

GREAT TRANSITION
PARADIGM SHIFT DE-GROWTH

ECO-SOLIDARITY ECONOMY PARADIGM SHIFT

BUEN VIVIR

MONS SYSTEMIC

THE COMMONS

GREAT TRANSITION

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SYSTEMIC CHANGE

CONOMY

ARITY
NOMY



SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

Civil Society in Transition

— OUR BROKEN STORIES — SEEDS OF NEW STORIES — A NEW ACTIVISM? —



Innovating Civil Society strategies to make the Great Transition happen

www.smart-csos.org

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Introducing this document

To this day not many civil society organisations (CSOs) are promoting the much-needed transition to a new economic system based on the principles of ecological limits, solidarity, human wellbeing and intergenerational justice. Neither are many organisations embracing the complexity of systemic change in their strategies, campaigns and projects.

However, there are signs of hope. In October 2013 the Smart CSOs Lab organised the *Civil Society in Transition* conference in Cologne (Germany). At this conference, activists from many different civil society sectors and countries shared their stories of how they are involved in creating the seeds of a new activism that understands the systemic nature of civil society's many struggles and is experimenting with new ways of catalysing systemic change.

This document offers some of these seeds of a new civil society to a broader audience with the aim to inspire others to become active on systemic change. It explains the context for why these new stories have become necessary (broken stories) and how the Smart CSOs Lab is providing a space for activists and change agents to jointly learn how to make change in the way civil society thinks, acts and operates to work effectively towards systemic change.

For civil society to become a decisive actor towards a transition to a new economic system, many more activists and change agents are needed for this journey. Furthermore, the game has to be raised to grow and spread the seeds of new civil society presented in this document.

1. Realising that our old cherished stories are broken

For more than two years we (in the Smart CSOs Lab) have been organising gatherings and connecting activists and civil society change agents who have lost faith in the course current mainstream activities in civil society and activism are taking.

These people are seriously engaged in finding ways to solve global issues like climate change, poverty, human rights etc. They realise or start to realise that the ways their organisations (or civil society sector) are trying to fix these problems don't seem to work anymore. They believe that while they have won many battles, we as humanity are losing the planet (meaning that while the world would be worse off without the battles that have been won, in the end things are not improving, but only getting less bad than they would have been without these actions). These activists and change agents have the energy to do something about it – and want to try new ways – but lack the resources and the support.

The frustrations that these civil society change agents are experiencing are resulting from the collapse of long held beliefs about who they are and how they as activists can bring about change in the world. The contradictions eventually got too strong and the sober reality that things are not working as they were supposed to do was becoming too obvious. This is what we call broken civil society stories.

Some of these broken stories about ourselves as civil society and about how we believe change can happen:

Our economy is capable of developing the technological solutions that can and will ultimately solve our ecological and humanitarian crises

This story is broken. We are ourselves so deeply entrenched in the western world view based on deep beliefs in the positive forces of technological progress and economic growth that we can't see that this worldview and the system themselves are the root cause of current crises and that the system is not given by nature and not set in stone. Instead it is a social construction that we can and must change, but it will require a process of changing our worldviews.



We have to work towards what is possible instead of what is needed

This story is broken because although there are many advantages and it seems less risky to be pragmatic rather than utopian, too much pragmatism and too much tactics reinforces the unsustainable status quo. Only if we shift our actions much more towards what is needed and allow for utopia to be part of our strategy, will we have a chance to shift the logic of the debate. The space for what is possible will then shift over time.

Policy advocacy and lobbyism are the best way to be influential

This story is broken because although it can't be denied that civil society has an impact in the political game, the margins ultimately are very small and even what looks like a big success, very often in the long run doesn't really change much. The institutions themselves are failing, so playing the game through the institutional processes cannot achieve system change.

We need to raise more funds and lobby for more aid budgets for the global south to develop and eradicate poverty

This story is broken because the messages that still most NGOs send through their fundraising campaigns are as successful as they are harmful in perpetuating false stereotypes and hiding the real causes of poverty. The whole logic of the aid industry is still based on a hierarchy relationship between donors and recipients, far from the idea of a relationship of solidarity.

We are the experts on our issue, so we should focus on concrete feasible proposals to improve the issues

This story is broken because given the systemic and complex nature of so many of today's problems, the responses through this silo work are often inadequate. Only a multi issue perspective makes it completely obvious that we have to tackle the deeper economic and cultural root causes instead of proposing technical fixes.

The world is divided between the good and the bad. We are on the good side and to achieve social change we have to fight the bad

This is a broken story because the systemic problems of our times are not mainly the fault of one group or another. Instead, if there is one main enemy it is the system. The systemic shift that is needed requires changes at many different levels. Whilst the abuse of power by certain privileged groups resisting systemic change without doubt requires more and better organised protests and fights, the main task we have to confront is one of collective realisation that we all have to change and give up some of our deep beliefs and habits and embark on a process of searching and finding the new societal and economic models. In other words, the 99% vs. 1% Occupy slogan was very useful in highlighting the dramatic increase in global inequality. But it is misleading in that the fight for system change is not one of the 99% against the 1%. It omits the fact that the growing global consumer classes and those aspiring to become part of them are resisting to change almost as much as the 1%.

2. Learning together how to break out of the system trap

The Smart CSOs Lab is a space where activists and change agents come together as a community of practice to learn how to make changes in the way civil society thinks, acts and operates. The ultimate aim is to give large-scale impulses for an activism that works effectively towards systemic change.

When we started this space in 2011 a few things were clear and have proven successful:

Participating as individuals

The Smart CSOs Lab would be (and is) a space for individual activists and not a coalition of organisations. The committed individuals bring along their personal genuine energy to work as change agents for systemic change. Coalitions of organisations and initiatives with organisational membership are often very difficult to navigate and slow to move due to the institutional lock-ins and constraints that many civil society organisations are

facing. If we want to change the organisation, we need to keep some distance and take our organisational hats off.

Sharing a common purpose

The Smart CSOs community is united by a common purpose of respectful joint learning in a non-hierarchical space where we can develop the necessary trust outside our institutional rules. People in the lab share a common conviction of the need to and inquiry about how to overcome the current economic and cultural model of marketisation, economic growth and consumerism.

Connecting diverse communities

It's an important and distinct characteristic that the people who join the lab come from many different parts of civil society, the funder community and the academic world (from all over Europe and beyond). Activists from larger more formal organisations (like environmental

and developmental NGOs, unions) mix with activists from grassroots movements and less established networks. Connections between these groups are often not very strong or sometimes inexistent. Smart CSOs acts as a network broker connecting diverse people but who share a common inquiry and purpose. Often the different networks speak their own specific language. This is where the Smart CSOs can act as a translator to create better learning loops between networks.

Trans-disciplinary learning

Nobody knows all the answers for how we can create the new eco-solidarity economy and how it will look like. The Great Transition requires a learning approach with experiments at all levels; it requires asking new questions instead of providing old answers. This is why the Smart CSOs Lab is about continuous learning and experimentation. The lab is encouraging learning from multiple disciplines and practice without ever saying that we can provide the final answers. However, the lab is distinctive in its attempt to build on state of the art theory and practice.

Other aspects are more difficult and are the subject of discussion and experimentation:

How to go from talking to walking

Many activists in the Smart CSOs network are committed to the ideas and objectives with their hearts, but find it difficult to take any action in their organisations that would be about system change. The reasons for this are diverse. One is certainly that the pressure many activists face in their normal jobs is immense. Often this doesn't even give the head space to think about possible actions, much less to apply them. Others still require more concrete proposals for how to go about ways to change organisations and about trying concrete campaigns for system change.

What is the Smart CSOs approach, what isn't

While the Smart CSOs report in 2011 already laid out a framework for where change should come from in civil society and what are important aspects to look at when working on system change, we still haven't concretely nailed down which characteristics in organisations and in campaigns are less helpful for systemic change and which a priori are more promising. Through our discussions and the gathering of practical examples we are becoming more confident and can start to become clearer and more concrete on these questions.

What are the right approaches for learning for this community

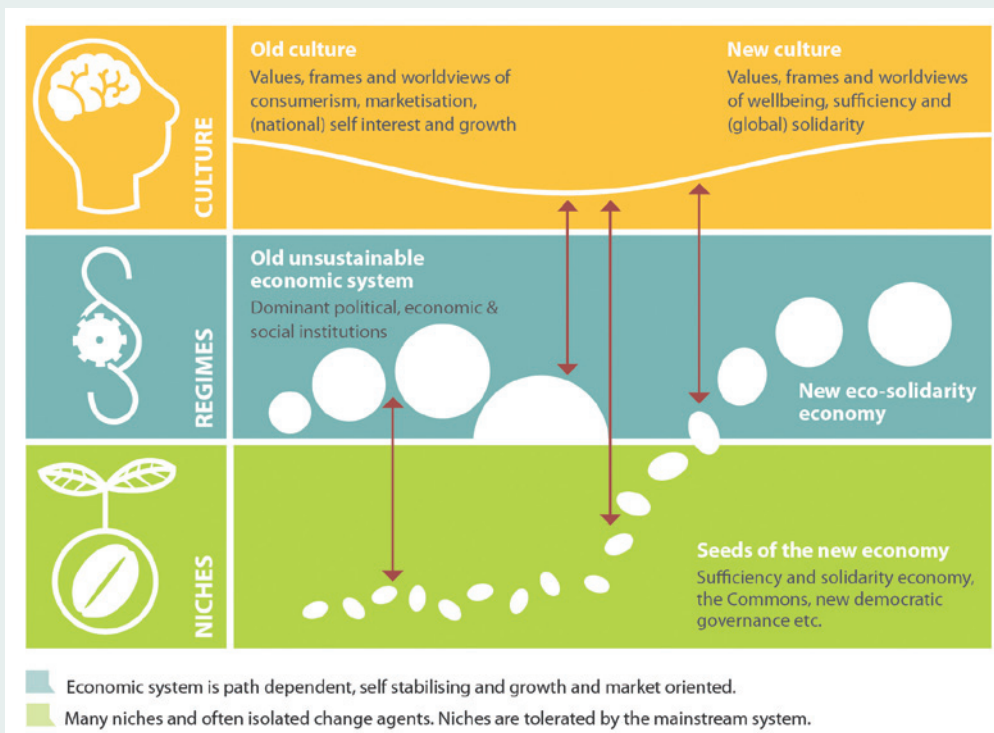
Linked to the above it is not easy to decide which methods and approaches are the best to be used in our workshops and how to best interact with each other in between workshops. Understanding how a community like ours can best learn and advance in its thinking and practice is truly something we are learning and the process is not finished. 'How to develop an open and inclusive action learning process that builds on existing knowledge and wisdom and doesn't unnecessarily reinvent the wheel again and again?' is one of the important questions to keep in mind.



3. Using a model to explore effective strategies for change

To help us have an informed discussion on how we as change agents in civil society can improve our theories and strategies of change, we developed a model of change.

The model's purpose is primarily to help us develop, refine and improve our theories of change when we design our system change strategies. Or in other words, it is about learning what different aspects and levels of change we need to take into account and how we need to change the way we work as civil society if we want to become successful change agents for the new eco-solidarity economy¹.



The model works at three levels:

Culture: This is where the current cultural values, frames and worldviews lie. These are currently dominated by consumerism, marketization, nationalism and self-interest. Here a shift to a culture of sufficiency, wellbeing and solidarity has to emerge to support the transition to the new economy.

Regimes: This is where the dominant political, economic and social institutions of the old unsustainable economic system lie and where –to succeed in the transition– the institutions of the new eco-solidarity economy have to consolidate.

Niches: These are the protected spaces where the seeds of the new system emerge and are experimented with and where in the case of a successful transition the most promising innovations become stronger and get the sufficient support to eventually institutionalise.

¹ In this paper the term *eco-solidarity economy* is used for an economic system based on the principles of ecological limits, solidarity, human wellbeing and intergenerational justice.

The model's core messages:

The model is based on the understanding that all three levels are important for a transition to the new economic system. Each of the levels holds important core messages for us to be aware of:

Culture: We as people, organisations and campaigns need to embody the values of the new system to support the transition. The current reality is that we are still too often communicating and representing the values of self interest, consumerism and growth and are contributing to perpetuate the current culture.

Regimes: Institutions are highly path dependent, self-stabilising and generally rejecting a fundamental transformation. Much of the current policy advocacy work of NGOs, while successful in promoting incremental changes, is (or would be) ineffective if it comes to promoting systemic change. By playing the political game, we cannot expect to make effective contributions to change.

Niches: While there is a growing number of experiments with alternative economic models, these are normally either tolerated by the mainstream institutions or co-opted by the system to play by the market rules. In many civil society organisations there is a lack of understanding of the emerging radical system innovations and insufficient belief in one's own potential to support and nurture niches to eventually become systems of influence.

But the main value of the model becomes apparent when we look at it as a whole and explore the existing and the potential feedback loops between the three change levels. Here the main message is that for a successful transition to the new eco-solidarity economy it will require strong positive feedback loops between all levels. It will require strong impulses from a cultural shift and strengthening the niches to create a virtuous circle of feedback loops to eventually unlock the institutional lock-ins at the regimes level.

The reverse message is that the model loses most of its value if we interpret it in a simplistic way, for example by classifying any given civil society strategy or approach into one of the three levels without evaluating what core message the change level holds and what feedback loops it might create, support or weaken.

To conclude, the multi-level model can help activists to assess their current strategies against their potential to encourage (or hinder) a systemic transition and it can support strategic conversations about possible new system change strategies and how they could eventually mutually reinforce each other.

While the model is a useful and flexible tool for strategic conversations, it is not an all-explaining wonder box. We need to populate it little by little with knowledge and wisdom from theory and practice to improve our understanding about useful civil society approaches for systemic change.

4. Planting seeds of new civil society stories



In spite of the difficulties that activists face to move from enthusiastic discussions and personal commitment to effective action, the seeds of the new civil society are being planted. Some are directly the result of discussions in the Smart CSOs community and others have their origin from else-where but are benefitting from the support and inspirations the Smart CSOs community (of practice) is providing.

At the Civil Society in Transition conference (2013) a diverse range of activists and civil society change agents shared their stories of how and why they have started to become active on system change and what has been their experience and learning up to date. Here we have summarised these stories to make them available to a broader audience and inspire others to become active, plant their own seeds and join the community of practice. For some of these examples we are making an exemplary use of the three-level model to explore how the strategy applied can logically work to support systemic change, i.e. what kind of positive feedback loops it can trigger in the system.

4.1 Examples focused on changing the organisation's narrative

The way most civil society organisations are communicating with their audiences is far from contributing to a Great Transition² and might often reinforce the status quo. One reason is that the often-heavy reliance on technical facts and rational arguments fails to address the importance of the non-conscious mind in human behaviour. Another is that short-term tactics, i.e. the hope to move the political agenda forward by playing the game of government and business often means that CSOs are communicating the very values and frames of our current culture of self-interest and national interest.

Some change agents and activists in organisations have started to plant promising seeds towards the Smart CSOs aim of *telling and living the stories* of the Great Transition to an eco-solidarity economy:

How CIDSE started to engage its network on developing a paradigm shift narrative

CIDSE is the International alliance of Catholic development agencies based in Brussels and comprises 17 member organisations from Europe and North America working together for global justice.

In 2009 the CIDSE Secretariat took the initiative to organise a workshop with the purpose to analyse and respond to the changing context as a result of the financial crisis of 2008. The workshop resulted in a collective realisation by CIDSE and its members that there was something fundamentally wrong with the system and that current efforts for global justice and sustainability were failing. They were focusing on issue silos, neglecting interlinkages between them and had a narrow focus on changing specific policies without fully considering the

wider picture and the system lock-ins. Consequently, under the leadership of Secretary General Bernd Nilles and in cooperation with representatives from member organizations, the CIDSE team developed a new mandate that starts to address systemic change, to rethink the current concept of development and to build new alliances that reflect the global power shift. On the organisational level this implies linking different work areas in order to avoid issue silos, connecting policy advocacy work with values such as solidarity and community, and building new coalitions, particularly in the global South.

In the course of the project CIDSE learned that articulating alternative paradigms takes time and requires frank inter-organisational discussions as well as giving sufficient attention to people's needs to deepen their analysis and critique of the current paradigm, as for instance the green economy. Continuous exchange on clarifying the terms of the debate and CIDSE's positions within it – particularly on controversial issues such as inclusive growth or de-growth – proved essential in order to avoid misperceptions about where the organisation was headed.

The next step is now to embrace and implement the new narrative in projects and activities of CIDSE and its member organisations, for instance integrating domestic issues and sustainable life styles into campaigns previously focused on change in the global South.

"There was a key momentum in 2008 with the financial crisis, where we came to the conclusion at CIDSE that there was something really fundamentally wrong with the system." – Bernd Nilles

² In this paper the term *Great Transition* is referring to a transition from the current inequitable growth-obsessed global economic system including the globally spreading culture of consumerism and marketisation of nearly every sphere of life to the new system, here called *eco-solidarity economy*.

It might also mean investing less in the official processes, and use them more as a hook to articulate and promote CIDSE's paradigm shift thinking while testing their role within civil society to work more with those that share their thinking on alternative models, outside the political negotiations.

How CONCORD started to engage pioneers in its network in telling a new system change story

CONCORD is the European Confederation of Development NGOs. It was founded in 2003 to act as the main interlocutor with EU institutions on development policy. CONCORD's project 'a new political narrative' was initiated in early 2013 by director Olivier Consolo and president Joanna Maycock who had both joined Smart CSOs

the previous year and shared frustrations that despite decades of advocacy policy work, NGOs have failed to sufficiently mobilise public opinion and to unblock intergovernmental negotiations of pressing issues such as climate change. Inspired by their director and new president, the CONCORD leadership decided that working on a new CONCORD narrative would help creating the conditions for new strategic thinking and gear CONCORD towards systemic change.

As a first step and in collaboration with the Smart CSOs core team, a group of pioneers was brought together to build their capacity and inspire them to become agents of change within CONCORD and its member organisations and thereby to become multipliers for system change strategies. To help CONCORD work on the new narrative, the pioneers were introduced to a proven methodology for storytelling designed to help rethink the role CONCORD has in achieving change.

While many among the CONCORD staff and membership now acknowledge the need to re-invent the ways how they influence changes in societies, the more difficult task seems to be to advance concretely on content discussion, on building consensus about key concepts and to start developing alternative strategies of influence. It now remains to be seen whether the initial dynamic and motivation will be maintained and whether the system change pioneers will succeed in steering and spreading a change of direction across the organisation.

How Greenpeace started to reflect on its role in achieving change through its process for the new brand guide

Greenpeace, founded in 1971, is one of the most prominent global campaigning organisations fighting against environmental destruction like climate change, over-

fishing, deforestation etc. Greenpeace is known for its strong campaigning culture and a sense of urgency and determination among its staff to save the world with little time left.

In 2011 Greenpeace first articulated the relationship between environmental destruction and the current socio-economic paradigm and therefore the need to aim for more fundamental change in its long-term global programme.

However, the organisation has since then continued its issue-based way of campaigning which on its own terms has proven so successful albeit not tackling the root causes and bringing success of short-term nature. Under this scenario, the then director of communications Inge Wallage, committed to the idea of a paradigm shift also through her involvement in the Smart CSOs Lab, wanted to use her influence in the area of communications to start shifting the organisation's culture from one where Greenpeace campaigners mainly see themselves as the heroes fighting to save the world towards a culture where Greenpeace sees itself as collaborators, inspirers and learners in a transition process of systemic change.

With the help of acclaimed storyteller Jonah Sachs a storytelling workshop was organised in 2013 to concretely develop a new Storytelling Brand Guide as part of the Global Communications Strategy, which the organisation had adopted. The resulting Storytelling Brand Guide was a first attempt as part of the new Global Programme to move Greenpeace from organisation-centric to audience-centric communications, where the organisation's role is reduced to articulating a meaningful vision for a better world, mobilising, inspiring and empowering Greenpeace supporters to take action themselves. The project started with a small group of devoted change agents and then continued with key leaders, who were to ensure that it would find its way into the organisation. *Playing the politics* was crucial in this regard because in order to take a hold in a large organisation such as Greenpeace the project needed support of a few true 'game changers' in leading positions to avoid falling back into default mechanisms. Also, passion and audacity were required to keep on following endeavours that were perceived as too radical by some in the organisation. It is still early days to know whether the new brand guide will effectively support shifting Greenpeace's campaigns from a focus on fighting single issues and symptoms to a more a holistic approach of taking action at the root cause level of environmental destruction and climate change, including changes in the socio-economic system and individual lifestyles.

"Changing our organisation is a pre-condition for changing the system!"

– Olivier Consolo

"Through the support of the Smart CSOs community I felt that I should continue my quest within Greenpeace to try and do things differently."

– Inge Wallage

An emerging common system change story translated from diverse languages

The people who come together in the Smart CSOs Lab have quite diverse backgrounds and origins and don't always speak the same language, but they are sharing many elements of a common story that unite the Great Transition, the Commons, the de-growth and the solidarity economy discourses (and others). Some of these story elements are:

- We can build an economic system that provides sufficient material wellbeing to be equitably shared by 9 billion people while leaving sufficient resources for future generations. A happier and better society will emerge from a refocus from material and economic wealth to spiritual and social wealth.
- Cooperation and collaboration are as natural to humans as is competition. In an economy that focuses much more on humans' predisposition and will to collaborate, humans and the planet will thrive. A redefined concept of *freedom* is the right of all humans and future generations to equitably share the resources of our planet.
- While we still need to pursue the opportunities of more efficient and environmentally friendly technologies, we need to focus much more on the root causes of environmental destruction and support a cultural and economic transformation away from today's consumerism and narrow-minded national economic interest.
- Together as humanity and planetary citizens we have to take care of the earth's resources and distribute them fairly, leaving a rich planet for future generations. We will create a rich and thriving global community if we share our abundant and our scarce commons. It enriches our life if we hold multiple levels of identity (local, regional and planetary).
- While historic inequalities and injustices require more economic transfers from rich countries to poorer countries and the support in using the resources in a meaningful way, the main focus in our fight for global justice and sustainability is to collaborate with change agents across the planet to create the foundations and the cultural shift that brings us on a path towards an eco-solidarity economy based on the commons as a structural principle.
- If civil society concentrates on and lives the values it wants to see in the world, it can be an example for and a leading actor in a cultural transformation towards planetary solidarity, cooperation and simpler living.
- If civil society across its sectors learns how to unite forces for a deeper transformation of the current political and economic institutions, it can tackle much more effectively the multiple urgent crises it is facing.

4.2 Examples focused on the organisational change process

Changing an organisation to work on system change is far from being an easy task. Most civil society organisations are deeply entrenched in the current system. We might irritate partners and constituencies if we don't fulfil their expectations and we have a reputation and trust to lose. Most available funding schemes are far from supporting the type of uncertain work needed for long-term system change. But the most difficult part is to change the organisation's culture, its structure and way of doing things. It requires a change in mind-sets and developing the right capacities.

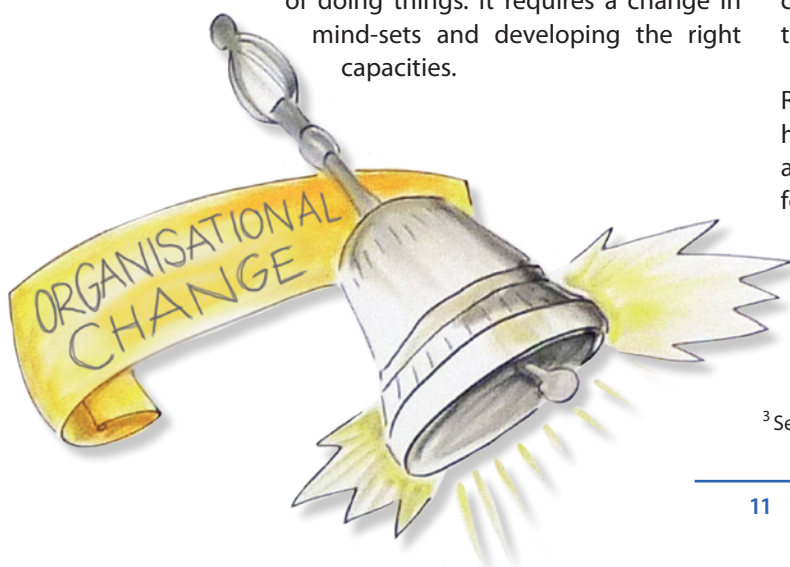
Some organisations are pioneering the types of processes needed to make organisations fulfil their potential as change agents for system change. These are invaluable experiences and learning to draw from:

How Tearfund has started a journey from single issue to economic system change

Tearfund is a UK Christian relief and development agency founded in 1968 working through advocacy and on the ground in over 50 countries.

In 2012 advocacy director Paul Cook came across Kate Raworth's *doughnut model*³ for a safe and just space for humanity. The framework demonstrates that sustainable development must be based on both a social justice foundation and the respect of the planet's environmen-

³ See also www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/



tal boundaries. It helped crystallise concerns which had been building in his mind for some time; that the traditional model of development based on consumption-driven growth was not *fit for purpose* in a future of climate change, rising inequality and population growth. He was also aware that the department's traditional advocacy model of focussing on single-issue policy processes was not always achieving the scale of changes required to meet these challenges – with the failure of the 2009 Copenhagen Summit in the UN Climate Change Conference negotiation process being a particularly strong example. He led the department to consider what would need to happen in order for humanity to meet the interconnected challenges of the on-going environmental and social crises.

“Giving people enough space to change their own mental paradigms was really important.”
– Sarah Anthony

As a result, Tearfund's advocacy team decided to move their advocacy work from an issue-based focus towards promoting a holistic transformation to a society that works for both planet and people. In order to find out how exactly this could be done an inclusive transformative process was started. While using a model of

co-creation and consensus decision-making generated more ownership of the process amongst staff, it also proved time-consuming and exhausting and created uncertainty that needed to be managed. Encouraging people to reflect and question their mental paradigms proved to be a slowly evolving process that cannot be enforced from the top down. Continuously questioning the status quo and engaging in system thinking is a complex and uncomfortable challenge that bears the temptation to fall back into old patterns of thinking and working.

Nevertheless the outcome of the process was a commitment to a new strategic direction which would imply two major shifts: transforming internal organisational structures to live the values of social change and embrace a broader understanding of advocacy work that is based on movement building, communication and engagement at the grassroots level. The next step is now for the advocacy team to engage and include the rest of the organisation in the process and to align Tearfund's institutional structures and practices with a system change approach. It will particularly be interesting to see how the advocacy department will engage and include the rest of the organisation in the process and how they can manage to align their overall structures and practices with their new strategic vision.

How DEEEP started a transformational action experiment

DEEEP is a support mechanism to the Development Awareness Raising and Education Forum (DARE Forum), the development education working group of CONCORD, the European Confederation of Development NGOs.

The project's new phase, DEEEP4, was recently set up as a *transformational action experiment* resulting from the acknowledgement in the DARE Forum⁴ (among them prominently Tobias Troll, who is also engaged in the Smart CSOs Lab) that the development sector is stuck in a crisis of identity: The old paradigms of *developing the South* do not work anymore in a world that faces common global challenges like climate change. Moving from charity to justice implies moving from policy work to much deeper engagement in political and transformational discussions, and stronger linking with movements and populations around the globe.

As part of the action experiment all DEEEP activities, both project actions and internal procedures, follow this transformative vision. For instance DEEEP's HR policies experiment with non-traditional management methods; and procurement is assessed against high environmental and social standards. Moving away from a conventional focus on institutional policy work, DEEEP co-organised the Building a Global Citizen Movement conference in Johannesburg convening more than 200 participants from all sectors of civil society to explore how the emergence of a global citizen movement working towards real system change can be catalysed and/or supported.

An inclusive vision and project design process, both before the start of the project with its stakeholders and, once started, with staff, was essential to create joint ownership and understanding of DEEEP's system change agenda. The challenge is now to live up to these high ambitions: How to allocate sufficient time to experimentation and learning in daily actions, how to value and capitalise the learning within the project team and beyond? Also, collaboration with new and unknown stakeholders, a crucial element toward the creation of a broad, transformational movement, is complex and difficult to maintain once a joint activity is over.

“We believe that emancipatory engagement with citizens has to move from the margins to the very core of the development agenda, because what is development about if not responsible global citizenship?”
– Tobias Troll

⁴ See also: www.deeep.org/what-is-dare-.html

4.3 Examples focused on strategies for emergence



A transition to a radically different economic system (the eco-solidarity economy) is nothing that can be planned by an individual or result from top-down, pre-conceived strategic plans. The economy is a highly complex system that can only radically change through emergence. Emergence happens when “separate, local efforts connect with each

other as networks, then strengthen as communities of practice. Suddenly and surprisingly a new system emerges at a greater level of scale. This system of influence possesses qualities and capacities that were unknown in the individuals. It isn’t that they were hidden; they simply don’t exist until the system emerges. They are properties of the system, not the individual, but once there, individuals possess them. And the system that emerges always possesses greater power and influence than is possible through planned, incremental change. Emergence is how life creates radical change and takes things to scale.”⁵

Consequently, working on system change requires different civil society approaches than much of the traditional NGO work (like for example technical policy work or policy related campaigning) is currently delivering. To support the emergence of the new economic system, civil society groups need to find ways to connect, strengthen and illuminate the pioneers of the new system, thus increase the potential that the seeds of the new economy become systems of influence.

Some new initiatives are experimenting with new ways to find effective roles in the field of emergence:

“It is much more useful to tell a story about how we want to live and what we have to do to achieve a society that seems to us much more attractive than the one we have.” – Harald Welzer

How Futureperfect tells stories about real pioneers to start developing a counter-narrative

Futureperfect, a foundation based in Berlin and founded by social psychologist Harald Welzer, is working towards a sustainable society by way of telling stories about individuals, groups or companies that have already begun the transition towards a greener and more social society. What could simply be understood as a presentation of best practice cases in fact combines an emotional, identification-oriented form of communication with a focus on concrete and practicable paths into a different society.

The work of the foundation is based on the rationale that people will volunteer to change their everyday practices only if they have something positive to strive for, something more concrete than a CO₂ footprint. With their stories, the Futureperfect team hopes to inspire thoughts about a desirable future, to bring to mind the social implications that an ecological transformation will necessarily have, and to create a resilient network of pioneers of ecological change from different sectors of society.

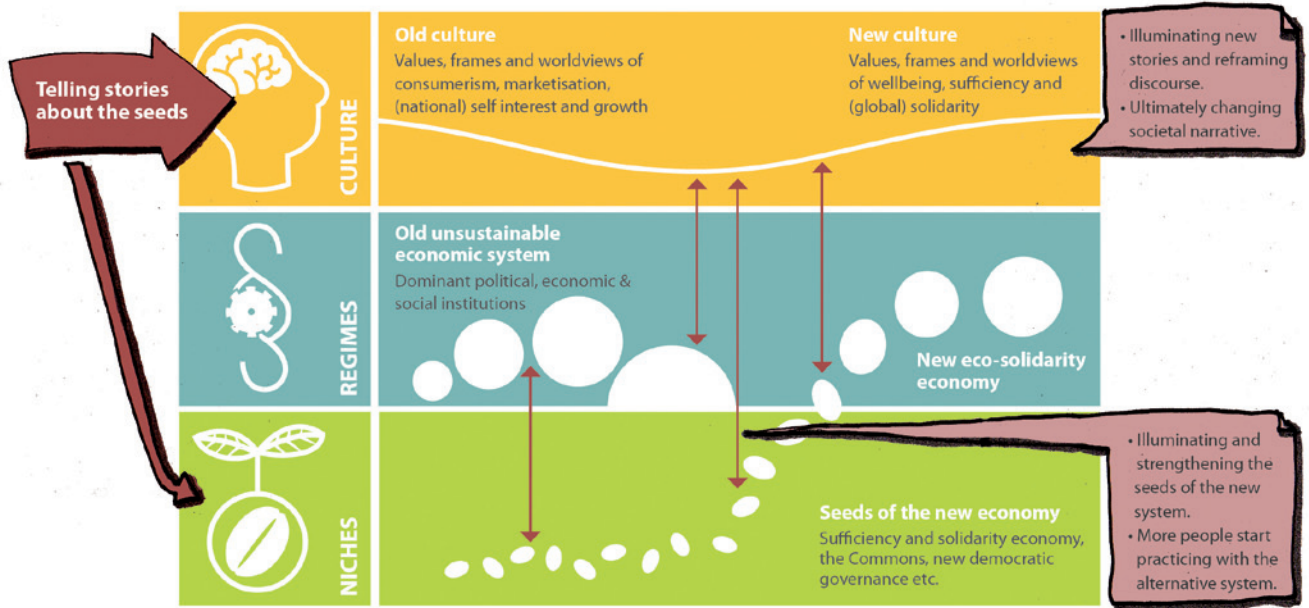
Futureperfect focuses exclusively on projects that combine a resource perspective with a change in social structure – rather than on innovations that are purely technical or optimize the resource use of a growth economy. The team specifically looks for individuals and projects that are seeking to build a less growth-oriented, more resilient, more resource-sensitive and more social society.

According to Luise Tremel, who is an editor with Futureperfect and also takes part in the Smart CSOs Lab, the main recognition in the foundation’s work is that its kinds of stories appeal to people; they motivate people to become active on their own accord. Because the stories are usually not too moralistic and not necessarily about saving the world – but rather about being involved in a reasonably-sized, concrete project–, they make it easy for the readers and listeners to imagine becoming involved in or starting something similar.

In its work Futureperfect has benefited from being directed by social psychologist Harald Welzer, who had built strong ties with the German media over the years before setting up the foundation. Cooperation projects with a public TV station and one of the country’s most prominent newspapers have increased Futureperfect’s reach far beyond what their website could have achieved.

⁵ Wheatley, M. and Frieze, D. – Using Emergence to Take Social Innovation to Scale, The Berkana Institute.

Potential system effects of FUTUREPERFECT



How does this example work to support systemic change?

Applied to the multi-level model of change Future-perfect's storytelling approach simultaneously works at the levels of Culture and Niches. On the Culture level, it provides a counter-narrative to the existing expansionist and consumerist values and frames in society. On the Niches level the organisation makes clear links with the radical change agents by illuminating the stories about the seeds of the new system and by attracting more people to take part in the alternative practices. By bringing the stories together, the pioneers are encouraged to see themselves to be part of a bigger movement. The dynamics triggered at the two levels aim to reinforce each other with the hope that they ultimately open up opportunities for institutional change at the Regimes level.

How an academic became an activist

The German social psychologist Harald Welzer was a keynote speaker at the Civil Society in Transition conference where he told us his story about why he started his own action research experiment aimed at illuminating promising stories of real transformative social and economic change beyond the current growth paradigm (Futureperfect).

He talked about his frustrations with the current climate change discourse, which according to him was dominated by hypothetical, theoretical and technocratic arguments. Its focus on arithmetic and apocalypse did not inspire people to take action on climate change.

For Welzer the green growth concept, as manifested in the German *energy transition* (*Energiewende*) project of substituting fossil fuels with renewable ener-

gy, is not an adequate response to the climate change challenge because it does not question the basic principles of our capitalist society, such as linear growth and technological progress, which are at the root of what has caused our global ecological crisis in the first place. Instead, current responses to climate change are framed within the same cultural model, such as simply replacing traditional energy providing systems with renewable energies. Welzer points out that as long as these technical solutions are not accompanied with a change in cultural norms leading to change in behaviour and life styles as well as a decrease in energy consumption levels, a transformation to a truly sustainable society will not be possible: "Renewables only make sense if you have a culture of less, not a culture of more".



But the story of growth and progress is deeply entrenched in the institutions and infrastructures of our society and in the activities of everyday life. According to the social psychologist, every drive on the *Autobahn* tells a story about mobility, every visit at the shopping centre a story about happiness, thus reinforcing dominant values and worldviews. What's more, Welzer points out that in a society based on the division of labour individuals are used to taking on different roles which lead them to easily engage in contradictory behaviour: People may be concerned about climate change (as one role), but do not actually transfer this information to adapt their behaviour in other spheres of life, which may be dominated by their role of pursuing security or status. Because of this *cognitive*

dissonance, Welzer argues that climate change statistics and apocalyptic scenarios can never lead to a fundamental change towards sustainable life styles. What we need instead is a counter-narrative of tangible, empowering alternatives to the dominant story of growth that has worked all too convincingly well for Western society up till now.

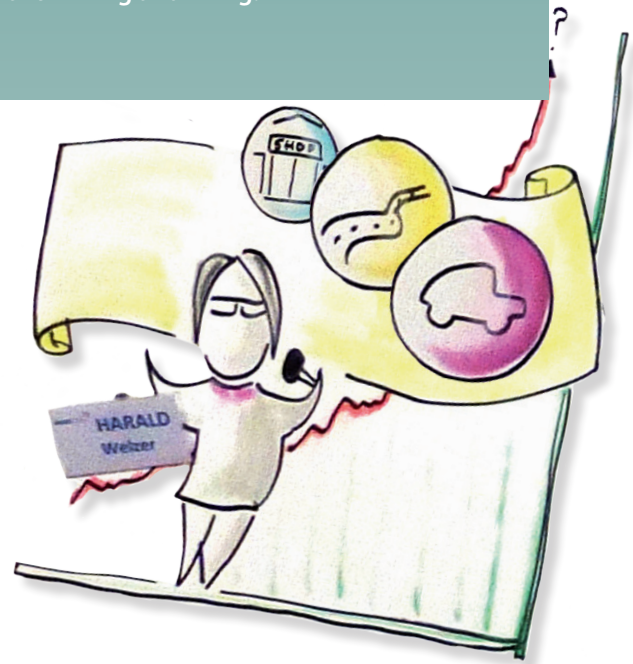
Harald Welzer's foundation Futureperfect has already started with building such a counter-narrative by telling stories about real life examples of pioneers practicing sustainable life styles or alternative economic models which are to provide and inspire others with new ways of thinking and living.

How local activist groups are supporting a systemic shift in the way business operates (Economy for the Common Good)

The Economy for the Common Good (ECG) is an economic model originally put forward by Christian Felber, co-founder of Attac Austria, in his book *Economy for the Common Good* in 2010. It is based on the idea that the incentive structure of our current economic system, which is profits and competition, is the common root cause of all our ecological, social and spiritual crises. The ECG is therefore proposing an accounting system for business that is focused on the common good instead of profit as the main goal as well as a whole vision for broader change in the economic system that would support the new type of business and its positive effects. ECG tackles all dimensions of business - social, environmental and economical - in order to create maximum transparency for all stakeholders. By compiling a so-called ECG balance sheet using 17 distinct parameters, companies are entering into a profound change process of rethinking and re-designing all their processes – from how fairly they treat their suppliers to how they cooperate with all their other stakeholders.

Since the beginning the ECG was rooted in the ideas of a whole range of members of Attac and importantly it was bringing businesses on board who were willing to experiment with the new accounting system. Already more than 1500 businesses, many of them medium sized and some large, are supporting and/or experimenting with the ECG balance sheet.

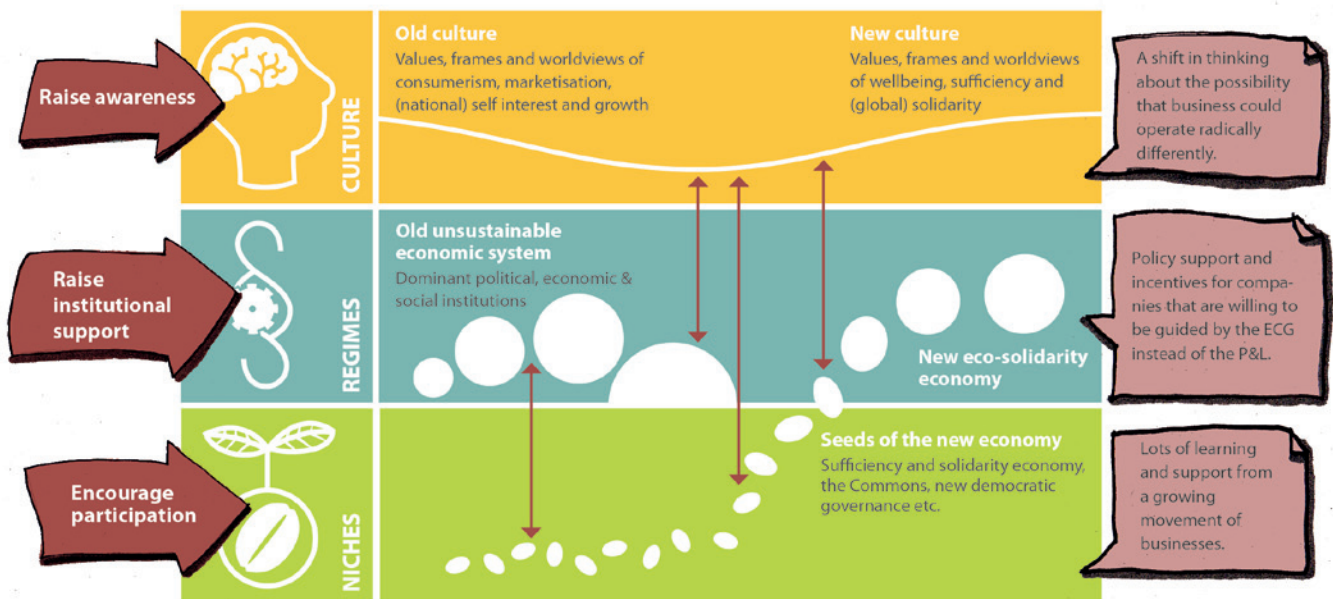
"Companies spend lots of money, time and brainpower to address all the dimensions of the ECG balance sheet and they can only get something out of that if civil society buys into the concept." – Hans Steisslinger



While the whole idea has been proposed and is being led by members of Attac, the implementation of the ECG model depends on local activist groups called ECG Energy Fields. They are composed of individual volunteers committed to the cause, who inform and educate the public about the ECG and invite civil society, communities and companies to participate.

Organisations which truly think systemically and serve the common good eventually have to be treated preferentially, e.g. by getting cheaper access to loans and paying lower taxes. This requires a massive rework of the legal and financial boundary conditions. All of this will result in deep system change, which – unless the movement is firmly grounded within the society – will not be brought about.

Potential system effects of the ECG Energy Fields



How does this example work to support systemic change?

The ECG Energy Fields follow a holistic approach working at all three levels of the multi-level model of change: They raise awareness for a change of the current economic system and inform about the ECG as an alternative model (Culture), approach companies to encourage them to experiment with the ECG balance sheet (Niches) and try to raise institutional support from political parties and municipalities (Regimes). The positive feedback loops between activities at the different levels are crucial. For instance, companies will only invest in the process of compiling a balance sheet if the ECG receives broad public support, manifest through public pressure, consumer buying decisions or legal and financial incentives. However, it is exactly the difficulty of reaching and engaging people that remains the main challenge for many Energy Fields.

How the Jamaica Plain New Economy Transition network connects and nurtures local change makers pursuing a common vision of a new economy

Jamaica Plain New Economy Transition (JP NET) is a neighbourhood network in Boston, USA, carrying out local projects for an economy that is in harmony with people and planet.

JP NET was started by Orion Kriegman who works at the Institute for Policy Studies and wanted to connect his abstract policy work on the New Economy with the lived concerns of his neighbours in Boston's district Jamaica Plain. Reaching out to neighbours door to door for the creation of a community project on a vacant city lot, he got in touch with other neighbour-led initiatives doing

similar work across Boston and they formed the network JP NET. An initial convening group hosted a *State of Our Neighbourhood* forum, bringing together over 20 civil society groups and more than 250 neighbours. This was followed with monthly potlucks to catalyse volunteer leadership on local initiatives that were geared toward engendering new cultural norms and lifestyle choices, for example launching a farmers market, a community orchard and a local currency experiment.

JP NET plays the role of connector and catalyst: it seeks to help innovative change makers in the neighbourhood understand that they are part of a large movement, and to support their projects with space, coaching, outreach and fundraising. The challenge therein is to find the right balance between pursuing specialized and focused pro-

jects while keeping the network's holistic vision of a socioeconomic transition. JP NET continuously hosts events bringing a diversity of people together to build trust and a growing sense of solidarity and community power – bridging race and class divides through focused relationship building work is a crucial aspect in this regard.

JP NET's projects provide important insights about how a socially and ecologically sustainable society can emerge from the grassroots. Currently the network is experimenting with how they can scale their activities to the regional level.

"The world is changing now and we can't wait to adapt to it." – Orion Kriegman

4.4 Examples focused on strategies to fight the system

System change is resisted by an elite and by institutions that are defending and often abusing their positions of excessive and uncontrolled power. As long as the groups who have an interest in the status quo continue to effectively control the system, the system change pioneers will not be able to institutionalise their new economic models. Campaigns of protest, confrontation and resistance are necessary elements of a portfolio of system change strategies.

Many NGOs are very good at campaigning for a particular policy goal and at mobilising sufficient public support to achieve their goal i.e. win the campaign. These campaigns are successful on their own terms – successful in achieving short-term well-defined wins that satisfy the NGO's funders and constituencies. However, most of them are not successful when looked at from a long-term perspective. By not tackling the root causes they are perpetuating the problems. Often they even contribute to strengthening the status-quo by repeating and confirming again and again that the world will be alright if we apply some better technology here to save CO₂ or if we transfer some more aid to the poor there.

Campaigns designed for systemic change need to have a much more long-term perspective and cannot define their success by some specific short-term policy outputs. Furthermore they need to focus on changing the logic of the debate by pointing at the root causes of the problems rather than the symptoms. And finally they need to help mobilising and speaking to people in many different parts of society, not only to those who are most affected or marginalised. The civil rights movement in the US or the anti slavery movement were successful when they were supported by people who were themselves

white or not slaves respectively.

Some new initiatives are experimenting with new types of campaigns that have a more long-term system change perspective. They make a conscious effort to change societal discourse and the logic of the debate towards the root causes of our systemic crises as well as trying to mobilise diverse ranges of societal groups:

How a new global campaigning network is fighting key leverage points in the system to change the logic of the debate (The Rules)

The Rules is a decentralised network of activists from all over the planet aiming to tackle the structural causes of poverty and inequality in the global economic and political system through innovative, transformational campaigns. It aims at connecting movements from the South and the North and at creating momentum on key systemic issues like for example the global system of tax havens.

Their recent campaign *City of London, the Tax Haven Capital of the World* exposed the City of London as a key player in the global system of tax havens and framed it as a root cause for global inequality and unsustainable power and wealth distribution.

The project was a first step in a process of trying to build a narrative around the tax haven system and its role in creating global inequality and poverty. The team at The Rules wanted to use the very active tax debate in the UK as a test ground; to see how easy it might be to try injecting a global angle and a new framing into an existing debate. In addition, by focussing on building support in the global south, they wanted to see how

responsive people would be to a) seeing the City of London as relevant to people in the South, and b) trying to reverse the usual power frames – i.e. the global north saves the global south.

The campaign used new values and frames, specifically looking at what the key

"The world is as we've made it - it is a reflection of our human consciousness. So the state of our consciousness at some level has to be integral to how we think about questions of systemic change." – Martin Kirk

components to the dominant frames are and challenging them as well as trying to present the economy as something that CREATES inequality and poverty, i.e. re-framing away from dominant assumptions about how and why the economy works the way it does.

As Martin Kirk (Head of Strategy at The Rules) explains,

the campaign had only limited success because there weren't enough resources to sustain a long-term campaign. Their analysis is that the basic framing was strong as far as it went and showed signs of being able to be well heard and that it would have been a good strategy if they had had the resources to push it harder and longer.

The story of a *smart* activist who became *wise*

Martin Kirk is the Head of Strategy at the international campaigning network The Rules and was keynote speaker at the Civil Society in Transition conference. He told us the story of his journey as an activist who at some point started to question the current international development NGO paradigm, which he eventually left to start experimenting with systemic approaches to the fight for global justice.

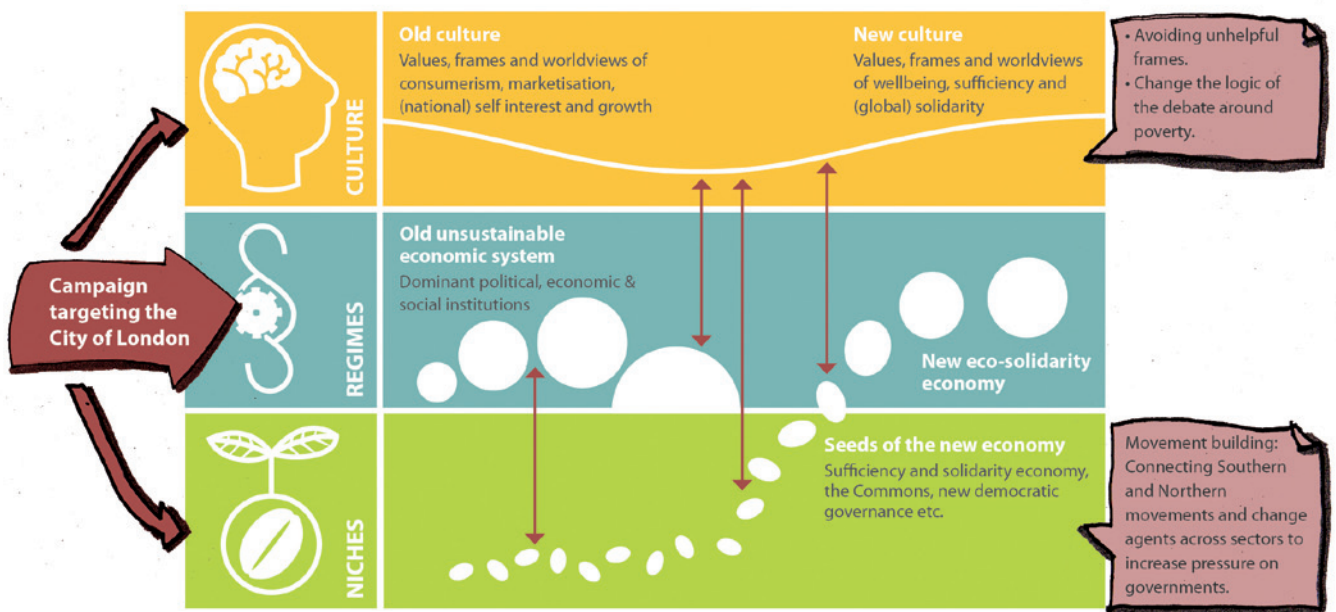
His journey started when he, then still at Oxfam, joined the Common Cause working group (valuesandframes.org) and learned about the virtues of using intrinsic rather than extrinsic values and frames in NGO strategies and campaigns to achieve structural and long-lasting change. Consistently applying these insights to his work turned out to become a profound personal challenge of questioning his long-standing beliefs and convictions. One example was the global charity industry, which he had long taken for granted as the natural place to do good and now came to see as fundamentally counterproductive and hypocritical in its quest for global justice. This disillusion led him to a long "sometimes torturous, sometimes enlightening" journey of re-evaluating his personal standpoints and finding his new place in civil society.

On a spiritual level, it made him switch from *being smart* to *being wise*, meaning to let go of today's fetish for innovative, technocratic knowledge, and instead to look back at what humanity has found to be true over time. He notes, for instance, that basically all world religions have in common the belief that life is about the intrinsic value of compassion, of loving and caring for each other. Dismantling and overcoming a global system that is, to the contrary, built on unsustainable extrinsic values he sees as the main challenge for civil society today.

This journey led him to join The Rules, a citizen-powered campaigning organisation addressing the systemic and structural causes of global inequality.



Potential system effects of Tax Haven Capital of the World campaign



How does this example work to support systemic change?

While opening a window of opportunity for some fundamental global policy shift in the area of global tax havens at the Regimes level, the campaign was simultaneously aimed at creating positive feedback loops at the Culture and Niches level. In support of a cultural transformation The Rules attempted to change the logic of the debate around issues like poverty by avoiding unhelpful frames that evoke the idea of charity (like e.g. the term *aid*) but rather framing poverty as something created by human beings with an underlying system logic that humanity in fact is able to change. At the Niches level the campaign breaks down issue silos and connects Southern and Northern movements as well as civil society from different sectors around the structural issue of tax havens. These effects on the Culture and Niches level should help to eventually unlock the institutional level through increased pressure on governments and to eventually eliminate the global system of tax havens.

How a group of grassroots campaigners are fighting advertising and want to create a critical discourse (Office for the Abolishment of Commercial Ads and for the Good Life)

The *Office for the Abolishment of Commercial Ads and for the Good Life* is a campaign brought to life in 2013 by *Impuls – Agency for Applied Utopias*. It works towards the long-term vision that societal structures should enable rather than prevent sustainable and self-determined lifestyles, e.g. based on sufficiency rather than consumer-

ism. The campaigning project was started as an attempt to initiate a critical discourse among the German public on how being exposed to omnipresent advertising in society promotes consumerist and competitive values. Simultaneously the campaign aims to influence local politics by demanding that one of Berlin's districts be made advertising-free.

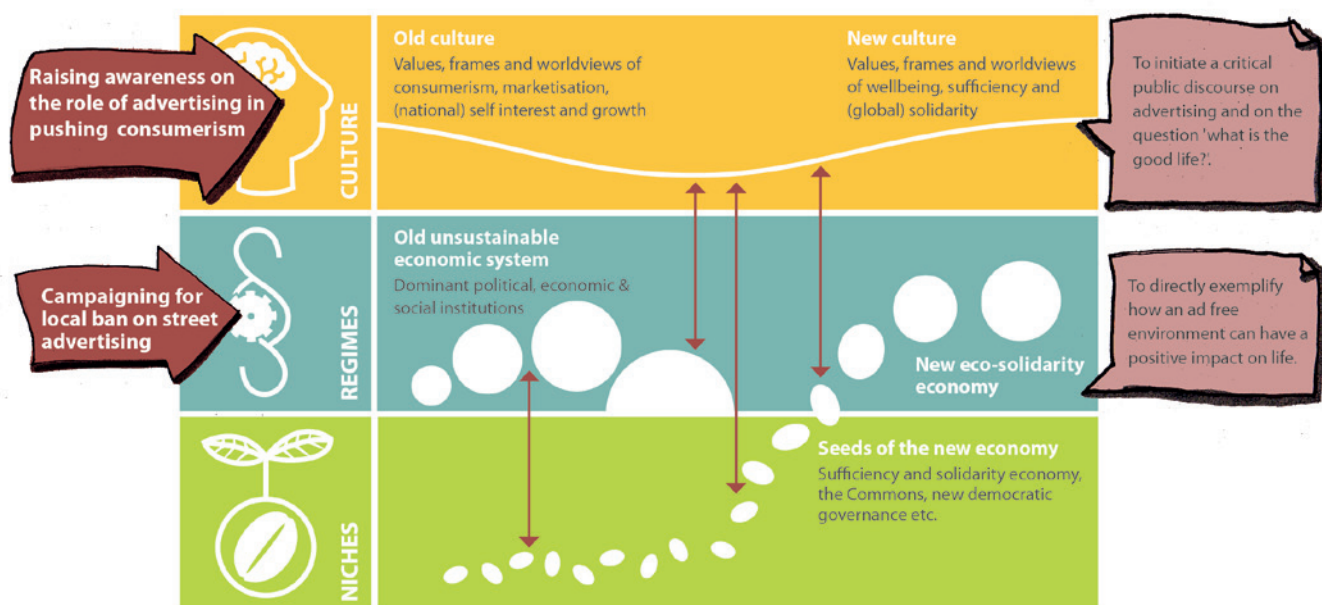
The *Office* initiated a resident petition for an advertising-free public space to be filed for at the local district government – addressing the lowest democratic level. In doing so, the aim was to reach beyond expert circles already

dealing with issues of a post-growth society and aim to make the concept accessible to more social classes.

While the *Office* has been successful in raising awareness on many critical facets of advertisement as well as mobilizing people for immediate change at the institutional level, it seems more difficult to find ways on how to get beyond the topic of advertisement and bring about the long-term vision of transformation towards broad social change in values and life styles.

"The idea behind our action learning process was to try a different approach of campaigning - transformative campaigning - which is based on three pillars: strategy, participation and inner transformation." – Melanie Hernandez

Potential system effects of the Office for the Abolishment of Commercial Ads



How does this example work to support systemic change?

Applied to the multi-level model the campaign addresses both the Culture and the Regimes level. Through media and local activities the group of campaigners initiated a critical public discourse on advertising with the intention to question the rationale of advertising, consumerism and economic growth and to make way for alternatives based on sufficiency and the *good life*. In order to create political leverage at the Regimes level, the Office filed a resident petition for an advertising-free public space at the local district government and lobbied the *German Enquete Commission on growth, prosperity and quality of life*. Ideally, the dynamics triggered at the two levels should mutually reinforce each other: Informing and mobilizing people through an on-going public discourse should increase democratic participation and put pressure on the Regimes level to ultimately change rules and regulations. On the other hand, action and changes achieved on the political level were to stimulate an even wider dialogue on the issue, expanding and intensifying a change in values and lifestyles at and beyond the local level.

4.5 Examples focused on supporting the emergence of (global) citizen movements

Global processes like UNFCCC and Rio+20 are severely damaged and almost paralysed by governments putting their short-term national economic interests first, leaving the common interest of international collaboration behind. They are unlikely to achieve anything else than window dressing (under the current scenario). Nevertheless thousands of NGOs put much of their resources into participating in these processes as they don't see any clear alternatives. The new UN led SDG (sustainable development goals) and Post-2015 processes have become the latest NGO hope ending up stuck in the paradigm.

During these times of deepening crises, a Great Transition can only succeed with the emergence of global citizen movements that within all their diversity are expressing a common project of systemic change towards a new eco-solidarity economy. Yet, over the last few decades strengthening of grassroots political movements has played a subordinate role to policy advocacy and partnership with governmental agencies and business.

Despite the need for synergy, the potential among existing movements is severely limited by current political realities. Social movements seeking to ally in the global justice movement, including indigenous, feminist, labour, peasant, human rights, environmental, and socialist groups, have difficulty moving beyond protest to articulate a common proactive agenda. Issues, priorities, and even goals often conflict.

"Our belief as organisation is that no idea, no matter how compelling, is going to create change – whether it's global citizenship, the Commons or Great Transition. We need real places, real practices and real engagement in order to make change."

– Alexa Bradley

Civil society can play a crucial role on various fronts to help facilitate the emergence and development of citizen movements. In order for such movements to crystallize, civil society must overcome the current *politics of opposition* and develop new models of leadership and collaboration. Some initiatives are experimenting with such new ways:

How On the Commons is working to create the conditions for a Commons movement

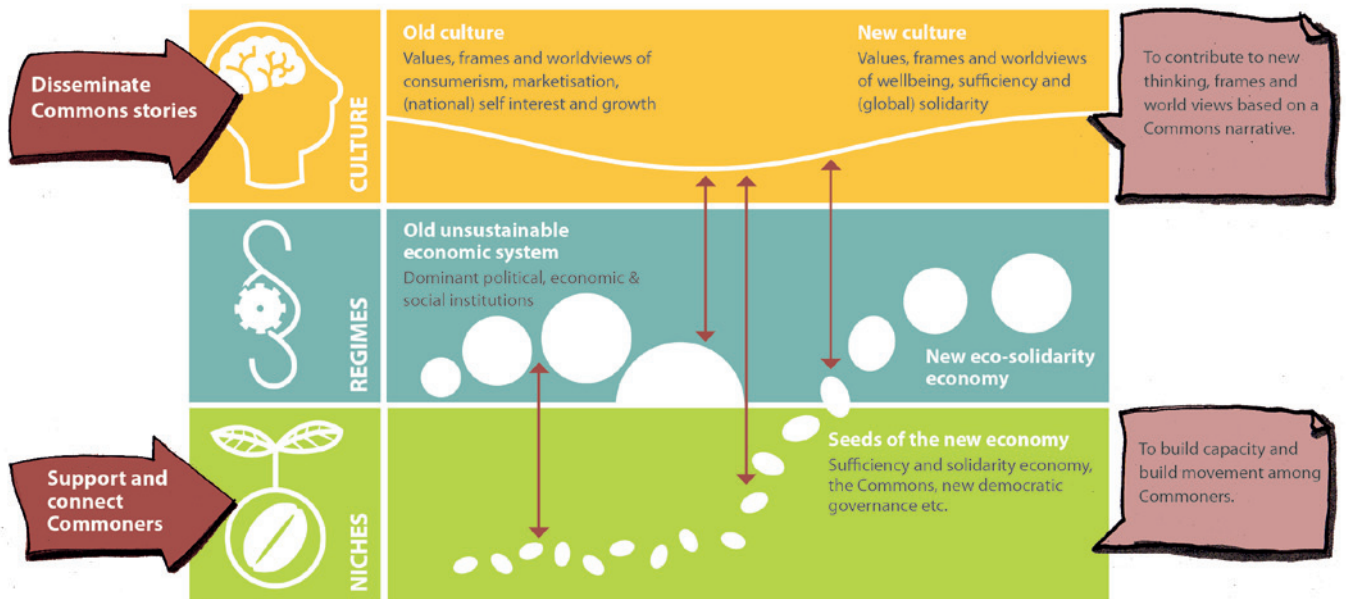
On The Commons (OTC) is a US-based movement strategy centre, fostering the thinking, solution-making and leadership for enabling communities and activists to intervene creatively in the ecological and economic transitions underway.

OTC believes that the Commons offer a generative, crosscutting, radical and practical paradigm for rethinking our relationship to resources, eco-systems, governance and one another. Moreover it provides an arena of vital citizen engagement for bringing about transformative change. The organisation works on three levels: to bring visibility to Commons stories and efforts through their website and speeches, to catalyse and incubate Commons approaches and solution-making in specific projects and to develop Commons leadership and leadership models, such as networks and self-organizing.

Alexa Bradley (Programme Director at On The Commons) explains that the OTC team has continued to refine and re-invent their practices as *animators* of the Commons. They had to recognise the extent to which most people are conditioned by existing paradigms of change (including funders) and provide *handrails* to enable greater understanding and involvement in their work. OTC continually explores how to not only catalyse but sustain change, particularly change that is based on new thinking in an environment shaped by dominant cultural worldviews and interests.

As a network of diverse stakeholders, OTC breaks through the issue silos, and focuses attention on deeper system problems and solutions, thus creating the conditions for transformative movement building.

Potential system effects of On the Commons



How does this example work to support systemic change?

Applied to the multi-level model, OTC's activities aim to illuminate and support significant and promising shifts in thought (Culture) and action (Niches) to ultimately trigger change in institutional settings (Regimes). Because the Commons is a non-market based system of value and relationship, OTC offers concrete examples of worldviews and life styles beyond commercialisation and self-interest, thus constituting a new cultural narrative. At the same time OTC creates capacity and space for Commons projects to experiment with organisational forms and governance structures for community engagement, co-stewardship and democratic participation at the Niches level.

How the Universal Citizenship Passport campaign experiments with movement building for a world political space

The Organisation for Universal Citizenship (OCU) is a project initiated in 2011 by the Utopia Movement, France Libertés – Fondation Danielle Mitterrand and Emmaus International Movement. It aims to create a new political space at a worldwide level. It promotes the convergence between the fundamental laws of different countries by relying on common values, thus creating a common political space and identity of global citizenship. As part

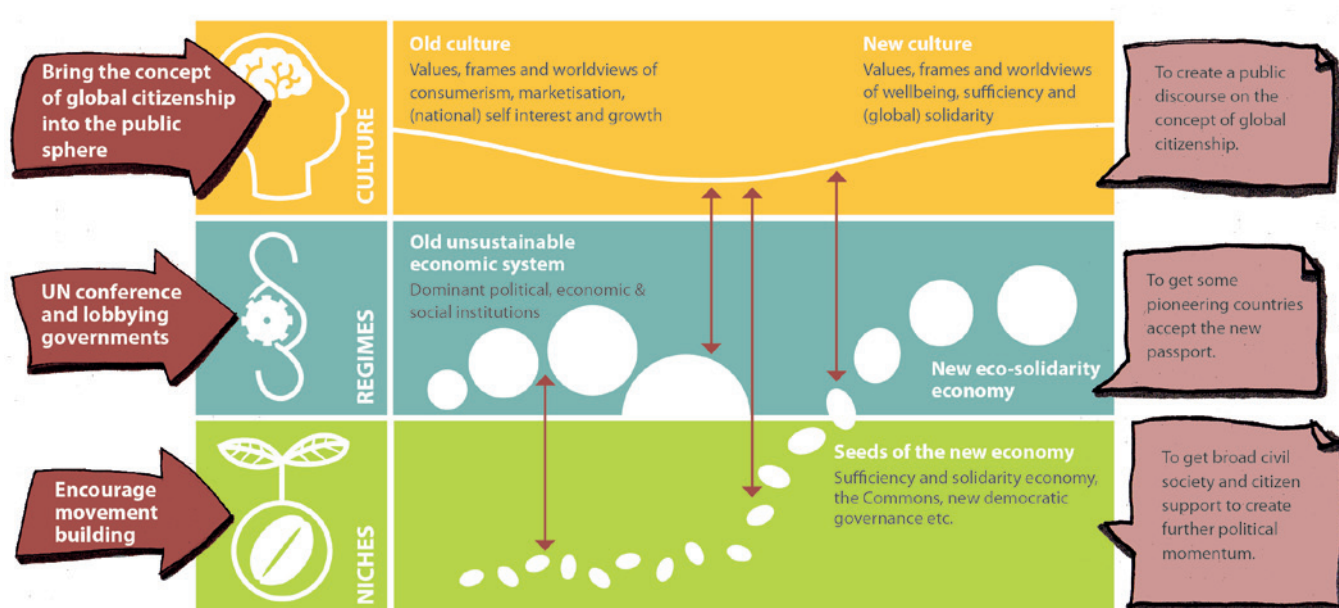
of OCU, the Universal Citizenship Passport campaign attempts to create a debate on the issue of freedom of movement and settlement through the creation and implementation of a legal Universal Citizenship Passport and the call for a UN conference on this issue. To achieve this, OCU has built alliances with civil society associations to negotiate with states and push governments towards legal changes. Contacts have already been made with the president of South Korea and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador and Uruguay. The campaign has created great attention among civil society circles for example at the World Social Forum

in Tunis in 2013. It has great potential to create a new discourse on the prospect of creating a global political space and to make the currently intangible idea of a global citizenship something realistic to achieve. However, the current main focus of the campaign is on trying to achieve policy change through conventional channels like political parties and the United Nations. Due to the difficulties of this approach, such as the contradiction in politics between long-term perspectives and short-term elections and the mistrust between CSOs and political

parties, it will be interesting to see if this will create the desired direct successes or whether this is not a much longer process of cultural change at the level of world-views and identity.

"We believe that the 'constitution' of a world political space requires the convergence of nations and people that are sharing common or close values." – David Flacher

Potential system effects of the Universal Citizenship Passport campaign



How does this example work to support systemic change?

The campaign attempts to achieve change at all three levels of the multi-level model of change: (1) It supports a cultural transformation by proposing a new concept of citizenship – worldwide citizenship – which is to activate a discourse on our current concept of citizenship and; (2) it works at the institutional level through efforts to reshape current national constitutions and laws; (3) it contributes to the creation of an international movement for global citizenship and a world political space by connecting different civil society actors at the Niches level.

5. Spreading and growing the seeds – the challenge ahead

The above stories of civil society are the seeds of what should become a much more visible and more generalised practice within civil society and activism. There are of course many more examples of new stories in activism to be told. In the Smart CSOs Lab we will identify further promising new civil society practices aimed at systemic change and report about them on the Smart CSOs webpage (smart-csos.org; see our blog on theory and practice).

Some of the conclusions about future work in the Smart CSOs Lab that were shared by many at the Civil Society in Transition conference are:

5.1 Creating the knowledge (research and discussions)

We will continue our discussions to gain more clarity on what type of strategies are most promising to support system change and what approaches are most promising to change our organisations and shape the collaborations suited for this type of work.

Which social change strategies?

We will get further to the bottom of the question which different strategic approaches (campaigns, processes, initiatives) can mutually reinforce each other and how they can develop strong positive feedback loops to support the Great Transition. Furthermore, we will look to gain more clarity on the question of what strategies of emergence it needs to create the new system and what type of campaigns to fight the old system should complement this work, also to help avoid that the old power structures kill or co-opt the promising seeds of the new system. The three-level-model will provide a useful framework for these discussions.

Which type of organisation and how to change the ones we have?

There is a large body of knowledge about organisational change theories and practice. Which approaches seem

useful for our purpose of making organisations fit for system change? What are the important conditions for an organisation to become successful in driving system change? What structures, processes and capacities need to be in place? How to bring people along for a big organisational shift? What are approaches for individuals who are not at the top of the organisation to bring others on board and drive change from bottom-up?

Which collaborations are needed and how to shape them?

How can different types of civil society organisations best collaborate to become more effective towards the Great Transition? How can NGOs support grassroots movements and how can both learn from each other? How can civil society work, support and learn from the radical innovators who are experimenting with the new system? How could relationships with funders change? What collaborative models between different networks and civil society sectors work and how can they be best facilitated to develop better collaboration and overcome current silo thinking and silo work?



5.2 Creating the conditions (putting things into practice)

Our collective challenge will be to become more ambitious in creating the conditions ourselves in our organisations and networks to bring the theoretical ideas to life and/or spread examples that have worked elsewhere. We need to be smart in doing this and discuss how we can support each other. This practical work will also be the best source for further knowledge creation (action research).

Developing capacity

In the Smart CSOs Lab we will explore ways we can better support organisational change. Following on our previous experiences we have had with developing capacity in civil society, we will now go a step further and create a state of art learning programme built on best available practice to engage people in organisations in real effective change that doesn't stop on Monday morning.

5.3 Creating a new activism?

Current and future members of the Smart CSOs community are invited to engage in a dialogue about how we can raise the game and become a more visible force in civil society. After two years of our collective learning experiment as a community of practice, the Civil Society in Transition conference was a major mile-stone. It showed us all that working on system change isn't something utopian that we can talk about but will never be able to put into practice. It showed us that some courageous far-sighted people are really doing it.

The next challenge will be to explore how we can engage broader parts of society towards deeper systemic change. The conditions in the world for this are better than ever. Everywhere on the planet people are fed up with a system that so many sense is not working for them, that is not working for nature and neither it is for future generations.

The invitation is open to more activists and change agents to join us on this journey. To grow and to spread the seeds of the new system change activism and to plant new seeds. Together we can become a driving force for the Great Transition.

GREAT TRANSITION BUEN VIVIR GRE
SOLIDARITY ECONOMY PA
SYSTEMIC CHANGE
THE COM
BUEN VIVIR DE-GROWTH
ECO-SOLIDARITY ECONOMY
BUEN V
VTH SOLIDARITY EC
PARADIGM SHIFT ECO-SOLIDA
SOLIDARITY ECONOMY ECON
PARADIGM SHIFT
SOLIDARITY ECONOMY THE COMMONS
BUEN VIVIR