big social justice issues you fight on a big stage.

This might seem very distant from the tension that comes with connecting between organizational sectors (government–business–civil society). However, many of the same leadership challenges arise. There is strong tendency to exaggerate, create stereo-types, and even vilify others in contrast to one's own position and organization. One powerful intellectual insight that has helped me overcome this arises from my work on identifying distinct attributes of these organizational sectors. When I matched this to the work of Sandra Seagal,[5] on individual learning styles, I understood that the sectors tend to be aggregations of different learning styles – kinesthetically centered and physical for business, mentally centered for government and emotionally centered for civil society (see Chapter 5). This insight provides an invaluable way for people to understand their differences so they can meaningfully work together.

Some top leadership skills

- Connecting
- Stewarding
- Handling paradox and ambiguity
- Inspiring

Connecting means GANs must be able to see, encompass, and reflect diverse perspectives. If they are seen simply as a civil society organization, they will lose their capacity to make connections across sectoral divides. If they are seen simply as a collection of donors, they will be restricted

to very utilitarian connections that will dissolve when money disappears. GANs must pay great attention to their formal governance structures to facilitate connecting to them, to ensure connecting is an ongoing activity and that people see their own views integrated into GANs' work.

One concept that supports this approach to leadership is stewarding and "stewardship," a term that Peter Block advocated to replace "leadership." His 1993 book provoked controversy when it was published. Peter writes:

> Stewardship focuses our attention on aspects of our workplaces that have been most difficult to change, namely the distribution of power, purpose, and rewards .... Stewardship is to hold something in trust for another. Stewardship is ... the choice to preside over the orderly distribution of power. This means giving people at the bottom and the boundaries of the organization choice over how to serve a customer, a citizen, a community. It is the willingness to be accountable for the well-being of the larger organization by operating in services, rather than in control, of those around us. Stated simply, it is accountability without control or compliance.[6]

For Peter, the concept of "authentic service" is key. He associates it with a balance of power, primary commitment to the larger community, collective definition of culture, and equitable rewards. Ania Grobicki, Global Water Partnership (GWP) Executive Secretary, reflects this in response to key qualities she'd look for in someone to replace her: "The desire to serve ... to want really to serve people and lead the organization to achieve our vision and mission through service." Similarly, Marcos Espinal of the Executive Secretary Stop TB Partnership says: "I always define myself as the servant of the partners .... to convene, the credit goes to the partners. When I hire, I say 'you will suffer because the credit won't go to the staff, but to the partners.' " Stewarding contrasts nicely with the dominant "operating logics" of sector organizations. *Administering* of rules and laws dominates government; *managing* to goals dominates business; and *co-developing* with lots of community input is the dominant logic for civil society.

The scale of global networks, their ambitiousness in terms of vision, and their diversity-embracing quality all bring out the need to skillfully handle paradox and ambiguity. In some ways, paradox is at the heart of GANs work: creating outcomes that make sense for diverse stakeholders. How can a direction be rewarding for business and government and civil society? The ambiguity is about living with uncertainty, and yet taking

action. Rarely is there truly "a right answer" when working with diverse stakeholders. There are better and worse ones from different perspectives. Leadership in part is about *emerging* decisions that are guided by a clear vision of what is important.

For example, I have seen tensions of ambiguity with the concept of "transparency." Usually business and government have a much more restrained interpretation of what this means, in comparison to civil society. Everyone supports being transparent, but there are different views about how much to share and when. Should differences within a support team be part of an online discussion? When does information become distracting and confusing as opposed to edifying and helpful? What role should leadership have in shaping data and information into knowledge?

GANs are dealing with big issues, and the leadership skill of inspiring is important to generate the energy and enthusiasm to keep moving ahead. This is done in part by continually bringing participants back to the vision that they are working for. We need better ceremonies and etiquettes to support these reconnections. They need greater formalization and integration into the working of GANs – while avoiding a cult-like approach and maintaining an open, questioning one.

Many think of ceremonies as bad and inauthentic. However, to infuse leadership we need to have moments, such as with face-to-face meetings, when we actually pause to renew and hold up visions. This both inspires and reinforces the need to make decisions and take actions that are accountable to, and reflective of, the vision.

In the Boston College program, I always aimed to develop these leadership skills to contribute to deepening capacity to understand how our actions can affect people and events. This is associated with the concept of the "butterfly effect," so-called because of the idea that a butterfly flapping its wings can influence events far away. It is also associated with the capacity to understand how our actions can influence options years in the future. This is related to the Iroquois concept of the seventh generation, the idea that decisions should be considered for their impact on the seventh generation.

Some top leadership attributes

Peter Senge is commonly rated among the top management consultants in the US and globally. When I showed him the flower diagram of competencies, he nodded and said "But you know leadership is the key." For him leadership relates to being *systems intelligent* (SI) – something that many would associate with being wise.

> For me the fundamentals start with a set of deep capacities with which few in leadership positions today could claim to have developed: systems intelligence, building partnership across boundaries, and openness of mind, heart, and will. To develop such capacities requires a lifelong commitment to grow as a human being in ways not well understood in contemporary culture. Yet, in other ways, these are the foundations for leadership that have been understood for a very long time.[7]

Some top leadership attributes

- Systems Intelligent
- Leaderful
- Trustworthy
- Entrepreneurial

By SI, Peter means the ability to see systems as described in Chapter 2, and the relationships and inter-dependencies in them. He draws upon his experience in developing the Sustainable Food Lab (SFL) to illustrate his meaning.

> Before the members of the Food Lab could work together effectively, they needed to share understanding of the systemic forces driving the "race to the bottom" and how they were all part of creating these forces: as companies pursuing business-as-usual business models with little regard for the effects on farming families and communities or on environmental systems, as farmers unable to moderate pressures for continual production growth, and all of us as consumers whenever we buy food at the cheapest price with little thought as to where the food comes from.[8]

By "building partnerships across boundaries," Peter is referring to the diversity-embracing quality of GANs. By "openness" he means the ability to be challenged and discover new approaches, and learn from others.

Referring to SI as an attribute emphasizes that it pervades the whole being of successful GANs, rather than a skill that can be applied to certain issues. It is a mindset. Explaining SI for individuals, Hamalainen and Sarrinen write that it is "... intelligent behavior in the context of complex systems involving interaction and feedback. A person acting with systems

intelligence engages successfully and productively with the holistic feedback mechanisms of her environment. She experiences herself as part of an interdependent environment, aware of the influence of the whole upon herself as well as her own influence upon the whole. With this heightened awareness, she is able to act intelligently."[9]

Joe Raelin, like Grady and Claire, sees a new paradigm of leadership emerging. His concept of "leaderful" was developed in part through his participation in the group of wonderful faculty who put together the Boston College Leadership for Change program. It is a complementary description leadership that can take GANs to their ultimate purpose.

> In the Twenty-First-Century organization, we need to establish communities where everyone shares the experience of serving as a leader, not sequentially, but concurrently and collectively. In other words, leaders co-exist at the same time and all together. In addition, we expect each member of a community to make a unique contribution to the growth of that community, both independently and interdependently with other. In this sense, our leaders are inherently collaborative, which in turn they derive from their compassion toward other human beings. Their well-developed sense of self permits them to develop a deep consideration of others.[10]

Raelin associates leaderfulness with four shifts in behavior. With *concurrent* leadership, there can be more than one leader operating within a community at the same time. With *collective* leadership, people assume responsibility as a whole. *Collaborative* leadership is particularly relevant to change, since it means people work together to learn diverse views, identify paths to change, and implement them together. In contrast to the tradition of leaders who dispassionately make the tough decisions for the enterprise, Raelin sees *compassion* as a key quality in avoiding self-centered control. The dignity of each person is preserved regardless of one's background, status, or point of view.

Also key to networks success is being trustworthy. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this means trust of *intent*: that you and I share a goal. Then there is trust in *competence:* that you and I are actually capable of doing what we say we will do. And third is trust of *understanding:* that you and I have shared understanding of the words and language and commitments.[11] These three forms of trust are important for individuals, working groups, Secretariats, and the whole network of GANs. It is critical to reputation, and without high reputation GANs cannot succeed.

As voluntary associations GANs rely on peer pressure, persuasion of logic, and moral assertion of what's right and just. In this situation, an inspirational vision is paramount. People and organizations undoubtedly have utilitarian goals when they participate in GANs. Without regularly asserting an inspiring vision, these goals will take over.

"Entrepreneurial" is a popular word today, and its definition has been widened with the concept of "social entrepreneurship." Ashoka, the pre-eminent global supporter of social entrepreneurs, describes them this way:

> Social entrepreneurs are individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change.
>
> Rather than leaving societal needs to the government or business sectors, social entrepreneurs find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps.
>
> Social entrepreneurs often seem to be possessed by their ideas, committing their lives to changing the direction of their field. They are both visionaries and ultimate realists, concerned with the practical implementation of their vision above all else.[12]

GANs must be vehicles for nurturing, stewarding, and supporting this type of energy and drive. The contrasting image is a bureaucracy that is focused upon application of rules and processes that suppress and frustrate social entrepreneurs, or a managerial one that pursues profit objectives with negligible consideration for other impacts.

Competency 2. Network development – Aligning effective strategies, patterns, and structures

This is the competency that most people automatically associate with networks. It refers to activities of strategy, structure, and governance. Developing these activities for networks is distinguished by the importance of participation and systems thinking. I refer to this with the simple term "Network Development," to reflect the job titles most often associated with the competency.

Network development knowledge

The way a network is organized should reflect its strategy and encourage both effectiveness and accountability. Networks have developed a range of approaches to the governance, planning, and structural challenges. These approaches take a GAN through stages of development. Chapter 3 really investigated these challenges and the knowledge necessary to address them, summarized in Figure 7.2.

Network development skills

Let's return to the issue of global finance, the Global Finance Initiative (GFI), and the vision of a global financial system that integrates social, environmental, and economic concerns. This is a huge topic. Systems thinking makes the scale manageable. Unlike traditional science, which focuses upon the parts, systems thinking understands the parts and their relationships to make the whole. For example, systems thinking helps identify sub-systems of global finance such as ones of global public policy

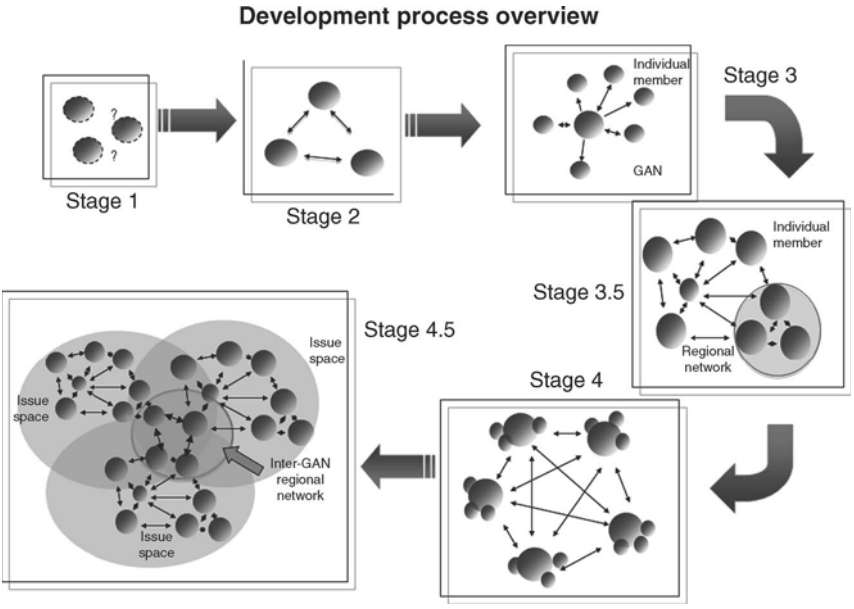

Figure 7.2 Network development knowledge framework

organizations, national counterparts, environmental stakeholders, and others. Systems thinking helps identify patterns of interactions and strategic leverage points where the interactions can most easily be influenced. The underlying principles of the system that are leading to crises and opportunities are revealed.

"Mental models" and underlying assumptions are associated with these principles. The assumptions are usually so ingrained in our thinking that they are not even recognized. Often they are highly limiting and problematic. For example, the common mental model with finance is that democratization of financial institutions will lead to destabilization and enhance short-term thinking; voters will not be able to understand the complexities of finance, they will chose immediate benefits over investment, and there will be wild swings in direction as Boards with different philosophies are elected.

Some top network development skills

- Systems thinking
- Community development/network weaving
- Strategizing
- Empowering

In fact, there is a very long and robust history of credit unions that are as successful as banks, that challenges this type of thinking. Each person with an account has one vote. In Canada these are a very large part of the financial system. I was personally involved in running (successfully) for the Board of Directors at the world's largest community credit union, VanCity in Vancouver. People actively campaign and it is a major media event since VanCity is the largest locally owned financial institution. The credit union's success presents a good illustration how different people will have different assumptions, mental models, and system principles, based upon their experiences, beliefs, values, and education.

These principles are associated with Peter Senge's systems intelligence. They explain not just the current relationships, but also the ones that need development to realize the vision. Through this type of approach with the GFI, we were able to identify that one major problem is a lack of interaction between those in the environmental and social development communities, with key global public policy organizations.

This gap in relationships is referred to by network analyst Ron Burt as "structural holes."[13] These are like dead zones, where there is not even antagonism – there is nothing. Network development is about eliminating these. Today the terms "boundary spanning" and "network weaving" are often used for this work.[14] Historically it is called "community development work." For GANs the community is global. For global finance, these holes are one of the systemic properties that are giving rise to poor social–environmental–economic impact outcomes. In fact, the GFI system analysis describes global finance as actually very insular and self-serving.

To change this situation requires a community-development strategy. One essential quality of such strategies is that they build relationships and a sense of common purpose. Where people previously felt isolated and in conflict, a GAN develops connections and movement in a common direction (coherence).

Community development provides forums and empowers people to speak and interact in new ways to develop alternative futures. This intimately concerns re-defining "system" boundaries – for finance, this means who is in and who is out in terms of financial system decision-making. In the GFI we identified three traditional insider stakeholder groups as G-7 policy makers (including Ministers of Finance), G-7 regulators like central banks and commercial financial institutions like banks, investment firms, and insurance companies. We also identified traditional "outsider" groups, which are stakeholders who have an interest in, and are affected by, the financial system. This included asset owners (such a pension fund investors), civil society organizations (NGOs concerned with social and economic impacts), non-financial businesses, labor unions, critical academics, and non-G7 (now G-20) governments.

The GFI community development strategy then focused upon strengthening and weaving together networks of the outsider stakeholders as a first step, and as a second step bringing together the insider and outsider stakeholders. The first step is important to empower the outsiders. Obviously, this process underlines the fact that community development is a medium- and long-term activity that is central to GANs work. It also emphasizes the importance of being able to think strategically about large, complex systems.

Network development attributes

Developing networks requires understanding stakeholders' needs, aspirations, and challenges to be able to appropriately respond to them. Bringing

together the outsider finance stakeholders requires understanding a disempowered outsider mentality and operating style, in contrast to the powerful insider interests.

Some top network development attributes

- Empathetic
- Trustworthy
- Visionary
- Entrepreneurial

However, to bridge the gap between them requires being sympathetic to all groups. Although compassion – one of the four Cs of "leaderful" – is usually associated with the underdog, it is an important quality to associate with the powerful, as well. Often in organizing business – civil society collaborations, I have heard business people describe CSOs as more powerful than they are, much to the astonishment of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). From the business side, often there is a much more natural alliance between CSOs and governments; business feels side-swiped by CSO campaigns that put it in a reactive position.

In fact, this is where understanding the distinctive competencies of the sectors is particularly useful. CSOs' power is related to their ability to mobilize people, and businesses' is related to ability to mobilize capital. These two types of power are very different.

There is a sequence in the importance of the Network Development attributes for GANs:

- first is developing empathy and understanding of diverse perspectives;
- second is development of trust among the stakeholders to deepen connections;
- this in turn leads to exchanges and gatherings across the differences that produce a vision that connects the stakeholders;
- then comes the entrepreneurial action to give life to the vision.

This work requires understanding how the different parties can benefit from building relationships and increasing their interdependence. Table 7.2 aims to get at this understanding for business–government–civil society. It presents some generic mutual gains. Creating a table like this with case-specific gains is a good way to guide Network Development. The vision (developed through the Change competency) should unify the

Table 7.2 Potential mutual gain outcomes of business–government–civil society organization relationships

Government	Business	CSOs
• provide ways to increase effectiveness of public service provision *and* accountability (if right system created!) • reduce direct involvement in rule enforcement while increasing its effectiveness • improve welfare • provide legal infrastructure	• expand markets • ensure supplies • develop new products • lower production and delivery costs • expand investments • improve human resources • build support for local activity • improve quality, regularity	• increase access of the poor to goods and services • provide new economic opportunities • improve basic medical, education, and health • reduce environmental impact • strengthen local cultures • social cohesion

Source: Waddell, S. (2005). *Societal Learning and Change: How Governments, Business and Civil Society are Creating Solutions to Complex Multi-Stakeholder Problems*. Sheffield, UK, Greenleaf Publishing.

stakeholders and transcend their individual positions in a description the stakeholders finding compelling and that they would not be able to realize individually. However, the operational reality is that there must be much more operational and prosaic wins for participants to build the network. A network will not hold together simply around some long-term idea; participants will simply become inactive and leave if they do not obtain more immediate and concrete benefits in terms of their diverse needs.

Competency 3. Measuring impact – providing continuous feedback to improve effectiveness and support

A colleague at the GWP once described to me their dilemma with measuring impact. He explained that a goal is to enhance education, with the understanding that provision of safe and secure drinking water is one of the most important contributors to health of all time. With safe drinking water, the children will be healthier and be able to attend school more regularly. But wait! The GWP does not provide safe drinking water, nor does it even create safe drinking water infrastructure. Through organizing partners and provision of some technical resources, GWP supports others to implement good practices for the sustainable management of their water resources.

And the GWP vision is *a water secure world.* Its mission is *to support the sustainable development and management of water resources at all levels*. Certainly these make no mention of education! It is a fine vision and mission, but they do not get at the "healthy and happy people" end outcomes the GWP is actually aiming for.

This dilemma also showed up in some work I did with The Access Initiative (TAI). I noticed that some TAI participants were anxious about the rigor and quality of their assessment tool. But the goal of TAI is not to have a high quality tool – it is to give life to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration. So any energy and resources applied to improving the tool can only be justified if their application is the best use of those resources in terms of the bigger change goal. But becoming distracted with perfecting the tool is easy, given the complexity of the work.

Measuring impact knowledge

There are many different ways to approach impact measurement, but using the wrong methods can actually undermine a change network's efforts. The value of appropriate impact measurement is that it not only helps explain to funders the return on their investment, but it also is an important tool for priority-setting, decision-making, and managing.

At a March 2007 meeting, GAN representatives were asked about the qualities that they perceived as important for a good impact measurement system. Among the top qualities were simple, flexible, adaptable, a coherent system, participatory, integrating qualitative and quantitative, credibility, and generative of learning. Some of this contrasts with traditional evaluation approaches that come from an industrial "input/output" model. They are either *formative* evaluation that gets a production or program model ready (working out the bugs) or *summative* evaluations at the end of a project to assess "did it work?" These use frameworks like SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound). The evaluator is typically thought of as outside of the project being evaluated, and as a dis-interested observer and analyst who delivers periodic reports.

These two approaches alone are insufficient for networks. That is because:

- Methods for evaluating simple tasks cannot address the complications of the interaction in network participants' relationships.
- There is not one, but an emergent number of possible pathways that require exploration and development to address issues such as ending

corruption, creating sustainable forestry, and integrating triple-bottom-line imperatives into corporations.
- Change networks' visions require a long time to realize. With all the change in their operating environments over that time, adaptive strategies are required, although simple ones can be good for relatively short-term sub-initiatives.
- Change networks usually do not aim to "take credit" for the actual valued outcomes (such as healthy, happy people). They aim for a backseat in favor of their participants' being recognized for their work. This makes attribution, a cornerstone of traditional impact measurement, highly problematic.

Referring back to the distinctions between simple, complicated, and complex activities described in Chapter 2, traditional evaluation approaches are appropriate for *simple* tasks where there is standardization and a single set of objectives. In networks, different objectives that are valued by different stakeholders which requires measurement methods that can address *complicated* activities. However, GANs are distinguished by an over-arching mission that requires *complex* activities. Therefore, although they need impact measurement methods that will address all three activities, GANs' measurement umbrella method must accommodate complexity.

Good questions and learning are foundations that unite all the evaluation approaches. As described in Chapter 5, the work of GANs embraces three types of change that are distinguished by the types of questions they ask and the type of learning required. Simple activities are associated with incremental change and single-loop learning that asks questions within the established policies, structures, and goal (e.g. are we doing well at providing people fish to eat?); complicated activities, change-as-reform, and double-loop learning that asks questions about the policies, structures, and goals (e.g. should we instead be teaching how to fish for people to feed themselves?); and complex activities dealing with transformation and triple-loop learning that asks questions about how we think about an issue (e.g. how do we understand the eco-systems-fish-consumption relationships?).

One leading entrepreneur in this field is Michael Quinn Patton who has created the concept of "developmental evaluation." He writes:

> Developmental evaluation supports innovation *development* to guide adaptation to emergent and dynamic realities in complex environments . . . . Informed by systems thinking and sensitive to complex

> nonlinear dynamics, developmental evaluation supports social innovation and adaptive management. Evaluation processes include asking evaluative questions, applying evaluation logic, and gathering real-time data to inform ongoing decision making and adaptations. As in action research strategies, the evaluator is part of the development team from beginning to end, rather than someone who comes in at the end to simply do a *post facto* analysis.[15]

Another colleague, Sanjeev Khagram, has been puzzling about this situation for some time with the Impacts Community of Practice sponsored through iScale. While working with GANs and others he has developed an approach that he calls impact planning, assessment, reporting, and learning systems (IPARLS). He explains:

> IPARLS can provide and translate credible evidence to key stakeholders including policymakers and citizens in real time in appropriate ways for effective utilization. IPARLS integrates various activities such as monitoring and evaluation and impact evaluation for a range of purposes from adaptive management to demonstrating results to fostering accountability. The evidence generated by impact evaluations is much more likely to be credible and utilized when they are embedded in IPARLS.[16]

IPARLS links the measuring impact to several competencies, such as learning systems and communications. He continues to emphasize IPARLS' integrative nature. "An IPARL system includes:

(1) A theory of change
(2) A theory or multiple theories of action
(3) An integrated assessment approach
(4) A set of public and donor reporting mechanisms
(5) A range of constituency voice processes
(6) A focus on continuous learning"[17]

This constitutes a good list of the range of knowledge that an impact system for networks must comprise. These components are summarized in Figure 7.3, with the Dewey/Kolb learning cycle being central. This approach is quite different from traditional measurement and evaluation approaches. It emphasizes an underlying theoretical base to give rigor, and describes evaluation as integrating several activities, fully engaging stakeholders, and reframing evaluation as a learning process.

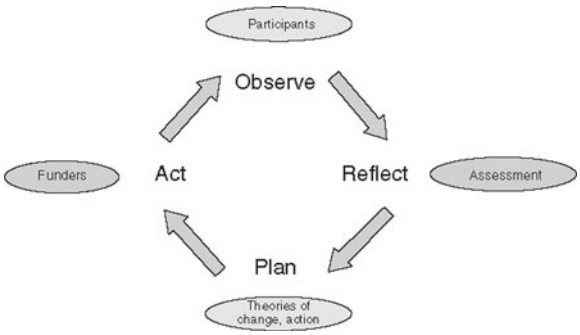

Figure 7.3 Measuring impact knowledge framework PARLS components

Measuring impact skills

The need for measuring and evaluating skills is obvious, and this includes, for example, the ability to address issues of validity and establishing data-gathering systems. But the IPARLS approach suggests some particular types of skills necessary within this broad description. Learning is brought to the fore.

Some top measuring impact skills

- Measuring and evaluating
- Action learning
- Analyzing large complex systems

To understand the needed skills, some specific approaches can be referenced. One approach developed by the International Development Research Centre (of Canada: IDRC) is called Outcome Mapping (OM). Applied to GANs, it focuses upon the creation of feedback systems both to respondents and to those who want to know how the network is doing. (The sub-title to Outcome Mapping is *Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs*.) The developers of OM explain that:

> The originality of the methodology is its shift away from assessing the products of a program (e.g., policy relevance, poverty alleviation, reduced conflict) to focus on changes in behaviours, relationships, actions, and/or activities of the people and organizations with whom a development program works directly.[18]

The focus of OM is upon learning and changes in behavior. This arises from the observation that the aspired changes usually occur at a significant time after an action or program, and that the outcomes might be different than expected. One core concept is "boundary partners": for GANs, this means participants. OM recognizes that a GAN is only one actor in realizing change, and that there is a complicated interaction with participants in realizing change. Therefore, OM does not aim to attribute an outcome to the GAN action, but to understand the contributions the GAN makes to an outcome as well as its boundary partners.

OM assesses strategies, issues, or relationships. There is a three-stage cycle to design an OM plan, usually conducted in a workshop with participants:

1) Intentional Design: This aims to ensure there is consensus about the definition of the "macro level changes," by answering Why? Who? What? How?
2) Outcome and Performance Monitoring: Its learning emphasis means OM is based on principles of participation. The OM process itself is designed to support development of the outcomes. A disciplined process of participant record-keeping and observation is key.
3) Evaluation Planning: An evaluation plan identifies the main actions to be taken to apply the OM framework.

Process and outcome evaluation are integrated by collecting observations about process implementation and results being achieved by participants.

Another approach to measuring impact created with the leadership of David Bonbright and Keystone is developed around the concept of *constituency voice*. As the name suggests, it focuses upon identifying stakeholders and asking them questions to assess the change strategy. As with OM, it therefore emphasizes participation. The participation can be through a variety of methods, such as focus groups, surveys, and interviews. Its core activity, therefore, is to establish effective feedback mechanisms and ways to use the data.

One application collected constituents' perceptions of the impacts of the Campaign to End Pediatric HIV/AIDS (CEPA). It created the following over 6 months:

1) Design and implementation of a global-level baseline survey based on CEPA's theory of change;
2) Design of the country-level baseline survey;
3) Implementation of the country-level baseline survey

This would lead to subsequent additional feedback surveys of both global and specific national constituents to test changes compared to the baselines.

These approaches emphasize the importance of a clearly identified theory of change and being able to work with stakeholders to collaboratively develop and implement the measurement approach. In this way, the knowledge is "socially embedded," since those who are being assessed are active co-participants in the process. This is a key quality of action learning.

A third approach, like the first two, takes a systems approach. However, it is quite different in other ways. Jim Ritchie Dunham and the Institute for Strategic Clarity have been developing an approach with a *Systemic Leverage Index.* The approach is founded in systems thinking and complex systems. It considers how different groups and organizations are trying to achieve their own goals and produce a larger collective goal. There are four guiding questions:

1. Thinking at the level of the whole system, is there a set of the overall measures of the impact this network is trying to have?
2. Do the different groups (environmental, social, economic, North, South, different parts of the supply chain, etc.) that contribute to the whole have different value sets? Is it clear how the contributions of these different groups combine? If I'm an environmental group, what do I do every day, what do I want, and what do I want to do to the larger goal?
3. What happens when the individual decisions of these groups start to influence each other? For example, the actions of one party in the supply chain start to influence other parties in the supply chain?
4. What specific interventions is the GAN making within the system? Is it getting high leverage impact from its resources and its specific interventions, and how much are they helping us to our larger impact goal?

This approach produces an index of the "health" of the system at key points within it, from the perspective of different stakeholder groups and levels (local–global). This could be, for example, indexes with respect to each of these four questions.

Measuring impact attributes

Measuring impact with GANs must be attentive to detail, but not meticulous about it. The issues that GANs are dealing with are so large,

there are so many variables, and so many unknowns that impact measurement systems will only provide information about direction and not precise quantitative analysis.

Some top measuring impact attributes

- Attentive to detail (but not meticulous)
- Diversity embracing
- Inquisitive
- Theory-based

These methodologies help explain why the measuring impact competency of GANs must be diversity embracing. The approach must be able to work with a great range of stakeholders in a very personal way. The stakeholders have very different power roles in the larger system the GAN aims to influence. The Constituency Voice approach emphasizes this most. The OM approach deals with behaviors, which are very heavily influenced by culture and therefore requires great diversity sensitivity.

The Systemic Leverage Approach most categorically emphasizes the quality of being systematic. The measuring impact approach must consider not just different individuals' positions, but provide analysis at the local-to-global levels.

Perhaps the core to any good impact measurement system is the quality of inquisitiveness. People must be curious about how they are doing, and how they can do better. Reporting to donors can become perfunctory; learning cannot.

One useful quality that this discussion about attributes and skills raises again of IPARLS is its emphasis upon the need to integrate various approaches in terms of methodologies. No one approach can do it all. But as IPARLS also emphasizes, a sound measurement system begins with a theory of change. A GAN must be clear about its strategy, to be able to measure its success.

Competency 4. Conflict and change – Developing complex change skillfully

GANs' work requires addressing significant conflict arising from diverse points of view, power differences and their core change mission. After

all, realizing change requires overcoming natural resistance, traditions, and entrenched interests. MSC Standards and Licensing Director Andrew Mallison describes theirs is "... a very conflicted space with diametrically opposed interests. Catchers want minimum costs, conservationists don't want any catch. Essentially we're in the middle. If we go to industry, then conservation groups are unhappy about certifying anyone .... if we make it too tough, it becomes too expensive (to commercially harvest)."

To approach their change work, GANs must be proficient at addressing problems from a whole-system perspective. This involves various types of change and change processes. It demands addressing critical questions such as: how can networks' change efforts engage the broad numbers of people, realize the depth of change, and sufficiently sustain the change process for the long periods that are necessary?

This is probably the competency that is most undervalued and under-recognized by GANs. They recognize, of course, that they are addressing global change issues. But in general they lack sophistication in development and application of the knowledge, skills, and attributes needed to excel.

Change knowledge

Chapter 5 reviewed the knowledge relevant to this competency. Table 7.3 summarizes key items. The knowledge covers the full spectrum of change processes, from incremental change to the most challenging type of transformational change with still-unimagined possibilities.

Some top change skills

A GAN's strategy represents a change process that the GAN is stewarding. The GAN is the forum for sustaining the change activities for the many years necessary to realize the vision. The activities must be grounded in a solid change strategy. Chapter 5 explained that there are essentially two different peaceful global change strategies: a constitutional one where all the governments get together to make agreements, with actual application of agreements being highly variable. The dominant GAN change strategy is a social practices one, which is multi-stakeholder and experiment-focused. The goal is to shift what is seen as "normal behavior" and standards. This is what GANs must be highly skilled at developing, and there is much to learn about how to do this. For example, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) aims to shift companies, communities, and

Table 7.3 Conflict and change knowledge framework

Type of change	Incremental . . . changing quantities	Reform . . . changing the way parts interact in a system	Transformation . . . reconceiving the system
Focus	Changing ways of acting and behaving	Changing ways of thinking	Changing ways of perceiving
Core questions	How can we do more of the same? Are we doing things right?	What rules should we create? What are my mental models and assumptions? Are we doing the right things? What is the best practice?	How do I make sense of this? What is the purpose? How do we know what is best?
Learning loops	Single loop	Second loop	Triple loop
Type of action	Enacting/applying known approaches/ scripts/solutions	Reflection and learning, critical analysis	Unlearning and relearning
When to use	For simple issues with causal order For routine, repetitive, predictable issues, When the "answer" is known	For complex, non-programmable issues When new solutions have been agreed upon When a problem is well-defined	To innovate and create previously unimagined possibilities. When no "solution" is apparent? When breakthrough thinking is needed
Participation	Current actors addressing the problem	Stakeholders of the currently defined system	An exploratory microcosm of participants in the evolving understanding of "the system"
General dynamic	Implementing the predictable/ projectable	Defining and negotiating the projectable.	Emerging the previously unimagined
Skills/methods	Project management	Naming, framing, negotiating roles and strategies	Co-authoring/ narrative dialogue/ revisioning tools, deepening awareness of world views
Personal role	I am acting on the problem	Others are the problem	I am part of the problem, "we" are in this together

NGOs' behavior to integrate values, rules, and processes that will produce sustainable forestry practices.

The concept of "stewarding" often takes the form of creating other organizations to do some particular part of the change process. For example, the FSC has established Accreditation International to do the accreditation part of the work important to incremental change.

Some top change skills

- Stewarding change processes
- Systems Thinking
- Facilitating/Mediating/ Negotiating/Visioning

Of course there are many more variables than an X and Y, and they interact in complex ways. This again emphasizes the importance of systems thinking skills. This time their importance might be best illustrated by contrasting a systems thinking approach with another common approach to change: "root cause." That term suggests that some specific cause of the challenge being addressed can be identified and pulled out like a weed, leaving a garden to naturally flourish. There are no root causes for the issues that GANs address. This is why they are referred to as "complex." There is a great tangle of inter-acting sources. Chapter 4 presented systems archetypes and other methods for understanding these change challenges.

As described in Chapter 2, GANs are not only *networks*, but also *organizations* in the form of a Secretariat, and *partnerships* of organizations doing a specific sub-activity like applying certification to a particular forest. But GANs are trying to change behaviors of all the organizations in its issue *system* (such as forestry). This means that although the change process focuses upon changing "the system," a GAN is also deeply involved in changing its participants' behavior, and that as a GAN develops it must change its own behavior in response to success and to grow.

I find that often people in GANs become overly focused upon "changing the system," without sufficiently attending to the other places where an ongoing cycle of change is needed. For example, simply defining a vision, mission, and strategy once is not sufficient. As a GAN gains experience and success and the environment of its issue system change, the GAN's vision, mission, and strategy must be reassessed.

A great example of this is with the example that opened this chapter. The network felt that it had "done" its change work and visioning, and was approaching the question about how to engage (incorporate?) another group of stakeholders as a technical process. This situation often faces GANs as they expand into new geographic regions or sub-issues.

In fact, the network should undertake a revisioning change process with the other group of stakeholders, to engage them effectively. It is possible that the network would find its original vision and strategy re-affirmed and an incremental change approach to engage the new stakeholders would prove adequate. However, the network should hold itself open to changing its vision and strategy to transcend and incorporate new ideas from the new stakeholders. The new stakeholders need to go through the visioning process that others in the GAN have gone through.

This systems change process the GAN is stewarding requires skills in facilitation, negotiations, mediation, and visioning. These are often associated with face-to-face meeting skills. But the meetings are only one part of this activity. The teleconferences, research activities, local projects, online discussions, and other activities are all part of the change process. It is valuable to think of facilitation, negotiating, mediating, and visioning as encompassing all these different ways of interacting. For example, skillfully facilitating an online discussion is as important as – in fact likely of greater importance given the global nature of GANs – facilitating face-to-face meetings.

Some top change attributes

Change is a disconcerting and difficult process for most people and organizations. It is associated with confusion and uncertainty that give rise to fears. A GAN will be much more attractive if people see it as supportive and understanding of them as they go through the change.

Some top change attributes

- Supportive
- Patient
- Persistent

This brings back the leadership competencies of supporting ambiguity and paradox. Most people prefer situations that are "black and white." They have difficulty with the concept that people can have very different

views, and yet both can be right. One way for a GAN to be supportive is to build capacity for ambiguity tolerance.

Holding to an appropriate pace of change means being both patient and persistent. In his work on personal mastery, Peter Senge has a wonderful image to portray the concept of "holding creative tension." He has a rubber band stretched tightly between two hands, one over top the other. The higher represents the goals, the lower one our existing state. Often during change processes the vision is lowered, instead of the existing state being raised. And often when the existing state is raised, the goals do not change. The role of the GAN is to ensure that there is creative tension, with the goals and the existing state both moving ahead.

Competency 5. Communications – Creating robust glocal conversations and connections

I remember satellite television feeds of the 1980s that connected citizens of the Soviet Union and the United States, to create citizen-to-citizen forums. They had a remarkable impact. For the first time citizens could see and talk with each other without intermediaries, although of course there was some "control." But Americans, for example, could see that Russians could dress stylishly and speak with their own voices persuasively about their lives and views.

Creating global conversations, a key activity of GANs, is greatly facilitated by new communications technologies. These are local–global (glocal), and within each level and across sub-interest groups. However, the surface of new potential is still just being scratched.

Communications knowledge

There are two types of communications knowledge that GANs must possess, represented in Figure 7.4. One is the traditional pre-Web 2.0/social media type. I was a Communications Director for the 1980s in this world when organizations told people things, without an interactive capacity. It includes the rapidly diminishing world of print, and static web-sites. It also includes broadcast media of traditional radio and television with reporters, journalists, and producers acting as intermediaries.

The other type of knowledge is the social media world. Figure 7.4 presents this in order of a community-building sequence that relates to initiating a GAN. Specific tools are good to help listen to understand what is happening in the issue arena of the GAN; others are good for engaging people once the lay of the land is determined; the social content

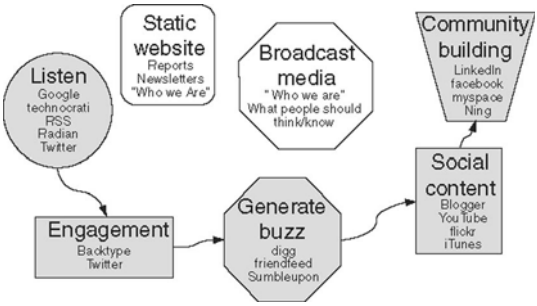

Figure 7.4 Communications knowledge framework

Source: Shaded components text: Kanter, B. (2010). "Nonprofit Social Media Strategy Map." Retrieved April 5, 2010, from http://bit.ly/9wM9y6.

and community building tools are useful even at earlier stages to link initiating participants.

Some top communications skills

Despite the big changes with Web 2.0 and the social media world, some core communications skills remain the same: listening, speaking, writing, and visualizing. However, increasingly important are two other skills. No longer is the focus upon *telling*. Rather, it is about creating conversations between diverse groups. Stimulating and sustaining conversations is an art for both traditional and social media worlds.

In the social media world, the emphasis is on creating robust, dynamic, and attractive community platforms. This de-emphasizes the traditional focus on providing content, in favor of provision of places for people to generate content. Also in the social media world, visual presentation takes on much greater importance.

Some top communications skills

- Listening, speaking, writing, visualizing
- Conversing
- Creating community platforms

One place that this all comes together is with Madmundo.tv, created by the Bridge Initiative in Paris. Patrice has created a marvelous way to create conversation through the Madmundo.tv platform. He begins with

an issue and a person who is passionate about a question on the issue. He then supports development of a community conversation and story of the type that binds people across geographic distance.

One of his productions concerned AIDS with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS. A South African AIDS-infected child asked the question "Why must I die?" to G8 participants Gordon Brown (UK Finance Minister), Paul Wolfowitz (World Bank President), and Kofi Annan (UN Secretary General). The questions and responses were videoed and put on the web along with a written explanation. A conversation was then created with others who commented in writing or added their own videos on the web. Out of this, Patrice created a traditional TV presentation.

Some top communications attributes

This approach really emphasizes the value of creativity. The media can be combined in new and imaginative ways that are extremely powerful. The communications creativity of a GAN helps drive the attraction of being associated with it.

Some top communications attributes

- Creative
- Open
- Participatory
- Empathetic

The greatest difficulty for people from traditional organizational life is to let go of notions of control in this new communications world. The communications competency for networks is different from traditional organizations because there are no clear organizational boundaries. The story of the network is the story of its participants. If the network is healthy, there is a high degree of participation in community forums without an attempt to control the conversations. Again, the idea of stewarding them as leaderful co-participants is a good guiding image.

Of course there are certain versions of reality that a GAN will want to produce, but these should be driven by a high degree of participation. Cobus de Swardt of TI took great pleasure in the 2009 TI report. It was produced by the network, and the Secretariat only had a supporting role. It reads like the network's story, rather than an official version of institutional history that is commonly associated with annual reports.

People must be able to see themselves represented in the network's activities and conversations. Being empathetic of course means listening deeply; but it also means being comfortable with people with diverse views who participate in a GAN.

Competency 6. Learning systems: Transforming data to wisdom-in-action network-wide

I began this chapter by explaining that there are three types of competence that are important for GANs: issue, tool, and process competence. GAN participants and others need to deepen knowledge about the issue they are addressing, they must refine and develop new tools, and they must develop a highly effective learning strategy to realize this. The learning systems competency aims to support development of all three of these.

Usually people think of "learning" as something possessed and done by individuals. However, the concepts of the learning organization and societal learning are also relevant. The core goal here is to develop GANs as learning networks. Network learning occurs when: (a) learning is done in order to achieve a network's purposes; (b) learning is shared or distributed by people throughout the network; and (c) learning outcomes are institutionalized in the processes, systems, and structures of the network.[19]

Like the change competency, I find the learning systems competency is very underdeveloped in GANs. This isn't universal, of course. Paul Faeth, President of the Global Water Challenge (GWC) comments: "If we didn't do learning the rest (of the competencies) wouldn't matter." However, in 2007 in Kuala Lumpur we held a meeting of people from GANs who had some responsibility for "learning." Of first note, there were very few GANs that formally assigned the responsibility. Of second note, those who did come said their GAN spent minimal resources on learning. However, GANs typically spend enormous percentages of their staff and money on face-to-face meetings. But these are not thought of as "learning events." They exist as decision-making places and ones where information-sharing occurs with a very technical objective. Rarely are they also organized to build network and participant capacity as part of a well-defined learning strategy.

Learning systems knowledge

In 2003, the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) virus quickly spread from a visiting international traveler in Hong Kong to the world. After describing this situation, Bill Snyder and Etienne Wenger, both known as gurus in the community of practice (CoP) world, ask: "How

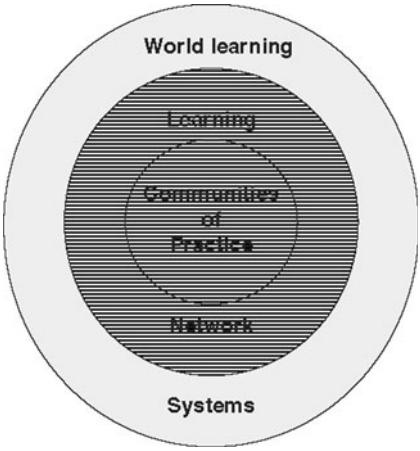

Figure 7.5 Learning systems knowledge framework 1

can we connect the power and accessibility of local civic engagement with active stewardship at national and international levels? What are the design criteria for such a system and what might it look like?"[20]

I find useful the concepts of "community of practice," "learning ecology," and a "world learning system" that are being developed by Bill and Etienne. (The end of Chapter 2 describes CoPs.) As three basic specifications for a world learning system of Figure 7.5, Bill and Etienne identify:

- *Action-learning capacity* to address problems while continuously reflecting on what approaches are working and why – and then using these insights to guide future actions.
- *Cross-boundary representation* that includes participants from all sectors – private, public, and nonprofit – and from a sufficient range of demographic constituencies and professional disciplines to match the complexity of factors and stakeholders driving the problem.
- *Cross-level linkages* that connect learning-system activities at local, national, and global levels – wherever civic problems and opportunities arise.[21]

These are so closely aligned with the work of a GAN that they can be taken as framing a GAN itself as a world learning system. Knowing how to create this is part of the core knowledge of the learning systems competency.

But the learning ecology concept is equally important. Think of all the possible types of activities when learning happens. These are not

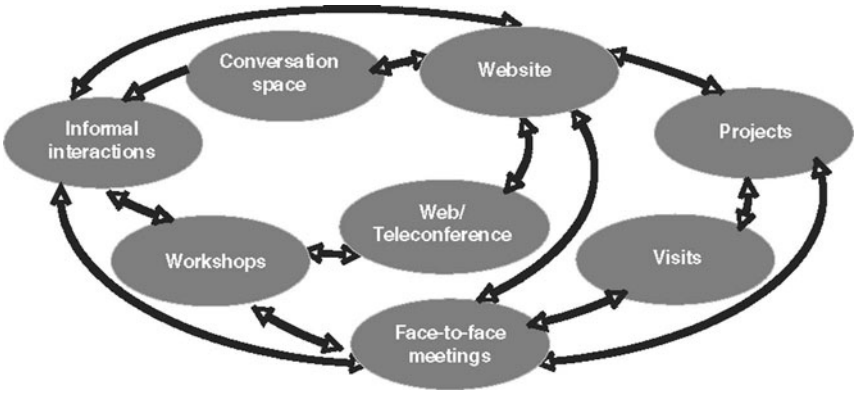

Figure 7.6 Learning systems knowledge framework 2 learning ecology

Source: Snyder, W. M. and X. d. S. Briggs (2003). Communities of Practice: A New Tool for Government Managers. *Arlington, VA, USA, IBM Center for the Business of Government, pp. 13–16.*

necessarily framed as "learning activities" – sometimes learning is not even the primary goal. However, they can be structured to support learning as an explicitly valued activity. These are virtual and face-to-face interactions that can be one-on-one, sub-group, or community-wide. Figure 7.6 describes this as an interacting set of activities that are framed as learning spaces.

The knowledge of the learning systems competency is about developing these activities and creating synergies and inter-actions with a rhythm and cycle that fits with people's other tasks. The secret of developing such robust systems is to connect people's other tasks with the learning activity, so it supports task completion rather than be experienced as something additional that is expected. In other words, the activities become institutionalized in the processes, systems, and structures of the network.

Using these three concepts can produce a learning network. Peter Senge's definition for a learning organization can be adapted to define this vision as networks:

> . . . where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together.[22]

These activities must address both explicit and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge can be written down and easily shared like facts and procedures. Formal education processes, databases, and books are great

for sharing explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is knowledge that one has but cannot explain, and includes intuitions, values, artistry, and expertise. It is best developed through such activities as dialogue, mentoring, joint problem-solving, and informal exchanges.

However, still missing from this is reference to knowledge management that is a critical associated knowledge domain for the learning systems competency. This includes creating a system that is comprehensive, useful, and accessible. Colleague Thomas Kriese specializes in online communications and social media. He emphasizes the need to think of making documents traditionally kept on individuals' computers for oneself, as documents for a wider community. How these types of issues are handled is critical to supporting a robust learning ecology.

Also there is knowledge about learning technologies that support development of the learning ecology. There is almost no use by GANs of webinars, for example. And there are enormously exciting new platforms that support an individual's learning goals and connect to resources to realize them.

Learning systems skills

The learning ecology is a systems diagram, and a learning network must be competent at developing learning systems. This means understanding the learning needs, the range of activities where learning is or can be an objective, ensuring there is a learning design element when these activities occur, and fitting it within the larger learning ecology to link it as appropriate with other learning activities. Then pay attention to the rhythm of the whole, people's responses, and continually shift as appropriate in response to them and the network's shifting needs.

Some top learning systems skills

- Developing systems
- Learning
- Teaching
- Connecting

This systems development is best done in close connection to the goals and work of the network and its participants. For example, as GANs grow to new geographic regions and engage new participants, those new participants need to learn how to work in a diversity-embracing network.

This systems approach is nicely described by one study stating that "our experience shows that on-the-job training is most effective when it is reinforced through some sort of formal teaching and feedback loop. Although resistance to change is often viewed as a barrier to building new capabilities, almost as many respondents to this survey identified a lack of resources and an unclear vision as barriers."[23]

All of this involves learning and making tacit knowledge explicit. Tacit knowledge is the unspoken and unwritten knowledge represented in learning generated through actions and completion of tasks. In particular, we are talking about action learning (described in Measuring Impact competency) of the network about how to develop the GAN as a learning network. Creating learning processes for the learning itself is a great way to model learning as well.

Action learning is particularly appropriate in a network where knowledge is so "emergent" – GANs are often innovating and cannot find historic "answers" about how to proceed. Action learning provides real-time processes for feedback to quickly integrate the learnings into next steps, all in a peer learning environment. From this point of view, the Kimberley (conflict diamond) Process (KP), for example, is a series of experiments about how to control the flow of conflict diamonds, and weave those lessons into its global network.

A GAN also must be a skilled teacher. Teaching is a more formal exchange between someone who has knowledge and someone who does not. For GANs this skill is particularly important at founding stages, because people either resist, or there is not widespread understanding of, the issue the GAN is addressing or how the GAN is addressing it. For example, at the early stages Transparency had to teach people about corruption in order for resisting institutions like the World Bank to take it seriously. Today TI is still teaching, but now more about how to address corruption. This "teaching" activity has strong connections to the communications and advocacy competencies.

The teaching certainly also happens with more traditional workshops to build GAN participants' abilities. For example, the GRI organizes trainings about its reporting framework and to develop reporting skills and the ability of its stakeholders to work productively across their differences.

The learning occurs in a network way. That means that there is not a central disseminator of knowledge, but rather many depending on the topic. The network emphasizes capacity for connecting people who need to learn with people who have relevant knowledge. For example, in standards-setting networks there should be an easy way to connect

experienced people to inexperienced people who are addressing conflicts between business and civil society over some particular standard.

Some top learning attributes

The downside of entrepreneurial often is the "just do it" attitude taken to an extreme. GAN staff are usually too busy "doing the doing." They put little time into looking for the latest knowledge to know whether what they are doing and how they are doing it represents the best strategy. This means lots of repetitive mistakes and repetitive lessons learned. I am still occasionally astonished when people in senior network positions excitedly share a new insight *they* have about networks with the assertion that it is new knowledge, when the insight has been well-documented for years. This also happens with learning professionals. I remember being at an FSC General Assembly when an academic who had just written a book about FSC started to make incredible claims about how unique the FSC was, in total ignorance of the bigger GAN community.

Some top learning systems attributes

- Learning culture
- Relevant
- Wise

All this underlines the importance of creating a learning culture. There is a humbleness associated with such a culture – there is an assumption that even if others do not know something you are trying to figure out, someone has raised the question before or has a piece of the puzzle. Creating a learning culture must start at the top with the most senior people. Often these people give strong double messages, saying that they really value learning, but then are too busy to ever engage in activities that have a strong process learning or even competency development goal.

Part of a learning culture is also being inquisitive. Rather than thinking of yourself (or your GAN) as being the expert and focusing upon telling people things, a learning culture emphasizes the importance of producing good questions and ways to carry on conversations and activities to address them. Often these are conversations over a year or more. With the learning ecology and systems developing skills in mind, these can be sustained

when the question is important. In this situation, people who are formally responsible for learning are responsible for sustaining and stewarding the conversation.

Despite its generally positive connotations, learning is derisively referred to sometimes as "learning for learning's sake" or "academic." Ray Stata, the head of the American company Analog Devices, was asked "How do you distinguish between valid learning and specious learning?" He responded "One of the fundamentals is that valid learning does not occur unless you continuously go back to reality. All knowledge is objective in the sense that there must be some correspondence to reality."[24]

GANs' actions are certainly guided by theory – simply defined by the expectation that doing X will produce Y. However, they are fundamentally *action* oriented. The learning system, therefore, is an applied learning system. To be of use and have robust life, it must be relevant to the work of participants. This means that if someone is puzzling about how to develop a multi-stakeholder strategy in China given the dominant role of government, the learning ecology will produce activities to answer the question. Ideally the learning ecology is vibrant and the individuals asking the questions are familiar enough with the options that the learning ecology presents, to activate them.

One way to frame this competency is as the ability to transform data, to information, to knowledge, to action, and finally to wisdom-in-action, as described in Chapter 2. Certainly a robust learning system will not simply deal with data, information, and knowledge. It will deal with questions about the best way to apply these. Values and principles are reflected in people's actions and choices. Wisdom reflects the ability to make difficult choices (which may include no action) while understanding contexts and implications from a whole system awareness.

I see development of wisdom and its spread can be associated with the development of GANs themselves. In their Stage 4 development when they become highly decentralized with strong connections between GANs, a GAN must be able to transcend its own issue to strongly connect to others. For example, although the GWP is focused upon water, as it develops, the connections grow between them and those dealing with climate change, the natural environment, health, and poverty. If a GAN makes these types of connections too early in its development, however, it will lose its focus because its identity is too weak; if a GAN does not eventually develop these types of broader relationships, it will never enter Stage 4. Wisdom is exemplified in knowing when and how to make these choices. A learning system should reflect and support development of that type of wisdom.

Competency 7. Policy and advocacy – Generating tight connections between action and policy

Networks embody two approaches to policy and advocacy. The more traditional is advocating that others change, and urging others to adopt particular policies. Here the network power comes from combining organizations for size and power of voice. The second approach is to gather diverse stakeholders together as peers who recognize that new policies are needed, and to collectively develop them. Here networks act as laboratories where diversity produces innovative, whole-system approaches that can be quickly disseminated through the participating organizations. GANs emphasize the second approach.

Policy and advocacy knowledge

Wolfgang Reinicke, who introduced me to global multi-stakeholder networks, looks at them through a political science lens. He calls a similar group of networks Global Public Policy Networks: "... loose alliances of government agencies, international organizations, corporations, and elements of civil society such as nongovernmental organizations, professional associations, or religious groups that join together to achieve what none can accomplish on its own."[25] He emphasizes their contribution to resolving issues with producing global public policy and goods.

Working with Tariq Banuri (then with the Tellus and Stockholm Environmental Institutes), we built upon this work to produce Figure 7.7. It describes the traditional global public policy making process that produces international agreements and conventions such as the one establishing the Kyoto Accord and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development produced at the 1992 UN conference. GANs' work can be framed as addressing weaknesses in this process. For example, TAI categorically focuses upon giving life to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, which was an empty commitment for most governments.

In the national policy-making cycle there are basically four activities. Citizens (1) express their opinions to their elected representatives, who (2) get together in legislatures to debate what should be done. Legislatures pass laws and regulations that the bureaucracy (3) then translates into programs carried out by multiple organizations to (4) educate, enforce, and take other supportive actions. If there is some controversy with this process, citizens are then able to go back to their elected representatives for changes.

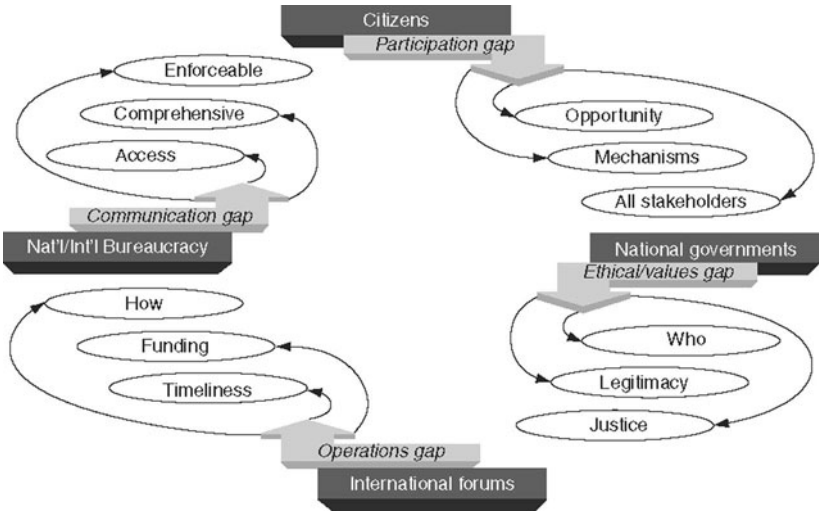

Figure 7.7 Policy and advocacy knowledge framework

Source: Waddell, S. J. (2003). "Global Action Networks: Building Global Public Policy Systems of Accountability." *AccountAbility Quarterly* 20: 19–26, p. 20.

At the global level the underlying institutions such as legislatures, political parties, courts, and regulatory structures are not present. Citizens have almost no options for connecting meaningfully with global decision-making processes, and this is referred to as the *participation gap*. Participants must perceive that what they are participating in is legitimate and incorporate their views. When this does not occur, an *ethical or values gap* arises. The difficulty of identifying and organizing an effective response to implement international agreements gives rise to the *operational gap*. The fourth gap, the *communications gap*, arises as the need to communicate to citizens the global public policy goals and the value of abiding by their norms and rules. This framework summarizes the policy and advocacy knowledge that GANs need.[26]

Some top policy and advocacy skills

As distinguished from mono-sectoral networks like trade associations and NGO coalitions, GANs have a collaborative learning strategy toward policy and advocacy. TAI has probably taken this work the furthest in terms of developing it as a core strategy. Essentially TAI creates learning projects with national governments. This requires the collaborative, peer-learning approach characterized by action learning.

Some top policy and advocacy skills

- Action learning
- Developing policy
- Connecting cross-sector

Of course the GANs must also have expertise in writing and developing policy as well. This includes familiarity with legislative processes and knowledge about when and how to exert pressure effectively. TAI has national coalitions of NGOs that typically include partners with expertise in this arena, and connections to legislators.

To be effective, all this can require fancy footwork in terms of creating cross-sector alliances with government. "TAI members recognize that governments are not monolithic; they are filled with allies and opponents," comments Joe Foti, TAI Associate.

This leads to a diversity of TAI strategies. One is that TAI gains government legitimacy and help because it receives funding from the government agencies such as the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. TAI country coalitions find that the national Ministry of Environment is usually interested in working with civil society, because the MoE is usually weak on finance, political power, and science, and *vis-à-vis* the Ministry of Finance. Judges in Argentina and the Ministry of Information in Mexico also have helpful roles.

In Thailand the TAI coalition includes an institute sponsored by the King of Thailand, which gives it legitimacy in government eyes. And in Africa, the TAI–Cameroon representative was asked to speak on the government's behalf at a UNEP Governing Council meeting when the discussion was about adopting the draft guidelines on implementation of P10.

Some top policy and advocacy attributes

For governments a basic question to any advocacy group is "who do you represent?" and "why should we listen to/work with you?" GANs must be seen as legitimate and valuable commentators on policy. This legitimacy is developed in a number of ways. TAI finds that the fact its local coalitions are members of a global network can greatly heighten legitimacy for the local networks *vis-à-vis* their national governments. There is also the question of who to have as members of the local coalitions themselves. They

can bring legitimacy because of their history, expertise, constituency, or other qualities.

Some top policy and advocacy attributes

- Legitimate
- Authoritative
- Persuasive

For most GANs one of the most powerful assets is their ability to speak authoritatively on their issue. For TAI this is greatly enhanced by the scientific reputations of some of its national coalition NGOs, as well as the founding leadership of the World Resources Institute. GANs' development of new information and knowledge can also be packaged in particularly powerful ways. For example, most governments pay attention to TI's Transparency Perception Index.

In the end, all advocacy depends upon being persuasive in some form. This might occur because of the sheer size of the GANs' constituency, its insider political connections, its knowledge and information, or its ability to speak effectively. Often a quality of the GAN strategy is to play an "insider–outsider" strategy, by building strategic ties with insiders and providing insider partners an avenue to work outside as well.

Competency 8. Resource mobilization – Growing commitment to global public goods

I was leading a discussion of a half dozen leaders of GANs on the topic of competencies critical to success when we turned to the question of resource mobilization. I was surprised that none of the leaders thought of it as a major issue for them, in comparison to the other competencies.

"But what if you think about barriers to your network really *flourishing* and realizing its goals?" I asked. That moved the issue of financing to the top of the list of challenges.

Resource mobilizing strategies and needs vary greatly with development stages. At the beginning, one or two venture investors usually come forward plus a lot of community volunteer works. With success and growth, the challenge of creating a sustainable business model grows. GANs are still underappreciated and poorly understood, their needs are large, and the global public goods financing systems are weak.

Resource mobilization knowledge framework

Traditional business is funded by profits, government by taxes, and NGOs by donations. Networks are combining all these strategies to build an economic model appropriate for their multi-stakeholder quality. However, how to do this well is still not clear. Moreover, how to maneuver as global organizations in a world where most funding is at best regional also creates challenges.

By far the dominant financing framework is "development." Substantial global network funding comes through taxes with funding from donor agencies like USAID and DFID, and multilaterals like the World Bank. In this tradition, the richest nations have a moral obligation to distribute some of their wealth to poorer ones in the same sort of distributive rationale that drove development of the welfare state.

However, as Ernest Ligteringen who heads up the GRI commented to me, it is fitting a round peg in a square hole. GRI, for example, is not about developing poorer countries' capacity to apply the GRI framework. GRI is about the creation of a global public good for use globally: a sustainability reporting framework. Ironically for many GANs, this means that they are more active in the developing countries than in the richer ones.

This current state of affairs is highly problematic for three reasons. One is that it creates a two-tiered strategy and set of activities for creation of global public goods. It produces a real barrier to creation of truly global public goods. For example, the GWP is essentially a group of rich country funders financing work in other countries. However, water really needs a

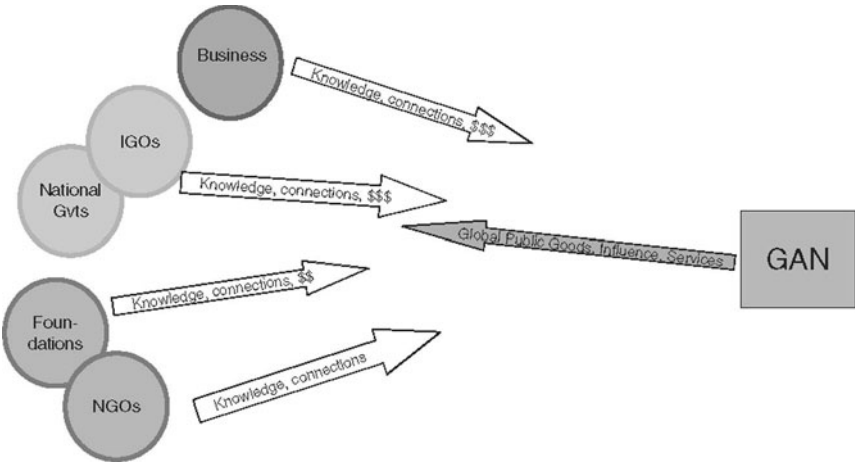

Figure 7.8 Resource mobilization knowledge framework

global strategy. Similarly, TAI finds working in Europe highly problematic because there is a separate European strategy referred to as the Aarhaus Protocol.

A second reason that "development" is an unsatisfactory approach is that it gives richer countries disproportionate power over other countries. There is an unhealthy funder–recipient dynamic that perpetuates concerns about colonialism, rather than a collective problem-solving dynamic.

But perhaps the most pressing problem is that the development framework simply perpetuates a philanthropic attitude to badly needed global public goods production. "Donor" countries are naturally miserly. The long-term – and only realistic medium-term solution as well – is that the development/donation framework be replaced by a global public goods one. The important work of global public good financing must be with categorical national tax transfers for that purpose, or a global tax. The Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development is venturing into this arena.

Some top resource mobilization skills

Current business models for GANs are not obvious. When they get to Stages 3 and 4 they need to have at least $3 to $5 million in resources for just the Secretariat, and many times that for the network to flourish. Given their work, this is an incredibly small amount of money that they struggle mightily to get. The networks as a whole really need many times that amount to really rise to the challenges that they are addressing.

Some top resource mobilization skills

- Developing business models
- Translating needs into opportunities
- Managing finances

One of the more successful in raising funds is TI. Cobus de Swardt, TI Managing Director, explains they've evolved their business model.

> Our original operating model was everyone is responsible for their own funding so everyone (National Chapters operate in 102 countries) including the Secretariat raises their own funding independently of each other. Then there was the question of due diligence. This meant many of our chapters didn't get sufficient resources and they had to do the same thing 102 times (apply). So what we've changed is twofold.

> Chapters remain responsible for raising their own funds, but the Secretariat will be responsible for maximizing the brand and the ability to look at economies of scale and the ability to do the same thing in many countries. So we now raise funds for one proposal for 25 countries. And that translates to economies of scale for donors, for chapters, for us. In the past, if something went wrong in a local chapter, the donor came to us although we had not impact on what went wrong. And what happens in any of the chapters affects our reputation.

Gathering finance information about networks is very complicated, since it requires defining what part of the network the data cover. As networks develop, most increasingly depend upon sub-parts (regional, particular program) raising their own funds. In May 2008, I surveyed 11 networks[I] ranging from 8 to 15 years of age with the initial question:

> *What was the total income (revenue) that came to/through the Secretariat for the most recent fiscal year including funds that may have gone to other parts of the network?*

The response ranged from $500,000 to $11.4 million, with the average of $3.6 million.

But the finance question is also wrapped up in strategy. Being multi-stakeholder, the networks could be expected to have tax-based contributions from government, civil society-based funding from foundations, and revenue generation from services and fees.

Table 7.4 gives responses to the question:

Please indicate the approximate percent of funds that flow to/through the Secretariat that come from the following sources.

Most networks perceived potential conflicts of interest with business revenue generation. One way the Global Compact addresses this is with a foundation to receive business donations; the foundation does not fund core Secretariat costs, but only the broader network.

Strategy also raises Secretariat–network relationship questions. For TI the Secretariat role in putting together up to 30 National Chapters for joint funding proposals increased dramatically in 2010 from less than €1 million a year to more than €5 million.

[I] Building Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation, Global AIDS Alliance, Global Knowledge Partnership, GWP, GRI, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), Mountain Forum, SFL, TAI, TI, Youth Enterprise and Sustainability (YES).

Table 7.4 Source of funds (%)

	IGOs	Nat Gvt Dev Orgs	Other Gvt	Fdns	Business	NGOs	Individuals	Other
1.	20	75	0	0	3	2		20
2.	0	0	0	80	0	18	2	0
3.	2	79	0	0	10	0	0	2
4.	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
5.	5	5	20	0	50	0	0	5
6.	0	0	20	30	5	0	0	0
7.	0	90	5	5	0	0	0	0
8.	0	0	0	50	25	5	0	0
9.	50	0	45	5	0	0	0	50
10.	1	82	1	9	5	0	0	1
11.	0	20	30	0	40	10	0	0
Ave.	**7**	**41**	**11**	**16**	**13**	**3**	**0**	**9**

Table 7.5 Reasons for funding (%)

	Donation	Institutional support	Network flow-through	Project	Member-ship fees	Goods and services	Endowment income	Sponsor-ships	Other
1.	3	25	0	72	0	0	0	0	0
2.	2	20	18	50	0	10	0	0	0
3.	0	17	53	21	9	0	0	0	0
4.	75	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0
5.	0	38	0	37	0	20	0	0	5
6.	5	0	30	20	30	10	0	5	0
7.	75	5	0	10	0	10	0	0	0
8.	0	0	55	20	25	0	0	0	0
9.	0	25	63	2	0	10	0	0	0
10.	0	52	48	0	0	0	0	0	0
11.	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	0
Ave	**15**	**17**	**24**	**32**	**6**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Table 7.5 gives responses to the question:

Please indicate the approximate percent of the types of funding/reasons for funding.

These tables indicate great variety in business models. But the data are very unsatisfactory. We need a bigger database and more analysis with regard to relationship between business model and issues of strategy, stage of development, geographic reach, and Secretariat versus node costs.

An underlying challenge is clearly articulating needs of GAN participants and matching it in some way to the value of the work of GANs. Certainly this relates to the Measuring Impact competency, but it also raises the big issues about who should pay for what. These are still very difficult issues to discuss. Governments can easily shrug off requests

because the businesses should pay, business can say government should pay, and NGOs say they are impoverished. By and large, with a very few exceptions like the Gates and Ford Foundations, private foundations do not support global public good production.

Another issue is the way funding is so clearly tied to tangible "issue" outputs. GANs are really process actors that affect issues and the ability to address them effectively. This means that funders are fundamentally "suspicious" of networks and prefer to finance "grass-roots" organizations. Moreover, funding is often restricted geographically. GANs work globally, but funding is often country- or at best region-specific.

One underlying rationale for this fragmented state of affairs is to enhance accountability. The financing GANs like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS in many ways are like investment fund managers, accountable to donors. The importance of their capacity to skillfully manage funds is particularly acute, and a crisis arose for the Global Fund around this very issue. Certainly these large financiers must pay particular attention to financial management, but the other GANs need to pay attention because of the importance of every dollar and euro. They are anorexic and cannot afford any problems due to financial mis-management.

Some top resource mobilization attributes

This state of affairs emphasizes the importance of being persuasive, transparent, and accountable. The GANs generally embrace these attributes, although they take resources to realize. "Making the business case" is a highly popular phrase that does not necessarily easily transfer into global public goods production financing. Paul Faeth, President of the GWC, points out he is competing for funding with issues like health care: "There isn't a lot of money that goes to drinking water/sanitation globally . . . there're more people dying from poor drinking water than from malaria/measles. Talking about infrastructure and behavior change . . . it's not as easy as giving a shot, nor as straight-forward as a (mosquito) bed-net . . . it's very difficult."

Some top resource mobilization attributes

- Persuasive
- Transparent
- Accountable

Persuasion is generally practiced through specific anecdotes and stories, with generalized figures such as hectares of certified forests. These can leave a funder that has a particular geographic community interest cool to the idea of funding a *global* network.

This emphasizes the importance of GANs' local network partners. However, they often find themselves in a conflicting situation. Local partners' work with the GAN often is only a small part of their overall work, and often they want money from the same funders for other programs.

Transparency and accountability find important support with Internet technologies, and generally GANs provide data openly. However, sometimes they find themselves in competition with one another when they work in the same issue arena, which can create some tensions. Some corporations pay to both the Global Compact and to the GRI, for example. As well, the accountability issue can pose challenges because of the diversity and number of stakeholders that the GAN is accountable to. These stakeholders come from very different financial reporting traditions that can make reasonable standards a challenge given most GANs' modest size.

Power, politics, and the competencies

On separate occasions I spoke about the eight competencies with Ger Berkamp, Director General of the World Water Council (WWC), and Peter van Tuijl, Director of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). In both cases when the question arose about what may be missing in this framework, they brought up power and politics.

> "The political management of the network . . . it needs taken care of as a political process," said Ger.
>
> "Capacity to deal with power differences," said Peter. "It misses the political edge – for the network both internally and externally."

Daily both Ger and Peter deal with diverse demands and interests to move the network toward its vision. In their positions they have leadership responsibility with their Boards, major stakeholder groups, and particularly influential individuals.

With "politics and power" they are talking about the ability to mobilize support for and/or opposition to policies, values, and goals. Internally,

they are talking about the ability to work with power differences inherent with the array of constituencies in a global multi-stakeholder network. Externally, they are talking about the ability of the network to influence organizations that are not active participants in the network.

However, in a network like WWC and GPPAC, there is a huge gray area of when the power and politics issue is internal and external. Even if an organization is a participant in the networks, the organization does not automatically agree with the network decisions, move to implement them, or even know how to implement them.

Sociologist Amatai Etzioni categorizes power into three types. As voluntary associations the networks have little *coercive* power generally associated with governments. They have little *remunerative* power generally associated with business – they simply don't have the financial or other resources to allocate. They must depend upon *normative* power: peer pressure, persuasion of logic, and moral assertion of what's right and just.[27]

However, others have coercive and remunerative power that they may apply to influence the direction of the network – either in support of the network's goals or to undermine them. This is always particularly worrisome *vis-à-vis* funders, but it can come from others as well. TI has faced the coercive power with intimidation by the Government of Sri Lanka against its chapter there.

Power and politics is a topic of the Leadership competency: how can individuals, groups, and the network share leadership to create a leaderful culture and way of working together? And how do we address powerplay leadership?

Power and politics is a topic for the Network Development competency where the question becomes how to create strategies, structures, and processes to manage power in the interests of the larger network. This involves ensuring and balancing diverse stakeholders' voice and influence.

Power and politics is also a big topic of the Change competency. Transformational change of the type that GANs aim for involves a fundamental change in power and political arrangements. The core work of GANs is to realize a "tipping point" where the values and standards promoted by the GAN become "the norm."

Of course there is lot of overlap among the competencies. Change, Network Development, and Leadership competencies are all needed to clarify, address, and create accountability for contributing to two sets of goals: those of individual participants (organizations, Board members) that are conditions for being active in the network and also those goals of the network to realize its vision.

Developing the expertise

One goal of the competencies framework is to suggest how to organize capacity-building programs for GANs. Business schools are organized around core functional divisions like Marketing and Finance; schools of government are organized around divisions reflected in Ministries such as justice (law), health, and international relations. For GANs, capacity-building programs might be developed around the competencies since they align with trends in the way GANs are actually organizing themselves.

However, capacity-building programs are only one element in developing the needed expertise. And in fact, traditional classroom-based education is not going to get GANs where they need to be with respect to the competencies, although it can have a modest role. Today we are well into development of the life-long learning world. Development of the competencies must be integrated into the daily work of GANs, so they do indeed become learning networks. Communities of Practice, learning ecology, and world learning systems provide powerful frameworks for developing GANs as learning networks.

Because the capacities have to be developed in very diverse settings, they cannot be prescribed as with traditional training programs. They must be co-developed and co-owned. Indeed, as suggested in the Learning Systems competency, capacity-development is not something done *for* others but *with* others. The capacity development itself must be experimental and responsive to changing needs.

Developing capacity depends upon numerous drivers. The traditional focus is upon such things as workshops and alignment of reward systems. However, one report lists 11 internal and 5 external drivers to consider.[28]

One of the drivers is formal structures, processes, and systems. GANs can further reinforce the development of these competencies by creating organizational units, titles and teams associated with them to focus the development of the capacity. GANs will often have something like a department for Network Development (seen with the Network Building Programme of the GPPAC, and titles such as TI's "Governance Manager"). GANs commonly have organizational units for communications, monitoring, and evaluation, something for resource mobilization, often for policy, and sometimes for learning. The Change competency that I find so important really deserves its own unit in my opinion, although I have never seen it. The Leadership competency is the one that does not call out for an organizational unit, although there are innumerable capacity-building programs with that focus.

There are three capacity-development strategies to consider. One is the more traditional "planned strategy." This approach involves targets and crafting achievements to clear objectives, with schedules of activities. It is particularly appropriate when there is clarity about needs and a relatively stable funding source.

The second approach is "incrementalism." This is about adaptability and taking advantage of opportunities as they arise within a program defined by more flexible guidelines rather than fixed targets. This is a good approach when there is greater instability in the general operating environment.

The third approach is "emergence." This is appropriate in a volatile environment. Capacity is developed out of relationships in doing the work. There are not clear objectives, but rather opportunities that are nurtured through information-, knowledge-, and skill-building relationships that grow organically.[29]

Of course in practice there is mingling of these three approaches. In my own experience, the biggest challenge to building these competencies is to create conscious valuing of their development with the necessary reflective spaces. People working in and with GANs are naturally very action-oriented, and they tend to work from the premise that "action = good". However, systems thinking tells us that often actions are counter-productive. Moreover, even when an action is productive, there is value in actually investigating the best tools, knowledge, and strategies for it. And after action, there is value in review and reflection about what was done and how it could be improved. Learning requires discipline!

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