*A Model for Improved NGO and Related Capacity Building in
Developing Nations: The Case for a Balanced, Collaborative Approach by
Host Societies and External Agents*

By

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Introduction

For over two decades development specialists have spanned the globe, working to improve the lot of the majority of nations and people on planet Earth experiencing debilitating poverty and its various after-effects. As they and the institutions they represent have done so, the vast majority operated within the "underlying assumption (that) developing countries lacked important skills and abilities—and that outsiders could fill these gaps with quick injections of know-how" (Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, Malik, 2002, p. 2).

A primary focus of development as a consequence has centered on helping developing societies in building organizations in the public, private, and civil sectors posessing sufficient organizational capacity or "capability…to achieve what (the organization) sets out to do" (Fowler, 2002, p. 75-77, in Edwards and Fowler). As an extension of what was termed "the Washington consensus", this development strategy or approach directed resources toward development of organizations and institutions capable of fostering democratic governance, private enterprise, and civil society in the so-called Southern nations of the world (Knight, Chigudu, Tandon, 2002; Williamson, 2004).

In the pursuit of comprehensive, tri-part development, civil society has often been viewed as the "keystone" to development success, representing "a galvanizing force for positive social change…its organizations represent(ing) different voices, perspectives, and values" in the developing society (Cheema, 2005, p.14). As a result, a significant amount of capacity building in support of development has centered on improving the abilities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and non-governmental development organizations (NDGOs) not only managerially but also as accountable agents for all societal stakeholders, especially the poor, the marginalized, and the otherwise disenfranchised (Jordan and van Tuijl, 2006).

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Building organizational and thus societal capacity in the developing world has proven and remains difficult at best, but it is complicated even more by the fact that development and capacity building models are products of and are biased by their Northern and core roots (Bush and Alessio, 2008). As a result efforts to develop NGO and NDGO, as well as other, capacities may undermine local capacity, distort domestic and indigenous priorities, ignore locally based priorities, and direct resources to activities serving donor and Northern interests over those prevalent in the host nation or community (Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, and Malik, 2002). As Holmen notes, too, the brutal bargain for the developing nation, for targeted populations, and for targeted communities is that modern

> *(d)evelopment always entails a break with the past. Whereas it may solve certain problems, it also creates new ones, some of which might not be manifest until after considerable time has passed. But development also has a more immediate price— institutions, established knowledge, social security systems, and ways of doing things as well as people's identities, relationships, and social positions are in flux. While there are winners, there are also losers—at least in the short run. Development, therefore, may not even be desired. It often meets resistance, especially when initiated or orchestrated from "above" or outside. (2010, pp.1-2)*

Or as Gonzalez observed, the outcome or result of development directed from the one and the dominant side of the process is often "modernization-within-dependency" (Gonzalez, 1980), that is, development of benefit more to the external agents of change but of minimal benefit to the target society. It does not change the essential reality of a world of nations defined as core or primary, peripheral, or for some at best semi-peripheral to the core beneficiaries of modern development processes (Wallerstein, 2000). Absent sufficient voice and influence over the processes, the institutions, and the key actors driving the development of their nations and their lives, the result often is Barber's *jihad*—the "rabid response to colonialism and imperialism and their economic children, capitalism and modernity" (1995, p. 11).

This is not to say that development and its foundation, capacity building, is either unnecessary or doomed by experiential biases to date. Quite the contrary, the author believes wholeheartedly in the core principles central to the theory of development, contending that civil society built upon and through competent NGOs is critical to improved individual, family, community, and national life. This premise is based on the idea that as citizens each of us "lives through institutions" (Bellah, et.al., 1991), and as institutions in developing societies, NGOs can be essential intermediary forces on behalf of citizens and society, working with other critical institutions to secure a better life for citizens.

If the lives of those in the developing part of the planet are to measure up to the standards normal in their more developed counterparts, however, the organizational entities upon which they rely must improve in terms of their purpose, performance, and capacity to contribute to individual, community, and societal life (Bush, 2010). The difficulty is in developing capacity building approaches that, rather than serving the

interests of already empowered and benefited interests, attend to the needs and interests of the less empowered and the disadvantaged.

Rather than exclusive reliance on models of capacity development rooted in Northern and core societies, effective individual, organizational, and societal capacity development in developing contexts must be balanced with local realities and seriously take into consideration the perspectives, values, and aspirations of local stakeholders. Capacity building conceived in this light extends to and recognizes the "critical importance of decentralized village and community-based organizations and units, right down to the individualized household" as not only appropriate in but also essential participants in and contributors to the capacity building effort (Browne, 2002, p. 1). Identification, development, encouragement, and inclusion of "civic revolutionaries" (Henton, Melville, and Walesh, 2004) from throughout targeted societies is in the paper regarded as the best means for unleashing capacity "in a catalytic way (triggering) a positive chain reaction throughout developing societies" (Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, Malik, 2002, p.).

As Smillie and Hailey note, constructing capacity building with host countries and local representatives included on the design and delivery ends makes intuitive sense, given that in the end "(a)ll organizations are formed by and within the context of a country's history, culture, and religion" (2001). Building from this premise, the remainder of this paper discusses some of the key provisions for collaboratively constructive effective capacity building programming for NGOs in a variety of developing nations and regional contexts. At present, the envisioned model is built conceptually around collaboration and networking theory (Bush, Harris, McClusky, 1997; Bush, 1998, 2008, 2010; Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, Malik, 2002), learning community theory (Bolam, et.al., 2005; Larson and Barnes, 2001), civil society/social capital theory (Zimmer and Friese, n.d), and world-system theory (Bush, 2010; Wallerstein, 2000), and axiomatic values/ethics theory (Edwards and Sen, 2000) among others.

Based on the author's experiences directly and indirectly developing capacity building institutions in both the United States and international settings in Oceania, the Caribbean South America, and Africa, the following section offers a few observations regarding key capacity issues related to contemporary international development, and the final section offers the author's recommendations for development of learning communities for the pursuit of more effective development and capacity building. The recommended actions involve actors in collaborative strategy development, jointly conceived and delivered program development, and more effective delivery of capacity building involving host stakeholders and external actors as partners in capacity building.

Key Issues When Considering, Designing, and Delivering NGO Capacity Building

Development and its cousin, capacity building, are replete with problems, issues, and challenges. Some are well known and have been widely analyzed and discussed. In the sections that follow, three are discussed that are important and often overlooked when considering how best to pursue and achieve successful development and capacity

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building. These are the integrated consideration of the issues of NGO lifecycles, mission typology, and distributive equity as grounds for planning and delivering better capacity building to voluntary and NGO organizations in the Southern world.

1. The Impact of Life Cycles on NGOs and NGO Capacity Building

It is generally understood that, just as is true for human individuals, both organizations and entire societies evolve through life cycles. It is also recognized that "people and organizations with differing world-views or from dissimilar cultures put life cycle thinking into practice differently" (Valdivia, 2009), impacting those delivering and those receiving even the most well intended capacity assistance and building.

There is nothing surprising about this tendency to see and interpret the world differently. Each nation, each society, every family and individual citizen, and every unit of human community and organization is uniquely affected by the interaction across the respective society by the structure, values, and actions implicit in its culture, its state, and its economy (See *Diagram 1: Social Forces and Society*). These three socio-political forces combine with the array of human, organizational, and other collective structures available in a society to at different times and under different circumstances both facilitate or impede societal and organizational evolution along the life cycle.
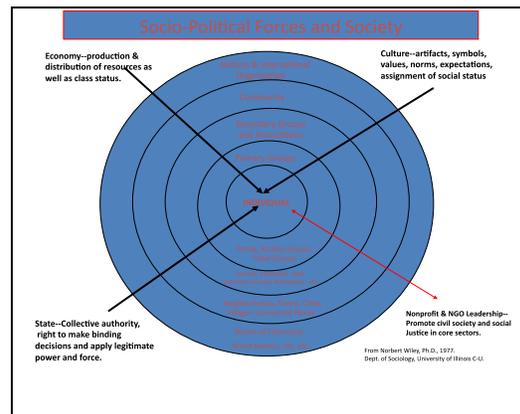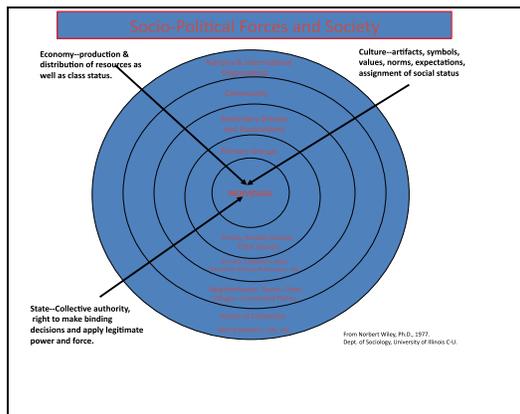

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Diagram 1: Socio-Political Forces & Society[1]   Diagram 2: Socio-Political Forces, Society,
                                                                                             and Third Sector/Spaces Influence[2]

      As depicted in *Diagram 2: Socio-Political Forces, Society, and Third Sector/Spaces Influence,* adding the efforts of NGOs, the energies and efforts of third sector and NGO leadership, and the real as well as imagined weight of third spaces and civil society interjects in the eyes of international development theorists a fourth social force presumed capable of making a significant "difference" in developing and changing Southern societies for the better (Bebbington, Hickey, Mitlin, 2008; Van Til, 2000). Leaning against the substantial, pre-existing forces of in-place culture, state, and economy, NGOs and their CSO counterparts are expected to work fundamental miracles and trigger desirable changes while contending with both internal and external economic, cultural, and political forces. One consequence is what Barber notes are the forces of *jihad* and the forces of McWorld inevitably unleashed and raging across the face of the world, contending for the hearts, souls, and minds of citizens within a multitude of developing nations (Barber, 1995).

      In life cycle terms, development in general and development through NGOs encounters a two-fold problem. First, the agents of development and change must possess sufficient capacity for the wide variety of development activities expected of them; they must, in other words, have "the ability to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives" related to both their own organizational development and that of society as a whole (Browne, 2002).   Second, individual, organizational, and national life must be seen not as static but as subject to and found along a complex continuum of development.   Individual, societal and organizational vision, purpose, and strategy vary and "exist at various stages of development" over the life span observable both within each organization (Werther and Berman, 2001) and within each society as a whole (Valdivia, 2009). All are impacted differentially by the influences exerted by, first, internal and, second, by external socio-political forces. In each society, in fact, both its own and that of its external developmental benefactor's culture, state, and economic structures and practices are critical and at time determining factors to the success or failure of development and development activities.

      The degree to which any NGO is in synch with—or even is subconsciously or deliberately in opposition to—any element of the three social forces is directly related to both the "external forces inherent in the organizational environment (and to) internal forces…(that also) shape organizations and their structures and cultures" (Anheier, 2005, p. 150). What is clear, however, is an often missed but important element of successful development and capacity building should include "processes to enable life cycle based decisions" as part of the development process and as a feature in determining content and direction of supporting capacity building at any given time (Valdivia, 2009). Impacted by both internal and external social forces, where a society and where specific NGOs lie along the life cycle continuum of a place's culture, governmental systems, and economy

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[1] From Norbert Wiley, Department of Sociology, University of Illinois—Urbana, with modifications by Richard Bush.

[2] From Wiley with major modification by Richard Bush.

is of potential importance in development decision making. It is not an issue that can or should be ignored.

In attempting to achieve development and capacity building at either the individual, the organizational, or the societal level of the NGO or CSO, those funding and having authority over the development process often do ignore, however, the importance of where in the life cycle not only people and organizations are, but they also ignore or underestimate the importance of where a given society's culture, state, and economy are relative to those of the benefactor and its own society. Where a recipient society is with regard to the stages of its own development, let alone in comparison to those of benefactor nations, raises serious questions regarding "capacities in the society as a whole," and it also calls into question its overall sufficiency for meeting the goals, objectives, tasks, and expectations set by the agents of development (Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, Malik, 2002;   Bush, 2001).

The fundamental problem inherent in the development consensus is that, judged from the accomplishments of the Northern developed democracies of Europe and of the United States, those nations and societies designated as "developing" are nowhere near the same point in the timeline of possible development as their benefactors wish them to be—or once were themselves. What took centuries of painful evolution and at times outright cultural, political, and economic warfare to achieve is expected too often from developing societies in a compressed instant of human societal time. In what Deepak Lal terms a process that "bears an uncanny resemblance to 19th-century imperialism," those on the benefactor end of development attempt to force and "legislate (their) 'habits of the heart'" upon the developing world (2000), pushing for change and for outcomes that are unrealistic at best and impossible at worst. Absent the benefit of the same lengthy time period to work out the evolutionary kinks of culture, national governance, and self-determined place in the world-system and world-economy,

(T)his imperialism (is) in part motivated by the civilizing mission embodied in the white man's burden. Something similar is afoot today: the call for ethical trading, ethical foreign policies, the insistence that everyone embrace the West's political system of majoritarian democracy.   There are dangerous pressures in the West to use multilateral institutions...to legislate their 'habits of the heart' worldwide...(These actions) aggravate the suspicions of many developing countries that the newly emerging globalized economy will lead to a form of cultural imperialism that will undermine their ancient and cherished ways of life (Lal in Vasquez, p. 38).

In more recent development efforts, an emergent and often favored of these multilateral institutions has clearly been the NGO, the CSO, and a host of other related nonprofit-like organizations. Viewed from the developing nation side of the equation, not surprisingly these emerging "nonprofit organizations, voluntary associations, charity, and philanthropy" are suspected of being "basically 'Western' phenomena that do not naturally exist (or fit) in the developing world" (Anheier and Salamon, 1998, p. 4).

At issue is whether NGOs and their related counterparts are nothing more than "an externally imposed phenomenon," marking a "new wave of imperialism," or do they offer an actual alternative means for developing societies to define and drive their own development (Bebbington, Hickey Mitlin, 2008, p. 9-11)? If the former, the timeline

over which and the processes of how they develop organizationally will indeed be drive by the external, Northern-based forces of international development. If the latter, NGOs in key parts of the developing world will evolve according to domestically determined timelines, using place-specific, culturally and politically sensitive criteria for their evolution.

2. *Evolutionary Mission and Functional Capacity during NGO Development*

Speaking of voluntary action, one of the founding voices of the nonprofit sector wrote that the sector "is the total persisting social embodiment (in the form of norms, expectations, customs, and ways of behaving) of voluntary action in society" (Horton Smith, 1973). In his seminal article, *The Impact of the Volunteer Sector on Society,* Horton Smith went on to catalog ten types of impact one could and should expect from the sector's formal and informal entities, stating further that these varied impacts "are extremely important to human society, past, present, and future."

Table 1: Horton Smith, Bush, et.al. Purposes of Nonprofit, NGO, Voluntary Organizations illustrates some of the types of nonprofits and NGOs active throughout the developing world today (Bush, 2012). In the more mature, developed societies of the Northern world, one would expect to and in fact does find a wide variety of organizations representing each of the twelve listed types. As noted in the previous section, this is not surprising as the very fact of these nations' development provides each with cultural, political, and economic underpinnings befitting advanced development itself and producing the rich tapestry of voluntary, civil, nongovernmental, and nonprofit organizations evident in these societies.

Table 1: Horton Smith, Bush, et.al. Purposes of Nonprofit, NGO, Voluntary Organizations

Speaking of the United States in particular, Lestor M. Salamon notes that "because of growing social and economic complexity" modern, developed societies over time and with their age in lifecycle terms

> *have found it necessary to make special provisions to protect individuals against the vagaries of economic misfortune, old age, and disability; to secure basic human rights; to preserve and promote cherished social and cultural values; and to provide institutional vehicles through which individuals can join together to bring important matters to public attention and voice their support for policies they favor or oppose...The result is an intricate 'mixed economy' of welfare that blends public and private action in ways that few people truly understand. In fact, the resulting system is not a system at all, but an ad hoc collection of compromises between the realities of economic necessity and the pressures of ideology and political tradition (Salamon, 2012, p. 1-2).*

In the case of Europe, societies and the nation states they represent also have had centuries over the socio-political and economic timeline to get to where they are today. In the case of perhaps the world's most developed and advanced voluntary, civil, and nonprofit sector—the United States, its society had the foundational base of its European forefathers plus an additional three hundred years of colonial and subsequent nationhood to evolve the intricate cultural, economic, and political ideas and infrastructures that birthed and then supported its third sector. As Jon Van Til notes in the introductory chapter of his book, Growing Civil Society: From Nonprofit Sector to Third Space, the

task or problem of "setting goals, attracting resources, sharing meaning, and sticking together" did not happen automatically but developed in fits and starts over the long sweep of history until a working "constitutional democracy," a system of "mixed capitalism," a culture of "meaning", and finally a third sector providing " fellowship or common cause" emerged (Van Til, 2000, p. xii).

As pictured again in Diagram 1 and also in Diagram 2, the emergence of a functioning, constructive, and helpful third sector capable of cutting across the whole of a society and capable of interacting in a positive manner within the context of a society's economy, culture, and state is a miraculous, almost mystical occurrence <u>when it happens</u>. And in truth, it may not and does not happen in every instance for every single human society. The seeds of culture, state, and economy may germinate in a particular group, community of people, society, or even the equivalent of a modern nation state, but each may develop at a differential rate, at cross purposes with its counterparts, and without ever generating the kind of interaction or impetus leading to an emergence of voluntary action and a full-fledged third sector as discussed by Van Til and as depicted in Diagram 2 above.

When one looks at the range of possible nonprofit or NGO types and purposes suggested in Table 1 above, doing so cognizant of the time that is necessary for any one type to effectively emerge, it seems even more incredible for any society or any nation to give birth to and constructively support an array of possible NGO entities and entire third or NGO sector. The three core social forces—culture, state, and economy—are just as likely to unfold in a manner that stymies as one that encourages or supports third sector or NGO development like that taken for granted in a place like the United States.

It is a well recognized fact in development circles how difficult it is to get any one of the social forces behind and in support NGO development, let alone all three at once. With regard to the state, the relationship between NGOs and most developing states is best described as one of mutual suspicion lying "between benign neglect and outright hostility" (Edwards and Hulme, 2002). In many instances, in fact, developing states resist the development of voluntary and NGO action as inimical to the state and its leadership.

The same may be true for the reactions emanating from a society's culture. While a significant portion of development literature has taken a positive view of culture as a possible ally in development, others point out that culture can be a potent impediment to development, modernization, and emergence of organizations advocating change— including change in the values and traditions of a given society (Chambers, 1997; Barber, 1995). In reality and in too many instances "appeals to 'tradition' (may) run contrary modernizing impulses of development," like the expectation for emergence of voluntary and eventual formal organizations in pursuit of <u>all</u> the prospective missions and purposes identified in Table 1, and in those cases "local 'culture' is oppressive to certain people," including those attempting to form organizations and associations seen as hostile to the existing culture (Cleaver in Edwards and Fowler, p. 232). Culturally and

otherwise, when viewed from Parenti's "bottom up" perspective it appears to many in the local community, society, and culture that

> *(w)ell-meaning outsiders are actually trying to impose the norms and values of an educated, well-fed, and often spoiled urban middle class in a post-industrial welfare state to inhabitants in a poor, rural, semi-literate, and pre-modern peasant society. That this would work is hardly a realistic assumption (Holmen, 2010, p. 215).*

Following the collapse of the old Soviet Union, a significant element of these external norms and values included those again captured in what became known as the "'Washington consensus'—the belief that market liberalization and Western-style democracy offered a universal blueprint for growth and poverty reduction in the world" (Edwards and Gaventa, 2001, p. 2). If developing nations would just "minimize the state, transfer as many roles as possible to the private sector as quickly as possible, go for export-oriented growth whatever the consequences," their progress would be, it was argued, swift and assured (Hulme in Bebbington, Hickey, Mitlin, 2008. P. 339).

This prescription of "Anglo-American style capitalism" combined with the "channeling of aid through private organizations," including internationally based NGOs, has not proven to be an answer to the development dilemma faced by many Southern nations (Ahmed and Potter, 2006, p. 24). Considering the types of private NGO and private economic organizations required to make this strategy work, many found themselves forced into an economic development model for which they were inadequately prepared and in which they were at a distinct disadvantage. They were "asked" to join and participate in the world-economy and the world-system absent the organizational capacity and infrastructure, the know-how, and the lifecycle development and maturity that would make their inclusion fair and equitable (Wallerstein, 2000).

So in terms of Horton Smith and the nonprofit or NGO typology in Table 1, what does all this mean? In an ideal and fully developed society, one would expect again to find the full range of organizations noted in the table. In developing contexts, however, in which culture, economy, and state elements are immaturely modernized, poorly differentiated, and in fact in conflict with internal as well as external forces, what must be determined is a prioritized order for the development and capacity building within specific types of organizations. This is a difficult task at best, but the alternative is to waste time and resources focusing on NGO types that are ill suited for, ill prepared for, and out of step with where a society is at a specific moment in time.

It would be nice if there was an already existing prioritized list of the types of nonprofits that should receive first and primary attention with regard to organizational development and capacity building. There isn't such a list per se, but external development forces often act as if there is based on the inherent biases of the conceptual framework that drives development funding and activities. If an external development agent is a firm proponent of the Washington consensus, one would expect that agent to focus attention on building the capacity of NGOs capable of replacing the government as a provider of services—perhaps acting to strengthen or even create the first and fifth types of NGOs. If instead an agent is more in tune with the post-Washington consensus

and a focus instead on the strong social and institutional infrastructure (Edwards and Gaventa, 2001, pp. 2-3), the social capital, and the framework of civil society as the bulwark of societal and NGO capacity building, then the focus might be types four and eleven. In reverse mode, external development agents may wish to avoid "religious traditions, social context, and political history," ignoring and avoiding type 7 NGOs in favor of again more secular organizations, missions, and purposes (Flanigan, 2010, pp. 2-3).

The temptation, in other words, is to ignore, first, where a nation or society sees itself along its the evolution and life cycle and then, second, to assume from the external perspective and based on external conceptual frameworks what NGOs and other social structures should exist—whether a nation, its people, and its culture, state, and economy have generated the right kinds of supportive ideas, structures, and other underpinnings of successful development. As Flanigan notes in his study of the Middle East, it is often easier but also perilous to ignore and wish that other types of NGOs existed to do the work one wants done. Or as Holmen says of Africa and African NGOs, what is needed are African definitions of need and African-defined efforts to "simultaneously…build state, markets, and indigenous organizations" of their own first choosing—not those of a type dictated from and demanded by external agencies of development (2010, p. 225).

3) *Democracy, Substantive and Procedural Equity, and NGO Capacity*

Another key element in development and in subsequent related capacity building has been the emphasis on "democracy and good governance—that is, democratic institutions and the quality of the processes and practice of governance…" (Cheema, 2005, p.2). In this equation, governance is the

> *concept compromising the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations, and mediate their differences. Good governance addresses the allocation and management of resources to respond to collective problems; it is characterized by the principles of participation, transparency, accountability, rule of law, effectiveness, equity, and strategic vision (Cheema, 2005, p. 5).*

Through democratically structured organizations and structures—not only in the the state but in other sectors of society as well—it is thought possible to structure the voice of citizens "in ways that combat, rather than accentuate, existing social, economic, and political inequities" (Edwards and Gaventa, 2001, p. 7). For those stressing the importance in doing so, there is an implicit belief that progress along or through the socio-political and organizational lifecycle requires movement or evolution into democratization. It is further argued as part of "conventional wisdom that a free market and political pluralism" are the best combination for assuring democratization, assuring as they do growth in and more equitable distribution of wealth and resources through improved wealth and democratization of decision making (Cheema, 2005, p. 235-236).

An unfortunate reality confounds the notion that some combination of political democratization and economic freedom in the marketplace will solve what may be termed the "equity problem."   If not for unprecedented economic growth in India, Eastern Asia, and especially China, overall world poverty rates would have changed very

little for the better (United Nations, 2011). Large numbers of citizens in the developing part of the world remain in grinding poverty, living on the equivalent of $1-2 per day. While overall world wealth has increased, "the gap between rich and poor has widened (and) a smaller and smaller percentage of the world's population controls a larger and larger percentage of the world's wealth (Cheema, 2005, p. 1; United Nations, 2011). How has this happened, despite the strategies of the Washington consensus and the promises of development specialists, development organizations, and NGOS to the contrary?

Diagram 3: Two Views of Equality
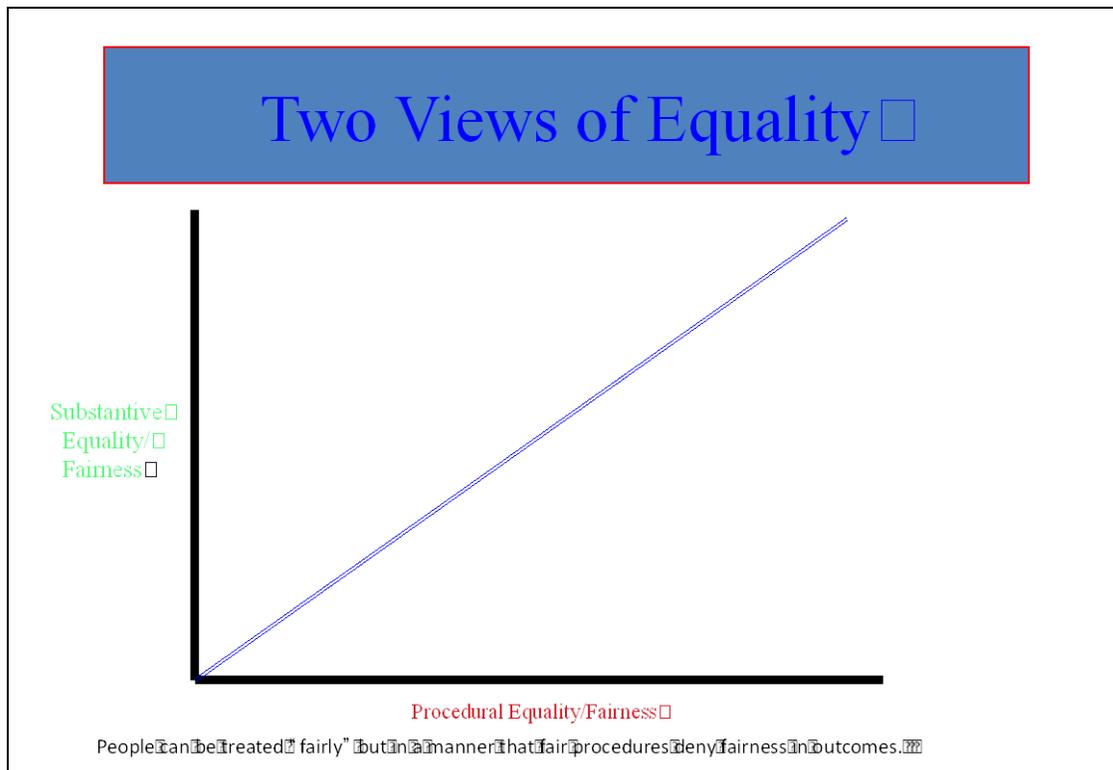
Diagram 3: Two Views of Equality[3] illustrates a key problem regarding the insistence that development and capacity building emphasizing democracy will be the game changer across the Southern world. When thinking about democracy as an organizing and decision making principle in society, what is usually emphasized is procedural equality and fairness—the opportunity of each citizen to participate in primarily electoral and other political processes, to freely exercise the right to vote, to have the ability to assemble and organize, to live under a rule of law, and the various other vestiges of a liberal state. This axis of equality also includes the opportunity to engage in free market-based economic activities and to the extent possible earn an income, procure a living, and accumulate wealth—wealth of nearly unlimited proportions on both an individual, corporate, and in some instances national scale.

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[3] Richard Bush for various PAPA and IS courses at SIU Edwardsville.

From a development and capacity perspective, this emphasis on procedural equality supplants the equally important axis that represents substantive equality and equity; that is to say, the dominant concept of equality focuses on some aspects of *how* societies operate while showing dissimilar concern for *what* happens in society—with regard to outcomes and the distribution of the material substance available in society. As long as the so-called right processes and procedures are followed, especially in the state or political realm, as long as structures are reasonably open and participatory, and as long as it appears that all citizens have the opportunity to engage in these systems, a society can be considered sufficiently democratic, explaining away the resulting and substantial inequities through a variety of methods.

This willingness to ignore the distributive outcomes of what passes for modern democracy is obviously problematic on any number of levels—too many in fact to discuss in the limited confines of this paper. From the perspective of what is discussed here, however, it must be pointed out that the result of limiting democracy in this fashion means that for many people and for many nations we end up not with equity but with what Michael Parenti once termed aptly the "distribution of want and misery" (1977, 2010). And our ability, furthermore, to effectively address this troubling reality has been diminished in the last decade-plus by any number of factors.

Chief among those are the efforts at emasculating and reducing the footprint of the state in both national and international life, or as noted earlier, work "to minimize the state, transfer as many roles as possible to the private sector as quickly as possible, and go for export-oriented growth"—for unfettered free enterprise without consideration of consequences like ongoing poverty and inequity (Hulme, p. 339). For those versed in the role of the state and its institutions, this prescription strips citizens of the very—and often the only—authoritative and legitimate instruments subject to popular influence and bendable to the popular will.

As a replacement, citizens throughout the world are offered less than what sound to be interesting alternatives—the chance to grow and develop (often with help and direction from outside benefactors) new and "strong social and institutional infrastructure"; the admonition to develop social capital and "a rich weave of social networks, norms, and civic institutions"; the suggestion that they experiment with "more pluralistic forms of governance and decision making"; that "public, private, and civic roles (be) re-conceptualized and reshaped" and that "partnerships" be formed to solve critical problems (Edwards and Gaventa, 2001, pp.2-3).

As a further response to the reduction in the state's role, in its authority, and its power, citizens are also encouraged to build and utilize alternative organizations and institutions to address their needs. Using their new reserves of social capital and their newly established abilities at collaboration and partnership, people are pushed and expected to develop and use private alternatives, including those from the private sector and also from NGO, CSO, and other third sector organizations to bypass and in some instances replace the state in the pursuit of better lives and "a good society" (Knight, Chigudu, Tandon, 2002).

The limitations of obtaining needed services from the private sector are well known. First, the private sector in many developing societies is limited in size, scope, and ability. Second, the sector is usually export oriented and seldom a producer for domestic distribution and consumption. Third, the business sector is motivated by profit, and if sufficient profit and wealth are not possible providing public goods and services, businesses simply won't get involved. Finally, there is no guarantee that business-generated income and profit will be invested or even stay in the community or nation in which and from which it is generated. The danger is that "unquestioning acceptance of private sector values and methods…(may) lead to a disengagement from mission as the primary focus of nonprofit activity and for evaluaton of a (NGO's) accomplishments, altering in the process the internal culture and external vision of…the organization" (Bush, 1992, p. 392). The NGO is in essence "neutralized" as an independent force on behalf of citizen, serving more and more as " a substitute provider of previously state-provided services (and) less and less as a thoughtful advocate for significant human and social change" (Bush, 2001, p. 1).

An immediate problem in suggesting the preceding is that, in many nations, "NGOs (have become) peripheral to the way in which people (think) about their societies and how to improve them" Knight, Chigudu, Tandon, 2002, p. 152). In the terms of this paper overall, NGOs in most developing societies are still at the beginning stages of the organizational lifecycle, lacking resource and other capacity to meet identifiable needs. For the purposes of survival and meeting even basic needs—"economic security, basic services, physical security and peace"—citizens of the developing world are more realistic than many development and NGO theorists in that, when asked and they "identified external solutions to their problems, they usually (select) government as the key agency" for improving their lives (Knight, Chigudu, Tandon, 2002, p. 152). Yet at a time when citizens expect involvement and engagement in their lives, the state is expected to and does less and less under the pressure from forces external to the local state.

In truth, the poorest and least of our world's citizens understand better than many that, when democracy does not tend to substantive and distributive equity while also attending to procedural equity, is not much of an improvement, if any, over the undemocratic structural and organizational authority known previously in their lives. In fact, simply giving people voice through procedural change is little more than a blip, a small tick forward, on the continuum of possible socio-economic and political change. A nation, bowing to internal and external pressures, may establish the latter form of democracy, but if in the end "the human conditions of ordinary people have not significantly improved, and income inequality and poverty have increased," it will be very difficult to extend the lifecycle of democracy in a nation and its organizational structures. Failing to progress and develop in ways that citizens see as necessary, those citizens too often will again opt for "strong central leadership" and assurances of "economic development and political stability," whatever the costs and regardless of the degree to which democratic procedures are sacrificed (Cheema, 2005, pp. 235-236).

Concluding Remarks: Where to from Here with NGO Capacity Building?

So what does this mean in the overall context of this paper? In lifecycle terms, we are—those of in the so-called North and certainly those in the South—trying to figure out which way we need to and are going to go. As illustrated in the lifecycle model (Diagram 4), in what ways are the institutions, the sectors, and the citizens of developed as well as developing societies going forward or backward? What in the content of the past and what in the perceived content of the future envisioned is to drive and motivate people to act in favor of one societal direction and not the other? Or is their another way or ways for us to think, believe, and subsequently act to secure a future?

Diagram 4: A Lifecycle Model Applicable to Development and NGOs

Adizes: Corporate Lifecycles (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988)
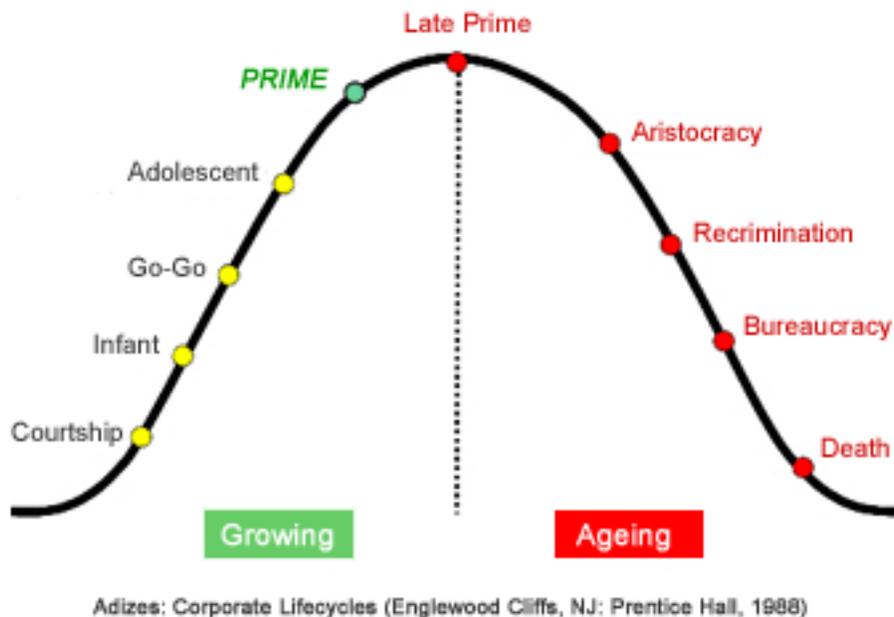
As established previously for organizations like NGOs and as introduced in this paper for societies in general, there is no guarantee that on a national or international level culture, state, and economy necessarily balance and integrate with one another. They may evolve differentially and are often in conflict with one another. Influenced by ideas and values from or by each, the same is true for citizens in their individual, collective, and organizational roles in society. Based on experiences and on the ideas held about the nature of past, present, and future, human beings as members of society, nation, and world as a whole stumble along as best they can, getting along at some times and acting in conflict at others.

As Barber notes, we are presently caught in a conflict rooted in differing views as to how best to integrate culture, state, and economy in human life and society. I believe he is correct when he argues the nature of this conflict is about the degree to which we either revert back to "the tribal past" or move to further into integration and a

"cosmopolitan future," but one way or another, we will be "compelled to choose" which path we will be taken (Barber, 1995, p.4).

From a Northern and a development perspective, it seemed for some time that, under the aegis of the post-Cold War Washington consensus of Western democracy and market liberalization, matters had reached what in lifecycle terms is called a "prime" period of ascendancy and dominance by Northern or Western cultural, political, and economic models. In particular, it appeared that the "invisible hand" of capitalist economics and globalization triumphed over the "dead hand" of government or state control of not only economic life but also social and cultural life (Lindsay in Vasques, 2000; see also Lindsay, 2002). This model of socio-political and economic action seemed so ascendant in fact that it was declared that there was "no third way" or alternative to either moving forward with the so-called winning approach or moving backward state domination of political and economic life (Lal, 2000).

Not everyone would, of course, agree, and arguments have been made for a third way for navigating the trials and tribulations of the modern era (Giddens, 1999). As proposed by Giddens, the guidance of this alternative way for organizing and advancing human life and societies will emerge as all things emerge in lifecycle terms—not from any "single agent, group or movement…"but from many points of political engagement which offer good cause for optimism" (1994).   Is this possible? The answer is yes if enough of us are willing to "explore conditions," as I have in this paper, "under which (we) would (consider altering…present paradigms," recognizing the need to keep flexing and testing in these turbulent times" the prime models with which we organize and act in life (Barker, 1992, p. 215).

The alternative would be to pursue instead the path suggested by Holmen. Writing of Africa and by extension for NGOs in developing countries everywhere, Holmen argues that developing areas should be "allowed to become self-reliant" (2010, p. 227) and permitted to exercise " the will and capacity to establish their own organizations for self-help purposes that make them part, and to some extent owners, of development." In this scenario, "donors and concerned outsiders can—if they tread carefully—do a lot to facilitate" development but in ways that "*avoid getting directly involved in local projects and local organizations"* (2010, p. 266, italics by author).

The world of international development and of nongovernmental organizations can and should play a key role in offering challenges to both old and present paradigms by framing, debating, and testing new models for building the good society, regardless of its location—North, South, developed, developing, or undeveloped. As to how this can happen, the following recommendation flow from the ideas and thoughts of this paper:

First, recognize from the framework of lifecycle theory that no idea, no theory, no concept, and no approach to organizing human culture, state, or economy is meant to or can last forever.

I am sure that those who developed the ideas and from those the structure of every previous culture, state, and economy in history thought that perfection had been discovered and that change would not be necessary and would not occur. Certainly that has been the case with those in the United States, who having won, first, World War II and then the subsequent Cold War, who created the greatest economy and national wealth ever known to mankind, who have been lead to believe in the what Wallerstein terms the perception of "American exceptionalism" (2000, p. 414). Our place in the world and its history has been remarkable and in many ways remains so culturally, politically, and economically, but as Wallerstein notes,

> *We have been masters of the world, perhaps benign and beneficent masters (or so say some of us), but masters nonetheless. That day is over. Is it so bad? As masters, we have been loved but also hated. We have loved ourselves but also hated ourselves. Can we not arrive at a more equilibriated vision? Perhaps, but not yet, I fear, I believe we are coming to the third part of our historical trajectory, perhaps the bumpiest, most exhilarating, and most terrible of all (2000, pp. 408-409).*

The great benefit of lifecycle theory and also of Barker's theory of paradigm shifts is that both recognize the impermanence of even the greatest ideas, models, and systems of organizing and directing human thought and behavior. The real issue to confront, once the premise of the constancy of change integral to both is accepted, is on what side and in what ways we will participate in the continuing evolution of how human culture, state, and economy are framed and realized. As Barker states, will we resist what is inevitable, or will we anticipate, innovate, and redefine excellence in individual, collective, and societal life? Will we lead into the future, act as "pioneers" of change, or will we resist the necessary and the inevitable changes that will come with or without us (Barker, 1992)? Obviously I believe that especially those of us in the field of international and NGO development should be the former, not the latter, leading to the remaining suggestions and recommendations flowing from this paper.

Second, NGOs and the societies they work within and represent in the so-called developing South of the world should be seen as and assisted through capacity building to better act as agents for exploring, developing, and testing "third ways" of structuring and effectively utilizing culture, state, and economy on behalf of national and international populations.

As noted in this paper, the Western or Northern tendency is to deny that there is any possible "third way" to approach thinking about and thus acting to reconfigure culture, state, or economy. Instead, Western nations are perceived as applying "dangerous pressures…to use multilateral institutions overseeing the global economy to legislate their 'habits of the heart' worldwide" (Lal, 2000, p. 38), engaging at times in what appears to also to be "a Western moral crusade to legislate its own cosmological beliefs worldwide" as well (p. 39).

I have personally worked with and observed efforts again in South America, in Oceania, in Africa, in the Caribbean, and in the Middle East to explore "third ways" of reconfiguring the cultural, economic, and political social forces within nations and societies in a manner that respects the past, develops the present, and engineers a future

that is not free of or dominated by either—all the while also borrowing from the North and using resources from the West, often when permitted and not punished for sacrificing fidelity to the "prime" model offered to them.

NGOs have been and are central actors in many of these experiments, difficult as this often is when dealing with what Holmen aptly terms the new "snakes in paradise" (2010). Guided by Western-based and Northern-based international agencies preaching "empowerment through participation" (Hoogvelt, 2001, p. 53), most of these providers of assistance have practiced the opposite, that is, what Bebbington, Hickey, and Mitlin term "big D/Development"—development directed from above and from external sources, using NGOs as "sources of alternative ways of arranging microfinance, project planning, service delivery and so on: that is, alternative ways of intervening" (2008, p. 5).

This is, of course, not surprising. Believing in the sanctity and perfected ability of the Western or Northern way of organizing culture, state, and economy in developing states, the vast majority of development agents have shown little interest in what the authors termed "little d/development"—experimenting with local "alternatives…to the underlying processes of capitalist development (and) organizing the economy, politics, and social relationships in a society" (p.5).

Like Hulme, I believe that, as much from the developing world and especially from the NGO community, "(w)e might gain ideas…that can underpin a full-blooded development alternative" (In Bebbington, Hickey, Mitlin, 2008, p. 344). For that to happen, however, NGOs must be have capacity building that relates to the beginnings of this paper and to a different conception of NGO type, mission, and purpose in development.

Third, when developing and delivering capacity building to the NGOs of the developing or Southern world, attention must be paid to the purposes and the types of NGOs that merit special attention as potential agents of change within their own societies and especially in the broader world of development internationally.

It is one thing to say that capacity building is a necessary prerequisite to development—that the "attainment of skills and the capabilities to use them" is a core objective if development and progress are to occur (Browne, 2002, p. 3). It is another to "answer the question 'for what'" capacity building should be undertaken and achieved—in the interest of "positive micro-improvements" that improve individual or organizational capabilities or for "the kind of macro-impacts that build and sustain national capacity for development" (Fukuda-Parr, Lopes, Malik, 2002, p. 3).

This paper obviously advocates for the latter, agreeing with the premise that NGOS can be advocates for and primary change agents "whose major task is one of fostering cooperation and collaborative spirit as the basis of human relations in (what is) an increasingly interdependent world" (Fowler in Edwards and Fowler, 2002, pp. 17-18). As Fowler correctly sees it, NGOs can "choose to remain 'ladles in the global soup kitchen'" or they can adopt "thinking and practice…and place (themselves) firmly in a

pivotal position to accelerate and direct change in the 21st century—a change that really makes a positive, structural and systemic difference to people who are poor, excluded and risk-prone" (p.22).

This cannot occur unless both the leaders of the NGO community and the leadership of those offering capacity building assistance approach the capacity building process with a sense of prioritization on two levels. First and as outlined in this paper, attention must be given to the substantive versus procedural equality and equity issue outlined in this paper. It is no longer enough to attend to the principles and practices of procedural democracy without also accepting the importance of outcomes from those and other socio-political and economic processes and institutions. Not only must these "be based on (each) country's social, economic, and political context" (Cheema, 2005) but democracy and good governance must, as noted earlier, clearly address and alter "existing social, economic, and political inequalities," especially those again that leave so many citizens helpless, impoverished, and little hope or means for securing a better life (Edwards and Gaventa, 2005, p.19).

Looking again at *Table 1: Horton Smith, Bush, et.al. Purposes of Nonprofit, NGO Voluntary Organizations,* I end this paper by suggesting that capacity building should in particular focus on types of NGOs with missions that directly and clearly address the plight of the less fortunate, the excluded, and the impoverished in each and every society. In doing so, the greatest attention should focus on those NGOs that take the greatest risks to innovate, challenge the status quo, and advocate on behalf of fundamental changes in the culture, the state, and especially the economy of each society. To do otherwise dooms nearly one to two fifths of the world's population without "even basic necessities like safe drinking water, adequate food and healthcare"—necessities that ensure a reasonable life span and decent quality of life (Agarwal in Cross, 2003, p. 225).

In his study of international aid and NGOs in Africa, Holmen suggests that societies and nations of the South have the ability to and should be unleashed to frame and conduct their own development (2010). Assistance should be offered but to those organizations that clearly demonstrate that they can be "safely entrusted with the task of organizing for self-help" (p. 230). Provided carefully crafted and mission-focused capacity assistance, this approach to assisting Southern NGOs holds promise for identifying the new approaches that 21st century development requires for its and our own success.

Fourth, recognize the power and validity of collaborative and relational leadership, accepting and treating all participants as equals with value regardless of life cycle stage or perspective.

There is no nation, no society, and no organization—public, private, or nonprofit—that does not find itself confronting times and a variety of issues marking what is characterized as the "shared-power world." This is a world
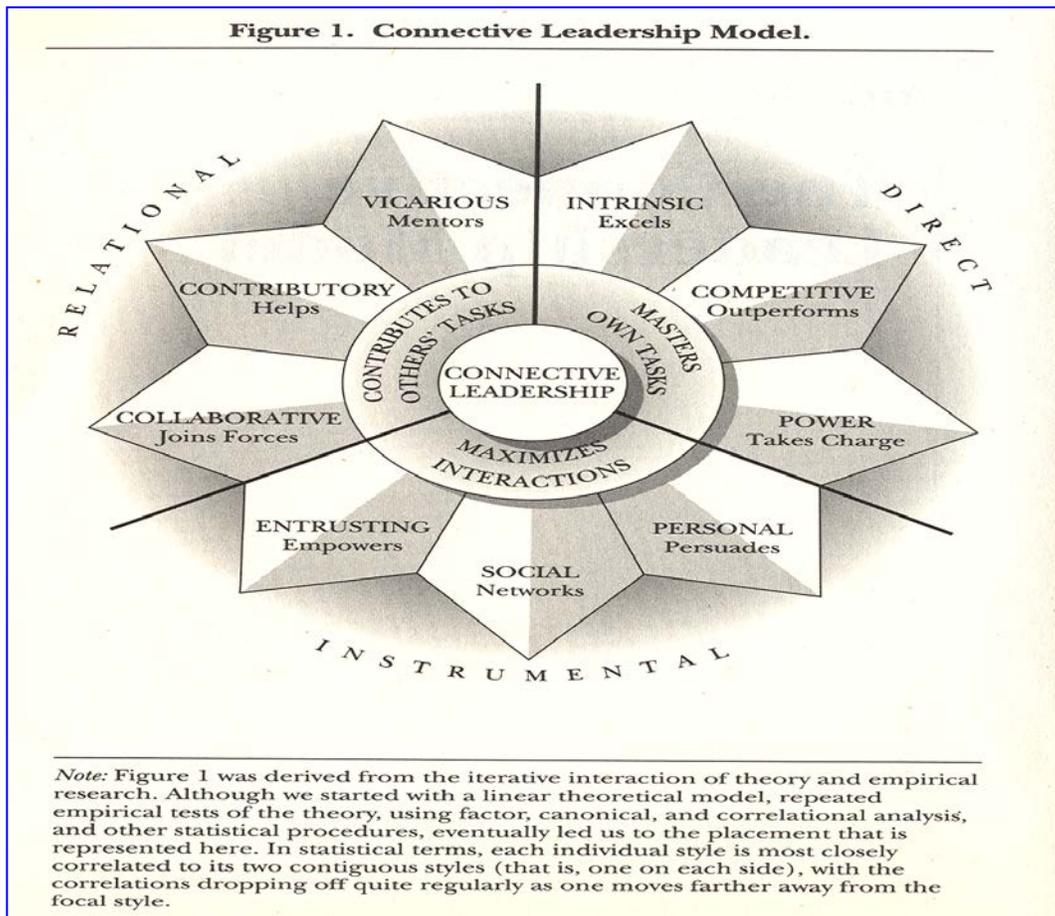
> where no one is 'in charge (and where n)o one organization or institution has the
> legitimacy, power, authority, or intelligence to act alone on important public

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issues and still make substantial headway against the problems that threaten us all…
Many organizations or institutions are involved, affected, or have a partial responsibility
To act, and the information to address public issues is incomplete and unevenly
Distributed among the involved organizations (Bryson and Crosby, 1992, p.xi)

In the shared-power of today, bona fide partnerships and honest, fairly conceived and collectively, well managed collaborations are a necessary strategy for identifying and beginning the process of solving difficult, seemingly intractable problems at local, national, and international levels. For this to occur, NGOs can and should be vital players, but to do so they must accept that their "major task is one of fostering cooperation and collaborative spirit as the basis for human relations in an increasingly interdependent world" (Fowler in Fowler and Edwards, 2002, pp.17-18).

As I have argued for a number of years (Bush, 1997, 1998, 1998, 2001, 2008, 2010, 2012), domestic nonprofits and also NGOs nationally and internationally can and should advocate for, foster, and model collaboration as the model for successfully addressing problems through sharing of power, resources, and authority. To do so will require NGOs willing to learn and practice a style and approach to leadership that is drastically different to the traditional model of classic individual and organizational leadership. As Lipman-Blumen notes (1996), "even as diversity evokes independence, separatism, tribalism, and individual identifies, interdependence pulls in a different direction, promoting alliances, collaboration, mutuality, and universalism" (1996, p.6), requiring a different, more innovative, and more collaboratively based form of contemporary leadership.

Today's leadership, as modeled on the following page, must be what Lipman-Blumen terms connective in nature, that is, multi-dimensional within and across individuals, organizations, international boundaries, and communities and societies as a whole. The leadership challenge is tremendous, requiring a "shift from tight (and often narrow) alliances to loose (and connectively directed and led) global networks" in which NGOs in particular exhibit creative leadership, model interdependent behaviors, and drive the attempt to forge shared-power across organizational, sector, national, and international boundaries of every type (Lipman-Blumen, 1996, pp. 82-84).

Figure 1. Connective Leadership Model.

Note: Figure 1 was derived from the iterative interaction of theory and empirical research. Although we started with a linear theoretical model, repeated empirical tests of the theory, using factor, canonical, and correlational analysis, and other statistical procedures, eventually led us to the placement that is represented here. In statistical terms, each individual style is most closely correlated to its two contiguous styles (that is, one on each side), with the correlations dropping off quite regularly as one moves farther away from the focal style.

The challenges faced throughout the world we know, North as well as South, are daunting, and as these are faced within both developed and developing contexts, the question that permeates this paper is whether or not NGOs can "make a difference" in how problems are conceived, addressed, and solved to the benefit of all parties involved (Bebbington, Hickey, and Mitlin, 2008). I believe not only that they can but that, if they are true to themselves and pursue the suggestions in this paper, they can emerge as the most critical, most dynamic, and the most successful source of leadership for the complex, shared-power, relational, and inevitably connective world we live it. To do so, organizations in the nongovernmental sector and leaders within effective NGOs will need to avoid pandering to and mirroring the values and practices of other sectors and other traditionally framed styles of management and leadership (Bush, 2001).

As always as I write this, I am reminded that, as Wallerstein has written, "the search for the true and the search for the good is but a single quest" (2000, p. xxii). In the end, what we pursue, I believe, is the good that marks what my colleague Jon Van Til calls "a better, fairer, more productive society"(2000, p. 214). NGOs can play in the

terms described above not only an integral but the key leadership part or role in defining, advocating for, and helping secure the good society for people all over the world. Surely, they and we will be "judged by the content of the actions and outcomes these (NGO) structures generate and assure" in order to fulfill this promise (Van Til, p. 214).

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