SOCIAL INNOVATION: Its Time to Get Serious About Capacity Building

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A Little Context
Time to get serious about capacity building.

The demand for innovation outstrips the supply ...

The political, social & economic shifts creates opportunities ...

There are plenty of scattered learnings practices upon which build.
Find a partner.

Take 5 minutes to share one area in your work or community that requires significant innovation in order if progress is to be made.
Social Innovation
A Diagram & Two Stories
Re-thinking Organizations

The Performance Loop
(The S Curve)

The Innovation Loop
(Backward Loop)

entrepreneurial * adaptive management & leadership * flexible structures * trial & error * dead ends * variation * lag times * flexibility * tolerance for risk * emergence

Effective Practice

crisis

neutral zone

release

itch to proceed

confusion

High-Predictable Performance

unraveling * chaotic * loss

anger * blame * conflict *

Little structure or process * reflection * relationships * values * principles *

New Energy & Hope

growth

manage

cope with decline

development

adapt

refine

birth

DEVELOPMENT

choice

EXPLORATION

place bets

expand possibilities & buy-in new engagement

GROWTH

MATUREITY

conserve

options

High-Predictable Performance

creativity * messy * uncertain*

relationships * perspectives * conversations

research * probes * prototypes

insights * hunches * ideas * empathy *

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Effective Practice
Micro-Lending
watching, researching & talking with villagers in Jobra and ‘failing forward’ with small experiments
# Insight Into the Challenge: A Pattern of Systemic Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of People Living in Poverty</th>
<th>Bangladeshi Banking Patterns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Require small amounts of funds</td>
<td>Provide only larger loans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>Multiple forms and applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No assets</td>
<td>Collateral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can only make small payments</td>
<td>Larger lump sum payments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly women</td>
<td>Prefer to lend to men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot afford not to repay loans</td>
<td>Perception of poor as high risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing a Peer Lending Model

Personal Loans
Jobra Loan Guarantor
Tangail Pilot: Peer Lending
65 programs, 27 countries
Competition from other micro-lending programs

- Grameen: Over $11.3 billion loaned to the poor since 1983
- Kiva: Over $270 million loaned to the poor since 2005
- Peer-to-peer lending: Over £150 million P2P loans since 2005
- Kickstarter: Over $100 million raised from 1 million backers since 2009

Plateau of borrowing

Delinquency on rise

Growth

Maturity

DECLINE?
Persons with Disabilities Living a Good Life
Disruption: our children with disabilities are now likely to outlive their parents – then land in institutional care – and non-profit services may not be enough.

We realized the limits of scaling out (aka replicating) an innovation—we can only influence thousands.

A raise to government asset limit for persons with disabilities receiving assistance.

A new policy to allow persons with disabilities a choice of their legal guardian.

Scores of affiliates

110 Founding Members
TYZE software

Hundreds of high level dialogues, media campaign, Networking with policy makers.

Build a movement for citizen-based Policy and systems change.
A powerful tool for disabled people

Money grows inside an RDSP

Households with incomes and $87,907 can grow a range of disabilities

**Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)**

Key benefits of RDSP:

- Up to **$70,000** Disability Savings Grants
- Up to **$20,000** Disability Savings Bonds

“Scaling up’ through policy change is fragile – we need to ‘scale deep’ to get these ideas in the Canadian ‘water supply’

Build a movement for citizen-based Policy and systems change.

TYZE software

Hundreds of high level dialogues, media campaign, Networking with policy makers.

Helping people with disabilities PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

PHILIA a dialogue on caring citizenship
How do we get millions of Canadians committed to helping all citizens – including those with disabilities to live a good life.
The emergent insight.

**BEING NOTICED AND APPRECIATED IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN ABILITY OR ACHIEVEMENT. ONE THAT COSTS NOTHING TO BESTOW. AND THAT LASTS A LIFETIME.**

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Insights About Social Innovation

1. All solutions experience ‘decay’ and/or have a ‘half-life’.

2. Best practice is (by definition) anti-innovation.

3. The process of social innovation is messy and unpredictable but has patterns upon which to build.

4. Social innovation is more than a new idea – it is new practice that has been embraced and sustained.

5. There is no guarantees of success, failure is endemic all we get is an improved probably of ‘maybe’.
We're lost, but we're making good time!
(Yogi Berra)
Eight ideas and practices that non-profit managers, funders, policy makers, and academics can work on that will help strengthen the capacity of our sector to innovate on complex issues.
#1: Establish an R & D Space in Organizations

Create an R & D space – with its own resources, metrics, expectations, processes – that allows for true exploration and innovation, to complement your traditional performance space.

Example: 90 Day Campaigns in Mentoring Organization
#2: Engage the right people at the right time.
#3: Focus on outcomes & principles

- Standards & rules freeze practice and rigidify thinking

- Focus on the general outcomes and principles you like, and freedom to see how they can be addressed

Example: Mentoring in Edmonton
#4 Reframe evidence & purpose of evaluation

- Evidence can point to promising areas of action and hunches but ....

- ... innovation is always “ahead of the evidence” curve.

- (Developmental) Evaluation can help innovators to create the evidence to ‘test’ the innovation in real time.

See Better Evaluation.org for Developmental evaluation
#5: Engage people (citizens, clients, users)

Example: Car Seats in Dallas

“Effective engagement is inspired by the empathy that develops simply by being human.”

- Brian Solis
#6: Court – and mediate – conflict.

The Columbian Peace Deal
#7: Demand and share intelligent failure.

https://failforward.org/
#8: Read about, train and experiment with new methods and skills for social innovation
Possibilities & A Plea
• External transformation depends on internal transformation.

• The ideas and practices of social innovation depend on a moral commitment, a sense of vulnerability, a curiosity, optimism and hope.
Homelessness (1990)

Homeless plight an impossible fight:

THE GLOBE AND MAIL

CANADA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER  •  WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2011
Medicine Hat is about to end homelessness — but then what?

ANALISE KLINGBEIL, CALGARY HERALD

More from Annalise Klingbeil, Calgary Herald

Published on: April 15, 2015 | Last Updated: May 12, 2015 8:47 PM MDT

Medicine Hat Homelessness Could Reach Its End This Year

The Huffington Post Alberta | By Jesse Ferreras

Posted: 05/14/2015 10:20 am EDT | Updated: 05/15/2015 11:59 am EDT
Reconciliation in Canada

1990

2015
It’s far too late and things are too bad for pessimism.

Dee Hock
Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out

Vaclav Havel
What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.

(Crowfoot)