



The Practice of MACRO SOCIAL WORK

William G. Brueggemann | 4e



The Practice of Macro Social Work

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FOURTH EDITION

William G. Brueggemann

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The Practice of Macro Social Work,
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*For our grandchildren: Erik Matthew and Emily Lorraine Grunenwald;
Riley Gen, Emma Kailani, Olivia Masako, and Lilliam Umeko Brueggemann*

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How Evil Triumphs

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.
Edmund Burke (1729–1797)

The Categorical Imperative

We ought always and in every way to treat mankind and every other rational being as an end and never merely as a means only.
Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals

MISSION AND PURPOSE OF *THE PRACTICE OF MACRO SOCIAL WORK*

The fourth edition of *The Practice of Macro Social Work* has been motivated by the challenge of social work leadership, the expansion and development of macro social work, and the coming postmodern revolution in the second decade of the 21st century.

The Challenge of Social Work Leadership

At the turn of the 20th century, the field of social work was peopled by leaders of enormous vision and energy whose goal was nothing less than the eradication of the overwhelming social problems of the day—grinding poverty, political corruption, abusive working conditions, exploited women and immigrants, and dangerous and unhealthy slums. These macro social workers were dedicated to creating a wholesome, safe, and equitable social environment in which the American dream would be a reality not just for the rich but for everyone.

Social workers of the stature of Jane Addams, Florence Kelly, Homer Folks, Graham Taylor, Mary McLeod Bethune, Charles Loring Brace, Saponisba Breckenridge, Dorothy Day, Dorothea Dix, Homer Folks, Jeannette Rankin, Bertha Capen Reynolds, Mary Simkhovitch, the Abbott sisters, Mary Parker Follett, Lillian Wald, and many others displayed altruism and compassion, courage, and character that we rarely see in second decade of the 21st century. The pioneering efforts of social workers like these laid the groundwork for many of the social advances we continue to benefit from today.

Today, we face similar challenges. Large corporations are usurping power and control in government. Great disparities of wealth are apparent. Poverty, racial intolerance, and a host of social problems continue to plague us. Social workers are often at the center of helping resolve many of these struggles. This book was written to inspire a new generation of social workers who, like many heroes of the past, are willing and able to assume important roles of leadership in the coming postmodern era.

Expansion and Development of Macro Social Work

In the past decade macro social work has experienced a revival, especially in the field of community social work. Community development corporations have increased in number and have expanded globally. Community organizing has become more

consensually oriented and has often combined with community development corporations and community planning in a three-pronged approach to empowering communities.

New social organizational forms, particularly social enterprises, have arrived. Together with burgeoning nonprofit service and advocacy organizations, they have created a new social sector, comprising an unprecedented third force in government, and initiating a long-awaited resurgence of the social commons. Social administration has become more sophisticated, complemented by innovative educational ventures. New social movement organizations have grown in North America and globally, promising a revolution in social thinking and social action aimed at bringing about a more just social order. Internationally, grassroots organizations (GROs), national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), transnational nongovernmental organizations (TNGOs), and nongovernmental support organizations (NGSOs) have proliferated, creating an expanding web of change.

These new developments create the need for an updated text with expanded coverage and increased depth, assisting social workers to engage a more complex but exciting world in the years to come.

Postmodern Revolution

It has become increasingly clear that our society is at the beginning of a new postmodern era in which the development of a new civil society will become one of our most compelling and prominent concerns. Even as the ideology of the market economy, individualism, and the self-interested pursuit of wealth seems to be triumphant, the seeds of its demise are already becoming apparent. A new era is emerging that is altering the way we think about social problems, recreating community, providing alternatives to market-centered organizations, and transforming modern politics.

While it is often involved in these developments, social work needs to become more intentionally and centrally engaged in bringing about a new reconstructed society. The field needs to adopt innovative models of change, examine social problems from new perspectives, develop alternative ways of thinking, and adopt fresh practice approaches. This text was written explicitly to lay the groundwork for accomplishing these goals.

Past editions of *The Practice of Macro Social Work* have been dedicated to helping social work develop

strong leaders, explore new developments in the field, and help learners prepare for greater challenges as society unfolds. This fourth edition continues that tradition, but in a deeper and more comprehensive fashion, helping the coming generation of social workers assume important roles in bringing about a new, postmodern society.

ORGANIZING FEATURES OF THIS TEXT

In order to help students and instructors follow the content of this text easily and clearly, the Introduction provides a definition of macro social work: *The practice of helping individuals and groups solve problems and make social change at the community, organization, societal, and international levels.*

The text is organized by following this definition step by step in each of its sections. By memorizing this simple definition as a mnemonic device, students can easily bring to mind the main themes not only of the book but of individual chapters as well.

The first section of the book, Chapters 2 through 5 explores *the practice of helping individuals and groups solve problems and make social change*, laying a theoretical foundation for the practice oriented community, organizational, societal, and international sections of the book that follow.

Chapter 2, for example, provides a basis for practice, describing a new action-social model used throughout the text. Chapter 3 describes how generalist-oriented macro social workers help individuals and groups. Chapter 4 explores the dynamics of both conventional and social problems. Chapter 5 provides an understanding of solving problems and making social change.

Part Two, Chapters 6 through 9, explores social work at the *community level*, exploring the components of community in Chapter 6, and then looking at research and planning in Chapter 7, community development in Chapter 8, and community organizing in Chapter 9.

Part Three, Chapters 10 through 12, reviews social work at the *organizational level*. Chapter 10 examines nonprofit social organizations. Chapter 11 shows students how to create new social organizations, and Chapter 12 explores how to administer them.

Part Four covers social work advocacy and social action at the *national level* in chapter 13 and international social work at the *global level* in chapter 14.

Format and Pedagogical Features

The fourth edition, as in previous editions, has a rich banquet of features, often drawn from real life, that will help students apply the content of the chapters in meaningful ways and provide the instructor with helpful aids to learning.

Quotations and Table of Contents Each chapter begins with several, often provocative quotations that summarize the spirit of the chapter. Quotations are followed by an outline of the chapter's contents to provide easy reference and as a learning device for review of the major areas that each chapter contains.

Opening Narrative A compelling illustrative story follows, highlighting the chapter's contents. A "What You Will Learn in This Chapter" narrative summary highlights the key ideas in the chapter and serves as a guide for students in following the chapter's logic.

Experiential Exercise An exercise follows each narrative summary, inspiring students to begin thinking about critical issues in the content of the chapter, and setting the stage for the content that follows.

Illustrative Boxes and Conclusion Illustrative boxes that provide practical examples of the chapter's contents are included. Each chapter ends with a conclusion that summarizes the content of the chapter and restates key topics to aid in student recall.

Questions for Discussion and Exercises Each chapter contains a list of questions for discussion that instructors may use to invite student engagement in the topics covered in the chapter. These questions are followed by a set of thought-provoking experiential exercises designed to help students look deeper into particular issues, reflect on what they have read, and integrate that learning with other ideas and concepts to which they have been exposed.

Additional Reading Additional reading lists are provided, which students will find useful in helping expand their understanding of particular topics, or as a place to begin for writing reports. Often other resources including websites or agencies are included that students may contact if they want to deepen their engagement outside of class.

Experiential Exercises, Instructor's Resource Manual, and Test Questions An Instructor's Resource Manual posted on the website provides additional exercises that instructors can use to press students to look more deeply into issues. There are also test banks on the website for instructors to use for class examinations.

NEW AND REVISED MATERIAL

The entire text of the fourth edition of *The Practice of Macro Social Work* has been scrupulously reviewed for relevance and currency. As a result, three chapters from the third edition have been excised, including Chapter 4, Leadership; Chapter 12, The Practice of Organization Development; and Chapter 14, The Practice of Social Work with Social Movements. Relevant information they contained has been incorporated into revised chapters.

A completely new Chapter 2, the Action-Social Model of Macro Social Work, makes its first appearance in the fourth edition. In addition, three chapters bearing new titles, containing substantial amounts of fresh material, and expanded information from the third edition are introduced, including Chapter 3, Helping Individuals and Groups; Chapter 4, Conventional and Social Problems; and Chapter 5, Solving Problems and Making Social Change.

Exhaustive research has been undertaken in each content area of the book. Every chapter carried over from the third edition has been completely rewritten, incorporating updated information, innovative concepts, stimulating ideas, and the latest material available.

Part One: Practice of Helping Individuals and Groups Solve Problems and Make Social Change

The Action-Social Model Chapter 2 is a completely new addition to the fourth edition, introducing an action-social model of macro social work. Rather than traditional biological and physical science-based social ecology and systems theory that forms the basis of many social work models, the action-social model intentionally uses concepts of social reality as its foundation. The action-social model is derived from social constructionism, social phenomenology, and symbolic interactionist orientations. It includes strengths/capacity, assets/resources, and empowerment/social justice

practice perspectives. The action-social model is expanded upon in other sections, and is used as a platform for all the practice chapters in the book.

Helping Individuals and Groups Chapter 3, *Helping Individuals and Groups: Generalist Social Work Practice*, provides a new generalist perspective to the text. It contains updated and expanded information from the third edition about leading task groups through the first meeting and through the group's life cycle.

In addition, the chapter introduces innovative new material exploring how social workers use social groups to strengthen individuals and task groups to make change, empower people, and help people overcome self-oppression. The chapter contains a new action-social model of leadership. It develops a new model of "philanthropy" by which macro social workers promote individual emotional and physical health by participation, volunteering, and civic engagement.

Conventional and Social Problems Chapter 4, *Conventional and Social Problems*, is a completely rewritten and refocused version of the third edition's Chapter 2, *Social Problems*. The chapter provides updated and new information about economic injustice and other social problems. Most important, the chapter includes a completely new, innovative typology of four levels of human problems that exist on a continuum of increasing complexity. The typology shows the differences between these types of problems, and ways that macro social workers help resolve them using combinations of rational problem solving and social thinking.

The chapter utilizes an expanded definition of social problems and explores the origin of social problem models, a continuum of problem-solving approaches, and answers that don't work, much of which originated with the third edition.

Solving Problems and Making Social Change Chapter 5, *Solving Problems and Making Social Change*, contains an updated description and definition of rational problem solving (RPS), a brief revised and updated history of RPS, and a step-by-step exploration of how to use RPS derived from the third edition. It provides a restructured section exploring the limitations of RPS.

In addition, however, Chapter 5 offers a new section on social thinking, including a helpful new definition of social thinking and an original description of the way social workers can use social thinking to solve social problems. An innovative section, new to

this edition, reviewing the limitations of social thinking is included.

The chapter adds fresh material exploring the assertion that social problems are best dissolved by a process of social change in combination with social thinking. The chapter introduces several theories of social change for the first time, and explores their limitations. It presents a unique action-social model of social change and new information about three aspects of change. The chapter utilizes an updated exploration from the third edition, helping students understand how to change social systems.

Part Two: Social Work Practice with Communities

Community Chapter 6, *Community*, is completely restructured, with a new focus and new material. Based on an original action-social model of community, the chapter expands the definition of community from the third edition and contains a compelling examination of whether community is dying that is new to this edition. Following this discussion, the chapter provides an in-depth, more concise history of community and community theorists.

The chapter also includes expanded and updated information about locality-based central cities, inner-ring suburbs, and suburbs. Material exploring problems that urban communities face today is a new feature in this chapter, along with an original section describing assets/resources and community control approaches that social workers can use in their efforts to revitalize urban localities.

A new section on rural towns and villages has been added describing the changing conditions of rural America, its unique features, and ways that rural social workers can assist these communities to become strengthened.

The chapter also looks at relational community from a fresh perspective as a form of the social commons, including information about social goods, social networks, and communal associations that is new to this edition. Additional new material shows how social workers use relational community in practice. Also new to the fourth edition is an original exploration of virtual community, how social workers use virtual community in community organizing and social action, and a critique of virtual community organizing.

Community Research and Planning Chapter 7, *The Practice of Community Research and Planning*, has been significantly expanded and refocused, centering

the chapter for the first time on the use of research methods in the planning process. Using new material, the chapter explores what community planning is and the role of social work in planning. A shortened and more directed section on the history of community planning is included, using refurbished material from the third edition and bringing community planning into the present.

A new, original action-social model community planning centering planning on foundations of participation, empowerment, and leadership is offered. Expanded and improved data from the third edition provides a step-by-step walk through the community planning process, from how to organize a planning group, through implementing the plan and ending the process.

Community Development Chapter 8, *The Practice of Community Development*, has also been substantially revised and updated, reflecting many of the changes that have occurred in the field over the past several years. For example, the chapter provides a completely reorganized history of community development. Building on information from the third edition, it incorporates new material describing community development corporations.

Completely new sections include a treatment of community economic development (CED) and its market-based approach, a community investment approach, a community wealth approach, and the partnership approach. Political community development (PCD) is also a new section reflecting the field's pioneering developments in community organizing, consensus, and community benefits approaches. Community social development (CSD) is also a new inclusion, exploring how CSD is bringing about the social commons by means of social investment and social development models.

Using fresh, updated information about building a community development corporation derived from the third edition, this chapter also provides recent material itemizing how e-community development is transforming the field. The chapter concludes with a new section exploring challenges to community development in the 21st century.

Practice of Community Organization Chapter 9, *The Practice of Community Organizing*, has been completely rewritten and updated. New material explores recent accomplishments of community organizations since the third edition. The chapter includes a

fresh review of the purpose of contemporary community organizing, and brings community organizing into the present by means of a new practically based history centered on the community organizing models of Saul Alinsky, Fred Ross, and Cesar Chavez, along with social networks and issue organizing approaches.

Building on this history, and incorporating concepts from the third edition, the chapter presents a new generic model of community organizing that social workers can use in many current situations, including how community organizers engage members, build community, create an organization, and engage in action. The chapter includes expanded strategies and tactics for direct engagement in social change. Especially compelling is a new section describing how students can develop a career in community organization.

Part Three: Social Work Practice with Organizations

Social Organizations Chapter 10, *Social Organizations*, provides a virtually new treatment of the topic. An updated description, and a shortened but more directed history of modern complex organizations utilizing information from the third edition begins the chapter. A new section describing the implications of large modern organization for macro social work is included.

The central feature of the chapter, however, is a completely revised and expanded exploration of nonprofit social organizations using some material from the third edition. This treatment, however, includes a clearer definition of social organizations than before, and a new section itemizing the foundational characteristics of nonprofit organizations. A refurbished history of social organizations that is briefer but more specific and detailed also appears in this chapter.

Important for social workers are new updated descriptions of the role and function, size, scope, structures, and funding of the major four categories of social organizations. Especially noteworthy, however, is a completely new exploration of the advent of new social enterprise organizations. This treatment brings social enterprise organizations into focus for social workers, showing why they are important today, and the various kinds of enterprise organizations that exist. An additional new feature highlights the challenges and future of nonprofit and social enterprise organizations in macro social work.

Creating Social Organizations Chapter 11, *Creating New Social Organizations*, is a new chapter that utilizes some material from the third edition. New information describes what social organization building includes. A more concise section on the history of organization building from the third edition and a new piece exploring organization building today are provided. The central focus of the chapter, however, is a step-by-step presentation covering the process of constructing non-profit social agencies, building on material from the third edition but also including a wealth of newer insights. Of equal importance is a creative examination of social entrepreneurship for social workers, and a new addition exploring how social workers can build social enterprise organizations. The chapter provides a challenge to the social work profession, making recommendations for developing social enterprise organizations in the 21st century.

Practice of Social Administration Chapter 12, *The Practice of Social Administration*, adds a number of new components to the subject matter of this fourth edition, including an action-social model of administration, the difference between social leadership and operations management, and updated information on the more important laws that guide administrative practice.

In addition, new material on program planning and service development, employee development, and an updated section on promoting organizational change are included. Completely new to the chapter is a section on rules of thumb of social enterprise administration, and a new logic model of program evaluation.

Part Four: Social Work Practice at the National and International Levels

Advocacy and Social Action Chapter 13, *Advocacy and Social Action: Making a Good Society*, includes updated and expanded descriptions of social policy advocacy, new information about how to carry out social work advocacy, and more focused and concise information about social movements from the third edition. The chapter also includes information from the third edition about both modern and new social movements, but also provides fresh and expanded material detailing how social workers engage in social action to create a revitalized society.

Social Work at the Global Level Chapter 14, *The Practice of Social Work at the Global Level*, has been refocused and substantially revised. The new focus aims to inspire students to consider international social work as a viable arena of practice. The history section has been completely expanded and rewritten, including new and updated information on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs, transnational NGOs, and nongovernmental support organizations. The chapter provides fresh, updated material on international social problems. It explores in more detail the arenas in which international social workers make change. An expanded section from the third edition on how to become an international social worker has been included.

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William G. Brueggemann graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa School of Social Work in 1964 as a social group worker. For over 20 years he worked as a psychotherapist, supervising counselor, group work director, and community resource developer, and founded several new social organizations. After receiving his master's and doctoral degrees in public administration from the University of Southern California, he taught administration at the University of San Francisco, directed the social work program at Fresno Pacific University and taught in the master's and doctoral programs in social welfare at Kyushu University of Health and Welfare, Nobeoka, Japan. He is the author of nine social work texts published in Japan, a chapter in *The Handbook of Community Practice 2nd ed*, a number of journal articles, as well as *The Practice of Macro Social Work*.

The Practice of Macro Social Work

1

Overview of the Practice of Macro Social Work

The Mission of Social Work

Social work's mission should be to build a meaning, a purpose and a sense of obligation for the community. It is only by creating a community that we establish a basis for commitment, obligation, and social support. We must build communities that are excited about their child care systems, that find it exhilarating to care for the mentally ill and the frail aged, and make demands upon people to contribute, and to care for one another.¹

Harry Specht and Mark Courtney

My Brother's Keeper

If anything human is foreign to me, I am myself, by just so much, less human.... It is a fact of man's makeup ... that I am indeed my brother's keeper; the voice of my brother's blood cries out to me from the ground, because, in the most significant sense, his blood is my very own.

As the range of our fellow-feeling contracts, the boundaries of the self close in, and become at last the walls of a prison. As we withdraw from the problems of the aged, the young, the poor, from suffering humanity in any part of the world, it is our own individualities that shrink.²

Abraham Kaplan

Ideas in This Chapter

DEATH COMES TO FRANCISCO

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

THE PLACE OF MACRO PRACTICE IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WORK

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MACRO SOCIAL WORK

Social Work and the Progressive Era (1865–1915)

The Great Depression (1929–1939)

The Conservative 1940s and 1950s

Professionalization and Specialization (1950–1970)

Generalist and Specialist Social Work (1970–1990s)

Expansion and Integration (1990s to the Present)

WHAT IS MACRO SOCIAL WORK?

Macro Social Work Practice

Helping Individuals and Groups

Solving Problems and Making Social Change

Community Social Work

Organizational Social Work

Societal Social Work

CONCLUSION AND A CHALLENGE FOR YOU

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

ADDITIONAL READING

DEATH COMES TO FRANCISCO

Francisco Martinez is dead. One of millions of faceless and insignificant laborers in our country, his passing will scarcely make a ripple in the course of world affairs. But “when his friends chew over the events of that morning, they taste the bile of being strangers in a strange land, the mules pulling agriculture’s plow,” writes Alex Pulaski. To his friends, Francisco’s death is symbolic of the hypocrisy of American culture. Searching for a better life, Francisco, a young Triqui Indian, came to the United States from the state of Oaxaca, Mexico, but as Filemon Lopez, an advocate for the Triqui Indians said, “the end of all this, for many, is death.” Each year the numbers of Triqui Indians swell in California when summer farm work calls. The many who remain in the United States often must live in caves or in the open. Francisco, however, was more fortunate than most. Part of a vine-pruning crew, he was one of 14 men and their wives and children who shared an unheated brick shed owned by rancher Russell Scheidt.

On a cold winter morning, however, Francisco’s fortune changed. Waking for work at about 5:00 a.m., Augustin Ramirez found Francisco on the floor, his breathing labored, appearing near death. Augustin woke two of Francisco’s friends, who ran to the ranch house to ask Scheidt to use the phone. Roused out of bed, Russell Scheidt was exhausted, having just returned at midnight from a Caribbean vacation in Jamaica. Mario Ramirez told him in Spanish that Francisco was dying and they needed to call the police. Scheidt’s response, according to Ramirez, was that they had cars, and they could take him to the hospital if they wished. Then he shut the door in their faces. Later Scheidt said “I can’t really remember what I told them.... I was kind of incoherent, to tell the truth.”

Desperate for help, Francisco’s friends sped into Kerman, a nearby town. Stopping at a service station, they talked an attendant into calling the Kerman police. They explained their problem to the officer, who asked several questions and then called the Sheriff’s department. The friends waited 22 minutes for the Sheriff’s deputies to arrive. Wasting more precious time, the deputies drove to the shed, where they found Francisco

at 6:15 a.m., already dead. Finally, they called the ambulance.

Francisco died of acute alcohol poisoning, which caused his brain to shut down his lungs. Tom Stoeckel, manager of the Valley Medical Center’s emergency unit in Fresno, said that paramedics can often revive victims of alcohol poisoning by simply giving them oxygen. However, death can result if the supply of oxygen to the brain has stopped for even a few minutes. The official report makes no mention of Scheidt or his refusal to allow the workers to call an ambulance. It stated that Francisco was already dead when the workers found him that morning.

The afternoon of the day Francisco died, Scheidt returned with a translator and told the Triqui men, women, and children to leave the property. The translator reportedly told them that housing inspectors were coming and the shed was not fit for human habitation. Scheidt said later that the men had finished their work and were basically squatters.

Francisco was buried two weeks later, a victim of human indifference, powerlessness, and poverty. His friends, now unemployed and homeless, gave him the best funeral they could buy with the \$861 they collected. Four of his friends attended the service. Russell Scheidt did not come.³

Francisco Martinez died a victim of alcohol poisoning. But his death was ultimately brought on by the social conditions of poverty, racism, and indifference, as well as the exploitation of an entire group of people. Even in the United States, many are impoverished economically and socially for the benefit of a few. When social abuse such as this occurs, our entire society is diminished and degraded.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

This overview introduces you to the practice of macro social work. You will discover who macro social workers are and explore a brief history of macro social work. Then you will look at a definition of the practice of macro social work and see how different aspects of macro social work practice are covered in this book. You will be challenged to consider your own role as a macro social worker.

EXERCISE 1.1

Who Is to Blame?

Indifference to the plight of others in pain allows “man’s inhumanity to man” to thrive. When we are simple bystanders—spectators rather than actors in human affairs—we become devoid of social responsibility and retreat into a world of indifference, exploitation, and greed. We become socially and ethically numb, giving tacit assent to a host of social ills that eat at the heart of our well-being.

Macro social workers are people who insert themselves actively into the lives of others, not allowing social ills to go unchallenged. We want to make a difference in people’s lives where oppression, intolerance, and insensitivity exist. We work to correct conditions that cause human misery. We struggle to get at the root of social problems by calling attention to injustice, discovering where unfulfilled human needs cause deprivation, and we help forge people together to build communities of mutual responsibility with one another to increase strength and empowerment.

Imagine for a moment that you are a social worker with migrant farm workers in Kerman, California. The news of the death of Francisco Martinez reaches you. The plight of the Triqui Indians is all too familiar to you: wrenching poverty, oppression, prejudice, miserable living conditions, lack of educational opportunities for children, alcoholism, language barriers, health problems, long hours of backbreaking labor in fields where temperatures often pass 100 degrees for days on end, and worst of all, for many, the continual aching fear of deportation and separation from family and loved ones. Who or what is ultimately responsible for Francisco’s death? Where is the balance between personal and community responsibility?

After you have reached some conclusions, turn to the section “A Challenge to You” at the end of this chapter and read it. As a macro social worker, what method or combination of macro social work methods would you employ to address the problems of the Triqui Indians? What is your sense of the quote by Specht and Courtney at the beginning of this chapter? Come to some conclusions about what genuine social work practice consists of, then discuss them in class.

THE PLACE OF MACRO PRACTICE IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WORK

Social work is among the more altruistic human service professions in existence today. Social work not only takes a lead in providing clinical services to individuals and families, the arena of micro practice, but assists in engaging people in improving social conditions as a whole, the focus of macro social work.⁴ According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), all social workers, therefore, have a double orientation: to individual clients as well as to the broader society.⁵ Even if macro level social work is outside one’s day-to-day professional obligation, helping make a better society is not only an expectation of all social workers, but ought to be part of every social worker’s personal commitment as a citizen and member of one’s community. In many different ways, all social workers ought to exercise their civic consciousness by volunteering and becoming active in expanding the social commons, the arena where social goods, benefits, and opportunities flourish.⁶

Every social worker, for example, ought to be open to efforts to help people in their neighborhoods engage in conscientious planning for social betterment; promote projects of community economic, political, and social development; and, where possible, become active in community organizing efforts to overcome social injustice and solve social problems.⁷

Some of you may have an opportunity to contribute to building the social infrastructure of your community by leading social groups for youth or young adults, for example, or volunteering in one of the many nonprofit social organizations that exist in your community. You may use your social work skills to help develop a new community-based social organization or serving on its board. At the larger societal level, others may be motivated to become involved in movements for social justice, or become engaged in the political process, advocating for particular social programs or policies to help make our society more humane, caring, and compassionate. You may even become involved in helping remediate global social problems, becoming affiliated with and supporting organizations such as Oxfam, CARE, UNICEF, and Amnesty International that are dedicated to refugee, relief, international community development, and human rights.

Whether your occupational goal is clinically based practice or macro social work, therefore, this textbook is intended to inspire you and give you information that will equip you to engage in social change and social justice as part of your professional calling and personal lifestyle. It will assist you to discover how to apply your idealism, compassion, and altruism in daily acts of social change. The information in this book can help you build a foundation of knowledge so you can make a difference and help make the world a better place.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MACRO SOCIAL WORK

By about 1850, voracious economic corporations of the day and laissez-faire U.S. democratic government encouraged rampant wealth accumulation and exploitation, not only of natural resources but of the nation's human population as well. What made this era especially harrowing were the "evils of unrestricted and unregulated capitalism," says David Cannadine.⁸ The imperialistic possessive mentality even extended beyond national borders, as Britain and other nations including America enslaved human beings and in the process appropriated much of the remaining territory of the globe for their own use.

The result was the rise of unimaginable power for a few and abysmally inequitable deprivation for many. The harnessing of entire families to a dreadful existence in factories and work houses where life, as Thomas Hobbes so aptly put it, was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short,"⁹ was a condition that for some came to be seen as "natural" and, what was more chilling, as the way things ought to be.

For some citizens, however, such conditions were far from natural. Many of these people were the first social workers, who saw the destruction of family and community life as an egregious horror that needed to be corrected. Beatrice Webb, one of the most respected social workers and commentators of late 19th-century Britain asserted that 'for four-fifths of the entire population, the 'Industrial Revolution' ... must have appeared ... as a gigantic and cruel experiment which, insofar as it was affecting their homes, their health, their subsistence and their pleasure, was proving a calamitous failure."¹⁰

Social Work and the Progressive Era (1865–1915)

Early social workers in the United States and Canada, in spite of all odds against them, challenged the dominant ideology of the day and struggled to recapture a vision of a society where cohesive social relationships, concern for others, and communal social well-being would again be the norm. In so doing they worked to restore humanity to its ideal condition of mutual benefit, forging within the emerging profession of social work a particular concern for community.

Progressive social workers were at the forefront of every major social movement in an era that was filled with reform efforts. Whether involved with individuals and families as charity organization workers, or with groups and community as settlement workers, they were tireless fighters for social justice, helping to mobilize people who were desperate for social change. They worked on behalf of labor, child welfare, progressive politics, and pacifism, seeking social reform, not revolution. They advocated for social change wherever and whenever the necessity arose. Early social workers, as Harry Specht and Mark Courtney assert, "were concerned about every corner of darkness, despair, and deprivation on earth. They sought to aid criminals, alcoholics, the poor, children, and people suffering from mental or physical disability. They worked to improve food and drug safety, sanitation, playgrounds, and slums."¹¹

They mobilized individuals and groups, conducted research, helped improve communities and organizations, and were involved in social change at the local, state, and national levels. A few even became involved in international issues.

Social Work with Individuals and Groups Social workers in the Charity Organization Society and Settlement House movements engaged individuals in their own neighborhoods. Friendly visitors of the Charity Organization Society, for example, invented social casework to assist individuals, many of whom were impoverished immigrants trying to raise families in slums, young men who could not find work, and others who were struggling to adapt to conditions in the new country.

Settlement house social workers invited individuals to join settlement activities, programs, and services.

They understood the value of groups in empowering people. They pioneered the use of social clubs and discussion groups to address citizenship issues, promote educational and arts classes, develop leadership, solve common problems in their local neighborhoods, and they engaged in social activism.

Social Work Research Early social workers realized that if they were to make a difference, they needed to base their efforts on verifiable social research. Charity organization workers, for example, examined the way charity was distributed, the extent of poverty in cities, and the causes and correction of impoverishment, laying a foundation for evidence-based social work practice. But the major efforts of research and reform were carried out by settlement social workers. Jane Addams, founder of Hull House in Chicago, for example, understood that in order to solve problems, one must first understand them. Settlement house social workers collected, analyzed, and based their solutions on evidence, exemplified by the “3 Rs” of the Settlement House movement: residence, research, and reform.

In 1895, the Hull-House Association published *Hull-House Maps and Papers*,¹² examining the health conditions of tenements, poor sanitation, and crowded slums. They correlated these conditions with tuberculosis and other diseases and used that research to press local government to correct unhealthy conditions in tenements, improve health care and housing, create playgrounds, and develop legislation for consumer protection.

Community Social Work Charity organization social workers helped pioneer community social work, creating the field of community social welfare planning, rationalizing philanthropy, and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of social service delivery. Settlement house workers sought to mobilize neighborhood forces, and a few tried to help residents develop self-directed associations. In Boston, for example, settlement workers helped organize 16 district improvement societies, which chose delegates to citywide United Improvement Associations. Settlements formed their own federations.

Early social workers pioneered what has come to be termed community organization. While other types

of neighborhood organizing existed during the Progressive Era, says Robert Fisher, the “social work [community organizing] approach, best exemplified in the social settlements, dominated the era,”¹³ and until the 1930s was the most effective means by which people connected with each other to deal with the issues that affected their neighborhoods. “They played a positive role in delivering needed services, raising public consciousness about slum conditions, and called for collective action to ameliorate problems.”¹⁴

The settlement assumed a “special responsibility for all families living within a radius of a few blocks of the settlement house [and] it sustained a general relationship to the larger district encircling the neighborhood,”¹⁵ bringing about needed changes through direct efforts, mobilization of local resources, and democratic social action.¹⁶

Organizational Social Work Charity and settlement house social workers were simultaneously active in organizational social work as well. Charity organization societies pioneered local social service administration, establishing agency networks, organizing new councils of social agencies to coordinate services city-wide, and creating community chests, precursors of the United Way.

Settlement house social workers became experts in public administration and government. They knew that public administration must be placed on a neutral foundation that eliminated favoritism. They advocated government reform, designing a new city manager form of local government that was adopted by many cities across the nation. Early social workers, along with others, pressed government to eliminate organizational corruption at the national level, and they succeeded in obtaining passage of the Pendleton Act of 1883, creating the Civil Service Commission, eliminating nepotism in federal administration. Mary Parker Follett, a settlement house social worker, was then and remains today one of the outstanding pioneers in organizational theory.

Societal Social Work As settlement workers got to know their neighborhoods and the needs of residents, many of them were drawn into social change at the societal level. They became involved in child

welfare, reform of the democratic process, and wider social movements.

Child Welfare Settlement workers were prime advocates in the child welfare movement, pushing for child welfare legislation. In 1902 Lillian Wald and Florence Kelley mobilized 32 settlement houses in New York City to abolish the horrors of child labor, stimulating the 1903 Conference of Charities and Corrections, which built opposition to child labor on national lines. Wald and Kelley organized the first White House Conference on Child Dependency in 1909, bringing the issue of dependent children before the entire nation. The White House Conference was instrumental in developing the Children's Bureau, established in 1912, the first child welfare agency of the federal government.

Settlement workers successfully developed proposals for a new juvenile criminal justice system, advocating and obtaining a separate court for juvenile offenders, with laws to protect children from overly punitive sentencing and prison conditions. They provided leadership in establishing the first probation service in Chicago and the Juvenile Protective Association.

Democratic Political Process Working through small groups and clubs, settlement house social workers encouraged government to play a larger role in providing for the public welfare through policies, programs, and regulatory efforts. Social workers helped break the back of political machines in local government that colluded with business to distort the democratic process by means of bribery and favoritism.

Progressive social workers pressed for more direct democratic participation in political choice by advocating for laws mandating citizen-sponsored initiatives, the referendum, and the recall of ineffective politicians at the state level. Along with other social activists at the national level, they won the right of people to participate in choosing presidential candidates by means of the direct primary and for direct election of senators.

Social Movements and Social Reform Progressive social workers pressed for government regulation of big business. They advocated for better wages, hours, and working conditions for men, women, and children, and advocated for federal laws in consumer protection.

Hull House workers organized the Immigrant Protective League, easing immigrants' adjustment to their new country, helping to prevent political exploitation

of immigrants by corrupt political machines. Settlement workers fought for laws to protect employed women, helping organize the National Women's Trade Union, and picketed with women workers in strikes against sweatshop owners.

Florence Kelley was instrumental in establishing the constitutionality of the 10-hour work day. Jane Addams was a leader in the creation of the State Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration in Illinois. Settlement workers formed the Municipal Voters League, provided national leadership to the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and were in the forefront of passage of the Women's Suffrage Amendment to the Constitution in 1919. Progressive policy advocates, using evidence-based practice, pressed for enforcement of pure food and drug laws, and advocated for regulatory agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration.

Social workers engaged in social protest and were active in some of the momentous social movements of the time, including the labor movement, women's suffrage, temperance, and the peace movement, helping to win amendments to the U.S. Constitution allowing women to vote and prohibiting alcohol consumption.

The Great Depression (1929–1939)

During the Great Depression the crisis in the national economy spurred many social workers to increased activity, especially at the national level. Social work associations pressured government to reverse its "hands off" policies toward the economy and provide programs to assist destitute families with jobs, relief, and protection from economic fluctuations. "The American Public Welfare Association and the American Association of Social Workers lobbied hard in the early 1930s for federal public works and employment relief.... Social workers never showed more interest in public welfare than they did in the Depression years,"¹⁷ asserts James Patterson.

Many social workers were recruited to serve in ranking positions in the Roosevelt administration formulating plans, making proposals, and carrying out policies and programs. They included Ewan Clague, administrator of the Social Security Administration; Jane Hoey, director of the Bureau of Public Assistance; Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor; Wilbur J. "Mr. Social Security" Cohen, author of the Social Security law and later Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Works Progress Administration was

mobilized by social worker Harry Hopkins (1890–1946), one of the great humanitarians of that period, who also served as director of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and Secretary of Commerce.

As a result of the dedicated efforts of both micro- and macro-oriented social workers, along with others, a number of groundbreaking pieces of legislation were passed including the Social Security Act (SSA) of 1935, which provided assistance to aged; unemployment insurance; Aid to Families with Dependent Children; Maternal and Child Welfare; public health services; and services to the blind. The SSA was the most significant piece of social welfare legislation ever devised, the largest government program in the world, and, at the time, the single greatest expenditure in the federal budget.

Councils of Social Agencies provided a necessary intermediary role assisting in the support and development of numerous social programs. So important were these councils that the influential 1939 Lane Report cited them as the only urban community organizations at that time that organized resources to meet community needs.

The Conservative 1940s and 1950s

Many new social service programs were developed after World War II to care for increasing areas of need, including housing and assisting people with physical, emotional, and developmental disabilities. While most social workers engaged in individual social care, some focused on social group work and a few became active in planning, program development, administration, and policy advocacy. With the successes of the 1930s and early 1940s it became clear that an integrated arena of professional social work practice needed to be developed.

Professionalization and Specialization (1950–1970)

In 1955 the National Association of Social Work (NASW) was formed, and formally began to define social work methods. NASW officially recognized social casework and group work as two of its methods, and in 1962 NASW officially included community organization, a precursor to macro social work, as its third specialty. Soon schools of social work began offering coursework in each of these three disciplines as well

as instructing students on professional roles and ethical guidelines common to all social workers.

Social work specialization continued in the decade of the 1960s as more and more caseworkers identified with the practice of clinical psychotherapy and pressed for legislation to allow them to become licensed clinicians on a par with psychiatry and psychology.

Changes in society at large were also having an impact on workers. While many individual social workers became actively involved in and provided leadership to the civil rights, women's rights, and welfare rights movements, community organization social work was still in its early stages of development as a specialty, limiting its impact on social changes that were occurring in this turbulent era. Social group work was transformed into clinically based group therapy or absorbed into community organization, gradually disappearing as a specialty in its own right.

Generalist and Specialist Social Work (1970–1990s)

Clinical social work continued to grow rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s as local NASW chapters pressed for legislation allowing master's-level social workers to establish private clinical practice and receive third-party payments from insurance companies and government providers. So successful were these efforts that in state after state MSW clinical social workers became licensed practitioners. Within a few years social workers dominated the field of psychotherapy, a position that social work continues to hold today.

Other social workers, still concerned about larger social problems, gained skills and increasing competency. Community organization moved beyond its identification as a single method and, according to Jack Rothman and John Tropman, became defined as community social work practice including locality development, community planning, and community organizing.¹⁸

By the end of the 1980s community organization social work made a giant leap as the field claimed four distinct arenas of practice at the community, organization, societal, and international levels and became renamed macro social work. Macro social work practitioners were adding new styles and approaches to many arenas of social reform.

At the same time, however, a reaction to increased specialization was occurring. A number of social work

educators and practitioners were concerned about the bifurcation of social work into individual psychotherapy and social reform.¹⁹ Gradually, the practice of social work, particularly at the BSW level, was reconceptualized as general social work practice. Even though most general social work practitioners concentrated at the micro level, an expectation was established that all social workers at the bachelor's level should be knowledgeable about the role played by macro social workers and, where possible, should apply macro social work methods in the larger scope of change and social betterment.

Expansion and Integration (1990s to the Present)

In the early 1990s the field of macro social work continued to grow. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) included social justice and macro-level practice in its expectations for all social work practitioners. Today, macro social work is transforming itself so rapidly that each decade it seems to reinvent itself. While community social work practice only engages about 1% of the total number of NASW members, community practice is key to growing changes that our society is experiencing. Today, for example, community practice includes community planning and policy, community organization, and community development. Community planners and organizers have initiated multiple new practice approaches. Community development has expanded into three arenas of practice: economic, social, and political development.

Moreover, the field of organization social work has also grown to include social administration and organization building, as well as organization development aimed at improving the social health and effectiveness of organizations, although few social workers engage in this form of advanced practice. Nonprofit organizations have become recognized as comprising a new social sector of society, including not only traditional social agencies but social intermediaries, advocacy, and new social enterprise organizations.

Societal social work has moved more assertively into social betterment, including policy advocacy and the use of both modern and postmodern social movements to bring about social change. International social work is becoming an increasingly important field of practice in our global market society. Macro social work is a firmly established field within the profession

of social work. It is one of the most rapidly developing areas of social work today and is seeing increased utility and sophistication of its practice modalities.

WHAT IS MACRO SOCIAL WORK?

Macro social work is the practice of helping individuals and groups solve problems and make social change at the community, organizational, societal, and global levels. Let's look at this definition in more detail.

Macro Social Work Practice

Macro social work is a professional field of *practice*. Most clinical social workers utilize time-tested practice models derived from biological and physical sciences-based systems theory. While macro social work, in general, has not found systems models to be compatible with its theory base, the field has not until now developed a practice model congruent with its unique components. This text corrects this oversight by introducing the action-social model of macro social work practice.

In Chapter 2 you will find that the action-social model is based on a theory of the social as an entity in and of itself and embeds social work within an action frame. You will learn how the action-social model is centered on a form of reason called substantive or social thinking. You will discover how you can utilize its strengths/capacities approach, its assets/resources model, and its empowerment perspective. Most importantly, you will learn how to engage its social justice orientation congruent with the NASW Code of Ethics. You will explore how you can apply the action-social model to your own practice throughout this text.

Helping Individuals and Groups

The way large systems in society affect *individuals and groups* is a concern of all social workers. Where those systems disempower people, create injustice, or threaten to overwhelm the individual, you will learn how you can help individuals and groups apply their collective strengths and resources and help make a better society.

In Chapter 3, you will learn how social groups help improve people's individual character and promote emotional growth and social development. You will discover how your work with people in task groups

helps overcome a condition called “self-oppression.” You will learn that your engagement in project-oriented task groups is a necessary means of working with both communities in which you live and organizations where you work. You will explore how to lead task groups through the first meeting and the life cycle of the group, and you will learn to assist individuals become socially and emotionally healthy by means of “philanthropy.”

Solving Problems and Making Social Change

Solving problems and making social change by means of macro social work practice is the heritage, the present responsibility, and the future promise of the social work profession. It is social work’s commitment to social betterment at all levels that ensures its continued impact in our world today.

In Chapter 4 you will explore a range of human problems that you may encounter in your career, focusing particularly on social problems and their particular dynamics. In Chapter 5 you will learn how you can help solve many of those human problems by means of rational problem solving combined with social thinking. You will explore how you can be a part of helping resolve some of the major social problems of our day by social thinking and making social change.

Community Social Work

Community social workers must be familiar with the growing diversity of community in today’s modern world. Community social workers help communities strengthen relationships between people, gain empowerment, and overcome injustice by means of social planning, community development, and community organization.

Community In Chapter 6 you will learn that until relatively recently, community has been *the* universal means by which human beings related to one another and developed governance structures. While large social systems structures tend to dominate society today, community not only continues to survive but has taken on a multiplicity of roles in our modern era. You will discover that three forms of community exist: community as locality, as relationship, and virtual

community. You will explore each of these forms and learn how you can help revitalize your urban neighborhood, rural town, or village.

Community Research and Planning *Community research and planning* is one of the most important components of macro social work and is used in every arena of practice. In Chapter 7 you will explore the role of action-social planning and how you can get involved in local community planning projects, working step by step from forming a community planning group through evaluating the process.

Community Development Social workers who help make communities better places for individuals and families engage in *community development*. In Chapter 8 you will discover what community development and community development corporations (CDCs) are. You will explore how to use community economic development (CED), community political development (CPD), and community social development (CSD). You will learn how you can participate in building a CDC and explore a future in community development social work.

Community Organizing Some community social workers help overcome the estrangement and oppression imposed on people by large megastructures of corporate and public life. These social workers are called *community organizers*. Community organization is a process by which you assist people in neighborhoods and coalitions of neighborhoods engage change over the long term. In Chapter 9 you will discover how you can become involved in overcoming economic and political inequality and work to achieve social justice. You will learn how to define your role, identify an issue, forge a community of neighbors, choose a model, develop an organizing structure, carry out action strategies and tactics, and bring the organizing project to a close.

Organizational Social Work

Robert Prethus and others have observed that we live in an organizational society.²⁰ Just as important as community social work, organizational social work is becoming a key core of macro practice. Organizational social workers understand the unique

characteristics of social organizations. They engage in building new social organizations and in social administration.

Social Organizations Nearly all social workers will become employed by one or another form of public or nonprofit social service organization. In Chapter 10 you will explore the rise of new nonprofit *social organizations* in modern society. You will learn why this category of organizations is called “social” and how they are different from corporate business and government bureaucracies.

You will explore four major kinds of social organizations today: traditional nonprofit social service agencies, intermediaries, social advocacy organizations, and new social enterprise organizations. You will learn that social enterprises as yet have no official legal status and are in the forefront of new experiments in the delivery of social services and programs. You will discover that, along with social networks and communities, social organizations comprise an important and necessary arena of the social commons, also known as civil society, where social workers find their professional home and focus of practice.

Building New Social Organizations In Chapter 11 you will discover that you may have the opportunity to participate in *building new social organizations*, including social enterprises. When you help construct a new organization, you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are providing needed services to a number of people and the pleasure of seeing your new agency grow and develop. You will learn how to establish a legal entity, work with the board of directors, develop the organization’s culture and structure, obtain staff and financing, recruit clients, and evaluate the organization/enterprise.

Social Work Administration Social organizations require skilled *administrators* to implement change over the long term. In Chapter 12 you will learn that as a talented social worker you may have the capacity to display your leadership potential. You will discover how you as an administrator may engage in planning, program development, supervision, organizational change, and evaluating the agency, among other tasks.

Societal Social Work

As a social worker you are no doubt concerned with the welfare of our society as a whole, particularly how its economic, political, and social sectors interrelate. In Part 4 you will see how you can help make a better national society and engage in international social work at the global level.

Social Action and Advocacy: Making a Better Society More than any other occupation, social work is a profession whose members work to bring about a better society. In Chapter 13 you will learn how you can participate in social action. You will explore the characteristics of social movements and how you can use social movements to make societal change. You will learn how you can become involved in social advocacy, helping to bring about better social policies and government actions.

Social Work with a Global Reach Social workers not only help make your own society better but reach out to poverty-stricken, war-torn areas of developing countries in Central and South America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and other areas as well. In Chapter 14 you will discover how you as an *international social worker* may become involved in helping people in other nations solve the social problems that confront them.

You will explore how you can partner with indigenous peoples in transforming their own social world, become involved in new international social movements, and be a part of nongovernmental organizations that are bringing about a better, more humane global society. You will learn the fundamentals of how to practice international social work and find out how you too can be part of this exciting world of global social change.

CONCLUSION AND A CHALLENGE FOR YOU

If there is technological advance without social advance, there is, almost automatically, an increase in human misery.

Michael Harrington

As you read the remainder of this text it may become apparent to you that modernity has directed the bulk of human intellectual and creative effort at overcoming physical and biological problems of society. Nearly every day another medical or physical science breakthrough is announced that boggles our imagination. These developments hold the key to extending life and making existence more prosperous, comfortable, and enjoyable for many people.

Yet the genuine wonder of these accomplishments often pales in comparison to the social problems that continue to stretch before us. While physical science and technology promise a world increasingly free of disease and disability, the social science professions have failed to develop a world free of poverty, conflict, violence, hunger, homelessness, crime, oppression, injustice, and ethnic intolerance.

Most social workers understand that the genuine technological accomplishments of the modern age do not constitute the real revolution that is occurring around them. Many recognize that we are living in one of the pivotal moments in history, the hallmark of which is a revitalization of the social sphere.

Others are even now realizing that the struggle for authentic social justice and equality, which has eluded mankind for millennia, is beginning to blossom as a major turning point in the history of the human condition. Social workers and social scientists are beginning to understand that fundamental changes are occurring by the most unobtrusive means, in the most unexpected places, and by the least likely people.

It is gradually becoming evident that a new, post-modern society is being constructed by small communities of people and not by the owners of capitalist corporations or leaders of nation-states. Change is being constructed in the slums, migrant labor camps, barrios, and rancherias of America and in the refugee centers and shantytowns of the underdeveloped nations of the world. Significant changes are being brought about by the forgotten ones—the members of North America’s inner cities, the landless peasants of Guatemala, the homeless beggars of India, and the grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo in Argentina.

The poorest people of the earth who suffer the majority of the world’s problems are constructing a social revolution. It should not be surprising that fundamental social change is arising from those who have been locked out of the benefits of modernity, who

experience the violence that sustains it, the poverty that supports it, and the oppression that results from it. The simple quest by the least influential of the world for their own humanity is quietly and often unintentionally undermining the foundations of modern market-centered thinking, individualism, modern systems organization, the managerial hierarchy of modern corporations, and paternalistic government bureaucracy.

Fundamental social change will never come from the powerful who are at the center of the modern project. Rich politicians and influential corporate bosses are helpless to change the basic structures on which their power and wealth depend. Only the oppressed can save the oppressor and save themselves,²¹ as Paulo Freire asserted. Only those who are aligned and identify with the poor can have a part to play in developing new ways of social thinking, new communal forms, new social organizations, and new social movements of the coming postmodern era. Change always comes from a few, the exceptional, those who see farther, those who are not among the mainstream.

A Challenge for You

Social work is a profession that calls you to creatively use your social intelligence, your ideals, and your leadership in constructing a truly humane society. It is a profession that calls forth actions of the greatest humanity of which people are capable. It is also a calling in which you construct yourself and simultaneously help build your community, just as you assist others in constructing themselves and developing a better world.

Because students such as you have a different vision and your hearts are aligned with the least accomplished, you are marked to help bring about the social changes that our society needs. If it were not so, you would follow the well-worn path that others follow. But social workers, in the main, not only make their own paths but are engaged in helping others make their own as well. You understand what C. S. Lewis meant when he said, “It seems there are no paths. The going itself is the path.”

As you become engaged in macro social work, it will be because you already have values and ways of seeing the world that are unique, and that align you with those who seem to be the weakest of the world. Prize this identification. It is your most important ally. This identification will continually help you explore areas of thinking and action that are aimed in the

right direction, beckon you to become the person you were meant to become, and help you walk the way you were meant to go.

Understanding the workings of our social world and intervening in it, therefore, are crucial to the repertoire of every social worker. While all social workers need to be engaged in making the world a better place, there are others for whom macro social work will become a full-time endeavor. I hope that this book may inspire some of you to devote a good amount of your time to macro social work practice or even become a full-time macro social work professional. It is probably safe to say that those social workers who engage in macro social work practice will have a lasting impact on our social environment, helping make fundamental changes in the way we live and guiding the future direction of our society.

Conclusion

In this chapter you explored the problem of Francisco Martinez and some of the questions it raises for macro social work. You learned a brief history of the field of macro social work and a definition of macro social work that you will use in this text. You discovered how different aspects of macro social work practice are covered in this book. And you learned that we are living in a revolutionary age full of challenges for students who enter the practice of macro social work.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you believe the social sphere is eroding in today's society? Why or why not?
2. What are some indicators that our society has a strong sense of social responsibility? What are indicators that our society has a weak sense of social responsibility?
3. What is the responsibility of social work for the social good? How do social workers produce the social good?
4. Macro-level social workers must often take a moral or ethical stance against social systems that perpetrate injustice. In what ways is the stance of a macro social worker similar to or different from the ethical stance that micro social workers take in working with individual clients?

EXERCISE 1.2

Developing a Learning Contract

One way of ensuring that you learn well is to develop a set of learning objectives for yourself. The way to do this is to describe the learning you want to achieve, what you need to do to acquire that learning, and the behaviors from your classmates and instructor that will either enhance or detract from that learning. At home, answer the following questions and bring your lists to class.

1. What are the most important things I want to learn from this course?
2. What are the things that I need to do to achieve this learning?
3. What behaviors or activities of my classmates and the instructor will enhance my learning?
4. What behaviors or activities of my classmates and the instructor will not be conducive to my learning?

In class, form into groups of three. Your instructor will supply you with newsprint or another method to record your results. First, compare the personal learning you want to achieve. Combine and rank those items in order. They become your group learning objectives. Then look at the things you need to do to accomplish your objectives; these are your learning tasks. Discuss your common learning tasks and combine them.

Finally, examine the learning behaviors that will help or interfere with your learning. Develop a list of positive behaviors and activities and negative behaviors and activities.

Write your group learning objectives, your group learning tasks, and your positive and negative behaviors on newsprint and post them so everyone can see them. See how congruent the learning objectives are with the course objectives described by your instructor. Come to a joint agreement about the goals for the class as a whole. These will become your class objectives. Everyone write these down.

Look at your learning tasks. Come to an agreement on these and record them. These become your individual commitments to the class.

Finally, look at both positive and negative class and instructor activities. After discussing them, make an agreement that these positive behaviors will become the rules or norms of behavior in the class. The negative activities or behaviors will become behaviors to be avoided.

The combined lists become your class contract. Each of you should commit to achieving your personal objectives, class goals, learning tasks, and class norms.

The next class period, your instructor will give out class contracts listing the joint course objectives, learning tasks, and course norms. At home, fill in your own personal learning objectives. Sign your contract, bring it to class, and give to your instructor. Your instructor will review your learning objectives and then cosign your contract. Your instructor may even decide to base part of your grade on the extent to which you have met your objectives, course objectives, learning tasks, and course norms.

Learning Contract

Course _____

Date _____

I will work toward the following:

1. Individual objectives:
2. Course objectives:
3. Learning tasks:
4. Course norms:

Student's Signature

Instructor's Signature

Midway through the course, your instructor may ask your class to review and renegotiate the course contract. At the end of the course you can use the contract to assess the extent to which you and your classmates have met your objectives.

EXERCISE 1.3

Developing Commitment

There are a number of ways that you can individually or as a class confirm your own impressions about the role of being a macro social worker, find out directly what it is like, and explore questions you might have. Choose one or more activities from the following list and report back to class.

1. Visit some local agencies or investigate non-profit or governmental organizations that are

involved in social problem solving. For example, you might choose organizations working with the homeless, gay rights groups, political party organizations, human rights commissions, county boards of supervisors or city councils, action groups, minority rights organizations such as the NAACP, B'nai B'rith, Jewish Anti-Defamation League, Mexican American community action groups, or women's rights organizations such as NOW. Bring literature and describe your experience to your classmates.

2. Bring macro social workers to class who can tell you directly about what they are doing. For example, you could invite macro social workers involved in community development, community organization, or social work research. You could ask macro social workers who have developed programs, social planners, social administrators, organization development consultants, social activists, social policy analysts, international social workers, or others.
3. Interview a macro social worker who is well known in your community or is doing the kind of work to which you are attracted. In class, share what you have learned about the social worker you interviewed.
4. Read articles in current magazines or watch videos about particular social problems, social policy, and community political issues.
5. Read a book that has been instrumental in social change. See the Additional Reading section at the end of this chapter for books written by macro social workers, social activists, novelists, journalists, and "muckrakers." Your instructor may have others to suggest. Choose one to read and report to class.

EXERCISE 1.4

Getting Involved

This exercise is intended to help you learn more about macro social work. Think of the kind of fields or services about which you want to learn more. Make a contract with your instructor to spend an agreed-upon amount of time gaining some experience in one of the areas described.

Community Development

Community development organizations are active in most communities. One is Habitat for Humanity.

Perhaps your local community has organizations aimed at improving neighborhoods through projects such as eradicating graffiti, planting trees, cleaning neighborhoods, or getting better community services. Try to get involved not only in working on the project itself, but in the planning and decision-making processes by which the project is developed. Report on what you discovered.

Community Organization

Community organizations work to achieve social justice. Find a community organization active in your community. Attend meetings, a training workshop, or engage in a direct action project. Volunteer in your political party to work on a local issue of importance to you. Describe what you learned about community organization.

Organization Building

Is there an unmet need in your community on which people are working? Agencies or action groups in your community may be developing a shelter for battered women, housing for the homeless, programs to eradicate drug abuse, or centers for runaway teens or a social enterprise organization. Attend planning or implementation meetings and report what you learned about building a new social organization.

Social Planning

Social planning organizations are active in most communities and deal with mental health, developmental disabilities, aging, and human rights, among other issues. Visit one of these organizations and attend planning meetings. Attend a local planning commission meeting and report back to class on what happened and what you learned.

Administration

Attend a board meeting of a local social service organization, interview an administrator, or volunteer to carry out an administrative assignment. Tell your class what happened.

Social Policy Advocacy

Social policy issues abound. Abortion, gun control, euthanasia, legalizing drugs, welfare policy, and capital punishment are only a few. Choose an advocacy agency working on one of these or other policy problems. Visit the agency and volunteer to assist in its advocacy efforts and report back to class.

CHECKLIST 1.1

Exploring My Motivation

The following checklist will give you a chance to explore your own motivation for engaging in macro social work. Read over each question and circle the number on the continuum of strongly agree to strongly disagree that reflects your interests.

1. I get concerned when I hear about an injustice perpetrated on others.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
2. I have feelings for people who generally are the underdog or who have been disadvantaged.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
3. I want to take up the cause of people who have been wronged.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
4. I am attracted to particular social issues or problems I feel should be solved.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
5. I feel that everyone ought to try to get involved in his or her community.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
6. I feel particularly hopeful that there is something important for me to do in my neighborhood or community—that I can really make a difference.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
7. I feel I have a role to play in social change, in helping to create a better society.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
8. I want to become involved in something bigger than myself, larger than my own self-interest.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
9. I get excited about the idea of being engaged in social renewal and transformation.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
10. I feel I have creative ideas and can see possibilities for change that others may miss.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
11. I enjoy working with groups and helping people engage one another.
Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree

12. Sometimes I think about working in a third- or fourth-world nation.

Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Strongly Disagree*

Draw a line connecting the numbers you have circled.

You have a graph that depicts your interests in a very general way. Does the line you have drawn mostly pass through the 5–7 area? Does it hover around the center?

Does the line generally pass through numbers 1–3?

What does your graph say about your interests in macro social work? Are there specific areas where you strongly agree and others in which you strongly disagree?

What prime motivators lead you to be interested in social change? What detracts you from interest in being a macro social worker? Your instructor will lead you in sharing both motivators and demotivators.

How will you use macro social work skills in generalist practice? In clinical practice? Do you think you might want to make macro social work a career?

With which arenas of macro practice do you feel most comfortable? Least comfortable?

4. Shape a system in the here and now over the long term.
5. Gather information and facts to correct dishonesty or deceit.
6. Develop relationships strengthening communities or organizations.
7. Exert my creativity and ability to see the big picture and try out something new.
8. Fix a broken system by applying my technical skills.
9. Help the underdog obtain redress and empower the powerless.
10. Engage others in constructing a social world and forging social bonds.
11. Be a part of something positive that is larger than myself.
12. Make a tangible contribution by implementing concrete decisions today.
13. Get involved in social action and social justice.
14. Get involved in building community or neighborhood.
15. Get involved in developing new programs, plans, or projects.
16. Get involved in making things happen by implementing the details of decisions.

Place your scores for each sentence in the following columns and add up your answers at the bottom:

A	B	C	D
1 _____	2 _____	3 _____	4 _____
5 _____	6 _____	7 _____	8 _____
9 _____	10 _____	11 _____	12 _____
13 _____	14 _____	15 _____	16 _____
_____	_____	_____	_____
CO/SA	CD/OD	OB/SP	AD/SR

If you scored highest in column A, you may have more interest in either community organization or social policy advocacy. If you scored highest in column B, you may have more aptitude in the areas of community or organization development. If you were higher in column C, you might have more interest in either organization building or social planning. Those of you who were higher in column D could be better at either administration or social research.

What do your scores say about your motivation and stance as a macro social worker? Compare your rankings with those of others in class. Are there patterns that distinguish you from others?

CHECKLIST 1.2

The Stance of a Macro Social Worker

Within the field of macro social work are a number of particular arenas of practice. This checklist will help you discover where your particular strengths may lie. Look over the following list. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, mark the ones that are especially meaningful for you, placing them in the columns below. For example, if the statement describes you to a high degree, assign a 5. If it is generally descriptive, assign a 4. If it is sometimes descriptive of you, give it a 3. If it is rarely descriptive of you, give it a 2. If it is not descriptive of you, give it a 1.

It is important for me to:

1. Take part in a movement to bring an end to injustice.
2. Become involved with a community helping mold the destiny of a people.
3. Use my vision to look for possibilities in the future.

MANUELA RIVAS AND MACRO SOCIAL WORK

Read the following vignette. Then respond to the questions at the end.

“I knew that I needed to get people to trust and like me, and my singing and playing my guitar at the services helped a lot,” said Manuela Rivas, a young and talented second-year macro social work student at the University of Massachusetts School of Social Work. Manuela had been raised as a in a charismatic church in Costa Rica and was convinced that organizers can tap into the spiritual directive that believers have to do “God’s work” and enable the “brothers” and “sisters” to be more effective in their personal lives, congregational activities and in helping others.

The church’s pastor welcomed Manuela’s help, seeing her as a nonpaid staff member who also brought university resources to the church. In addition to singing and helping with the church youth group, Manuela visited the homes of people she identified as having leadership potential, and became active with several church committees. Her goal was to gather information, but also to develop closer relationships with them.

After talking to the church elders and other key members, Manuela felt she had some information about what the members needed, but she also decided to confirm those impressions. After getting permission from the pastor and the Board of Elders, she distributed questionnaires to youth groups, women food pantry volunteers, prison visiting committees, and others, asking them to provide information about what they felt their needs were. She asked about members’ personal needs, church-related spiritual needs, and community needs.

After gathering this data, she compiled it and wrote a brief report on her findings that she shared with the pastor and president of the congregation. They were pleased with her work and had some ideas about her findings. She then shared with the congregation the issues she had identified and her preliminary recommendations for addressing them. “Some brothers and sisters want to read and write better in Spanish, some want to learn English, and others want help in finding work or better jobs. Some committees want help in functioning better at meetings and others want to know more about how to help people in the community, including the homeless. Youth want to discuss school issues and some church elders wish to learn how to be better leaders in and out of the church. Some of the younger mothers are interested in day care.”

Manuela met with the county adult extension staff and learned that they could supply a teacher to help

with literacy in Spanish and English classes for non-English speakers. She organized leadership training workshops and called on Hispanic Studies faculty, community organization students, and community leaders for help. Wherever possible, church members themselves introduced speakers and planned gatherings. She was able to mobilize members to help organize workshops on job training, résumé writing, and interviewing skills. She used videos, films, and other visual aids when talking about conserving energy, applying for jobs, and women’s issues. She brought in speakers from the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and food stamp programs. Manuela helped organize a self-help day care cooperative in which members traded off providing day care for one another. She brought in an instructor from the School of Social Work to teach elders how to become a more effective board, which led to reorganizing the board structure and better use of committees.

Manuela also chose to work on some more controversial projects. She explained to the church members that since they welcomed drug addicts and worked with prisoners, some had expressed interest in knowing more about the AIDS epidemic. With the help of two members, she organized workshops on AIDS. However, some parents were less than comfortable that Manuela encouraged young people to talk about their feelings of isolation in school and in the community due to the strict moral codes of the church (no hard rock music, makeup, movies, smoking, etc.). When she organized a small group meeting with teenage girls to talk about sexuality, the pastor decided to end the group. Manuela was disappointed, but she learned a valuable lesson.

Reflect on the following questions:

1. What kind of process did Manuela use?
2. What kinds of qualities do you observe in Manuela?
3. Was she successful? Why or why not?
4. Is there anything you would have done differently? Why or why not?

ADDITIONAL READING

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Macro Social Work Organizations

- Association of Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA) www.acosa.org
- Association of Macro Practice Social Workers www.ampsw.org

PART ONE

Practice of Helping Individuals and Groups Solve Problems and Make Social Change

Social Meaning

People's action towards external objects, as well as relationships between people and social institutions can be understood only in terms of what humans think about them. Society as we know it is built up from concepts and ideas held by the people; and social phenomena can be recognized and have meaning for us only as they are reflected in the minds of human beings.¹

Friedreich A. Hayek

Who Can End Oppression?

Dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressor, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed.

It is only the oppressed, who, by freeing themselves, can free their oppressors. Oppressors can free neither others nor themselves. It is essential, therefore, that the oppressed wage the struggle to resolve the contradiction in which they are caught.²

Paulo Freire

FOUNDATIONAL IDEAS OF MACRO SOCIAL WORK

Part One introduces you to some of the key concepts that shape a macro perspective on social work practice including a new action-social model and a generalist approach to working with individuals in task groups. It provides a perspective on conventional human and social problems, rational problem solving and social thinking and making social change.

Action-Social Model of Macro Social Work

In Chapter 2 you will learn how the action-social model places macro social work in an action frame. Individuals are viewed as active and creative agents in the construction of social reality, not passive objects ruled by laws derived from physical or social science-based systems theory.

In addition, the action-social model restores a conception of the social to social work theory, a concept whose integrity is threatened by the domination of impersonal artificial systems structures in today's society.

The action-social model, you will also learn, is based on a combination of strengths/capacity, assets/resources, empowerment and social justice perspectives to the human condition that can be applied to any level of social work practice or practice approaches.

Using Groups to Assist Individuals

Macro social workers use a generalist perspective to utilize social and task groups to assist individuals accomplishing their goals and fulfilling their destinies. In Chapter 3 you will learn how social groups are indispensable for people's growth and development, beginning at an early age and continuing through adulthood. You will also discover that project-oriented task groups are necessary tools that social workers use to carry out the work of social betterment. Social workers are dedicated to assisting others become skilled leaders. We use social engagement in combination with social thinking as a means to assist people become whole, completed members of society.

Conventional and Social Problems

Chapter 4 is dedicated to assisting you understand the world of human problems. Problems, you will find, exist on a continuum from those whose solutions are readily available, goals are clear, and for which adequate information exists to those whose solutions are inaccessible, goals often controversial, and information disputed. You will explore relatively non-complex conventional human problems that most social workers are trained to help resolve, but will spend more time looking at intractable social problems that often fall on the shoulders of macro social workers. You will learn why social problems are so recalcitrant, and explore a definition of social problems. You will learn about several models that macro social workers use to understand the origin of social problems, a range of problem-solving approaches, and answers that don't work.

Rational Problem Solving, Social Thinking, and Social Change

Social workers, you will discover in Chapter 5, utilize two ways of thinking in their practice. Rational problem solving (RPS) is the most common form of thinking in our modern world, and the means by which social workers often approach conventional human problems. All social workers need to be informed about this way of thinking, its origins, strengths, and limitations. You will explore how rational problem solving is used in social work and how to apply it step by step. You will discover a number of limitations of RPS for social work practice.

Social thinking, on the other hand, begins in the here and now, in the lived experience of the world, becoming real as people engage in dialogue with one another. In combination with social change, social thinking is *the* means by which social problems can be assessed,

strategies developed, and action taken. Social change, moreover, occurs when people engage their own visions, carry out their own decisions, exert their own leadership, and bring about the society that they construct themselves.

Solving social problems and making social change is at the heart of macro social work. By engaging in the perennial issues of the human condition, people renew themselves, grow, and develop as human beings. While challenging, the process of solving problems and making social change is an emancipating endeavor by which people become the persons that they were meant to become, and in that process construct the foundations of the social world, the precious social commons that often lies in tatters around us.

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2

Action-Social Model of Macro Social Work

Our Modern Social System

Today we have “a system designed to defend individual privileges at any cost above and beyond any communitarian necessities. [It] has left people alone and dwarfed in the presence of a macrostructure which is crushing them and which seems to be taking them where they do not wish to go, namely to their own possible annihilation through nuclear destruction, ecological impoverishment, or the asphyxiation caused by the super control of the computer age.”¹

Jose Ignacio Faus

Active-Social Self

The normal role of human beings in and with the world is not a passive one. [Humans] participate in the creative dimension as well.... To the extent that man loses his ability to make choices and is subjected to the choices of others from external prescriptions, he is no longer integrated. Rather, he is adapted. He has “adjusted.”²

Paulo Freire

Ideas in This Chapter

JANE ADDAMS, SOCIAL LEADER

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

THE SOCIAL ORIENTATION

Sociality

Social Reality and Systems

The Action-Social Model and the Social Orientation

THE ACTION ORIENTATION

Active Construction of the Self

Active Construction of Social Reality

The Action-Social Model and the Action Orientation

SOCIAL THINKING

A Brief History of Social Thinking

Foundations of Social Thinking

The Action-Social Model and Social Thinking

STRENGTHS/CAPACITIES BUILDING

Positive Psychology

Critique of Strengths/Capacity Building

How to Use Strengths/Capacity Building

ASSETS/RESOURCES

EMPOWERMENT

Individual Empowerment

Group Empowerment

Community Empowerment

Societal Empowerment

International Empowerment

SOCIAL JUSTICE

MACRO SOCIAL WORK AND THE ACTION-SOCIAL MODEL

CONCLUSION

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

ADDITIONAL READING

JANE ADDAMS, SOCIAL LEADER

Year after year during her lifetime, she was voted the greatest woman in the United States, the greatest in the world, and on one occasion, the greatest in history.³ Even today, in a survey of 100 professors of history, she was second only to Eleanor Roosevelt as the most influential woman of our century. Publicist and persuader, social reformer, crusader, and social activist in the causes of progressive education, housing reform, child labor legislation, criminology, labor organizing, recreation, direct democracy, feminism, treatment of the immigrant, pacifism, and more, she was vitally engaged in almost every important issue of her day.⁴

She was Laura Jane Addams, one of the great pioneers of the Progressive Era in American history, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, and macro social worker. Born on September 6, 1860, two months before Abraham Lincoln was elected to the presidency, she became valedictorian and president of her senior class at Rockford Female Seminary in an era when there were no clearly defined roles for young college-educated women, most women being thought of primarily as homemakers.

Jane Addams was clearly out of the mainstream. Intensely sensitive, wealthy, and a born leader, but with no clear arena in which to expend her gifts, she entered a period of seven years of deep personal suffering, incapacitating back pain, and depression. Except for a brief period in medical school, these apparently fruitless and painful years were a period of gestation in which her character, determination, and sense of mission and purpose were being formed.

Restless and unhappy, Addams had no thought of entering social work when, at the age of 27, she landed at Southampton, England, three days before Christmas, 1887. She had, however, come into direct contact with the poor for the first time on an earlier trip to Europe. Now, she and her companion, Ellen Starr, investigated social work in the slums of London and met Canon Samuel A. Barnett, founder of the first Settlement House, Toynbee Hall. For the next six weeks Addams and Starr lived at Toynbee Hall. It was an experience that would change Addams' life forever. Like Barnett, she saw how the absence of leadership in the poorer districts had allowed local government to fall into disrepair.

Guilt at the desertion of duty by those who had been trained to lead impelled her to absorb the milieu of Toynbee Hall, its philosophy, ideals of service, leadership, and culture in the face of massive urban

disorganization and poverty. It was this experience that ended her desperate years of struggle.

Jane Addams had finally found her mission in life. Upon arriving back in the United States, Addams and Starr bought Hull House, a large mansion on Halstead Street in the middle of a Chicago slum, and turned it into a social settlement.

Not only did she conceptualize a new way of life, she lived it. For the next 40 years Addams lived not as an observer of social causes, but as a resident in one of the poorest sections of Chicago. She engaged people where they were, immersing herself in the sorrows, joys, and garbage, the suicides and the dirt. Unafraid to get her hands soiled by the squalor around her, she determined to learn from the homeless poor, the immigrants, working-class women, children, and the elderly. But most of all, she learned from experience, from trying things out.

Wherever there was a need, she was open to experiment, establishing programs, building relationships, improving neighborhoods, and forging community. "She had the kind of mind which could tolerate and even thrive on uncertainty and new experiences."⁵

Jane Addams was a visionary, a part of the radical tradition in America. Ahead of her time on numerous issues, she planted the seeds of reform, many of which were to bear fruit years later. "The poor were poor," she said, "because of misconstrued social environment, not because of a defect in themselves."⁶ But Americans in general proved resistant to this idea.

She advocated for the rights of women and laborers, and was "concerned with the poor, immigrants, and children simultaneously.... She seemed to regard all of them as sources of the social salvation which she continuously sought." She was convinced it was the outcasts of society who could "bring to reality the social vision which she had been formulating.... She wanted to enfold the poor, immigrants, children, blacks and women to full participation in American life not only because as a matter of right they deserved it, but because all of society would be redeemed by their inclusion."⁷

Concrete experience and envisioning the future, however, were only the beginning. As she reflected on the misery she saw around her she "effectively convinced Americans ... of the seriousness of the problems the nation faced, and of the need for change."⁸ A publicist for almost every social cause in her time,

the author of 12 books and hundreds of articles and speeches, she became a master at persuading people to take up the cause of reform.

But even more than simply reflecting and writing about human misery, Addams put her words into action, clearly pointing the direction these changes should take. As a leader of the settlement house movement, Jane Addams was instrumental in developing day care, kindergartens, adult education, group work, and recreation. She pioneered immigrant education, sanitation, public health, and labor research. Addams was a champion of unions, child welfare, and child labor legislation. She led programs to combat juvenile delinquency and establish neighborhood playgrounds, probation services, food safety, eradication of sweatshops, and improvement of sewage disposal.⁹

She supported and was active in the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association, Christian Socialists, the Chicago Peace Society, the National Consumers League, as well as the Legal Aid Society, the Juvenile Protective Association, and many labor unions. She had a vision of an “America in which women not only had the vote but ... would aspire and have opportunity to become college professors, legislators, policy makers in the executive departments of government.”¹⁰

Even before World War I, Addams was a fervent advocate for peace, nearly destroying her reputation and credibility. Her unwavering efforts were finally recognized in 1931 when she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. She died in 1935 in the midst of the great reforms of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins, each of whom followed her legacy—that the role of government in social welfare was not only practical but necessary.¹¹ Jane Addams, macro social worker, was without doubt one of the great social leaders of our time.

EXERCISE 2.1

Jane Addams and the Action-Social Model

Jane Addams exemplified many of the principles of the action-social model of macro social work in her work. Before you read on, think about Jane Addams and the values she espoused, the spirit she invested, the activities in which she engaged. Did she demand social passivity from the people with whom she worked, expecting them to be recipients

of help, or did she expect members to actively engage others in making their society a better one?

Review the life story of Jane Addams and list those characteristics that display social action and engagement. How did her own life exemplify the model of a person who is an “active and creative constructor of social reality” as the foundation of human character? When you are finished, compare your lists with your classmates’ and come to some conclusions.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

Macro social work is a complex field with many facets. It is aimed at making a better society and in particular improving its social welfare. Making a better society has two major components. First, macro social work aims at consciously constructing the social aspects of our environment. Second, macro social work engages community members in taking personal action in that social construction, rather than leaving decision making in the hands of those who dominate modern systems structures. A model that is congruent with these two components of macro social work is called the *action-social model*.

In this chapter you will explore this action-social model. You will learn that today the idea of the social and the social commons as a foundation of society has to a large extent been supplanted by systems constructs. While the action-social model recognizes the power of social systems today, it supersedes those systems, helping restore human sociality to its former dominance as the way society is constructed.

You will discover that the action-social model is based on both a social and action orientation. You will learn how both the social and action components of social work are applied to a way of thinking variously called classical, substantive, or, in this book, social thinking. You will also discover that the action-social model utilizes strengths/capacity building, along with assets/resources, empowerment, and a social justice orientation to social work.

THE SOCIAL ORIENTATION

Humans are irrevocably social creatures who are shaped by interactions with others whose lives are also social in origin. The self is a social self, and the

world that people construct is a social world. Like the air we breathe, the social is all around us. It is the milieu in which we exist as human beings. The social existed before we were born and will continue to exist after we die. The propensity of people to create their humanity by shaping their culture and developing society is one of the permanent and ineradicable characteristics of the human condition, without which people cannot live rich, meaningful lives.

In normal society, natural social values, feelings, and relationships are the cement that binds people together into a living communal culture. This world is comprised of social goods such as trust, honesty, and integrity, none of which can be directly or empirically observed. This non-empirical nature of the social makes it difficult for social professionals to measure its functions with any accuracy or completeness. In spite of its non-empirical nature, however, the social is our most important and lasting framework for constructing the self as well as social groups and communities. The social is a necessary building block for building society.

Sociality

The social is a prized possession of individuals who use their sociality to construct their own social reality. Sociality is the capacity of people to express the social in their lives and actions. Sociality is a universal characteristic of the human condition, built into our genetic structure as persons. It is not relative to a particular historical era, place, or time, contingent on circumstances, or bound by culture. Neither is sociality unique to one race, nationality, or ethnic group. Sociality transcends history and cannot be contained by mere history. When people express their sociality, they conceive values, experience emotion, form intimate relationships with other human beings, and think socially. Both sociality and the social are key components of macro social work, without which people would not be able to construct a good society or engage in actions that contribute to making social goods.

Social Realty and Systems

Even though the social and sociality persist, their utility as a foundation on which modern society has been built has given way to another form of social construction, that of modern systems. Systems, as a universal construct for understanding physical and biology, originated over 400 years ago, according to Immanuel

Wallerstein.¹² So compelling was this model, says David Halliburton, that by “the turn of the seventeenth century there is a tendency toward the systematic ... as a comprehensive body of doctrines, conclusions, speculations, or theses” signifying any “formal definite or established scheme or method.”¹³

Well into the Enlightenment, therefore, the word “‘system,’ like ‘theory,’ learns to stand as an ‘orderly arrangement or method; systematic form or order.’”¹⁴ René Descartes (1595–1650), for example, already saw “the universe as a vast machine, whose working could be explained by purely mechanical laws.... Even higher animals, as well as the human body were viewed as part of this vast machine.”¹⁵

Not only were systems mechanics the principal referent for science, but by 1651 they became the way organized human relationships were conceived as well.¹⁶ The resulting transformation of society from a communal to a systems base altered the way human association had been conceived since the dawn of civilization. It marks the advent of modernity. Most clearly seen in the creation of the American Constitution, systems patterns were captured by the automatic self-regulation and balance of forces of the federalist conception of government.

Gradually, systems, particularly complex organizations, became the common referent for the way both public and private sectors of society were constructed. Social systems are “dominant exactly because they play a support role for today’s dominant organizations,”¹⁷ says Ralph Hummel. Today, the metaphor of society as a system has proved so powerful it has become a near universal way people perceive social reality, including social work.

Professions and Social Systems Most modern professions, including engineering, computer technology, medicine, and business, among many others, rest on systems concepts. It is appropriate for these professions to adopt systems models as a basis for their professional practice, because each of them has physical and/or biological systems models as their foundation. In the physical sciences, engineering, and technology, mechanical systems are the basis for understanding how complex devices operate and are constructed. In the biological sciences and medicine, the human body is conceived as a natural system comprised of smaller and smaller subsystems that all interact in a unified whole. Business operates primarily by complex corporate organizations, which are nothing but artificial

social systems that utilize inputs, throughputs, outputs, and feedback mechanisms.

Social Systems and Social Work Even though social work does not have physical or biological science as its foundational structure, systems models have found a secure place in this field as well. Charles Zastrow asserts, for example, that there is an “increasing acceptance by social workers in using a system analysis approach to social work practice.”¹⁸ Social work has officially adopted systems ideas and concepts as its guiding conceptual framework. The Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) standards (2004 revised) of the Council on Social Work Education, for example, asserts that social work education should include “empirically based theories and knowledge that ... focus on the range of social systems in which people live (individual, family, group, organizational, and community); and the ways social systems promote or deter people in maintaining or achieving health and well-being.”¹⁹

For all of their utility and universality, however, centering social work on a surrogate form of the social, as systems pretend to be, can create problems for the profession of social work. Systems tend to undermine people’s sociality. They war against the social, destroy social space, and eliminate communal relationships at every point of contact. Systems induce people to passivity, embedding impersonality and dehumanization at the core of their processes. They tend to strip humans of the capacity to envision and live out key social values and adopt utilitarian, economic values instead. They reduce complexity, maintain a control orientation over their human subjects, treat humans as mechanical components, dominate decision making, and become the chief referent of society at large.

Reduce Complexity Social systems tend to simplify thinking and human interaction by programming communication and commanding uniform and consistent behaviors from everyone. Because systems are automatically self-regulating, once they are in place they bypass the need for humans to struggle with the complexities of developing harmonious relationships, mutual agreement, or the need to examine the interior life of either their own motivations or that of others. These tasks are built into the structures by which systems channel human intention.

Control Orientation Once a system is in place, it sustains the goals of those in control of that system.

In our society those in positions of power are intentionally rational and goal maximizing. They construct and use systems as tools to achieve their ends, often wealth accumulation, and seek advantage by calculating the benefits and costs of achieving their goals.²⁰

Humans as Systems Components Social systems view human beings as nothing more than mechanical parts of a machine that, in the aggregate, come to behave as the system would have them behave.²¹ People are systematically trained to divest themselves of their own thought and of any kind of orientation involving compassion, concern, or caring that may diverge from accomplishing the ends toward which the system is aimed.²²

Motivators are applied to people externally to induce them to greater productivity. In systems, people become a means to an end. Their worth is determined by their utility to produce. In a system people are fused together by formal, often functional rules, imposed ends, and contrived purposes that substitute for human relationships.

Decision-Making Power In the systems orientation, people tend to be left at the mercy of decisions made by others. Their futures are often determined by chains of decisions implemented by increasingly larger and larger organizational structures, which most individuals are generally helpless to control or even understand. Social systems create a world that most people have not chosen, and which, once constructed, people have little choice but to accept. Systems structures become a given, a component of our social world which we cannot ignore, and, what is worse, one which is nearly impossible for individuals to change.

Organizational Society Today the systematization of the social realm, including politics and the economy, is nearly complete. As Robert Presthus has commented, we live in an “organizational society.”²³ Organizational systems mold our thinking, determine our life chances, produce our goods and services, and present themselves as the order of the world. Few of us question the reality of their presence in our society today.

The Action-Social Model and the Social Orientation

The kind of social environment that macro social workers help people construct is different from the massive corporate systems of the private sector or

government bureaucracies. In contrast to an impersonal systems frame, the action-social model of macro social work uses an intentionally social orientation. We assist people to restore the social, inserting sociality into their own lives and into society as a whole.

The action-social model expects social workers to support people's efforts to build healthy social selves and develop strong relational groups. It encourages citizens to use their sociality in a conscious way, promoting the structure, values, and content of their communities rather than allowing artificial systems to dominate them. The action-social model points community planning in a social direction encouraging local autonomy and self-determination. It infuses community development projects with social concern that members use to provide political and economic benefit to one another. The action-social model helps social workers construct a social foundation of community organizations to counteract the often overbearing power wielded by massive systems.²⁴

Using the action-social model, social workers build small, humanizing nonprofit social organizations that provide oases of care in a desert of large, formal bureaucratic organization structures. We help create a new social sector of society and promote a better and more wholesome social commons. The goal of the action-social model is to restore the social as a foundational element in modern society.

THE ACTION ORIENTATION

Social workers are concerned about private and public structures which perpetuate disadvantage.²⁵ Systems impose a pervasive social passivity and dependency on their human subjects, who lack control over their own social processes. They disallow self-determination and insert pre-designed and programmed arenas of control in which people are trained to behave rather than act. Humans are assumed to operate as bits of social matter that are determined by natural laws rather than as autonomous beings who shape their own destinies.

Systems induce people to conform to organizational procedures that expect them to surrender their own capacity for inserting their values into those systems, preventing people, in general, from controlling their own social environment or making decisions that govern the quality of their lives.

In contrast, human action is at the center of the action-social model of macro social work. Social selves

are always actors who, says Michael Harmon, “have a measure of autonomy in determining their actions, which are at the same time bound up by a social context ... focused on subjective meanings that people attach to their own actions and to the actions of others.”²⁶ The action-social perspective “provides a consistent conceptual underpinning for the assertion that human beings are active agents, capable of self-transformation,”²⁷ who resist constructs that demand conformity and insist on compliance. “The person is actively engaged in the creation of one's own phenomenal (experiential) world,”²⁸ says Vivien Burr. All social workers assist people as they engage in the active construction of themselves and become “active and creative agents in the construction of social reality,”²⁹ says Janet McIntyre-Mills,

Active Construction of the Self

Just as people construct the social, people construct themselves as social actors. Each person is always in the process of becoming, of making attachments and forming relationships and so becoming more or less human. Therefore, assert Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, “While it is possible to say that man has a nature, it is more significant to say that man constructs his own nature, or more simply, that man reproduces himself.”³⁰

Action is a necessary process by which humans choose the kinds of qualities, values, and identities that are important to them. Individuals more or less unconsciously choose to become the persons to which they aspire, beginning with the family. Soon conscious choice expands to identification with siblings and friends, including playmates in the life world of social groups. The self develops most intentionally beyond the group to the social world of community.

Home World of the Family The action perspective sees the human person, beginning at birth, as actively striving to fulfill those qualities that are potential to his or her nature. Such activity is always centered in and directed toward a social context that begins with parents in the home world of the family.

Life World of Social Groups As soon as children begin to become social creatures, however, they no longer “identify with their parents; they identify with other children—others like themselves,” Judith Rich Harris states. According to Harris, “it is a mistake to think of

children as empty vessels, passively accepting whatever the adults in their lives decide to fill them up with.... Children are not incompetent members of the adult's society; they are competent members of their own society, which has its own standards and its own culture."³¹

Children do not passively and indiscriminately incorporate both healthy and dysfunctional components of parental and family systems into their psyches and then are fated to unconsciously carry those characteristics in their behavior for the rest of their lives, as many psychologists claim.

Children as young as two or three years old already reach out beyond the intimate home world of the parental dyad to engage a larger world of others. The self expands and develops relationships with siblings, and later especially peers in the neighborhood, school, and church groups in which she or he obtains material for self-construction. "Thus it is the set of significant others—supported by a chorus of less significant others—who, in their daily interactions, are chiefly responsible for repetitively confirming the individual's identity,"³² asserts Abercrombie. This process requires the child to develop empathy, the ability to see oneself through the eyes of another, and act on those perceptions by means of social groups.

Empathy: Putting Oneself in the Other's Place

It is only by means of putting oneself in the other's place that people take account of the actions of one another as they form their own actions.³³ According to David Miller, "people do this by a dual process of indicating to others how to act and of interpreting the indication made by others.... Through this process people come to fit their activities to one another and form their own individual conduct."³⁴

Humans have the capacity to "get inside" another person, putting themselves in the place of the other, a quality of understanding deeply what the other is experiencing and feeling. Humans also have the ability to consciously suspend their own particular intentions, drives, and emotions, and enter into the intentions, feelings, and goals of the other. This ability, which we call "empathy" or taking on the role of the other, allows us to converge with others, engage others in relationships, and, in the words of Bellah et al., "participate mutually in enterprises that further the common good."³⁵

It is the capacity of not only identifying with the other, but empathizing and taking on the role of significant others, that allows a self to choose the kind of

person one wants to be—in an ultimate sense, the capacity of a self to become fully human.

Action World of the Community Each individual person likewise adds to and shares his or her self with others, engaging others in the process of socially constructing their unique selves. The milieu of others and groups that provide the content of our self depends on the existence of community. Each of us "is rooted in a biological organism," says George Herbert Mead, that "acquires a self only through its interaction with a community"³⁶ of other selves. According to Gibson Winter, "community is *the* means by which the 'me'—my self as social or seen from the perspective of significant others and the community in general—comes to be."³⁷

The task of creating one's self is fundamentally a communal enterprise and speaks to the essential sociality and active nature of the human condition. "No individual exists without participation, and no personal being exists without communal being,"³⁸ assert social workers Antonia Pantoja and Wilhelmina Perry.

Community does not determine the character of the self, but it offers each of us a variety of meanings, values, and situations which we can accept or reject. Our selves, as objects, decide which aspects of the larger community we want to identify with and incorporate. Our selves come into being as a reflection of the attitudes, approvals, and meanings that are inherent in the community.³⁹ Our "person as a fully developed individual self is impossible without other fully developed selves."⁴⁰

While an individual must take on the attitudes of others in order to belong to the community and possess a self,⁴¹ a person does more than internalize those attitudes; he or she reacts to them, thereby changing the community to some extent.⁴² Community attitudes change over time, in part because of the dialectic between individual and society,⁴³ say Lauer and Handel. "The change in any particular case may be quite small, but the individual and the social milieu are engaged in an ongoing process of reciprocal influence that involves a degree of change in each."⁴⁴

Active Construction of Social Reality

For macro social work, people do not simply engage in human behavior in which people assemble themselves according to a prearranged pattern of social responses,

as systems theory seems to suggest. Nor do people engage in mere adaptation to the wider social environment. According to Herbert Blumer,

The human individual confronts a world that he must interpret in order to act instead of an environment to which he responds.... He has to cope with the situations in which he is called on to act, ascertaining the meaning of the actions of others and mapping out his own line of action in the light of such interpretation. He has to construct and guide his action instead of merely releasing it in response to factors playing on him or operating through him. He may do a miserable job in constructing his action, but he has to construct it.⁴⁵

When humans engage this active orientation they construct social goods, groups, community, and ultimately the social commons. As members conceive social projects, they simultaneously construct shared relationships, friendships, trust, cohesion, community spirit, and other factors that society needs and without which society cannot exist. As members actively put their heads, hearts, and hands to work and achieve something of positive benefit, the learning that occurs not only becomes a part of each individual but is also embedded in civil society as a whole and passed down to the next generation.

The Action-Social Model and the Action Orientation

The action-social model of macro social work understands that solutions rarely come if people allow themselves to be separated in apathetic individualism. Neither will they control their own futures if they rely on experts to make decisions on their behalf, allow large institutional systems to solve problems for them, or despair in social passivity. Before action can take place, people must be connected in a recognizable group in which the “personal troubles of each become public problems of all.”⁴⁶

When people resist the temptation to let others create economic and political structures for them, they begin to see through the deception that patriarchy fosters. As they confront their common situation together, using the action-social perspective, often with the help of a social worker, they break the shackles of dependency, gain power, and forge themselves into a people.

SOCIAL THINKING

Social thinking, also called whole-mind thinking, or classical or substantive reason, is specifically congruent with macro social work’s understanding of the dynamics of social relationships, meaning, and the active construction of social reality. This section will present a brief history of social thinking, lay out its foundations, and explore its relationship to the action-social model of social work.

A Brief History of Social Thinking

Social thinking has its origins in the classical reasoning of early Greek philosophers. It was developed through the sociology of Max Weber, the pragmatist tradition of John Dewey, the social psychology of Kurt Lewin, the ideas about community organization of social worker Murray Ross, the work of symbolic interactionists, cognitive science, and the situated learning of social constructionists.

Classical Greeks The social components of thinking, including emotions, intuition, values, and discourse, can be traced back to the ancient Classical Greeks, who believed that when people talk together and mutually deliberate about what is best they can arrive at ideas that inform community with ethical goods or “virtue.” This kind of reasoning socially about the nature of a good society has also been called “classical or substantive reason.” The Greeks understood that substantive thinking reciprocally constructs a good society and simultaneously creates human character. They believed the most important qualities of citizenship were the ability to understand excellence and infuse it into one’s daily life, and into the ideas that formed the community or *polis*. The process of thinking socially about the content and character of the polis became known as “politics.”

A fully developed human, in fact, was a “*politikon zo'on*,” a political animal, who exercised his humanity by contributing to the foundational principles or policies on which Greek community was constructed. Those unable to distinguish between their private interests and the public good or who allowed their interests to override the public good were “idiots” (a Greek word) and were not considered fully rational beings. All citizens, therefore, had a duty to their own development and to their communities to infuse their various ideals in the public arena by mutual dialogue and action. In this way, the conjoint acts of social thinking

became transformed into “democracy,” or the rule of the people.

Social Thinking and the Enlightenment Socially based thinking continued through the Middle Ages. By the Enlightenment period in Europe (1550–1850), however, as systems constructs came to dominate science and normal society, modern calculative rationality or systems thinking began to supercede classical substantive thinking. By the late 19th century, social thinking had become generally excluded as a way of thinking.

Max Weber and Value Rationality Max Weber (1864–1920) revived the dormant conception of “substantive” reason that had been abandoned during the Enlightenment. For Weber, as for Classical Greeks, social or substantive thinking was a means of comprehending ethical “virtue.” On the one hand, using such value thinking, people apprehend what is ultimately good, inserting those qualities that constitute a “good life” into their communities and society as a whole. On the other hand, Weber asserts that systems-based modern society requires a fundamentally different way of thinking than is used in communal social relations. Managers of organizational systems use functional reasoning, devoid of social values, called rational problem solving or RPS. Unlike substantive value reason, calculative RPS is not an inherent quality of human character but an artificial skill that one learns by education and training. By substituting functional rationality for value-laden reason as a preferred way of thinking, systems-based bureaucracy competes against personal communal social action by which people construct social reality. Social action becomes transformed into instrumental, rational/legal action that guides automatic, self-regulating bureaucratic systems on their path.

Pragmatism and Social Psychology Social thinking was heavily influenced by the pragmatism of John Dewey during the 1930s. Dewey stressed “learning by doing,” in which the search for truth was to start in the community among neighbors who explored new ways, leaving behind the old.⁴⁷

The tradition of social thinking continued with Kurt Lewin, who argued that true learning involves restructuring one’s relations with the world, a process that called for a personal re-education of one’s self. In the early 1940s Lewin argued that this could be done best in groups because groups form the life space in

which most people move about and develop as persons, workers, and citizens.

Researchers in the field of group dynamics found that when members go through the experience of being “acting subjects” and collectively act on their environment, they are often successful in changing their own attitudes and behaviors. Social thinking in groups, Lewin discovered, is a powerful means by which people not only change their social environment but change themselves as well, a principle that social workers have also discovered to be important.⁴⁸

Murray Ross and Community Organization Murray Ross, professor at the University of Toronto’s School of Social Work in the early 1950s, applied social thinking to community work. He viewed the role of the social worker as that of a “guide” who facilitates the process of mutual decision making. For Ross, a guide is one who helps community members think through a process and move effectively in the direction they choose. The choice of direction must be that of the community. Community organization, therefore, is a like a university in which people, through mutual dialogue, come to an understanding about who they are, learn how to construct their own social reality, and develop their own culture. For many people this process is one of the highest and most important forms of human reflection.⁴⁹

Symbolic Interactionists In the 1960s and 1970s, a group of social psychologists known as symbolic interactionists pioneered in developing theories of meaning creation and communication, a social model of man, and a theory of empathy. Among these thinkers were psychiatrist George Herbert Mead, phenomenologist Alfred Schultz, and social psychologists Robert Lauer and Herbert Blumer. By means of empathic role taking, “one apprehends the meaning of the symbols or gestures that express the attitudes of others,”⁵⁰ say Lauer and Handel. George Herbert Mead, in fact, viewed empathic role-taking process as the essence of intelligence, so that we become sensitive to the feelings and attitudes toward ourselves and others during the course of interaction.⁵¹ The capacity to infer what another is feeling and thinking, and so connect with that person, is a beginning of understanding which can only occur in a social context.

Cognitive Science While the consensus of most modern psychologists is that human cognition is “an

individual act bounded by the physical facts of brain and body,”⁵² recently, even within the bastion of cognitive psychology, many thinkers are viewing cognition as a social phenomenon.⁵³ Members of the cognitive science community agree that “the idea of knowledge is distributed across several individuals whose interactions determine decisions, judgments, and problem solutions,”⁵⁴ says Lauren Resnick. These scientists are engaged in multiple efforts to merge the social and cognitive, treating them as essential aspects of one another.⁵⁵

For these scholars, the idea of empirically based knowledge as an inviolable, value-free fortress of objectivity in which facts speak for themselves is a myth. “Not only are theories and paradigms of thought socially determined,” says Paul Diesing, “but even ways of reasoning themselves.”⁵⁶ Lev Vygotsky, for example, asserts that shared and communicated experiences are primary in many key instances, and he goes so far as to claim that *all* higher mental functions evolve from social relations.⁵⁷

Social Construction and Situated Learning

Thinking as socially constructed is also called *situated learning*. Situated learning asserts that knowledge is essentially situated in a social context and should not be divorced from the contexts in which it is constructed and actualized.⁵⁸ “The person is actively engaged in the creation of their own phenomenal world,”⁵⁹ says Vivien Burr. Social constructionist scholars, for example, argue that to “know is to relate and that to know better, or gain deeper understanding, is to grow-in-connection.”⁶⁰

Constructionist models view the subject as a builder of knowledge. Jean Piaget, in agreement with Paulo Freire, for example, “taught us that *knowledge is not a commodity to be transmitted* as modern systems-based thinking would assert. Nor is information to be delivered from one end, encoded, stored and reapplied at the other end.”⁶¹ “*Knowledge is experience*, in the sense that it is actively constructed and reconstructed through direct interaction with the environment.”⁶² Understanding is not “simply transmitted from teacher to student, but actively constructed by the mind of the learner. Children don’t *get* ideas; they *make* ideas,”⁶³ asserts social worker Mary Ellen Kondrat. For Alan Shaw, the learner is an active constructor of knowledge.⁶⁴

Foundations of Social Thinking

Social thinking occurs when members interact together. It requires collective effort through shared discourse

and mutual decision making. Social thinking is interdependent, direct, immediate, and empowering. It is change-oriented, rooted in practice, and engages the construction of social projects.

Interactional Social thinking in social work practice begins with and is centered in the mutual interaction of community members. According to John McKnight, people work out the meaning of events they encounter and arrive at an understanding of themselves and their social world, devising the social goods and social reality within which their lives take shape.⁶⁵ “It is through the daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated,”⁶⁶ says Vivien Burr. Social thinking, moreover, most often occurs out of informal everyday face-to-face interactions of people who engage one another in friendships, social groups, gatherings, meetings, and associations.

Shared Discourse According to social constructionists, our knowledge of the social world comes from the common ways of understanding of people who construct that knowledge between them.⁶⁷ McIntyre-Mills claims that “The closest we can come to a sense of shared ‘truth’ is through dialogue with all the participants who are affected by a decision. Here, knowledge is viewed as local, the knower is part of what is known, and what is known is made and remade in relational processes.”⁶⁸

Mutual Decision Making Thinking socially is based on mutual decision making. “The motive or normative expression of our sociality is mutuality in primary face-to-face relationships,” Michael Harmon states, and the motives underlying responsible action are “a function of the *commitment* of one person to the other—as persons.”⁶⁹

Community members who carry out decisions to make changes in the social environment not only bear responsibility for their own actions; they also benefit from the power of deciding and accepting the consequences of those decisions. By taking charge of their own destiny, by deciding *and* doing, community members actively engage those in power who impose functional and dependency-infused roles upon them. They challenge the assumption that they cannot or ought not decide and act on their own behalf but must leave deciding in the hands of the powerful.

Interdependent Social thinking is interdependent. It is based on participation and personal engagement with others. Members come to understand who they are and where they are going. They come to rely on one another and to provide support for others as well. Out of mutual interdependence, people who have had few opportunities find their voices and rediscover their ideas, dreams, and visions. They share thoughts and feelings and, with others, generate new ideas by means of a synergy that comes from multiplying idea upon idea, feeling upon feeling, dream upon dream.

Direct and Immediate Social thinkers are not dependent on others who think for us or plan for us. Nor does social thinking rest on the judgment of institutional systems through which ideas must be channeled and receive approval. Social thinking is direct and immediate. People do not need permission to put projects into action, nor do they need to wait for approval of large systems. They can autonomously, independently, and immediately act on those ideas that they believe are best for their communities. People can generate the resources themselves from the assets and strengths in their own communities without relying on systems outside of the community.

Empowering People often tend to feel helpless, separated, and defeated in the presence of vast institutional structures whose logic stacks the rules against them and narrows thinking to the logic of the marketplace. When people engage in social thinking, however, they begin to think anew and act anew. They become an empowered people who conceive and construct the world out of new perceptions. Members understand that people without many financial resources or plentiful alternatives do not need to be captured by calculation that gives preference to economic values. Instead, they realize that the ideas and plans that they conceive together allow them to discard competitive, acquisitive self-interest.

Acting together for the common good gives people power that calculative logic can never possess. What may have seemed like a problematic and even self-defeating situation when viewed from a rational perspective becomes transformed into an opportunity for rebirth and renewal as members share their feelings, values, hopes, and dreams.

Rooted in Practice Social thinking theorists claim that knowledge is derived from experience and validated

in practice. Knowledge is not static; rather, it is forever changing. There is no “one best way” or one solution to a problem at which any rational person will arrive. Ideas are enriched or modified by lessons drawn from practice, which in turn are applied to new situations as people reflect on the results of their actions. In this milieu everything becomes new once again and the process begins over.⁷⁰

Change Oriented You will learn in Chapter 5 that social thinking is the locus of social change. The essence of social change often lies with an aggrieved group of people who organize themselves into a community, collectively engage in political discourse to identify the root causes of their grievances, and then strategize together to overcome those conditions. Dara Silverman says, for example, “when given the opportunity most people have tons of great ideas. Asking people what they would like to see change is the first step. After that it is a matter of helping people create a tangible plan where they can see short term gains, work with others to become empowered and see themselves as having an important role in making change happen.”⁷¹

Construction of Social Projects Social thinking includes the conviction that constructing social projects, learning by doing, is among the most important and highest level of human accomplishment. “Knowledge is seen not as something that a person has or doesn’t have, but as something that people do together,”⁷² asserts Vivian Burr. “People learn best when “they actively construct their own understanding of the world by means of social projects.”⁷³ Helping members engage in their own speaking, thinking, and acting as they mutually construct social projects is the heart of the action-social model of macro social work.

Kinds of Social Projects Social construction projects include social plans, new services, a social organization or agency, a new policy. Projects may include making a crime-ridden street more wholesome; the struggle of a neighborhood to stop a parking lot, a shopping mall, or a highway from being constructed; creating a community development housing construction project; forcing a local business to clean up a dump site; winning a victory at city hall for better police protection. By developing tangible services and programs, community members discover strength in

action. Learning becomes a discovery that is indelibly integrated into a person's understanding. The key to successful project construction is personal commitment and engagement in activities that carry deep personal meaning for members. Meaning is not only a motivator, but a result of social action.

How to Engage in Social Project Construction

The construction of social projects is a process by which people use social thinking to visualize a project, often with the help of a social worker. Developing a plan, members then grapple with the complexities of how to form its structure, decide on the outcomes, and understand the components and how they fit together. It also includes learning how to interact with other members, coordinate one's actions, and communicate one's ideas. You will explore this process more completely as you learn about the various arenas of macro social work practice in later chapters of this book.

The Action-Social Model and Social Thinking

While not often recognized or made theoretically explicit, social thinking is a fundamental core of social work today, a means by which macro social workers engage people in groups to consider the most fundamental questions of their existence. Such questions include struggling with why social oppression exists, how to construct a truly good society, and how people forge their own destinies in mass impersonal society.

Social thinking is also a prized and central component of the action-social model of macro social work, and forms the basis of many of its practice components. You will learn in Chapter 3, for example, that social thinking, encourages social workers to reunite people in groups and communities, in part to restore their humanity, but also to empower them to resist being "colonized" by systems thinking and reject the pretense that organizational institutions, while massive and powerful, are ultimately superior to individuals. When social workers use social thinking in task group processes they assist members overcome the social passivity and self-colonization that many social systems foster.

In addition, you will learn in Chapters 4 and 5 that social thinking via project-oriented task groups is a means by which community members work together to solve human and social problems, make social change, reconstruct the social environment, and create

a more wholesome social commons. In later chapters you will discover that such thinking is a means by which macro social workers engage in social planning, community development, and community organization processes.

With this awareness, it becomes mandatory for social work in general and macro social work in particular to understand that as people engage in creating projects of social importance by means of social thinking, they also are constructing strong, healthy selves and restoring the social as well. Social thinking needs to be consciously recognized by social workers and applied to resolving the important social problems of the day.

STRENGTHS/CAPACITIES BUILDING

Much policy for poor communities "tends to be driven by a model that focuses on the deficiencies of individuals and communities, rather than building upon individual, associational, and institutional assets that already exist,"⁷⁴ assert Siranni and Friedland. In the end, such deficit models fail. They cannot do what is necessary to effect lasting change. They do not engage with people in a meaningful way. "As the power of professional and service systems ascend, the legitimacy, authority, and capacity of citizens and community descend. The citizen retreats. The client advances,"⁷⁵ says John McKnight.

In agreement with McKnight, Ann Weick and Dennis Saleeby state that "the strength perspective changes the modernist heritage of psychopathology and problem-solving which has permeated social work practice for a significant part of this century."⁷⁶ They also claim that "to examine the strengths and resiliencies of people in their everyday lives signals ... an important shift in our thinking."⁷⁷ Utilizing the strengths perspective, the action-social model of macro social work focuses on encouraging capacity rather than remediating incapacity, generating strengths rather than overcoming deficits.

Positive Psychology

The strengths/capacity approach relies heavily on "positive psychology" to reduce the overextension of weakness in explaining human behavior and in the use of treatment. The field of positive psychology has

grown dramatically over the past decade and has many exuberant supporters and evangelists,⁷⁸ according to Eidelson, Pilisuk, and Soldz. It emphasizes human strengths and virtues, happiness, and the potential to derive positive meaning from stressful circumstances.⁷⁹ People are growth-enhancing, and they have the capacity to develop solutions with which to build their own futures.

This positive strengths/capacity perspective signals a shift in our thinking away from systems-based problem solving and helps us encourage progressive development at the personal, interpersonal, group, community, organizational, and societal levels.

Personal Strengths Personal strengths are those things that we are good at—our natural abilities, our acquired talents, the skills we have developed, as well as our intelligence, problem-solving skills, and creativity. Social workers understand, moreover, that all people, even those who struggle with low incomes or who exist in marginalized life situations, continually strive toward the development of their potential, mastery, and self-actualization.⁸⁰ All people “have skills, resources, and knowledge that they can utilize to transform their lives,”⁸¹ asserts Donna Hardina. Social workers help people identify their personal strengths by recognizing and affirming their ideas, their feelings, their perceptions, their history, and their accomplishments. Among the more important kinds of strengths are values and meaning, and the capacity to overcome adversity.

Values and Meaning Strengths not only involve characteristics, abilities, and behaviors that are obvious to us; they also include more subtle successes and less apparent capabilities that members may not recognize. People are valuing creatures, for example. We are able to impute values in the things we do, in the choices we make. The ability to insert values into our feelings, relationships, and actions is a key capacity of human beings.

In addition, we create meaning. “We generate meaning,” says George Herbert Mead, “when we take action about an event in our lives.”⁸² Often meaning comes from important times of deep emotion. Meaning occurs when we share positive feelings of joy, happiness, and pleasure, as well as tragedy. Even our painful feelings can be turned into strengths when we display our ability to rise above them.

For social workers, the propensity of people to express and act on their values and insert meaning in their lives is among their most important strengths, without which many community- and people-building projects could not be accomplished.

Overcome Adversity Individuals often have great resources of personal strengths that allow them to face difficult situations, overcome adversity, and inspire others. The strengths perspective recognizes the capacity of people to rise above their surroundings. People’s ability to display perseverance, patience, and hope when confronted by trouble is another valuable personal strength that humans possess.

Interpersonal Strengths Among the most important strengths that macro social workers utilize is the ability of people to work together. As people forge bonds, share information, develop determination, they create the capacity to accomplish more together than if each person were to work independently.

Social workers build on successful interpersonal interaction.⁸³ We all seek to develop warm, trusting, fulfilling relationships with others. We need friends just as others need our friendship. By both being and having friends we create mutuality, trust, engagement, and honesty. When we extend ourselves to one another, we overcome loneliness, separation, and alienation. Every person has the ability to become important to others, and every person at times relies on the strengths of others. By giving love and trust, we create more love and trust.

Strengths in Social Groups Macro social workers encourage the use of social groups to assist people in personal development including character building, interpersonal skills, and leadership. Strengths-based approaches direct resources to community groups via programs that support child, family, school, and community development.⁸⁴ As children develop peer groups, teenagers engage in socialization groups, and adults engage in task-oriented project groups, people find meaning and increase their sense of self. People learn to be leaders as well as followers.

Community Strengths Social workers assist individuals to develop their capacities by engaging others in community projects of social betterment. Community

betterment is often considered the key to macro social work. The strengths/capacity approach often begins with a process of community engagement wherein the community worker is a facilitator in helping the members set free their collective potential.

Instead of assuming communities are arenas of neglect, crime, and poverty, the community is perceived as full of assets, including participation, community support, and naturally occurring social networks. Social workers assist communities to combine these strengths into organized community programs around issues of common concern.

The active-social strengths approach operates on the premise that members of the community know best. They, not the professionals, are the experts. The strengths approach maintains an inherent faith in people and their propensity to find their own way and their own solutions to life's challenges.

Strong communities are the building blocks of a life-enhancing social environment. Making connections with others in the community, as well as in public and private organizations, can help build a sense of mutual strength. We believe that this is the best way in which people's social welfare can be enhanced, healthy social selves can come into being, children and teenagers can use their potential for building strong character, and people can take charge of their own lives.

We believe that when people use their strengths they can accomplish the purposes which their lives were meant to achieve. We also believe that when people utilize the combined power of people in their own communities, a strong force is unleashed that can overcome obstacles, allowing people grow in ways that they often never believed possible. This occurs most often as social workers assist people in joint effort and in leadership development.

Joint Effort When we join together we become empowered by our collective thinking, our joint efforts, and our combined will. When people interact in community, their capacities are multiplied. When people ensure that their personal, family, and group resources are used for the good of the community as a whole, they become actively empowered in controlling their own destiny. The community becomes a collective resource of strength from which every member can draw.

Leadership Development Earle and Cvetkovich assert that leadership represents another key facet of community capacity building. "Capable, resourceful,

and inspiring leadership is necessary for the growth of possible sets of community values people share."⁸⁵ The central responsibility of leaders, according to Robert Reich, is "to provide the public with alternative visions of what is possible, stimulate deliberation about them, provoke a reexamination of premises, broaden the range of potential responses, and deepen society's understanding of itself."⁸⁶ This is what makes leadership creative and innovative communities possible. Leadership is about the future and it is about change—the construction of new futures,⁸⁷ say Earle and Cvetkovich.

Organizational Strengths In contrast to formal systems-based organizations, social workers use non-profit social organizations to mobilize community resources and provide social welfare programs. Strong nonprofit organizations are essential to a strong society. They mediate between the individual and megastructures of systems society. Social organizations provide alternative ways of coordinating the work of individuals in projects that can be both socially rewarding and a means by which people create social benefits.

Societal Strengths Macro social workers engage society as a whole by helping to develop policies and engage in social movements. According to Kenneth Maton, strengths/capacity building "addresses both the process and the content of instrumental change and represents a critical foundation for social transformation."⁸⁸ When our interventions are embedded in a capacity-building process, the potential for local ownership and enduring, transformative change is greatly enhanced, making use of what is available to improve the ability of people to use what is already there.⁸⁹

Critique of Strengths/Capacity Building

While there are a number of important advantages in adopting a strengths/capacity-building perspective, Eidelson et al. remind us that it is important not to overstress the positive to the exclusion of the negative realities many individuals have suffered.⁹⁰ Writers such as Barbara Held, Barbara Ehrenreich, Eugene Taylor, and James Coyne, for example, offer compelling critiques of positive psychology, including its failure to sufficiently recognize the valuable functions played by "negative" emotions like anger, sorrow, and fear, and

its disregard for harsh and unforgiving societal realities like poverty.⁹¹

The positive strengths perspective sometimes “fails to examine the depth and richness of human experience; and its growing tendency to promote claims without sufficient scientific support such as the relationship between positive psychological states and health outcomes,”⁹² or the mechanisms underlying long-term chronic stress that often results in learned helplessness, colonized thinking, and passive dependency. Social workers aim for the positive but also utilize negative experiences to help members look closely at the conditions that have held them down. We assist people in finding their voices and recapturing experiences that have harmed them so that they can engage in rebuilding their lives together.

How to Use Strengths/Capacity Building

By adopting a strengths/capacity perspective, the action-social model of social work promotes human dignity, worth, and self-determination. We create arenas for social justice, equality, and respect for the worth of the individual.⁹³ We aim to be responsive to the “humanistic, ethical, and political considerations that characterize the helping process”⁹⁴ and create an “atmosphere which accords people with dignity and support.”⁹⁵

The active-social, strengths/capacity perspective provides the critical edge for empowerment practice, maintaining an inherent faith in people and their ability to find their own solutions to life’s challenges.⁹⁶ We assist people to find mutual fulfillment and maximize growth.

Find Mutual Fulfillment When macro social workers use the strengths/capacity perspective, they build opportunities for people so that they, in cooperation and in relation with one another, can mutually achieve the fulfillment that is inherent in their nature.. The key is mutuality, because the strengths/capacity perspective is aimed at reciprocal development, a realization that no one can achieve his or her potential alone, but only in relationship with others who give as well as receive help.

Maximize Growth A strengths/capacity perspective asserts that everyone is in a process of growth and that everyone can and ought to have the opportunity to maximize that growth to their fullest capacities. Everyone can be a helper and a helpee at any stage of life. To

use one’s particular situation to keep a person from development, or as a means to maintain one’s superior power position ought to be considered unethical. When we engage the action-social model using the strengths/capacity perspective, we:

1. Believe that people and communities have existing reservoirs of resources and competencies.
2. Recognize that each person has a distinct capacity for growth and change.
3. Define problems as occurring in relationships between people or between people and the larger community in the social environment rather than residing solely in a person’s internal personality.
4. Assert that collaboration supports people’s strengths to build selves, groups, resources, and communities.
5. Affirm that people know their own situations best. When they are able to see options, they can determine the best solutions for their problems.
6. Maintain that positive change builds on a vision of future possibilities.
7. Support a process to magnify mastery and competence rather than correct deficits.

ASSETS/RESOURCES

The assets/resources approach, developed by Kretzman and McKnight, builds on the strengths/capacity perspective of the action-social model. Social workers believe that when people are aware of available resources, have access to them, and assert their rights to benefit from what society offers, they can build lives of meaning.⁹⁷ The assets/resources model of community revitalization asserts that “communities that are better integrated into the urban and metropolitan markets typically attract more outside resources and therefore increase the opportunities available to their members,”⁹⁸ according to Zielenbach. You will learn how to apply the assets/resources approach in Chapter 6.

EMPOWERMENT

“Empowerment emerged out of the 1960s as a strategy with near universal appeal that links, but does not necessarily unite, the urban poor with feminists, civil rights movements, undocumented labor with gang truce organizers, welfare rights activists with environmentalists,”⁹⁹ says Barbara Cruikshank. Empowerment-oriented social workers are concerned about private and public struc-

tures that perpetuate disadvantage.¹⁰⁰ Empowerment looks at the human part of strengths, assuming that as people gain power they develop self-confidence. The more power people gain, the more they can achieve socially, politically, and economically. The action-social model promotes individual, group, community, and societal level empowerment.

Individual Empowerment

Action-social empowerment assists people at the individual level overcome social passivity, hopelessness, and helplessness. Using the empowerment approach, you help reactivate people, awakening them from their passive slumber, reinvigorating the social dimension of their lives. You help people confront negative self-evaluations, aim at personal emancipation, refuse to be victims, and mobilize themselves to action.

Confront Negative Self-Evaluations Many individuals internalize the negative valuations of themselves that have accrued through experiences of oppression and disadvantage. Social workers actively confront those pervasive negative valuations that demean and dehumanize us as people. While we believe that individual counseling can assist us in regaining our self-esteem and personal power, we also believe that if social workers concentrate their efforts exclusively on individuals rather than on community and political change they may unconsciously collude in creating helplessness, dependency, and powerlessness. The key for social work is to engage people in a process of working together to empower entire communities.

Aim at Personal Emancipation We work to emancipate ourselves from hopeless dependence. Social workers mobilize people to create their own sources of strength when they come together to make corporations and government responsive to what is right and good. We help people take charge of their futures and make decisions for themselves. We bring people together to overcome the illusion that nothing people do will matter. When we begin to work together, we begin to discover that there is strength in our common action, there is hope in our unified ideas, and there is empowerment in our shared reality.

Refuse to Be Victims We refuse to see people as helpless victims of circumstance, unable to change

their condition, or doomed by their upbringing to live unhappy lives. We do not believe people are determined by the inadequacies of their families or by defective methods by which they were raised. We do not believe that the massive organizational systems created by the powerful necessarily mean personal defeat or are impervious to change. The seemingly impenetrable power structures, while complex, are open to influence.

We have confidence in the ability of our members to exercise their social thinking capacities, create social reality, invigorate community, develop solutions, and recognize the role of social and political change in developing a better society. We work to help “people see themselves as causal agents in finding solutions to their problems; and ourselves as peers and partners in solving problems.”¹⁰¹

Mobilize People to Action Macro social workers assist in mobilizing people to understand their situation, assess their potential, strategize, win struggles, and gain power so they can engage public and business systems on at least an equal footing. We work to emancipate ourselves and others from hopeless dependence. We assist people to create their own sources of strength when they come together to make corporations and government responsive to what is right and good.

We help people take charge of their futures and make decisions for themselves. We bring people together to overcome the illusion that nothing people do will matter.

Group Empowerment

Youth development and empowerment are closely related. “Young people become empowered,” says Melvin Delgado, “when they feel that they have or can create choices in life, are aware of the implications of those choices, make an informed decision freely, take action based on that decision and accept responsibility for the consequences of that action.”¹⁰²

The action-social empowerment approach assists youth become more complete persons by generating public spirit, primarily through social groups. Social workers encourage youth involvement by supporting, clubs and associations. Macro social workers empower individuals by using task groups to develop social projects to strengthen and enhance their communities.

Community Empowerment

John O’Looney asserts that the “notion of community empowerment—that even impoverished communities

have capacities for self-help, entrepreneurship, and development—has found expression in a number of recent policy developments such as enterprise zones, community development corporations, and community development banks.”¹⁰³ You will discover in Chapter 8 how these new social tools, including community benefits agreements, corporate social licenses, and the community consent approach, are empowering communities to control resources in their communities and extend the social commons rather than allowing corporations to drain them for their own benefit.

Societal Empowerment

Macro social workers use the active-social empowerment approach to engage people in social advocacy, social movements, and transformational politics.

Social Advocacy Empowerment has become a guiding ideal for a diversity of activist citizen groups and advocacy organizations. Kenneth Maton asserts, for example, that “empowerment represents a key component of a multidisciplinary, multilevel framework of social transformation.”¹⁰⁴ Forming alliances with advocacy organizations and citizen groups directly enhances our capacity to make a difference in the policy arena. Social workers, for example, can assist in developing empowerment-generating policies in the agenda setting, formulation, implementation, evaluation, and revision stages of the policy process, about which you will learn in Chapter 13.

Social Movements Macro social workers along with “intellectuals and scholars who collaborate with established and emergent movements can contribute importantly by providing ideas and data that help fuel activism,” says Maton, “representing a critical intervention approach in the empowerment domain.”¹⁰⁵ In the past four decades, for example, the movements for civil rights, women’s equality, disability rights, and justice for gay and lesbian individuals have resulted in substantial increases in political power, legal rights, government resources, and even enhanced socioeconomic status for previously marginalized groups of citizens.

Such activism has continued to the present. Today the “Occupy” movement is focusing the outrage of a nation against the recent Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, under

which capitalist corporations legally have been granted the same free speech rights as people, thus allowing campaign contributions that tip the power balance in favor of these artificial systems structures.

The gay rights movement has been gaining power steadily over the past decade. The military, as a result of citizen pressure, has finally abandoned its failed “don’t ask, don’t tell” discriminatory policy. The right of gays to marry is slowly but surely making progress as state after state is bending to the will of the people.

The labor movement is mobilizing itself, gathering strength in the face of challenges by conservative politicians who are attempting to destroy the hard-won gains of labor in its right to collective bargaining. Today, in state after state, labor is fighting back whenever their rights are being challenged.

Transformational Politics Edward Schwerin believes that “the empowerment perspective has great potential as a unifying theory or paradigm for transformational politics.”¹⁰⁶ Instead of rigid, uniform, and impersonal artificial systems protections that create passivity and breed loss of resilience, the turbulent times of the 21st century call for courage and creativity. “We need a vision,” says Edward Schwerin, “powerful enough to hold us together and a moral compass to chart our course and to guide our steps down new paths.”¹⁰⁷

The action-social empowerment approach is a leading candidate for this essential transformational paradigm. “Empowerment theory naturally focuses on the future,” says Schwerin. “It poses the right questions: What will be? What should be? How do we get there from here?”¹⁰⁸ One way of answering these questions is to challenge interest group politics.

Challenging Interest Group Politics Wealthy interest groups achieve their goals by virtue of their capacity to purchase the labor of others, disempowering people by keeping them working on projects that benefit the wealthy. Those who are unable to purchase another’s labor can only gain power by using their own time and energy to make change on their own behalf. It is therefore in the interest of those who hold power to keep members of society busy on employers’ projects as well as politically inactive and passively dependent.

The empowerment approach directly challenges the interest group pluralism that supports public and private leaders who hoard power and wealth, keeping

others deprived. The empowerment orientation asserts that power is not a commodity that a few can control, but a social good that is the birthright of all. Social workers assert that power is a value that everyone can share, not a scarce privilege that a few can purchase and claim as their property or prerogative.

The suggestion that ordinary people become socially active strikes at the heart of the imbalance of social power, shifting one of the primary barriers to social and political equality and bringing about a fundamental change in the foundational conditions of modern society. The Occupy movement, for example, challenges not only the political power of large corporations, but the hegemony of capitalist corporatism itself, in which large transnational corporations often fail to pay their fair share of taxes, engage in criminal activities, and pay their executives huge salaries.

International Empowerment

Global empowerment has as its goal nothing less than breaking the monopoly of power amassed by the exploitative global market society and its affiliated intergovernmental organizations, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Empowerment is a central objective of indigenous populations in underdeveloped nations,¹⁰⁹ according to Judith A. B. Lee, “requiring the active engagement of collectives working together toward shared objectives.”¹¹⁰ Conscientization, moreover, is the road to personal and group empowerment as well as the destination of social transformation that Gustavo Gutiérrez defines as liberation.¹¹¹ *Liberation* means “to set free”—not only to free the oppressed from injustice but to free the oppressor from the sin of oppressing.¹¹²

One of the primary goals of macro social workers, therefore, as you will learn in Chapter 14, is to use the action-social model to assist indigenous peoples around the world to achieve empowerment by means of grassroots social organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and international social movements. Today, for example, we are seeing people in the Middle East—the “Arab Spring”—taking responsibility for their own futures by refusing the rights of dictators and overthrowing autocratic governments in nation after nation. People are feeling empowered as they continually assert their claim to equal and just rights.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Among all of the existing human service professions, social work has a clear commitment to social justice as part of its professional mandate.¹¹³ “Social justice is the organizing principle of social work,”¹¹⁴ say Brocato and Wagner. Judith A. B. Lee adds that “The clear and ultimate mission of the social work profession is to promote and enhance social and economic justice.”¹¹⁵ Manning argues that to work for social justice, social workers must become “moral citizens,” fighting against organizational and professional practices that are harmful.¹¹⁶ For Mondros and Wilson, social justice can be defined as values that support “justice and fairness to individuals, a sense of collective societal responsibility for the welfare of individuals, and a sense of altruism that accepts personal responsibility for solving problems.”¹¹⁷ According to Uehara and Sohng, the goal of multicultural social work “is social justice and the transformation of contemporary sociocultural structures and processes that support injustice and inequality.”¹¹⁸

“The mission of the social work profession,” according to the National Association of Social Work (NASW), “is rooted in a set of core values ... embraced by social workers throughout the profession’s history,”¹¹⁹ among which is social justice, “the foundation of social work’s unique purpose and perspective.”¹²⁰ “Social workers challenge social injustice [and] pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people focus [ing] primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice ... equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.”¹²¹

Using the active-social model, social workers voice our allegiance to social justice, asserting that society as a whole must be committed to effective equal provision of services. Our social justice perspective demands that we contest economic and political inequalities, the maldistribution of power, and social exclusion.

MACRO SOCIAL WORK AND THE ACTION-SOCIAL MODEL

If society is an active construction based on human understanding, on the one hand, and “man’s consciousness is determined by its social being,”¹²² on the other, the profession of social work has not only

immense potential but a major responsibility in shaping social and individual consciousness, which can result in a cumulative increase in the development of the human condition.

The action-social model provides a framework that helps social workers and community members focus “on the making and remaking of society through the ongoing self-transforming actions and perceptions of a diverse and interlocked world of actors,”¹²³ says Norman Long. By using social thinking, strengths, assets, empowerment, and social justice approaches, this model helps people articulate experiences and guides their interaction so that everyone can add to the mix of common understanding. As members engage in social discourse, the action-social model helps people distill their common wisdom into a set of ideas that can be implemented in action.

The action-social model is committed to assisting people to uphold their rights and capacity to choose, rather than have others choose for them, to act rather than passively behave, to take responsibility rather than to deny ownership. It assists people to create their social world rather than accept an impersonal and alienating systems existence created by others.

It is, therefore, imperative to move social transformation to the center of our consciousness as a field of focus in social work. Norman Long, for example, advocates that social work give added attention to the condition of our social environment. “Our field’s understanding of social environments, of how and when fundamental, enduring changes in social environments occur, is very limited compared to our understanding of individuals.”¹²⁴ The action-social model of social work is a beginning to equalize this imbalance, bringing the concept of the social to the forefront of awareness and placing social thinking, strengthening, asset creation, empowering, and social justice at the center of our methods. When we work together, we begin to discover that there is strength in our common action, hope in our unified ideas, and empowerment in our shared reality, which in combination help activate social justice as a norm in our society.

While the action-social model aims to make social change and social betterment the key focus of social work, however, more needs to be done. More effort needs to be put into the exploration of the role of social goods, civil society, and the social commons so that a well-developed theory and practice of authentic “social” work can emerge in the future as well as an

expanded theory of action and its application to social work practice.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you discovered that macro social workers are concerned with how the megastructures of society, including massive social systems, tend to deprive people of authentic social relationships. These structures, often large bureaucracies or corporations, destroy sociality, undermine social goods, and deny a sense of communal worth that exists as part of the social commons. At their furthest extent, systems structures tend to create social passivity that undermines people’s autonomy and social competence.

Rather than being based on a model of social systems, you discovered that the action-social model of social work retrieves a concept of the social. You found that the action-social model is centered in restoration of the person as an active-social self who engages in meaningful joint interactions with other like-minded selves in value-laden and emotion-filled social relationships.

You learned that the action-social model supports humans as autonomous social beings who not only construct themselves, but are active and creative agents in constructing social reality as well. You discovered how people engage in self- and social construction as they continually interact with others, beginning with their parents but expanding to peer groups and eventually to the community as a whole. In addition, you learned that that social workers consciously and consistently work to assist members to construct social reality by means of social projects. These social projects, you will learn in the following chapters, are aimed at community planning, community organization, and community development as well as building social organizations.

You learned that one way that the social is constructed is by means of social thinking. You discovered that social thinking was first consciously conceptualized by the Classical Greeks, who used it as a means of community building and politics. Since the Enlightenment in Europe and the United States, social thinking has diminished, however, only to be reinvigorated at the turn of the 20th century by social scientists, philosophers, and macro social workers.

You explored the strengths, assets, empowerment, and social justice perspectives of the action-social model and how they engage people at the individual,

group, community, societal, and even international levels. You learned that these orientations are an alternative to the deficit orientation that generally characterizes problem solving in modern economy and politics. You discovered that the action-social model of social work has as its primary goal the strengthening, empowering, and restoring of social benefits to all. As you engage the remainder of this text, you will learn how to apply the action-social model to solving problems and making change at the community, organizational, societal, and international levels.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Describe your understanding of a person who is active and social. To what extent are people in our society considered to be active-social creatures?
2. What is meant by a passive conception of the person? Do you think that organization systems induce people to be socially passive and individualistic in today's society? Or do you contest this idea? If you disagree, how and to what extent do modern organizational systems enhance social interaction?
3. This chapter has asserted that action-social macro social work is based on restoring action in modern society, which has been described as being socially and politically passive and often disengaged. The social, in addition, has become limited, diminished, and even damaged in modernity. In your opinion, is this assessment correct? Why or why not?
4. What is your understanding of the social commons, also known as civil society? Is the social commons expanding, remaining the same, or contracting today? Is this something to be applauded or to be concerned about? What is the role of macro social work in shaping and enhancing the social commons in today's society?
5. Do you believe that the action-social model is an adequate model for social change and social betterment? If not where should it be improved?

EXERCISE 2.2

Process Consultation

One of the roles of macro social work practice is to provide consultation and feedback in a

supportive, reflective, and helpful manner. Macro social workers provide consultation to community groups, social organizations, and a variety of others. This exercise is intended to help you build skills in effective process consultation.

Each student will practice taking consultant, client, and observer roles and practice active listening, giving feedback, and formulating a diagnosis. Form yourselves into groups of three and choose a role as client, consultant, or observer. Read the following role descriptions:

Client: Think of an organizational problem with which you are involved, at work or in school, that needs resolution. The problem can be at the individual, group, intergroup, or organization level. Write the problem down. You will present this problem to the consultant.

Consultant: You are a macro social worker. Your role is to help the client tell his or her story by listening actively to the client. For example, you will use empathy, practice perception checking, clarify the problem, use reflection, and give feedback. Review attending, active listening, and feedback techniques. You will try to avoid giving advice or trying to solve the problem for the client by offering solutions. Avoid being judgmental, blaming, or moralizing. Finally, avoid small talk or getting sidetracked.

Observer: You are to carefully watch the interaction between the client and the consultant. Using the "Process Consultation Observer Form," record your observations as accurately as you can.

Each triad will have a total of seven minutes to complete one role-play round. The instructor will keep track of the time.

After consultant and consultee interact, the observer shares his or her observations. Once the observer has shared, the consultant should solicit feedback from the client. The best feedback is non-evaluative. Feedback should not be judgmental. Feedback should describe in objective terms behaviors that were observed.

Role-Play Guidelines

The following questions can be used as a guide. As observer, what patterns did you observe?

1. Did the process proceed smoothly or did the interaction get stuck?
2. Was there mutual engagement or did client and consultant talk past one another?

3. Was there good communication or did one or the other not listen accurately to what the other said?
4. Did the consultant try to help the client formulate his or her problem or did the consultant try to solve the problem for the client or offer advice instead of actively listening?
5. Did you observe moralizing or judgmental behavior?
6. Did the consultant and client stay on track or did they get involved in side issues or engage in small talk?

As client, how do you assess the consultant's interaction with you?

1. Did the consultant listen actively? Did the consultant give feedback?
2. Did the consultant seem to exhibit empathy?
3. Did the consultant help you clarify the problem?
4. Were you helped to move ahead in reaching a diagnosis?
5. What would your next steps be?

As consultant, how do you assess your engagement of the client?

1. Do you feel you were able to follow the issue?
2. Do you feel you were able to grasp the problem concretely and help the client verbalize it?
3. Did the client seem resistant?
4. What do you think your next steps with the client would be?

After a few minutes of sharing, roles are exchanged and a second round is initiated.

Process Consultation Observer Form

Consultant

1. Showed empathy:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
2. Used active listening:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
3. Practiced perception checking:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*

Observations:

4. Clarified the problem:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
5. Used reflection:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
6. Gave feedback:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
7. Reached a diagnosis:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
8. Gave advice:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
9. Solved problem for client:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
10. Was judgmental or blaming:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:
11. Engaged in side issues:
low 1 2 3 4 5 6 *high*
 Observations:

EXERCISE 2.3

Paulo Freire and Social Ecology

Review the ideas and premises on which social ecology is based, particularly social adaptation and social transformation. Think about the way that social ecology theory assumes that humans either adapt to or transform the social environment which they inhabit. Consider Paulo Friere's assertion that "If for animals, orientation in the world means adaptation to the world, for man it means humanizing the world by transforming it."

1. What is the social ecology idea of social adaptation?
2. What is the social ecology theory of social transformation?
3. Is the role of social work to help people adapt to their social environment or transform it? Do we do both?
4. Do people gain empowerment by adaptation or transformation?
5. Can the social ecology model assist you in your work to help empower people?
6. How is the social ecology model different from the action-social model?

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3

Helping Individuals and Groups: Generalist Social Work Practice

Model of Human Beings

Any model of human being that we draw up must be a model which sees man as a free, active creature immersed in a total social field and living at a certain stage of history.¹

Ernest Becker

Enabling Dehumanization

Man can only create himself through his freedom; otherwise he is created, an object, without dignity. Yet those who would aid him in his life and his productivity are often willing to sacrifice his autonomy, which is his essential well-being, on behalf of his physical or social well-being.²

Ed Shorris

Magic in Groups

Magic can happen in groups, organizations and communities, where the “many” become one coherent heart, mind and intent, releasing extraordinary creativity and power for collective action and co-creation.³

Myriam Laberge

Ideas in This Chapter

IRENA SENDLER: SOCIAL WORK RESCUER WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

Social Groups

Project-Oriented Task Groups

Philanthropy

USING SOCIAL GROUPS TO STRENGTHEN INDIVIDUALS

Why Social Groups?

Macro Social Work Practice and Social Groups

USING PROJECT TASK GROUPS TO MAKE CHANGE AND EMPOWER PEOPLE

Helping a Task Group Engage in Projects
of Social Betterment

USING TASK GROUPS TO HELP INDIVIDUALS OVERCOME SELF-OPPRESSION

The Full Plate Syndrome

Cognitive Dissonance

Breaking the Chains of Self-Oppression

Implications for Social Work Practice USING PHILANTHROPY TO IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES

Participation
Volunteering

IRENA SENDLER: SOCIAL WORK RESCUER

In 1940, Nazis confined 500,000 Polish Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto to await their deaths. Most people in Warsaw turned their backs, but not Irena Sendler. A Warsaw social worker, Sendler decided to invest herself in this community and wangled a permit to check for signs of typhus, a disease that the Nazis feared. Joining Zegota, a tiny underground cell dedicated to rescuing the Jews, she took on the code name “Jolanta.” Because the deportations of Jews had already begun, it was impossible to save the adults, so Sendler began smuggling children out in an ambulance.

Over the next three years Sendler successfully transported more than 2,000 Jewish children to safety, giving them temporary new identities. To keep track of the children’s real names, she placed information about their identities in bottles, which she buried in her garden.

It was difficult for Sendler to find people willing to help these children. However, after much effort, she did find families and developed a network of churches and convents that were willing to help. “I have clothing for the convent,” she would write, and the nuns would come and pick up the children.

In 1943 the Gestapo arrested and tortured Sendler and sentenced her to die. At the last minute, her colleagues in the Polish underground bribed a prison guard to free her, listing her as “executed” on the official form. In hiding, Sendler continued her work of rescuing children. After the war, she dug up her bottles and began searching for the parents of the children she had rescued. She could find only a few of the parents because most had died in Nazi concentration camps. Years later, when Irena Sendler was honored for her rescue work and her picture appeared in a newspaper, “a man, a painter, telephoned me,” Sendler said. “I remember your face,” he said. “It was you who took me out of the Ghetto.” Sendler had many calls like that.⁴

Civic Engagement
CONCLUSION
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
ADDITIONAL READING

EXERCISE 3.1

Macro Social Work with Individuals and Groups

Irena Sendler engaged herself in helping rescue children when their communities were being systematically destroyed. Her story shows how macro social workers get directly involved in the lives of people in communities and, in unusual circumstances, how they often take extraordinary measures when those communities are being disrupted and destroyed. While rescuing individuals was primary, her work was also aimed at preserving community itself. By rescuing a few she was setting in motion a counterrevolutionary effort that struck at the heart of those who were systematically destroying a community by killing its inhabitants. One by one, Irena Sendler helped rescue and preserve community and its spirit.

Do macro social workers play any significant roles with individuals or groups, or is their role limited to working with communities, organizations, and national and global societies? Think about ways in which macro social workers assist individuals and groups. Before you read further, write down as many ways that you can think of. Save your answers. Later you will compare your responses with what you have learned in this chapter and with your classmates.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

The ultimate goal of generalist macro social work is to help provide a wholesome social environment in which individuals can achieve those purposes that are potential to their nature. This chapter explores how generalist macro social work mediates between individuals and the social environment with social groups and task

groups, and by helping people become involved in wider social action.

Social Groups

Macro social workers assist people to develop their sociality and add to the social commons by advancing social group work in their communities. You will learn that social groups are an important means by which individuals obtain basic social nurturing. They help children, adolescents, and young adults develop socially, emotionally, and cognitively. You will learn that macro social workers promote groups for children, youth, and adolescents in their own communities.

Project-Oriented Task Groups

Second, you will learn how macro social workers engage individuals in task groups as they participate together in projects of positive social construction. Task groups are the key to accomplishing nearly every macro social work process. You will learn how to lead task groups through the first meeting and through the life cycle of the group.

You will also discover that as task group members become engaged in making change, they simultaneously strengthen themselves and often achieve personal growth and development. By directly encountering the forces of oppression that have often been keeping them from achieving their potential, task groups often help individuals rise above those forces and recover their destiny. This is the heart of generalist macro social work practice.

Philanthropy

Macro social workers help provide opportunities for people to become socially engaged in the life of neighborhoods and communities. We help people connect with others, reaching out to their friends and neighbors in ways that add to their sense of worth and develop meaning. You will learn that when people participate, volunteer, or become a part of direct social action they become more emotionally and socially fulfilled. In some cases their mental, behavioral, and even physical health improves. The process by which macro social workers help individuals improve their quality of life by active engagement in civic life is called *philanthropy*.

USING SOCIAL GROUPS TO STRENGTHEN INDIVIDUALS

Most often people think of social groups as clubs for children, youth, and young adults, but they are also valuable means of socializing for adults as well. These groups include faith-based youth groups, YM and YWCA groups, Boy and Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, after-school clubs, community and senior center group programs, among others. Social groups also include support groups in which adults share experiences about common issues or troubles. They may be self-help groups where grown-ups provide assistance to one another in common activities such as child care or food purchasing.

Why Social Groups?

Social groups are the building blocks of community. They provide a number of components of social life that are often not available to people in our systems-based society. Social groups offer a means of forming positive peer relationships, developing whole-mind thinking, and building character. They assist members obtain self-esteem and self-confidence, engage in teamwork, and they are laboratories for democracy. Social groups help members learn new roles. They are a means by which students improve academically and achieve success in school. Social groups offer at-risk students opportunity for prevention and remediation.

Positive Peer Relationships “The ability to establish and maintain social relationships is often a key indicator that an individual is [emotionally] healthy; and this is true regardless of age,”⁵ says Melvin Delgado. Groups are bridges to relationships. Social groups assist members to meet their needs for affiliation and validation. They provide a means for social affirmation and friendship.

According to Delgado, “new friendships outside of a peer network based on school or neighborhood are a not unusual outcome of participation in a youth-development program.”⁶ Small group extracurricular activities allow students to meet and interact with others who may not be within their close friendship circles. Over time, youth form social groups that regularly get together, becoming an especially prominent feature of their social worlds.⁷ A study of two different girls-only programs at four Boys and Girls Clubs in

Chicago, for example, found that relationships at the clubs were important contributors to members' development, positive peer relationships, and working cooperatively to achieve their goals.⁸

Develop Whole-Mind Social Thinking Social groups use recreational, religious, cultural, outdoor, sports, and other program activities whose main purpose is development of human sociality. These program activities activate whole-mind social thinking, stimulating the senses and engaging emotions. Social groups help members integrate learning by using their intuition, engaging values, and practicing active reflection. This kind of understanding is often not available in the classroom, but occurs as members engage one another in social groups where the advisor continually involves members in a process of experimentation and learning activities of the members' own devising.

Build Character Judith Rich Harris asserts that children's and adolescents' peer groups in their neighborhoods, and the social organizations that support them, are *the* most important arenas of character building. They provide the means by which children discover how to relate to others, incorporate norms and rules of society, and in general, form themselves into mature human beings.⁹ If we want to improve children's behavior, we should focus on improving the child's social environment—his or her peer group and neighborhood,¹⁰ says Rachel Hollrah.

Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence A study by Hollrah affirmed that by participating and persevering in social groups, students gain a sense of self-respect, self-esteem, and self-confidence.¹¹ This finding was confirmed by a national study by McLaughlin, who found that adolescents who participated in social group activities were more optimistic, had higher self-esteem, and expressed greater self-confidence than the national average, and they were more oriented toward serving their communities in the future. A longitudinal follow-up investigation found that the majority of participants continued to be active in their local communities during their twenties.¹²

According to Mark Smith, group activities give youth pride in their accomplishments. They learn that if an activity is worth doing, it is worth doing well.

Participation in groups results in growth in self-discovery, freedom in forging relationships, and greater capacity for undertaking new tasks.¹³

Team Work Members learn how to compromise and work in a group. Social groups help enhance social skills and teach lessons not learned in a classroom. They teach students to work in teams and to work cooperatively, skills that will help students be successful not only in school, but in their future careers as well.¹⁴

Laboratories of Democracy Clubs, groups, and associations usually have “democratic” structures that provide opportunities for jointly participating in shared decision making,¹⁵ says Mark Smith. Groups, of whatever nature, in Malcolm Knowles' words, are “laboratories of democracy”—places where people can have the experience of learning to live cooperatively. “Attitudes and opinions,” Knowles writes, “are formed primarily in the study groups, work groups and play groups with which adults affiliate voluntarily.”¹⁶ They help to create “habits of the heart”: the mores that allow people to connect with each other and the wider community.¹⁷

Learn New Social Roles Club membership provides opportunities to participate in new roles.¹⁸ Leadership roles in clubs, for example, offer a valuable experience not generally available to young people and adults. They help students elaborate on the more formal knowledge learned in school. Roles such as being a helper in a service club, a soloist in a music club, or an artist making scenery in a drama club enable students to engage in identity exploration, fulfilling developmental arenas that career-oriented education often fails to provide.

Academic Achievement Numerous studies affirm that children and adolescents who participate in social group activities do better academically than those who do not. J. Atkinson, for example, found that students who participated in the Boys and Girls Clubs' “Project Learn” increased their grade point averages by 11% and had “markedly higher school scores than youth participating in other after-school programs.”¹⁹ Boys and Girls Clubs' “Power Hour” program on Native American land in Oklahoma was credited by one

principal as the reason her school's academic achievement scores increased.²⁰ In 1998 a randomized evaluation of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program showed that participating youth were significantly more likely to improve their school performance and attendance compared to control group youth.²¹

School Success A study by B. M. Miller found that youth who participated in New York's 4-H program had significantly higher educational aspirations, achievement, and motivation compared to youth in grades 5–12 who did not participate.²² Elementary and middle school girls who joined YWCA's Operation SMART increased their confidence, competence, and comfort in science, math, and technology.²³ The National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) found that participants in group programs were more likely than nonparticipants to aspire to graduate from high school, pursue further education, and also do better academically.²⁴

Remediation and Prevention: Students at Risk Not only do extracurricular group activities help students who are already successful in school; they also help students who are at risk of dropping or flunking out. Rombokas found that extracurricular activities are often the only component that makes some students stay in school and attend regularly.²⁵ Social group participation lessens discipline problems as well as non-school-related deviance; drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse; and serious offenses with the law,²⁶ says Rachel Hollrah. A randomized control study of 1,138 youths in Boys and Girls Clubs by Grossman and Tierney found that 46% of youths were less likely to have started using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to have started using alcohol, had fewer days of skipping school during the previous year, and demonstrated a positive impact on their grade point averages.²⁷

Another study found less juvenile delinquency and less alcohol and drug use among adolescents and adults in ten public housing sites in which Boys and Girls Clubs were prominent than in five sites where no clubs existed.²⁸ A study by Martin et al. indicated that comprehensive after-school intervention is effective in increasing academic achievement and decreasing negative behavior among severely at-risk adolescent African American male students.²⁹

Macro Social Work Practice and Social Groups

Social groups are key to people's personal development, socialization, character building, and inclusion in the wider society. Many macro social workers believe that quality social groups led by competent adults ought to be available to every child as a normal part of his or her education. Group opportunities ought to be plentiful enough that every child, especially those in deprived neighborhoods, has access to them. One of the goals of macro social workers, therefore, is to ensure that neighborhoods have a rich supply of a variety of social groups through which children, adolescents, and adults can find arenas of positive growth and interaction at their own levels, needs, and interests.

Providing group activity in the social commons is, therefore, one of the more important roles of social work. All social workers, clinically oriented as well as macro social workers, ought to encourage and support the formation of social groups such as those in Jewish Community Centers, Girl and Boy Scouts, YM and YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and faith-based organizations, as well as group opportunities for adults in community and senior centers. Macro social workers in their work with communities, as well as social workers in micro practice, will routinely

1. Assess the capacity of the urban neighborhood, rural town, or village to provide an array of social and character-building groups for people of every age level;
2. Promote a variety of groups in a neighborhood;
3. Help facilitate an infrastructure of group activities in churches, schools, and community and neighborhood centers; and
4. Stimulate awareness of the importance of social groups for character building and social development.

USING PROJECT TASK GROUPS TO MAKE CHANGE AND EMPOWER PEOPLE

One of the keys to macro social work is the engagement of people in task groups. Task groups are small formal groups, often created by macro social workers to take on tangible projects of social betterment, make decisions, and help solve specific problems. Task

groups are a primary means by which social workers carry out their roles in communities and organizations. At the community level, social workers use task groups to engage members in community planning, community development, and community organization projects.

Task groups are also used extensively in building or administering social service organizations. Social work administrators create numerous task groups to carry out agency planning, develop projects, and create policy. Boards of directors of social agencies often structure themselves into standing, ongoing committees to carry out the work of overseeing the agency. They may form ad-hoc, temporary committees that meet to accomplish a particular project.

In addition, social workers use task groups to assist individuals to become better, stronger, and more socially competent persons. Individuals often learn how to work together. They learn social leadership skills. Using social thinking, macro social workers assist members to become empowered and thus overcome self-oppression and cognitive dissonance.

Helping a Task Group Engage in Projects of Social Betterment

The description of the task group process that follows is most appropriate for community-based group projects, but can be modified to work with organizational groups and committees as well. You begin your work by engaging in pregroup planning. You help members conduct the first meeting, and assist them as they proceed through the forming, norming, storming, and performing stages of its life cycle using the action-social leadership model.

Pregroup Planning The pregroup stage occurs before the group is formed. The success of a task group is often based on how you define your role, your capacity to express the purpose and process of the group, its size, and its composition. You think through such administrative matters as the duration of the group, timing and frequency of meetings, meeting time and place, and how to provide group resources.

Role of the Social Worker Most often, macro social workers play roles as staff in a task group. For example, you might carry out many housekeeping tasks to assist the group in its work, such as arranging for a

meeting place, sending out minutes, arranging for refreshments, taking minutes, following up on assignments and tasks between meetings, and obtaining information and resources for the group.

You provide consultation to the leader by meeting regularly to offer critiques of the chairperson's leadership and to offer support. You raise questions, point out issues and concerns, and give advice. You ensure that the leader thinks through his or her leadership style, process, and interactions. You may assist members by teaching, giving information, and acting as a liaison to government or other agencies.

Purpose and Process As you think through the purpose and process of the group, you will more than likely ask yourself a number of questions. Why is this task group important, and what do you expect to accomplish? What roles, tasks, and duties will you expect members to carry out? What will potential members expect from the group, from you, and from the experience as a whole? What will be the role and responsibility of the sponsoring organization? Try to write out answers to these questions in the form of a proposal. This effort will assist you in clarifying what you are trying to accomplish.

Size "The group should be small enough to allow it to accomplish its purpose, and yet large enough to permit members to have a satisfying experience,"³⁰ say Toseland and Rivas. The optimal size depends on the purpose of the group and the attributes of the members. Various theorists have recommended groups of from five to nine members as optimal. Herbert Thelen, however, recommends the principle of "the least group size": The proper size of the group is the "smallest number that represents all the social and achievement skills required for its particular activity"³¹

Composing the Group When you consider possible membership of the task group, take into consideration member characteristics, knowledge, and skill.

Member Characteristics. The characteristics of the members will affect task group interaction and influence outcomes. The best group members are those who are personally committed to the group project and who bring with them skills, experience, or influence that will enhance the group process. A rule of thumb is to choose people who are homogenous in

personal characteristics such as beliefs, values, and commitment to the group, but heterogeneous in demographic characteristics such as life experiences, gender, ethnicity, age, and nationality. Members who share personal ties will ensure stability and help the group become cohesive and motivated. If they also come from different backgrounds, they will increase the vitality of the group, add creative perspectives, and devise unique solutions to problems.³²

Ephross and Vassil note that one principle of diversity is the “Law of Optimum Distance,” which holds that it is not a good idea to have just one of anything in a group if it can be avoided. The group member who has a unique characteristic may be scapegoated or treated as a token.³³ Try to have a mixture of experienced members and those who are less experienced, those who are verbal and those who are less verbal. A group with many less verbal members will tend to be a drag on the group; a group with many highly verbal people may become overly competitive.

Knowledge and Skill. Another important factor in composing a task group is the knowledge and skill of the potential members. According to Fatout and Rose, members of a task group should jointly “possess all the information necessary to the performance of their task plus the ability to interpret and use it.”³⁴ Members should have the capacity to interact well with others, form relationships, and be able to carry out their commitments responsibly and on time.

Duration of the Group The duration of your task group will often affect the quality and extent of your members’ involvement in the project. Members of time-limited temporary groups often take more risks and endure more discomforts than members of long-term groups. If people have reservations about joining a group, serving on a committee, or working with others who are not necessarily to their liking, they may agree to serve if they know they can escape in a short time. In contrast, members who participate in long-term task groups are more inclined to invest themselves in group membership, develop relationships, and be more cautious,³⁵ according to Fatout and Rose.

Time, Place, and Frequency of Group Meetings Potential members often have constraints on their ability to participate. Make your meetings as convenient as possible for your members. Choose a meeting time and

place that is easily accessible for them. A noon meeting near the center of town might be a good choice for professionals working in government or private agencies, for example. Neighborhood residents who have small children might want to meet at a member’s home before children return from school. Others may prefer an evening meeting at a local church. At your first meeting, find out if the meeting time and place are good, and if not, help members decide on different ones.

Match the frequency of your meetings with the task and with the availability of members. For example, if there is a demand for intensity in the work, your members may want to meet more often. Otherwise they may meet on a regularly scheduled basis. Your members might appreciate an understanding that the task group will meet 12 times, once a month for a year, with the possibility of one or more additional meetings, after which the group will disband. With this information, members may be more willing to commit themselves to the group. They can plan their commitment around this schedule.

You can also use this 12-meeting limit to chart the group’s progress in accomplishing its task. For example, at around meeting 6, members should be about halfway toward accomplishing the group’s purpose. By meeting 10 they should be nearly finished, and by meeting 12, their task should be completed. Members can use their final meeting to engage in active reflection and celebration. You can also chart the group’s life cycle around this schedule as described below.

Arrange for Resources Try to arrange for a meeting room that is attractive to the members. A facility with a large table, comfortable chairs, white or chalk boards, easily accessible restrooms, convenient parking, and facilities for serving refreshments may add to member satisfaction.

When You Are the Leader Sometimes you, as a macro social worker, may lead the task group. If you are in a position of administrative leadership, for example, you will often provide leadership to your unit or department yourself. You may be asked to serve on the board of a social agency and chair a standing or ad-hoc committee.³⁶ In addition, in situations where you expect members to lead the group, you may need to assume formal leadership for the first meeting or two

and train your members until they can take over effectively.

When you are the task group leader, keep in mind the principles of good meetings.

Principles of Good Meetings When you lead or train others in leading a task group, keep the following principles in mind.

1. Begin and end meetings on time.
2. Limit meetings to no more than 1 to 1.5 hours. Shorter meetings are usually better than longer meetings.
3. Have an agenda prepared and distribute it to the members in advance.
4. Arrange seating and meeting room facilities to enhance accomplishment of group goals.
5. At the beginning of the meeting, ask members to review the agenda and, if necessary, change, add, or rearrange items.
6. In general, dispense with short, informational, or quick action items that require little or no discussion first. Save more complicated issues requiring discussion for the end. Add timelines to each item. If an issue requires more discussion or time than you anticipated, draw the discussion to a close and assign the topic to an ad-hoc committee to review and make recommendations to the group at its next session. If the issue is controversial, ask two groups to take opposing views and each present their position at a follow-up meeting to facilitate decision making.
7. After the meeting serve refreshments and ensure that members were satisfied that the meeting was beneficial.
8. Follow up the meeting with minutes of what occurred, including assignments, deadlines, and a tentative schedule for the next agenda, including place and time of the next meeting.
9. Between meetings follow up with members who have been given specific assignments to ensure that they have been able to carry them out.
10. Keep a quadrifocal vision: You attend to the arena of discussion, but you imaginatively place yourself outside of it. You listen to what each member is saying while looking for patterns of interaction that can help the group as a whole move ahead. You simultaneously focus on individual members, subgroups, the group as a whole, its stage in the

group life cycle, and the purposes for which the group has been formed.³⁷

How to Lead the First Meeting Make preparations before your first meeting. At your first meeting make introductions, review and modify the agenda, discuss the purposes and structure of the group, work on accomplishing a task, decide on next steps, and bring the meeting to a close. After the meeting, distribute minutes and an agenda for the next meeting, and between meetings work with members to accomplish their assignments.

Premeeting Preparation Send a reminder letter and agenda, and make sure the meeting room is prepared.

Meeting Reminder About a week before your first meeting, send a letter to each of your members thanking them for their willingness to serve on the task group and reminding them of the location, date, and time of the meeting. List the other members of the task group and include an agenda for the first meeting.

Tropman and Morningstar suggest that you divide agenda items into three parts: information items, decision items, and items for discussion. Indicate the action you want taken next to each item. Leave enough space between items to enable members to take notes or record motions.³⁸

Room Preparation Before the first meeting, place name cards, an agenda, a pad of paper, and a pencil on the table for each member, as well as any other information members might need. Table arrangements can facilitate power and interaction objectives in meetings. For the first meeting, a square table arrangement is best because it places members in equal proximity to one another. Later you may decide to choose other table arrangements depending on your objectives. For example, a rectangular table places members directly opposite one another, facilitating interaction with leadership directed at the head of the table. Make sure you have coffee and some refreshments prepared and that the room lighting and temperature are comfortable.³⁹

Beginning the Group When you begin the group, introduce the purpose of the meeting, the members, and attend to member concerns.

Introduce the Purpose As members arrive, greet each one by name and introduce members to one another. Begin the meeting on time, even if some members are late. This will establish a norm that members should not be late. Welcome everyone and announce the name and general purpose of the group. You are not only giving information but beginning to establish social and emotional connections.

Member Introductions Ask members to introduce themselves to one another in relation to the purpose of the task group. For example, if the purpose of the group is to extend transportation services to a particular community, ask members to describe how their lives or the lives of others are affected by the current lack of transportation and explain their interest or involvement in transportation issues.

Such commonalities help members connect with one another and learn about their backgrounds and mutual interests. Make a brief summary statement after a member has introduced him- or herself, such as, “Joe, you, like Sally and John, are interested in attaining bus services so your clients can reach health care services.”

Attend to Member Concerns Individuals may have concerns about the mission of the group, how it will be accomplished, where they will fit within the process, and how they will relate to and be accepted by the other members in the group. As you lead members through the first meeting, help them resolve these concerns and assist them in feeling committed to and a part of the group process.

Review and Modify the Agenda After the introductions, ask members to look at and review the agenda, add items to it, submit items for a future time, and agree on timelines for various items. You are establishing your expectation that members will contribute items for the meeting. You are also encouraging them to participate directly in the meeting’s content, and you validate each person’s worth in the group.

Discuss the Purposes and Structure of the Group A group must develop ways of working together that foster individual as well as group well-being. According to Miriam Laberge, “when the task group first comes together, and before they can or are

willing to do any ‘real’ content work, participants must address many issues around their purpose and goals, structure of the group, and the roles of members.”⁴⁰ You are helping members understand how they will participate, how they can contribute, and how they can make changes to better fit their expectations.

Conversations around these issues are sometimes given short shrift because of the mistaken belief that they are eating up valuable time that could be spent on the convening question. In actual fact, says Laberge, “taking time up front on these points is a reasonably safe starting point, and creates an early opportunity for agreement and alignment among diverse members of the stakeholder network.”⁴¹

Several questions are key to ensuring the group’s success: “What are we here to do together?” “What is our purpose?” and “What type of group/network/organization do we want to be?” Clarifying the purpose also includes defining and agreeing upon: “What is the desired outcome?” “What are the criteria for success?” “What will our output be?” and “How can we ensure that we can accomplish our purpose in the timeframe that we have available?”

When you encourage members to shape the group, you are planting the seeds for group ownership. You demonstrate that members have the power to influence the content and process of the group. If the purpose of the group is to improve their community, develop a plan, or start a new program, help members see how they can make a real difference in making social change.

Members Who Are Unable or Unwilling You want members to feel excited and motivated by the group. Becoming part of the task group may be stimulating for some members, but can sometimes create anxiety for others. Some members may be hesitant or reluctant to participate. You may present several ideas, but members may be unwilling or unable to discuss them. They may not be sure what is expected of them, what behaviors are appropriate, or whether others will accept their ideas. Members may need a structured means of participating that alleviates these anxieties.

When you ask for feedback at the beginning stage of the group, therefore, consider using a brainstorming or round-robin technique in which you go around the table and ask each member for input on goals and ideas. Help the group stay focused. If the group gets

off track, redirect the group by restating the purpose and clarifying the direction of the group.

Come to Agreement on Group Goals and Timelines Often the social agency or organization already will have established the primary goal or purpose of the group. Your group, however, will need to decide how they will accomplish that larger purpose, identify more specific goals and objectives, and look at their priorities. When members come to some agreement about the group's specific goals, have members decide on the next steps in accomplishing the group's purpose and attach tentative timelines to them. Then ask members to volunteer to work on accomplishing one or more goals by the next meeting.

Suppose, for example, the purpose of your task group is to improve relations between teenagers and the local police department. Your members decide that one goal is to gather information. One member, Mr. Samuels, agrees to discover police policies on stopping and searching juveniles. He will interview the chief of police and attempt to get the procedures in writing by the next meeting. Ask each member to accomplish a task such as this, making the task assignments specific so that you and your members will be able to see the extent to which they have been accomplished.

Bring the Meeting to a Close After each of your members has agreed to a task assignment, obtain commitment by asking members to structure the agenda for the next meeting. Ask members if the time and place of the next meeting are acceptable; if not, engage members in making different arrangements. At the end of the meeting, summarize the meeting's accomplishments, the task assignments, the goals of the next meeting, and its time and place. Thank the members for their participation and interest. Serve refreshments and chat personally with members, helping them to relax, enjoy one another's company, and feel more deeply connected to the group.

Observe Interactions As you interact with members, both in the meeting and in informal chatting, observe who talks with whom, and who the more silent members and more talkative members are. Watch to see if subgroups form. This will give you clues about how to structure interaction assignments in the future. For example, if certain subgroups seem to form, have

those members work together on a project. Another way is to pair more verbal members with less verbal members to promote mutual communication.

Working between Meetings Although you will accomplish much of your work during group sessions, there are many functions that you will carry out before the next meeting. For example, between meetings you write up and send minutes and the next agenda to members, follow up with members and committees, and work with the chairperson in planning the next meeting.

Distribute Minutes and an Agenda for the Next Meeting Minutes are a record of the decisions made by the task group. In large task groups such as agency boards of directors, one member, usually the secretary, takes minutes. In other task groups you should perform this role. Although there are differing points of view regarding the content of the minutes, a very clear, succinct method should be used that follows the agenda items exactly. You may write your minutes on the agenda if you have left enough space for each agenda item. This way, you complete the minutes as the meeting progresses.

How to Write Minutes. Record the name of the group; the date, time, and place of the meeting; and the names of the members who attended. Record the information that was provided for each information item on the agenda, decisions reached for each decision item, usually with the exact wording of the motion, along with the name of the person making the motion and the name of the person seconding the motion. Provide a summary of discussion items and any agreements or decisions that result from it. Record specific member assignments and deadlines for accomplishment. Sign and date the minutes, and send a copy to each member with the agenda for the next meeting.

Follow Up with Members You should follow up with members or committees regarding their progress on tasks that they have agreed to accomplish, and make sure that they are prepared to participate effectively at the next meeting.

Keep in close touch with your members to ensure that they are learning, growing, and feeling positive about the group and their participation. Call members on the phone, meet with subcommittees, and coordinate work between subgroups. You also should maintain contact with the administrators, staff, boards

of directors of your sponsoring organization or other significant groups in the community, and carry out assignments that you have agreed to.

Meet with the Chairperson After the group chooses a formal leader of the task group, one of your more important roles will be to meet regularly with this chairperson to review the task group meeting, critique his or her performance, give suggestions, help construct the next agenda, and carry out any other tasks that will help the chairperson or the group accomplish its purposes.

Leading the Group Through Its Life Cycle: The Action-Social Model The action-social leadership model presented here is a combination of Hersey and Blanchard’s situational leadership and Bruce Tushman’s 4-Stage Group Life Cycle that provides a cohesive way to lead a group through its life cycle.

The action-social model assists members to move through developmental stages of the group so they become competent and fully functioning, while simultaneously assisting the group as a whole reach its goals. Ephross and Vassil assert that “as a group matures, so does each member. In a mature group all group members share responsibility for the group’s executive function, which can be defined loosely as ‘making the group’s wheels go ’round.’”⁴²

Hersey and Blanchard’s Situational Leadership

In 1969 Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, both organizational psychologists, developed a leadership model they called “situational leadership.”⁴³ Hersey and Blanchard assumed that individuals in groups go through various phases of learning. As people develop their abilities, they need different styles of leadership. A leader must modify the amount of direction and the intensity of socio-emotional support offered, depending on the readiness level of the members.

Hersey and Blanchard defined four levels of individual readiness to successfully complete a task, engage in group problem solving, or work on a community project. (see Figure 3.1). They recommend that at the beginning of a group or when a group displays low readiness, unwillingness (lack of motivation), or inability (lack of skills), a leader should adopt the high-task/low-relationship (HT/LR) “telling” stance characteristic of a directive leader. As group members become more motivated and skilled (struggling but still

uncertain), the leader should shift to the high-task/high-relationship (HT/HR) “selling” stance of a democratic leader. When members reach a stage where their skills have progressed but they still need reassurance and encouragement (more capable, but lack practice), a leader should adopt a high-relationship/low-task (HR/LT) “participating” style characteristic of a supportive leader. Finally, when group members are highly capable and self-motivated (willing and able), the leader should take on a low-relationship/low-task (LR/LT) “delegating” style similar to that of a laissez-faire leader.⁴⁴

Tuchman’s 4-Stage Group Life Cycle Not only will your members develop as they learn to work with others in a group, but the group itself goes through a cycle of change. Many group theorists have described variations of this cycle. The model that seems most useful for task groups was developed by Bruce Tushman and modified by Linda Yael Schiller.⁴⁵

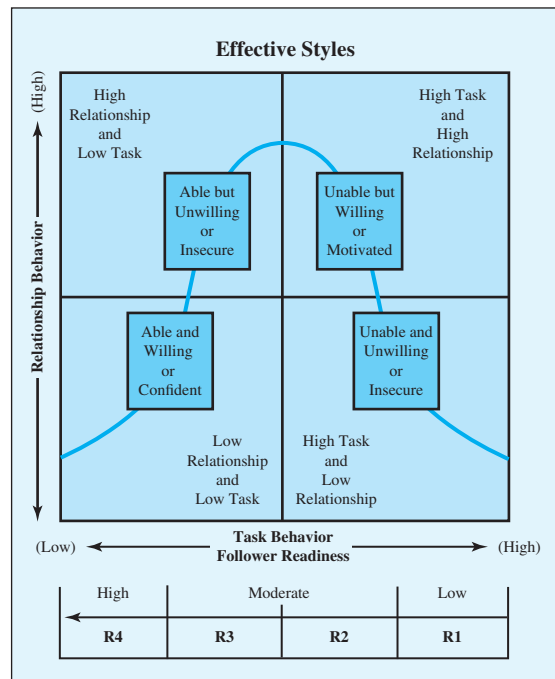


FIGURE 3.1 Situational Leadership*

Source: Paul Hersey, *The Situational Leader* (Escondido, CA: The Center for Leadership Studies, 1984, p. 63). Reprinted by permission of The Center for Leadership Studies. All rights reserved.

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This model describes forming, norming, storming, and performing stages for the group. The forming stage occurs in the beginning of group life, the norming and storming stages are middle stages, and the performing stage occurs when the group is fully functioning. It is important to note that groups do not tend to move through these stages in lockstep fashion. Instead, some groups may skip stages, and others may resolve issues at one stage only to return to those issues again later. Still others, as Bruce Tushman describes, may engage in the storming stage before the norming stage. Groups may move through some stages slowly or very quickly. A group may move through issues involving several stages sequentially in one meeting.

Action-Social Leadership Model The action-social leadership model combines Tushman’s life cycle stages with Hersey and Blanchard’s situational leadership (see Figure 3.2).

How to Use the Action-Social Leadership Model In working with the group as a whole, assess the readiness level of your members. In the forming stage, adopt a directive leadership style or help the chairperson take on this leadership style to help members form the group. Shift to a selling stance as members adapt to the group’s rules and boundaries in the norming stage. Adjust your role again to a participating style to assist members in developing smooth working relationships in the storming stage. Finally, change to a coaching style to enable members to reach a point where they are accomplishing the purpose of the group in the performing stage.

Assessing the Readiness Level of Members. Checklist 3.1, Member Readiness Assessment, will help you make a formal assessment of the level of readiness and skills of members at each stage of the group’s life, enabling you to aim your leadership style appropriately. Each section relates to a different stage of the group. A high score of 22–28 indicates that a member is clearly operating at that stage. A medium score of 15–21 indicates that a member is in transition from one stage to another. A score of 7–14 indicates that a particular member is not operating at that stage.

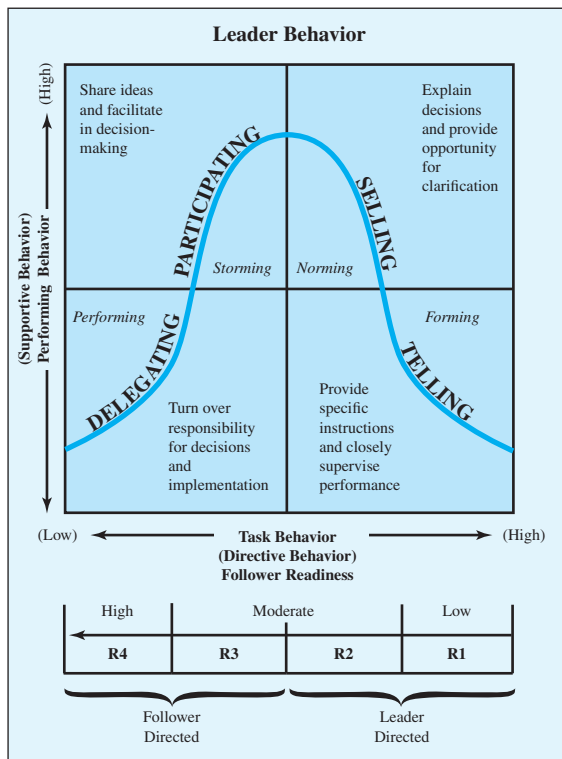


FIGURE 3.2 Action-Social Leadership Model
 Source: Adapted from Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, *Management of Organization Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*, 5th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988), p. 171. Reprinted by permission of The Center for Leadership Studies. All rights reserved.

CHECKLIST 3.1

Member Readiness Assessment

This assessment will help you identify readiness of members of a task group. Answer as honestly as you can to help the leader and other members understand the level at which the group is functioning.

Circle one of the following that most closely matches your feeling about each statement:

- 1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

If you agree with only part of a question, mark it Disagree. After you have finished one section, add up the points and enter the total next to Score _____.

Section I: Forming Stage

- a. I need to know what is expected of me in this group.

- 1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

b. I need to understand what this group is supposed to accomplish.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

c. I need to know when the group is supposed to accomplish its goals.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

d. I need to get to know members of this group.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

e. I need to know what the members of this group are supposed to do.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

f. I need to know how to proceed in this group.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

g. The leader of this group needs to give us clear directions about how this group is to go about its business.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

Score: _____

Section II: Norming Stage

a. I know what is expected of me but am not sure how to do it.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

b. I am uncomfortable about some of the procedures in this group.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

c. I disagree with some of the rules in this group.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

d. I am sometimes confused about the direction the group is going.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

e. I think we are wasting time in this group.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

f. I don't think we are accomplishing everything we could.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

g. I have feelings about how the leader is conducting the group.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

Score: _____

Section III: Storming Stage

a. This group has internal conflicts it needs to work out.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

b. I find myself disagreeing with members in this group.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

c. Some members in this group need to be more forthright.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

d. Some members in this group dominate discussions.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

e. Some members in this group tend to get off track.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

f. Some members in this group waste too much time.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

g. The leader needs to help group members work through interpersonal issues.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

Score: _____

Section IV: Performing Stage

a. Members of this group demonstrate that they know what to do and are able to do it.

1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

- b. Rules in this group are jointly worked out with everyone.
1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree
- c. This group is well on its way to accomplishing its goals.
1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree
- d. The procedures in this group are clear and workable.
1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree
- e. Leadership in this group is shared by all the members.
1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree
- f. Conflicts in this group are resolved internally.
1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree
- g. Members need only occasional assistance from the leader.
1 Strongly Disagree 2 Disagree 3 Agree 4 Strongly Agree

Score: _____

Ask members to compare scores from each section. When scoring for the group as a whole, ask whether members received low, medium, or high scores for each section. Do most members rank one or two sections higher than the others? This will tell you at what stage the group members are operating and what issues the leader needs to resolve before moving to the next stage.

If some members scored high on one section and others scored high on a different section, group members are operating at different levels. This tells you that members are experiencing differing levels of maturity. If members are evenly split, aim your leadership style at the higher level, expecting that the members who are less ready will catch up. In fact, it is probably a good idea to have some members at a lower stage and others at a higher stage so that the higher-stage members can assist the lower-stage members. However, if several members are two or more stages ahead or behind the others, the higher-stage members may feel bored and out of place, or the lower-stage members may appear to be a drag on the group.

The Forming Stage. Although your group members will most certainly come with a variety of skills and experiences that are relevant to the group, at the beginning of a task group, members may not yet have a clear understanding of their roles. They may not know the particular rules or boundaries of this group, or what specific behaviors will be expected of them. They may be wondering how their abilities will be utilized or recognized, and they may attempt to determine their relative power and competence in relation to other members.

Members will look to the leader to explain what to do, how to do it, and when and where to do it. They will expect the leader to get things started, provide structure, and provide guidance along the way until they have enough experience to begin functioning on their own. Members may direct questions and most of the discussion to the leader.

1. **Leadership Tasks at the Forming Stage.** When members express uncertainty, the most effective leadership stance is to be clear, structured, and organized, using a low-relationship/high-task (LR/HT) style characterized by “telling” or directive leadership. Focus on the tasks to be accomplished, provide structure, but help members decide on their own goals/purposes/processes and structures as well. Answer questions, make assignments, and establish the rules, boundaries, and timelines of the group. Acknowledge the socio-emotional concerns of members, but do not focus on them, or encourage or reinforce dependency.

As members begin to exercise their skills, engage in discussion, and place themselves socially in the context of the group, they will soon feel more confident and excited about the group. As members become more comfortable with each other, a few people will begin to try out their ideas. Others may quietly observe in order to determine what happens to risk takers. As they discover that verbalizing their ideas is valued, they too will begin to participate more freely. Cohesion will increase, and the group members will develop readiness to move into the middle stages of the group.

The Middle Stages: Norming and Storming. At times an entire group will work through norming concerns together to get clarity and then move on to the business of developing deeper relationships. At other times members may choose to work on relationships

and then concentrate on boundary concerns. A leader must recognize that what may appear to be mild dissension or conflict is, in reality, a necessary process by which members develop group ownership. Your goal is to help members achieve a certain amount of cohesion as they “participate in decision making, move toward task accomplishment, and regulate the group maintenance processes, especially in conflict resolution,”⁴⁶ say Fatout and Rose.

1. Norming

Members in the norming stage are becoming motivated and skilled (struggling but still uncertain). They will sometimes test the boundaries of the group, test your leadership style, and may struggle with performance anxiety. Your leadership task is to adopt the stance of a democratic leader to provide members with reassurance and confidence.

- a. *Boundary testing*: Although members may understand the rules, boundaries, and structure intellectually, they may need to assure themselves that they are firm, but not rigid. They may need to integrate them into their own experience, and make sure they are practical. Members who express confusion about the rules or boundaries are attempting to reduce anxiety and develop a sense of security within the framework of the group.
- b. *Testing the leader*: In addition, members who are engaged in norming behavior may still be somewhat dependent on you for direction but are struggling against their own dependency in their desire for mastery. Members may need to assure themselves that the leader has consistency, stability, and honesty and can be trusted. Don't be surprised if some or all of your members test themselves against you.
- c. *Performance anxiety*: Members want to perform but may not know how to do it successfully. Members may know something about what to do but may not be able to do it yet. At this stage, members will inevitably make mistakes because they lack skills. Members may experience cycles of success and productivity while at other times they confront barriers that limit their ability to succeed. They may go too far in one direction or another.
- d. *Leadership tasks at the norming stage*: When members express anxiety, your most effective

stance is to remain task oriented, confident, and firm, but supportive, encouraging, and accepting of members' feelings—characteristics of a “selling” high-relationship/high-task (HR/HT) leadership style. You expect members to achieve their purpose, integrate the group's rules and processes, decide on their own rules, and develop mastery, while at the same time you show you are willing to help members overcome barriers.

You watch for verbal and nonverbal cues that indicate misunderstanding, uncertainty, or unwillingness on the part of members. Listen carefully for themes or patterns in which members express confusion. While holding to the rules, boundaries, and to your own decisions, respond to your members' needs for more information, clarity, or structure. Welcome these questions, affirm them, and validate members who are willing to challenge you. These are indications that your members are ready to take ownership of the group and are working through dependency to gain mastery.

If members express concern about their ability to perform, keep them on track and give encouragement, but at the same time hold to the goals and deadlines. Give advice, guidance, and assistance, but do not encourage dependency by doing things for members. If things go wrong, step in only to avert failure. Engage members in critiquing what happened so they can learn from the experience.

2. Storming

At the storming stage, your members have gained task skill. They are more confident and capable but lack practice. To accomplish their goals, they need to rely on one another and find a comfortable level of cooperation. Their main challenge is to develop good working relationships with other members. They will work to establish their member roles and responsibility. They will accommodate themselves to one another and develop effective communication with other members of the group. The task of the leader is to shift to a more supportive leadership stance.

- a. *Member roles and responsibility*: Members may direct their testing toward other members to develop a deeper relationship or to discover the extent to which they can rely on one another. As members become increasingly dependent on one another for information, cooperation, and mutual support, they need to

develop trust. They need to show the extent to which they can be counted on and display responsibility.

- b. *Accommodation*: Members will struggle to find their own style of working, discover how their style fits with others in the group, and work to accommodate themselves to the other members. Members who rely primarily on their thinking function and focus on facts may not be comfortable with members who emphasize feelings and make decisions based on relationships or the meaning behind the facts. Members who are intuitive and look at the big picture may become impatient with those who focus on the small details of issues. Some members may be overly dominant or assertive. Others may be submissive and fail to assert themselves adequately.
- c. *Communication*: Members may have poorly developed communication skills. Some members may interrupt others, fail to listen carefully, or react defensively. Others may over-disclose or withhold information. Members who are poor communicators tend to misunderstand what is being said and are often misunderstood by others.
- d. *Leadership tasks at the storming stage*: Adopt a high-relationship/low-task (HR/LT) “participating” style characteristic of a supportive leader. Rather than focusing on tasks, you engage members personally, focus on member behavior, and help resolve issues that are creating difficulty for members. You engage in conflict resolution, develop members’ communication skills, and help resolve dysfunctional patterns.
- e. *Conflict resolution*: You encourage members to express differing learning styles and viewpoints to gain greater understanding of one another. For example, if people who look at the big picture express differences with those who focus on details, help these members see that by combining rather than conflicting they can add to their problem solving and learn from one another.

Ensure that members listen carefully and ask questions *before* they react. Help members refrain from evaluating ideas or suggestions until all ideas have been generated. As members

respond, point out areas of consensus and mutual interest as they arise. Build on agreements, rather than disagreements, promoting harmony rather than discord.

- f. *Communication skills*: Help members learn good communication skills. Encourage members to keep comments brief, listen attentively to what others are saying, wait until the speaker is finished, and always include silent members. Encourage members to use “I” statements in which people assume responsibility for their own ideas and feelings rather than “you” statements, which tend to be judgmental, block communication, and often project blame. Assist members to engage in perception checking by asking for clarification about another person’s position, paraphrase in their own words what they heard the other person say, and obtain confirmation before they respond.

Ensure that everyone is included in the decision-making process, has time to present his or her ideas fully, and that all ideas count. Build on suggestions, affirming individual contributions. Work toward a clear understanding of the topic and make sure it is relevant to everyone. Frequently summarize progress, check for understanding on issues that need clarification, and review issues that members did not fully discuss.

- g. *Resolve dysfunctional patterns*: As the group engages in open communication, shared decision making, and equal participation, you may observe dysfunctional patterns emerging. If members avoid issues that they must face, point this out. If members need information, resources, or assistance, help them accomplish these tasks without doing it for them.

The result of navigating through the channels of the storming stage will mean that members accept one another’s differences and learn to use that diversity in problem solving. They will have learned skills in communication and conflict resolution and be able to share their opinions without being afraid of rejection. They cooperate, discuss alternatives, and reach their own decisions.

Performing. Performing is the final stage of the life cycle of the group. Your members are now self-motivated and capable. Members understand the group’s task; they know what to do and how to do it. They have

skills, experience, and confidence in their abilities. They own the group and have made its rules and boundaries their own. They have developed working relationships with one another.

They have learned skills in group problem solving and interpersonal relationships. They are working as a cohesive unit with high motivation. Relatively little energy is required to maintain the group as a unit. A member has emerged who serves as the formal leader and who may facilitate the meetings. Other members also take on leadership roles as necessary. Members spend most of their time solving problems and accomplishing the purposes for which the group was formed.

1. *Leadership Tasks at the Performing Stage.* A good strategy when working with highly independent and motivated members is to take a “hands-off” low-relationship/low-task (LR/LT) stance, characteristic of a *laissez-faire* or “coaching” style of leadership. You encourage, observe, and monitor, but you don’t give direction, persuade, or interfere with the group process.

If you insert yourself into the process at this point, you will more than likely disrupt a smoothly working group. You may reduce your presence at meetings, or work only on those tasks for which you are directly responsible. When you are present, attend carefully to the group and its members, listen and remain silently involved with the process. Maintain eye contact and express interest. Offer support, encouragement, and give input only when asked. Continue working with the chairperson of the group between meetings, asking questions, giving affirmation and support.

Ending the Group. When the group has achieved its goals, members may feel a real sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. They will have made a positive contribution to improving their community and helped solve a nagging social problem. These victories are among the achievements that will remain after the group has run its course and are a cause for recognition and celebration.

Consider involving the sponsoring agency or organization in celebrating the group’s success with a party acknowledging their achievements, growth, and contributions. Provide awards as a symbol of appreciation. When the group ends, the relationships and interpersonal attraction of members may be carried over into the community outside, between coworkers in an agency, or

among volunteers in another setting or in other areas of life. You may want to build on these relationships by inviting members to contribute again in the future. You may also assess the group’s effectiveness by evaluating its process.

USING TASK GROUPS TO HELP INDIVIDUALS OVERCOME SELF-OPPRESSION

Often the members that you mobilize to engage in community work may have been damaged or at least affected by the deprivation that is often rife in poor communities. Not only are task groups essential in helping members overcome social problems in their communities; they are also a means by which you can strengthen and empower members and overcome self-oppression that may plague them.

This is an important if formidable effort. People in poor, oppressed communities must not only cope with everyday problems of life, but often must do so without the resources of more affluent members of society. This “full plate” syndrome adds to the seriousness of the difficulties they are facing. In addition, many experience a phenomenon called chronic “cognitive dissonance” that eats away at their self-esteem and sometimes forces them to engage in self-oppression.

The Full Plate Syndrome

People who have been forced to live in prolonged poverty or oppression are often unwilling participants in an unequal and hurtful system in which they may feel powerless. More than most people, the impoverished have their share of personal problems, worries, and concerns about their own private affairs, personal survival, and raising families. They are immersed in making it on the job, getting along until the next paycheck, and coping with social problems imposed on them by their social environments. Moreover, they are made even more helpless by the poverty and stress with which they live. Julio Morales calls this the “full plate” syndrome, in which problem after problem is compounded so that the poor and oppressed have little time or energy to confront their situations. Citing Puerto Ricans as an example, Morales says,

racism, violence, AIDS, drugs, crime, homelessness, alienation from the judicial system, massive underemployment or unemployment, high levels of

school dropouts, rivalry among adult leadership and others are common ingredients on that crowded plate. Insufficient services to families, inappropriate foster care for Puerto Rican children, lack of school curriculum on the Puerto Rican experience, lack of curriculum aimed at building the self-esteem of Puerto Rican youngsters, and the competing and clashing of cultural values within the larger society add to the full plate. The needs leading to the migration [of many families] to and from Puerto Rico, the different perspectives and levels of acclimating to U.S. society that [people] experience, and intra-community issues such as competition for resources ... at times fragmentize community efforts.⁴⁷

Cognitive Dissonance

In most normal situations of everyday life, “action proceeds automatically, without any consciousness of meaning”⁴⁸ or need for change, say Lauer and Handel. Sometimes, however, when a difficulty arises in the course of an action or experience, a person may be prompted to new “consciousness of meaning, thought, and a disruption of mechanical repetition.”⁴⁹ If the trouble is serious enough, as when a loved one dies, a person loses his or her job, or a sudden tragedy occurs, the crisis can cause people to reorient their understanding to some extent, change their approach, or even revise their values. Many times clinical social workers can help persons facing short-term trauma or loss turn the trouble into an opportunity for growth.

In addition to the more or less common traumas that occur in people’s daily lives, however, many people who live in deprived circumstances experience conflicts that shatter their perception of perceived reality. They encounter critical gaps between what that they believe to be true and what really exists in the social environment. These traumas are called *cognitive dissonance*. Cognitive dissonance, according to Leon Festinger, is the experience of discomfort at simultaneously confronting two opposing beliefs or attitudes that contradict one another, either in oneself or in the situation.⁵⁰ Cognitive dissonance, for example, often occurs when individuals who have generally been treated fairly and believe in equal treatment confront discrimination or some other form of injustice that disturbs their self-image and perceptions of the world. They are jolted out of their ordinary activities. As they try to reduce the dissonance they feel, they must either shift their

attitudes or change the situation that has caused the dissonance, neither of which is easy or often even possible. For many people experiences of cognitive dissonance are transient or of minor severity. But for others the dissonance they confront is so pervasive it creates life crises of major proportions, driving them to develop dysfunctional adaptations to their social environment.

Chronic Dissonance and Self-Oppression Some people are burdened with an ongoing, chronic sense of dissonance due to their life situation. For people who live with grinding poverty, experience economic injustice, institutionalized ethnic intolerance, gender discrimination, or prejudice because of sexual orientation that they cannot escape, cognitive dissonance is often an ongoing, daily experience that saps their energy, destroys their identity, and injures their spirit.

Others who do not “fit in” to today’s careerist, artificial organizational environment and are unable to earn a good living are doomed to live perpetually on the margins of society. Unlike recovering from the shock of an isolated instance of injustice or loss, their experience of dissonance is so generalized that their entire lives are sometimes experienced as tragic. In those cases there is often no one specific incident to which the sense of grief and discomfort can be attached, but failure added to failure, rejection upon rejection, loss after loss adds up to a life of hopelessness, sadness, and despair.

Chronic cognitive dissonance, in addition, is easily exacerbated in modern systems-oriented society, where the normal mode of human life for many is passive individualism, isolation, disengagement, and guilt. Impersonal systems, as you will learn in Chapter 10, present an often impenetrable barrier for many people, an “iron cage” creating dehumanization and alienation that destroys the basis of communality and undermines people’s capacity to transcend their distress.

Those who are forced to live with the “full plate syndrome” or who experience chronic dissonance, moreover, often believe that there is little they can do to change the social environment that has caused their social deprivation and discouragement. They come to the often agonizing realization that they have little choice but to change their attitudes about themselves, see themselves as the problem, and adopt coping mechanisms that enable them to survive. People who have spent their lives in conditions of dependency and

deficiency may act out, try to get out, opt out, flake out, or cop out.

Act Out People who have been forced to live in deprived conditions sometimes develop harmful behaviors that allow them to survive. Some may *act out* their pain, turning to a life of addiction, crime, drug dependency, or gang membership. It can at times be hard to empathize with people who perpetrate harmful or criminal activities. Social workers, however, strive to do exactly that. Saul Alinsky reminds us that

the worker's affection for people is not lessened nor is he hardened against them even when masses of them demonstrate a capacity for brutality, selfishness, hate, greed, avarice, and disloyalty. She is convinced that these attitudes and actions are the result of evil conditions. It is not the people who must be judged but the circumstances that made them that way. The worker's desire to change society then becomes that much firmer.⁵¹

Get Out and Opt Out Some people living in dehumanizing social environments may be able to *get out*—escaping the community or organizational system and seeking better circumstances. A very few may *opt out*—rising above poverty and oppression to become successful professionals, actors, or businesspeople.

Flake Out There are even some who *flake out*. Flake-outs become comedians who bring the pain out into the open by focusing it on themselves so people can laugh about it. They play a therapeutic role by helping people release the pain they feel.

Copping Out and Self-Oppression For the overwhelming majority of people who live with the insidious effects of cultural oppression, economic discrimination, and racism, however, many of these survival mechanisms are often not available. Most cannot get out, and acting out only adds to their problems. Neither can everyone opt out or even flake out. Nor can they as individuals change the circumstances in their environment that have caused the dissonance to occur.

As a result, many people who are victims of pervasive oppression *cop out*, behaving in ways that “reflect the structure of domination” of the wider society,⁵² asserts Paulo Freire. They often live with an “existential duality” in which they are “at the same time themselves as well as the oppressor whose image they have internalized.”⁵³

Research conducted by psychologists Steven Overmaier and Martin Seligman, moreover, demonstrates that, like adult survivors of abuse, many victims of long-term domination learn to live with an oppressive situation until they become part of the dynamics they call “learned helplessness.” “When an individual expects that nothing she does matters, she will become helpless and fail to initiate any action. When a person believes that events he experiences are beyond his control, he or she will tend to become passive. People are often trained to experience helplessness by the very social structures in our society that we depend on,” assert Peterson et al.⁵⁴

Their research concludes that people with learned helplessness develop emotional anesthesia, displaying dullness to feelings and numbness to pain. Rather than being active, they become extremely passive. Cognitively they tend to be resistant to learning new responses to their situations even when taught many times.⁵⁵

In 1967 Michael Lerner coined the term “surplus powerlessness” among members of the working classes to describe the same phenomenon that Overmaier and Seligman observed. According to Lerner, people who exist in poverty often exhibit the belief that they cannot change things, interpret victories as defeats, become unable to trust others, and fail to join with others in even small-scale cooperative activity. Most puzzling, however, is their inability to identify and learn coping responses even when the information is right under their noses. As a result, asserts Lerner, masses of people who engaged in political activity in the 1960s were reconfirmed in their powerlessness. It was as if they had learned nothing.⁵⁶

Social worker Julio Morales, speaking of Puerto Ricans, calls this condition “self-oppression” or a “colonized mentality,” which people experience as a result of centuries of forced dependency, powerlessness, and lack of control over their own decisions.

Many Puerto Ricans have internalized stereotypes [and] blame themselves for their fate, not understanding that poverty is responsible for their alienation and feelings of helplessness or that impoverishment is a function of a macro process over which they have little, if any control.⁵⁷

Conditioned to accept their situation, many oppressed people tend to think they are not as capable, as competent, or as good as others. Some may even believe they deserve poor services and shoddy living

arrangements. They should be grateful for anything they get.

Some express “unwarranted respect for authority and authority figures, making it difficult, at times, to organize” them.⁵⁸ They may hold an expectation that leaders and experts will solve problems for them, unwillingly and often unwittingly perpetuating the cycle of victimization because they have few choices. C. G. Woodson beautifully expresses the content of self-oppression:

If you can control a person’s thinking you do not have to worry about his action. When you determine what a person shall think you do not have to concern yourself about what he will do. If you make a person feel that he is inferior, you do not have to compel him to accept an inferior status, for he will seek it himself. If you make a person think that he is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to the back door. He will go without being told; and if there is no back door, his very nature will demand one.⁵⁹

Breaking the Chains of Self-Oppression

Rather than give in to this cycle of helplessness, macro social workers develop strategies to assist people reclaim the lives they were meant to have. We help individuals overcome self-oppression in two ways.

First, macro social workers gather members into task groups and, using active-social thinking help people destroy the distorted attitudes, behaviors, and coping mechanisms that oppression fosters. We directly challenge the negative thoughts, memories, and feelings that members have of themselves. Social workers invigorate people’s emotions, energize their cognition, and galvanize action. We assist members to place the burden of oppression where it belongs—on the backs of an unjust system that has consistently worked to undermine people’s integrity, keeping them passive and under control.

Second, when members work on projects of social change and personal meaning, they no longer accept their situation as it is, but transform it into what they want it to be. No longer do members see the social environment as impenetrable and unchangeable. No longer are members limited to self-oppression as a strategy of personal survival. Members united in mutual engagement use active-social thinking to solve social problems, make social change in their

neighborhoods, and create a better social environment. This process is a foundation that you, as a macro social worker, can use with any group of members in projects of social betterment at the community, organizational, societal, or international levels.

Setting the Tone In the process of engaging people in task-oriented projects of social construction, you develop a milieu in which members are free to express their feelings and values. By having a passion for your members’ cause and being genuine and real to others, you set a tone of engagement and accessibility in which your members can reach out to one another.

You begin where people are, understanding that people frequently carry insecurities about having adequate experience, being skilled enough, or having something worthwhile to say. You ask questions and invite members to share their difficulties and disappointments, successes and failures. You help people express the dissonance they feel. You listen as they recount their stories. You affirm their feelings and validate their perceptions. You rekindle their emotions, stimulate their cognition, rejuvenate their intuition, and help them move to action.

Rekindle Emotions Accepting the reality of the situation is the first step in recovery. Even as people begin a process of social betterment with one another, the problems of self-oppression will not be solved until and unless community members recognize them, take a stand, and resist those who exploit them.

People who are victims of self-oppression or learned helplessness may not be able or willing to look clearly at the pain they are experiencing. You fire up their anger, touch their innate sense of dignity that has been bruised, appeal to their sadness and sense of loss, encourage them to tell stories about the tragedies that have occurred, and get members to develop emotional ties with one another. You ask questions and invite them to share their difficulties and disappointments, successes and failures; you listen as they recount their stories, and you affirm their feelings.

You help members relate their own experiences to begin to reach for emotions they have buried and have nearly forgotten. You help them regain access to feelings that they have not allowed themselves to have.

As people begin to face their feelings and, in dialog with others, examine the events that brought those

feelings about, the depression and guilt that once enveloped them begin to give way to anger. They no longer live under an oppressive cloud, but place the problem where it belongs—at the feet of those who have defeated and discouraged them. Social thinking helps members confront the life circumstances that have kept them disempowered and helpless.

Stimulate Their Cognition As members expose ideologies of domination and passive acceptance of the status quo, you assist them in divesting themselves of the ideas on which their own devalued condition rests, a major cause for their poverty and lack of power. You call for suspension of belief in modern social practices that discourage, defeat, and disillusion them. Ultimately, no longer will community residents accept conventional wisdom as a substitute for reality, the prescriptions of government as the best that can be expected, or pronouncements of public officials as unqualified truth.

You help members discard amnesia and participate in conscientization. You engage members' critical consciousness and transform chronic dissonance into action.

Discard Amnesia Most macro social workers understand that one way people can begin to reclaim their lives is by rejecting alienation and its effects by shared discourse. Sharing memories of injustice and stories of oppression by means of social thinking becomes a cohesive force that cements people together and begins the process of recovery and strengthening individual selves.

You use social thinking to help people remember what they are all too willing to forget. It is often forgetfulness that oppressors rely on to continue their oppression. You ask people to remember incidents that destroyed their pride. You urge them to recall indignities that injured their spirit and events that blocked their success. You help them remember those who coerced their compliance and ensured their unwilling cooperation. You jolt them into recalling how others, often those in authority, have deprived them of the right to make their own decisions. Gradually they begin to become confident, consistent, and committed in their thinking.

Confident. Your members' thinking capacity helps them become confident in their ability to make things happen.⁶⁰ You help them develop a set of intentions

and goals for themselves. If they are firm in their thinking, they will stand up for their own beliefs and assist others to become firm in their beliefs. Help your members practice what they preach and live by the values that they profess. Your members do not simply stand for truth and justice in the abstract; they exemplify and truth and justice in their own lives and actions.

Consistent. Your members' thinking function builds stability and consistency. "It is consistency between words and actions that build your credibility,"⁶¹ says Burton Gummer. Edgar Schein adds, "I learned that my own consistency sends clear signals to the audience about my priorities, values, and beliefs. It is the consistency that is important, not the intensity of attention."⁶²

Commitment. The more your members cognitively understand the issues that confront them, the firmer will become their resolve, the clearer will be their ability to think through concerns, and the stronger will be their convictions about their cause. They will display commitment and encourage others to become committed as well. Gummer asserts that "People who present clear and convincing arguments for taking action in situations where knowledge is limited or absent will be influential in shaping the thinking and behavior of others."⁶³

Conscientization By means of conscientization, or consciousness-raising, you help people in deprived circumstances become aware of how their selfhood has often become appropriated for the purposes of others, how authentic freedom to act has become degraded into narrowly conceived and imposed lifestyles rather than authentic opportunity to choose a way of life. Members come to understand that, for the most part, they have not created the conditions that keep them subservient. You help pinpoint oppressive processes that induce people to be grateful to the powerful for their meager existence. They begin to realize that they have been subjected to a subtle, long-term education in an ideology of dehumanization, commodification, and control. You help them reject those ideas and beliefs as "false consciousness" and assist in restructuring their thinking.

Engage Members' Critical Consciousness You assist people to exercise their cognitive capacities, helping members recognize, identify, and name the conditions that have caused personal as well as social

problems in their communities. As members name discontinuities between the ideals society espouses and what occurs in practice, they reject the blame that others impose on them. They see that the social problems with which they are afflicted are not their fault, but are often caused by the insecurities of those who are driven to oppress others for their own benefit.

Transform Chronic Dissonance into Action

You help tame chronic cognitive dissonance so that members can begin to look objectively at their life situations. Members begin to transform cognitive dissonance from a total oppressive life experience to a window of opportunity for social learning. As members open up their feelings, senses, and cognition once again, the oppressive dissonance that held many back becomes expressive critical action that urges them forward. Expressive critical action is the deadly enemy of the imposed status quo of denial that demands, “Don’t ask, don’t see, don’t tell.” Members find their voices and begin to ask, “What is wrong here? And what can we do to change it?”

Rejuvenate Intuition: Active Reflection You assist members to actively reflect on what they have learned cognitively to generate deeper awareness. You help members discover inner meaning. You assist members to forge a common purpose and imagine positive outcomes.

Active Reflection When you engage in active reflection, you do a number of things simultaneously. As you listen carefully to what members are saying, you pick up themes and reflect back to members the issues they have been describing. You pay attention to the content of discussion but look more deeply into what the members may be implying. You think about the problem at hand but try to understand the meaning behind the issues that the members present. You help members see underlying concerns that can help them understand their own motives, feelings, and thoughts. You point out patterns, and connect commonalities that members describe.

As members begin to understand that their situation is not hopeless, they are compelled to rise above their own solitary interests and the alienation that separates them. You help people develop a sense of shared perceptions and feelings that shape and improve their lives. While this is a complex process, as you gain

experience in working with groups, your skills in simultaneously working at multiple levels will gradually improve.

Explore Inner Meaning You assist your members to seek out the brewing consensus among themselves. They will begin to listen carefully for quiet whisperings and attend to subtle cues. They will watch faces and begin to get a sense of what they want and what their friends and neighbors want, what they value, what they dream about. They will develop a deeper understanding of their collective yearnings,⁶⁴ say Kouzas and Posner.

Forge a Common Purpose You help members articulate those yearnings to forge a common purpose. You “act as a channel of expression between the down-to-earth followers and their other worldly dreams,”⁶⁵ not only communicating but *creating* meaning that gives your people a sense of identity. They grasp their own particularity, that which sets them apart from all others. This “differentness,” cherished and prized among people, fosters pride and self-respect. It transforms dissonance into uniqueness as people experience themselves as special.

Envision a Positive Outcome As you talk with the members and affirm their perceptions, you assist members to gather their hopes and dreams about what is possible. You help articulate those dreams and assist your members to reclaim inside themselves what is theirs—a future possibility, even though few may see it clearly. You assist your members to envision a positive outcome and help them head toward it. You reflect their vision back to them so that they see themselves and their purposes anew; they see their common future and the possibilities of what they can do and be. The community becomes the vehicle by which the shared vision is transmitted.

Making Change: Move to Action As members begin to overcome passivity and regain their active-social selves, you help them move to action, engaging in positive projects of social construction. You assist your members to work out specific strategies and tactics of community planning, building community development corporations, engaging in community organizing, creating programs, constructing new social organizations, participating in the political process, and advocating for better social policies.

As you engage your members in such tangible projects of social betterment, you simultaneously assist members in their own individual growth and development. Members experience personal remediation. Community members discover strength in action. Members develop empowerment through changing their social environment.

Personal Remediation Seeking justice, overcoming oppression, and constructing positive social change is a therapeutic endeavor in and of itself. People find emancipation by working on projects that challenge the source of oppression that holds them down. When people take action by meeting with city officials about police brutality, marching for gay rights, advocating for children's health care, planning community projects, developing a shelter for battered women, or challenging the unjust decisions of transnational corporations, they receive lasting personal benefits, assert Sax and Avalos.⁶⁶

Strength in Action Macro social work forges people into a force for good that not only empowers and strengthens members individually, but develops countervailing social structures that create sources of strength, help, and support for the entire community as well. "We make intimacy real by our commitments, caring, and self-sacrifice for the benefit of others. We become jointly oriented to a necessity of centering our lives on something larger than ourselves as the basis of a good life toward which we direct our efforts,"⁶⁷ says Lawrence Haworth.

As individuals work together in groups to foster social change, they find that they are strengthened and grow in ways they did not think possible. They develop social bonds that form the lifeblood of their communities. As their communities grow, they discover that social space and opportunities for development expand even more.

Changing the Social Environment When macro social workers assist task group members in developing social organizations and empowering the social commons, they also help construct mediating structures that soften the often alienating effects of large megastructures in our organizational society. People exercise their freedom to engage in activities that help expand the self, develop choices, and create opportunities for self-actualization that they would not otherwise have.

People become empowered and strengthened, knowing that they have made the world as a whole a little better, and their own social environment a healthier place to be.

Closing the Circle You review what your members have accomplished to ensure that they will not forget that it is they who are achieving victories, their actions are making a difference, and they are the ones making positive changes. You help them confirm for themselves that the changes they have created are occurring not by accident, luck, or external circumstances, but by their own consciously thought-out and carefully orchestrated actions. You help them see that their communities are stronger, policies have changed, programs have been developed, services have been provided, injustice has been challenged, and that through all of these efforts they have become strengthened and empowered as well. You engage them in celebrating their victories, telling stories, reviewing their accomplishments, and rewarding their heroes so that they will never forget.

Implications for Social Work Practice

Macro social workers engage people in task groups that help solve problems, construct communities, build social organizations, and create a better society. Not only do task groups create positive social change; they are therapeutic tools in and of themselves, strengthening the social commons, bringing about greater sociality, and lessening the dehumanizing effects of impersonal megastructures of society.

By means of generalist macro social work practice, we use task group projects to help people recapture lost emotions, reclaim thoughts and memories, use intuition and imagination, and stimulate action that brings people out of the slumber of passivity and into the wakefulness of being active-social selves. Rather than allowing oppression to dominate one's being, macro social workers assist members to overcome the forces that have kept them down and restore their entitlement to be masters of their own lives and social environments.

While this is a complex process, as you gain experience in working with groups, your skills will gradually improve. You will grow in your capacity to operate consciously at multiple levels of awareness and to help members bring about needed changes in the life of their neighborhood.

USING PHILANTHERAPY TO IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES

Not only do macro social workers use task groups to help individuals remediate self-oppression; there is a great deal of evidence to show that the more people participate in projects of social betterment, the more their emotional and even physical health improves. The macro process of voluntary effort involving participation with or helping others, according to Konwerski and Nashman, is called *philanthropy*.⁶⁸

Using philanthropy, macro social workers help people gain at three increasing levels of community engagement. The most basic level involves simple participation in community and group activities. At a more intense level, members help others by volunteering in their communities. Finally, at the highest level of engagement, members become actively and socially engaged in promoting social change and getting directly involved civic causes.

Participation

Clarke and Wilson report that over the past four decades, researchers have observed benefits of participation, including individual gains and the intangible social rewards of group membership.⁶⁹ People benefit from social activities “like going to church, or being a member of some voluntary association,”⁷⁰ says Argyle. In 1998 J. Rietschlin showed that membership in a voluntary group reduces symptoms of depression in men and women.⁷¹ Halpern reports that “several longitudinal studies have shown that social networks and social participation appear to act as a protective factor against dementia or cognitive decline over age 65.”⁷²

Volunteering

At a deeper level, Krause, Herzog, and Baker found that “helping other people may be beneficial to the helper.”⁷³ Benefits include increased personal growth and well-being, physical health benefits, and mental health benefits.⁷⁴

Increased Personal Growth and Well-Being

Voluntary action offers unique opportunities for growth and realization of personal potential, not only for those people who are otherwise deprived, but also for *all* members of society,⁷⁵ says David Horton Smith.

Volunteering improves people’s happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and well-being.⁷⁶ In 1972 Jahoda found that service or volunteer work supports people’s social networks and gives a sense of identity and meaning.⁷⁷ Uggen and Janikula (1999) and Peterson (2004) both confirmed that volunteer work benefits the volunteer, providing increased self-acceptance and civic identity.⁷⁸ Volunteers, according to Libbrett et al., are able to reap positive results from service participation and providing assistance in solving real-life problems.⁷⁹

Van Willigen in 2000 suggested that older volunteers experience greater psychological benefits and higher levels of life satisfaction when they become actively engaged with social projects.⁸⁰ Thoits and Hewitt in 2001 showed reciprocal effects between volunteerism and well-being,⁸¹ and in 2003 Morrow-Howell, Hinterlong, Rozario, and Tang demonstrated that volunteers had higher perceived levels of well-being than non-volunteers.⁸² Schwartz and Sendor in 1999 found a pronounced improvement in confidence, self-awareness, self-esteem, and role functioning among people who participated in working with others.⁸³

Physical Health Benefits Simple social engagement and interaction with others can increase a person’s state of physical health. D. Halpern states that “large numbers of cross sectional studies have reported a strong association between the size and quality of people’s social network and their health, with people who are less socially isolated and more involved in social and civic activities tending to have better health.”⁸⁴ Robert Putnam confirms this assessment and asserts, for example,

the more integrated we are in our community, the less likely we are to experience colds, heart attacks, strokes, cancer, depression, and premature death of all sorts. Such protective effects have been confirmed for close family ties, for friendship networks, for participation in social events, and even for simple affiliation with religious and civic associations.⁸⁵

In 1991 Graff found that volunteering boosts people’s immune and nervous systems, and reduces heart rate and blood pressure.⁸⁶ Brown, Nesse, Vinokur, and Smith showed that when respondents gave help to others, they themselves benefited more overall, experiencing faster recovery from health problems.⁸⁷

Brown et al. also found a correlation between health benefits and senior volunteering,⁸⁸ a result replicated by Goss, who reported that volunteers, particularly senior citizens, had improved health as a result of working in the community.⁸⁹ In 2003 Schwartz, Meisenhelder, Ma, and Reed found that people who both gave and received help improved their overall mental and physical health more than those who only received help.⁹⁰ Furthermore, Robert Putnam reports that older people “involved with clubs, volunteer work, and local politics consider themselves to be in better general health than do uninvolved people.”⁹¹ He goes so far as to suggest that “studies have linked lower death rates with membership in voluntary groups.”⁹²

Mental Health Benefits Williams, Ware, and Donald in 1981 and Cohen and Willis in 1985 discovered that regardless of how much stress an individual is experiencing, those with a higher incidence of social contact tend to report better mental health.⁹³ Luks and Payne discovered that people who volunteer *feel* better. They coined the phrase “healthy helping syndrome” to describe the warmth, energy, and euphoria, both physical and emotional, which they attribute to a rush of endorphins.⁹⁴ Volunteerism has also been shown to help people who grieve to feel better about themselves, and to gain physical and mental strength.⁹⁵

Depression Volunteers experience less loneliness, sadness, and depression.⁹⁶ A 1992 nationwide survey of 3,617 older people by Krause, Herzog, and Baker reported that giving informal assistance to others was associated with enhanced feelings of personal control and lower levels of depression.⁹⁷ A study of 1,700 women by Luks in 1988 and another study by Musick and Wilson in 2003⁹⁸ found that volunteers who helped others experienced greater calmness, enhanced self-worth, less depression, and more pleasurable physical sensation.⁹⁹

Civic Engagement

At the deepest level of involvement, macro social workers help individuals solve social problems and make social change by social and political engagement. Tomeh in 1981 and Musick et al. in 2000 argued that the opportunity to become socially and politically engaged allows individuals to transcend their immediate life situation and serves to integrate them with the

broader community and society.¹⁰⁰ Activists reported dramatic changes in their lives in terms of how they thought of themselves and how they related to others.¹⁰¹

Changes in Personal Behavior People who become directly engaged in social and political movements often exhibit changes in their personal behavior. Social movements and radical activists share empowerment, says John McKnight.¹⁰² The essential ideological function of the civil rights and women’s liberation movements is to persuade minorities and women that they are human beings who are neither deficient nor dependent upon systems that purport to meet their “needs” through individualized professional help,¹⁰³ says McKnight. Participation in the women’s liberation movement, for example, was “a powerful vehicle for personal change as well as for helping achieve social reform,”¹⁰⁴ asserts John Ehrenreich. In addition,

Numerous observers ... have noted the association between involvement in social action and improved “mental health.” For example, it was reported that crime among black youths in Montgomery, Alabama declined sharply during the year of the bus boycott.... Students involved in the sit-in movement used that experience of “prosocial acting out” to serve in constructive developmental tasks.¹⁰⁵

Later in the decade, some outstanding successes in the treatment of drug addiction were achieved by the Black Muslims and by militant community groups such as the Black Panthers and the Puerto Rican Young Lords organization, who found that participation in militant movements for social change provided the motivation and context for startling personality changes.¹⁰⁶

Political Involvement Numerous studies provide empirical evidence that political participation in its various forms increases the individual and collective well-being of a community.¹⁰⁷ A study by Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro and Matthew S. Winters of Columbia University concluded that people who participate in political activities will be more satisfied with their lives, not necessarily because of policy outcomes, but rather because of the feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness produced through political involvement.¹⁰⁸

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you discovered that macro social workers use a generalist-based process of helping individuals and groups solve social problems and make social change. You found that even though macro social workers do not engage people directly and specifically in therapeutic clinical practice, our work often has profound therapeutic effects on individuals, communities, and society as a whole.

You learned about social and task groups. You explored what social groups are, why they are important, and the role of macro social work with social groups. You learned about task groups. You learned a definition of task groups, and why and how they are used in macro social work. You learned how to lead a task group through its first meeting and how to apply the action-social leadership model through its life cycle.

As macro social workers engage people in task groups to work on projects of social betterment, you learned that they simultaneously assist individuals who experience chronic cognitive dissonance and self-colonization to overcome the effects of long-term, often subtle oppression that drains their spirit.

You also discovered that macro social workers assist people in participating, volunteering, and engaging in deeper civic involvement by means of philanthropy. You learned that philanthropy provides well-being and physical, mental health, and quality of life benefits, even resulting in prosocial behavioral and personality changes for many people.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. This chapter focused, in part, on how macro social workers help individuals. Netting, Kettner, and McMurtry assert in their book *Social Work Macro Practice* that “professional practice focusing only on an individual’s intra-psychic concerns does not fit the definition of social work.”¹⁰⁹ If this is the case, what is the role of psychotherapeutic clinical social work? Should this field be considered part of the social work profession? How can clinical psychotherapeutic practice become integrated with Netting et al.’s definition of social work?
2. Evidence was cited to show that people who get involved in their communities by participating socially with others, by volunteering, and even more importantly by becoming personally involved in projects of positive social change are more likely to be physically and emotionally healthier than those who do not get involved. Does this make a case for social workers to encourage individuals become socially active in their neighborhoods and communities? Is it true that macro social work can often provide therapeutic benefits to individuals?
3. The statement was made in this chapter that while social groups are essential for character formation in children and youth, modern society does not seem to place as great an emphasis on social group membership as it does on other activities such as education. Is this a true statement? If so, is this because groups are relatively unimportant, or do people in society lack understanding of the value of groups?
4. Social work once mandated social group work as one of its major specialties. Since then it has abandoned the social group work concentration but retained clinical and macro social work. Do you see this as an important omission or simply a natural part of the evolution of the profession? If the elimination of social group work is part of social work’s ongoing development, should this be applauded or a circumstance that ought to be remediated?
5. Have you ever exerted group leadership? What did you do? What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about leadership?
6. What group leadership opportunities do you have around you? Have you considered trying to become a leader?
7. Project task groups that assist adults in planning, development, and organizational projects are assumed to be important learning tools as well as providing tangible outcomes. What role should social workers play in developing and sponsoring project-oriented groups?
8. Compare the two statements below. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each statement?
 - a. “Developing and promulgating ... a vision ... is the highest calling and truest purpose of leadership.” —*Burt Nanus*
 - b. “The purpose of social leadership is to make leaders of others.” —*The Author*

CHECKLIST 3.2

Leadership Development Inventory

This inventory will give you a chance to explore more deeply leadership skills connected with your functions and discover which ones you may need to work on. First, read through the following inventory deciding where you are ok, which you need to do more of, and which you need to do less of.

	need to do more	ok	need to do less
<i>Thinking Functions</i>			
making up my mind firmly	_____	_____	_____
organizing myself	_____	_____	_____
being consistent	_____	_____	_____
relying on my logic	_____	_____	_____
reaching objectives on schedule	_____	_____	_____
making tough decisions	_____	_____	_____
facing unpleasant tasks	_____	_____	_____
being efficient	_____	_____	_____
living by the rules	_____	_____	_____
holding to my principles	_____	_____	_____
<i>Intuitive Functions</i>			
conceiving new possibilities	_____	_____	_____
using my imagination	_____	_____	_____
enjoying being good in many areas	_____	_____	_____
looking to the future	_____	_____	_____
looking forward to challenges	_____	_____	_____
being interested in growth	_____	_____	_____
showing enthusiasm for projects	_____	_____	_____
<i>Feeling Functions</i>			
needing approval	_____	_____	_____
being sensitive to others	_____	_____	_____
being loyal to others	_____	_____	_____
valuing harmonious relations	_____	_____	_____
persevering	_____	_____	_____
being conciliatory	_____	_____	_____
being concerned with quality	_____	_____	_____
raising ethical questions	_____	_____	_____
<i>Sensing Functions</i>			
focusing on the here and now	_____	_____	_____
being good at practical application	_____	_____	_____
going step by step	_____	_____	_____
being good at details	_____	_____	_____
dealing with facts	_____	_____	_____

enjoying hands-on work _____
following plans _____

After you have finished the inventory, break into groups of 4 or 5 and share what this exercise says about your skills.

CHECKLIST 3.3

Leadership Skills Inventory

Leadership is a learning process that occurs as members interact with one another and with the leader. This checklist will help assess your leadership skills. Mark those items that you do often, sometimes, or never. Is there a pattern in the issues you have marked? What do these patterns say about you? What areas would you like to improve?

Leadership Skills Inventory

- I seek out the lead in groups or situations.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- I wait for others to take over.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- People follow my ideas.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- People ignore my ideas.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- It is easy for me to let others take the lead.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- Is it hard to let go of the lead.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- It is easy for me to accept responsibility in a group.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- I resist doing things in a group.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- I have been elected to an office in a group.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____
- I avoid trying out for office.
Often _____ *Sometimes* _____ *Never* _____

11. I end up taking over in groups whether I want to or not.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
12. I do not take over in groups even when I want to.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
13. I need to have others recognize what I am saying.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
14. I need to have people like me in a group.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
15. I am persistent in getting something done.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
16. I tend to let nature take its course.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

Look over your list and choose some areas about which you would like to get feedback. Your instructor will help divide you into pairs. In the pair, one person shares an item and the partner gives feedback.

Reverse roles. Share as many items and give as much feedback to one another as time allows.

CHECKLIST 3.4

Membership Skills Inventory

Through interaction with one another and with a leader, individuals acquire skills in being group members. The following checklist will help assess your membership skills. Mark those items that you do often, sometimes, or never. Is there a pattern in the issues you have marked? What do these patterns say about you? What areas would you like to improve?

Membership Skills Inventory

1. I feel exposed in a group.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
2. I am in control of my thoughts and ideas in a group.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
3. I am the first person to break a silence in a group.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

4. I hold back until everyone else has spoken.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
5. I can't wait to get things off my chest in groups.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
6. I have difficulty speaking my mind in groups.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
7. I over-disclose at the beginning of a group.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
8. I under-disclose in group meetings.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
9. I am comfortable fitting in with others.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
10. I feel that I compromise myself in group situations.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
11. People seem to enjoy me in groups.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
12. I seem like a problem to others in groups.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
13. I generally include myself in groups.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
14. I tend to be on the fringe in groups.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
15. I am comfortable with the role that I play in a group.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____
16. I feel that I often get stuck with a role that I don't like.
Often _____ Sometimes _____ Never _____

EXERCISE 3.2

Role of Macro Social Workers with Individuals and Groups

At the beginning of this chapter you were asked to consider the roles that macro social workers play with individuals and groups and to write down your answers. Form into trios and review your

responses. How did your answers compare? Were they similar or different from those that you learned about in this book? Were you able to think of other roles that were not mentioned in this book?

How have your responses changed after reading this chapter? Has your perspective on how macro social workers engage individuals and groups expanded? How do those roles compare, or are they different from those that clinical social workers play? Is helping individuals and groups an important function of macro social workers?

When you return to class, report on what your group found about the roles that macro social workers play with individuals and groups. Were the roles you learned about the ones you expected for social workers or were they different? Are those roles important ones?

EXERCISE 3.3

Visionary Leadership

According to leadership theorist Burt Nanus, “The leader selects and articulates the target in the future external environment toward which the organization would direct its energies. This is the meaning of vision.”¹¹⁰ Nanus also asserts:

The forces unleashed by the right vision can be summarized in one word that has become the theme for leadership in the 1990s: empowerment. The vision is the beacon, the sense of destination shared by the people who care most about the organization’s future. Once people buy into the vision, they possess the authority, that is, they are empowered to take actions that advance the vision, knowing that such actions will be highly valued and considered legitimate and productive by all those who share the dream.... Vision is not a luxury but a necessity; without it, workers drift in confusion or, worse, act at cross purposes.

As the wise old proverb of Italian sailors states, “Who will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock.” In the end, therefore, human behavior in organizations is very much shaped by a shared vision of a better tomorrow.

Developing and promulgating such a vision is the highest calling and truest purpose of leadership, for people instinctively follow the fellow who follows the dream.¹¹¹

Discuss the following questions in class:

1. Do you agree or disagree with Nanus’s assertion that the meaning of vision is when “the leader selects and articulates the target” and that empowerment is “unleashed by the right vision”? Is empowerment unleashed when the right vision is articulated by a leader? If you disagree, what is unleashed when a leader selects a target?
2. Nanus asserts that when people “buy into the [leader’s] vision, they possess the authority, that is, they are empowered to take actions that advance the vision, knowing that such actions will be highly valued and considered legitimate.” Critique this statement. Is it consistent or inconsistent? Do you need someone’s authority to advance a vision? What do you think would be the consequences for someone who decided not to “buy into the vision”?
3. If you do not have a leader’s vision to guide you, is it inevitable that you will “drift in confusion or, worse, act at cross purposes” with others? What does this statement imply about people’s capacity for self-direction, cooperation, and self-motivation?
4. What does the “wise old proverb of Italian sailors” mean? Does being “ruled by a rudder or by a rock” describe the only two options that people have? What other options are there?
5. Do you agree or disagree that “developing and promulgating ... a vision is the highest calling and truest purpose of leadership”? If you disagree, what is the highest calling and truest purpose of leadership?
6. If you were truly empowered, would you “instinctively follow the fellow who follows the dream”? If Nanus was your leader, what would happen if you followed your own dream? Would Nanus applaud your individuality, or would he try all the harder to induce you to conform to his dream?

EXERCISE 3.4

Kissinger on Leadership

Henry Kissinger, Harvard professor, diplomat, and secretary of state, once said, “The task of the leader is to get people from where they are to where they have not been. The public does not fully understand the world into which it is going.

Leaders must invoke an alchemy of great vision. Those leaders who do not are ultimately judged failures, even though they may be popular at the time.”¹¹² Exercise your critical skills and critique Kissinger’s statement.

1. Do you need a leader to get you from where you are to where you have not been? Why or why not?
2. Do you agree that “the public does not fully understand the world into which it is going”? If you agree, why do you suppose people do not understand, and why is it that only leaders have such understanding? If you disagree, what does this assertion tell you about attitudes of our top leaders?
3. Is a leader who does not invoke an alchemy of great vision ultimately a failure? Why or why not?

EXERCISE 3.5

Qualities of Good Leaders

The following is a list of some qualities of good leaders. Read over this list. Are there qualities missing that you think are important? What do you think are the most important ones? How difficult are these qualities to achieve? In class, spend some time discussing what makes a good leader.

1. Good leaders enable people to become and feel empowered. Members feel significant and are infused with purpose. Each person can make a difference.
2. Good leaders inspire values of shared compassion. In a caring community, each person, no matter how small, has meaning. A community is judged to be good to the extent to which it prizes and values its weakest members.
3. Good leaders ensure that learning and competence matter. In communities that prize learning, there is no failure, only mistakes that give us feedback and tell us what to do next so members can learn and grow.
4. Good leaders help people feel a sense of unity. They develop community and cohesion where everyone is welcome and has a role to play. Everyone is wanted and needed.
5. Good leaders help members develop a sense of security and trust, not only in the leader but in one another.

6. A good leader will display reliability. Reliability means constancy. You know where you stand.
7. A good leader is honest and trustworthy. Integrity means that the leader has an inner core that commands allegiance to higher values and standards. A good leader does not compromise these values for expediency.

EXERCISE 3.6

What Kind of Leader Am I? A Feedback Exercise

This exercise will require some self-disclosure, skill in communication, active listening, and feedback.

The instructor should review active listening skills and characteristics of how to offer feedback.

First, think of the person who is the most admired leader that you have ever known. Picture that person.

Think of all the characteristics you admire most about that leader. Write down at least five traits that you admire most.

Next, think of a leader you dislike or think is the worst leader you have ever known. Write down five characteristics of that leader.

These lists give a rough idea of the qualities in leaders that you value. What do these lists say about your own leadership values?

The instructor will list the positive and negative characteristics in two columns side by side on a board in rough alphabetical order. You now have a composite of the leadership qualities that this class values and those which are not valued in leaders. What patterns are there? What does this say about the kinds of things this class values and does not value?

The next phase of this exercise involves both positive and negative feedback. Choose someone in class with whom you are comfortable sharing feedback.

Each person should silently write down three items from each list that describe positive and negative leadership traits of their partner.

After each partner has written the traits, one partner solicits feedback. First do the positive characteristics.

Spend some time discussing why your partner chose those traits about you. Then disclose

leadership characteristics that you chose about your partner. How close were the ones you chose and those your partner chose?

Now that you have shared positive characteristics, move on to the negative ones. Share feedback. After you are finished, your instructor will lead a discussion of the entire exercise. What did you learn about your leadership style?

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4

Conventional and Social Problems

Revolutions

Revolutions begin when people who are defined as problems achieve the power to redefine the problem.¹

John McKnight

Causes of Social Problems

Individual human beings are neither the cause of nor the solution to social problems. This idea contradicts common sense and is, hence, difficult for many people to accept. These and other factors have produced in most people a preference for seeing individuals as both initiating and solving social problems.²

Leonard Beeghley

Social Work's Goal

Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems.³

NASW Code of Ethics

Ideas in This Chapter

MODERN AMERICAN SOCIETY

Working Adults

Child Poverty

Housing and Health

Other Social Problems

Implications for Macro Social Work

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

THE RANGE OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

A Typology of Problems

Defining Social Problems

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CONCLUSION

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MODERN AMERICAN SOCIETY

In spite of its wealth and power, of all developed nations modern American society leads not only in inequality of wealth distribution, affecting working adults, children, housing and health, but in a number of other social problems as well.

In the 1980s, the salaries of people earning more than \$1 million increased by 2,184%; those earning between \$200,000 and \$1 million saw an increase of almost 700%.⁴ In those same years the poorest continued to lose ground. Since 1989, for example, each of the poorest fifth of families in America *lost* \$587 and each of the richest 5% gained \$29,533.⁵ By 1991 the combined wealth of the richest 400 Americans hit \$288 billion, an average of \$720 million per person, the highest ever recorded in our nation's history up to that time.⁶

By 1995 *Fortune* 500 CEOs averaged \$7.8 million in total compensation, exceeding the combined average salaries of 226 schoolteachers in a year, and on January 18, 2000, the Economic Policy Institute and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities revealed that in all but four states “the gap between the average incomes of middle-income families and of the richest 20% of families expanded between the late 1970s and the late 1990s.”⁷ For the United States as a whole, the average income of families in the top 20% was more than ten times that of the poorest 20%.⁸ As the middle class was squeezed and the poor got poorer, “the total amount of dollars in salaries funneled to the rich soared as did the rich themselves.”⁹ “It was a phenomenon unlike any America had ever seen,”¹⁰ say Bartlett and Steele.

As the United States moved into the 21st century, however, a report by the Children's Defense Fund asserted that the gap between rich and poor continued to increase by unprecedented degrees.¹¹ In 2003, American CEOs were paid an average of \$9.2 million, an annual raise of \$220,000, according to the AFL/CIO's Paywatch.¹² More than 100 of *Fortune* 500 corporations paid their CEOs \$10 million or more in salary, not including stock options.¹³ The top five CEOs averaged \$123.2 million in 2003; 27 CEOs earned between \$25 million and \$50 million, and 72 had incomes between \$10 million and \$25 million.¹⁴ In that same year, on the other hand, 12.5% of the population lived below the threshold for meeting their basic needs—an increase of 1.3 million people since 2002.¹⁵

From 1992 to 2007, the top 400 income earners in the United States saw their income increase 392% and

their average tax rate reduced by 37%.¹⁶ The top 1% of income earners nearly tripled after-tax income over the preceding 30 years, according to a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report.¹⁷ During the economic expansion between 2002 and 2007, the income of the top 1% grew ten times faster than the income of the bottom 90%. In this period 66% of total income gains went to the 1%, who in 2007 had a larger share of total income than at any time since 1928.¹⁸

This upper 1% reaped 17% of all income in 2007, up from 8% in 1979. For people in the middle of the economic scale, after-tax income grew just 40%, while the bottom 20% experienced an 18% increase, from \$12,823 in 1979 to just \$14,854 in 2007. The percentage of total income of the bottom 20% dropped to 5% of total income in 2007, versus 7% in 1979.¹⁹

In 2007 the richest 1% of the American population owned 34.6% of the country's total wealth; the next 19% owned 50.5%, so that the top 20% of Americans owned 85% of the country's wealth and the bottom 80% of the population owned 15%. However, after the Great Recession, which began in 2007, the share of total wealth owned by the top 1% of the population grew from 34.6% to 37.1%, and that owned by the top 20% of Americans grew from 85% to 87.7%. The Great Recession also caused a drop of 36.1% in median household wealth but a drop of only 11.1% for the top 1%, further widening the gap between the 1% and the 99%.²⁰

By 2009, the gap between rich and poor widened even more. In that year 43.6 million people were poor, up from 39.8 million in 2008 and 37.3 million in 2007.²¹ The nation's official poverty rate in 2009 was 14.3%, up from 13.2% in 2008, the second statistically significant annual increase in the poverty rate since 2004.²²

Working Adults

According to the 2010 census, “working age America is the new face of poverty.”²³ Adults represent nearly three out of five poor people, a switch from the early 1970s, when children made up the main impoverished group.²⁴ Today, the ranks of the working poor are at their highest level since the 1960s. The year 2011 “will mark the fourth year in a row of increases in the poverty rate, which now stands at 46.2 million people, the largest number in the 52 years for which poverty estimates have been published,” says Tony Pugh,²⁵ “and those figures show that of 8.8 million families who

are currently poor, about 60% had at least one person who was working.”²⁶

Child Poverty

While adults are now leading the numbers of people in poverty, the burden of poverty still falls heavily on our children. America cut its child poverty rate in half in the 1960s, primarily as a result of Johnson’s “War on Poverty,” but it began to rise again as poverty programs were dismantled during the Nixon administration.²⁷ The number of poor children reached a peak of 15.7 million in 1993 in the Reagan/Bush years, then fell for eight years during the Clinton administration, but rose again in 2002 and 2003 during the George W. Bush administration.²⁸

In 1987, 5 million children under the age of six, almost one child out of every four, lived in poverty in the United States, according to the Columbia University National Center for Children in Poverty.²⁹ The Children’s Defense Fund reported in 2003 that an American child was more likely to live without the resources to meet its basic needs than a child in 17 other wealthy industrialized nations, according to a cross-national Luxembourg Income Study.³⁰

Four years later, the Children’s Defense Fund reported that “more than one in five children in America is growing up poor and one in 11 is growing up extremely poor.” We have five times more billionaires but 14 million more poor children.³¹ Between 2008 and 2009, the poverty rate increased from 19.0% to 20.7% for children under the age of 18,³² and by 2009 19 million or 6.3% of children in the United States lived in extreme poverty.³³ These figures mean that a family’s cash income is less than half of the poverty line, or less than about \$11,000 a year for a family of four³⁴—this in a country that could easily provide for every one of its citizens if it had the will to do so. If the U.S. government lifted low-income children out of poverty in the same proportion as we currently lift low-income seniors, says the Children’s Defense Fund, three out of four poor children would no longer be poor,³⁵ and if we funded children’s welfare at the same rate we support war and the military, every child in the nation would no longer go to bed hungry at night.

Housing and Health

Not only are many people cash poor; they also lack the capacity to provide health and housing. While millions

of dollars worth of stock options helped the earnings of corporate CEOs soar between 1980 and 1995, for example, those same employers threw millions of children out of health insurance plans at their parents’ workplaces. The percentage of people without health insurance increased to 16.7% in 2009, up from 15.4% in 2008, and the number of uninsured people increased to 50.7 million from 46.3 million, the “most in more than two decades”³⁶ reports Tony Pugh.

In 2009, 16 million low-income households either paid more for rent and utilities than the federal government says is affordable or they lived in overcrowded or substandard housing.³⁷ In New York City, 50,000 homeless people live on the streets. Another 17,000 live in temporary shelters.³⁸

Other Social Problems

While the gap between the rich and poor in North America continues to be a hidden but real social problem, the United States leads in other disparities as well. The United States is number one in real wealth and the number of billionaires, big homes, defense spending and military capability, and executive and physician salaries.³⁹ As of 1991, the United States ranked first among developed nations in the number of rapes, incarceration rates, drunk-driving fatalities, cocaine use, greenhouse gas emissions, acid rain and forest depletion, hazardous waste per capita, bank failures, military aid to developing countries, divorce, single-parent families, and teenage pregnancy,⁴⁰ according to Eitzen and Baca-Zinn, a condition that remains unchanged today.

Implications for Macro Social Work

Ronald Frederico observes that social problems such as poverty “take a toll and a dreadful one. People’s lives are diminished or destroyed. Society is disrupted by the behavior of those who no longer care, or are so damaged that they cannot function in acceptable ways. Our society continues to suffer from serious problems, some of them longstanding and others more recent.”⁴¹

The field of “social work may be thought of as a profession concerned with social problems, their remedy and control,”⁴² asserts H. Wayne Johnson. If you are like many others, you are drawn to the profession of social work by a “passion for social justice and a desire to help those most in need.”⁴³ All social workers should be involved in solving social problems such as racism, sexism, economic injustice, urban decay, and dysfunctional political systems. We must

have the ability to understand and diagnose social problems and take a stance. More than ever, our society is desperate for people of stature who can assist in helping eradicate the most pressing social problems of the day. It is an endeavor that not only this nation but our entire global society cannot afford to ignore.

EXERCISE 4.1

Dissolving Social Problems

It is technically and economically feasible for many nations in the world, including the United States, to eliminate poverty among its citizens and end one of our most horrendous social problems. It is also possible to provide health care and a guaranteed college education to those who would desire it. And yet such questions are rarely seriously considered, and when they are they often meet contentious opposition.

Why do the people of the United States and their leaders often have difficulty recognizing social problems such as racism or poverty?⁴⁴ And when the question is raised, why are proposals sometimes fought and often defeated? After you have considered your answers, form into trios and share your perceptions. Report back to class, discuss this issue, and come to some conclusion.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter you will learn about four levels of human problems. You will learn that these levels of human problems exist on a continuum of increasing complexity, depending on people's understanding of them, agreement on goals, and the methods taken to resolve them. You will also learn that the first three levels are eventually solvable by methods available to professionals including social workers. You will explore these three kinds of conventional problems and the differences between them.

In addition, however, you will learn about social problems, the fourth and most difficult level of human problems. Social problems, such as economic inequality, discrimination, crime, child maltreatment, and others, are among the most tenacious problems encountered in our society today. You will learn that people's perceptions of the causes of social problems are sometimes under

dispute, and goals for resolving them are often unclear. Information about social problems is often conflicting. You will discover that social problems affect many people and can only be resolved by communities, or by society in general, by means of social thinking and making change.

You will not only explore a definition of social problems; you will also be challenged to develop your own understanding of social problems. You will discover that there are five theories that macro social workers use to help them understand the origin of social problems. You will explore a continuum of problem-solving approaches, and you will explore a number of answers that don't work.

THE RANGE OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Modern society can be considered a problem-centered culture, revolving around our capacity to solve the innumerable issues that present themselves to us. Most of the professions, including social workers, are dedicated to solving problems. Social workers engage in helping people solve problems of the human condition that vary from personal problems that generally only affect the individual and his or her close circle of intimates, to the most general society-wide problems that affect large numbers of people. Because of the wide range of human problems that social workers are called upon to help resolve, social work utilizes a combination of problem-solving methods aimed at the levels of complexity that those problems present. One place to begin is to examine the range of problems that social workers confront and the methods available to resolve them.

A Typology of Problems

Karen Christensen developed a typology for categorizing problems according to their complexity. This scheme classifies problem complexity according to two criteria: agreement on goals and knowledge of means.⁴⁵ It arrays problems on a continuum beginning with those that are relatively straightforward and that social workers help resolve individually, often using a form of thinking called rational problem solving (RPS). You will learn about RPS in detail in Chapter 5.

As problems grow in complexity and ambiguity, people begin to rely on one another in groups to help resolve them using a combination of RPS and a form of group-centered reason termed "social thinking," to which you have already been introduced. At the most complex

level, that of social problems, we rely almost entirely on social thinking in combination with making social change. These problem types are shown in Table 4.1, A Typology of Problems, Quadrants I through IV.

Quadrant I: Straightforward Problems In Quadrant I the problem is clear and straightforward, the method to solve the problem is specific and well defined, and is often relatively concrete or quantifiable. People’s perceptions of the problem are not in dispute and they

agree on the need for resolving it. A range of acceptable and often standardized solutions exist and are readily available. Straightforward human problems do not involve value choices, and enough information exists to resolve the problem. It is obvious when the problem has been solved. Straightforward problems are generally those that professionals are trained to solve in their day-to-day work using rational problem solving and methods that are common in their profession. Problems at this level can usually be resolved by one person working alone.

		Agreement on Goals	
		Agreed	Not Agreed
Knowledge of Means	Known	<p style="text-align: right;">Quadrant I</p> <p>Agreement on goals and clear, specific methods of resolution</p> <p>Kind: Personal problems</p> <p>Level: Individual, rarely family or groups</p> <p>Method: Casework, case management, counseling</p> <p>Problem Solving Type: Rational Problem Solving</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Quadrant III</p> <p>Lack of agreement on goals, but relatively clear methods for resolution</p> <p>Kind: Legal/political problems</p> <p>Level: Community organizations, coalitions, advocacy groups, legislatures</p> <p>Method: Community organizing, policy advocacy, negotiation</p> <p>Problem Solving Type: Social Thinking + Rational Problem Solving</p>
	Unknown	<p style="text-align: right;">Quadrant II</p> <p>Agreement on goals, but methods for resolution less clear</p> <p>Kind: Planning problems</p> <p>Example: Planning for clients with developmental disabilities, community planning</p> <p>Level: Problem-solving teams and mid-size groups</p> <p>Method: Team problem solving, community planning groups</p> <p>Problem Solving Type: Rational Problem Solving + Social Thinking</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Quadrant IV</p> <p>Disagreement on goals, and methods for resolution not clear</p> <p>Kind: Social problems</p> <p>Example: Poverty, racism, social injustice</p> <p>Level: Society as a whole</p> <p>Method: Issue-based coalition organizing, social movements</p> <p>Problem Solving Type: Social Thinking + Social Change</p>

TABLE 4.1 A Typology of Problems⁴⁶

Physicians solve relatively straightforward medical problems for which there is one diagnosis and a conventional treatment. Clinical social workers help solve psychological problems in their practice with individuals or families. A clinical social worker, for example, will need a great deal of information about the particular troubles that his or her client presents. The social worker will be able to come to a relatively clear assessment of the kind of problem his or her client is facing, and will often have a relatively specific set of procedures, programs, or services to help with the kinds of problems that a client brings. The social worker uses rational problem solving to assist the client through a problem-solving process, looking at alternatives, choosing those that are most appropriate, and proceeding toward resolving the issue.

Quadrants II and III: Middle-Range Human Problems

Problem solving increases in difficulty to the extent that a problem lacks specificity, clarity, or common agreement; or the methods of resolving the problem are complex and the combined ideas of a number of people are needed. The first middle-range problem is one in which the problem itself is clear but the goals or methods for resolving it are complicated, requiring creative, innovative, and unique solutions. The second middle-range problem is one in which the problem is unclear or in dispute, but the methods or procedures for resolution are known or well established.

Quadrant II: Clear Problem, Unclear Methods

Second-level problems increase in complexity. The problem is generally clearly defined and people agree on the goal, but the ways to develop an effective solution may either not be immediately obvious or require the input of more than one person to accomplish. Often second-level problems can be resolved using RPS in combination with social thinking. Examples of level II problems include case management planning for clients or community planning.

Planning for an Individual Client. A case manager working with a person who is developmentally disabled will gather information and develop a list of issues, goals, or objectives which are clear, measureable, specific, time-limited, and quantifiable. While the problem is often well defined, the more complex issue confronting the case manager revolves around devising a combination of services, programs, and relationships that will help the client meet his or her personal objectives.

The case manager brings together a team to help create a combined and agreed-upon array of potential solutions, often called an individual program plan or IPP. This team often includes the client and all the representatives who can assist with or affect the client's capacity to achieve his or her goals. Using rational problem solving in combination with active social thinking, the team puts together a plan in which each member contributes his or her skills in assisting the client over the coming year.

Community Planning. At the community level, a neighborhood planning group may want to make a street corner safer. The problem is clear and agreed upon, but ways to solve the problem are unclear. Using rational problem solving, members of the group gather information that is generally available, such as the amount of traffic and numbers of accidents that have occurred. Using a variety of group decision processes such as brainstorming and others, they arrive at various solutions including installing a stop sign, speed bumps, a traffic light, or reducing the speed limit.⁴⁷

Members compare these alternatives according to criteria such as effectiveness, cost, time, and political feasibility. They calculate which solution is best. The members also engage in social thinking to explore the social and political aspects of their solution to ensure that when working with city government officials they will be able to implement their decision.

Quadrant III: Contentious Problem, Clear Method of Resolution

In Quadrant III, problem complexity is a step greater. Often level III problems involve ethical, value-laden, or controversial political issues where there is disagreement about the problem. Once the issue surrounding the problem at hand is resolved, however, solutions tend to be well known, available, and relatively easily implemented.

Individual Level. Level III problems involving individuals include issues such as whether a woman has the right to an abortion, the legality of the death penalty, whether to terminate the life of a person who is brain dead, the acceptability of same-sex marriage, and many others.

Before a solution can be reached, the ethical and political implications of these issues need to be resolved. This can often only be accomplished by group-level social thinking that helps people clarify the particular values inherent in these issues. At times very contentious level III issues, such as same-sex

marriage, can only be resolved by the political or judicial process. However, once a decision is agreed to, the various alternatives can be easily decided upon using rational problem solving. For example, once the problem of a woman's right to choose is resolved, performing the abortion is left to a physician who will use rational problem solving to compare treatment procedures, arrive at the best one, and carry it out.

Community Level. A local community group decides to locate a small group home for dependent teens in an upscale neighborhood. The group believes that it is important for teens to live in and be exposed to a pleasant, high-end social environment where a number of amenities exist, schools are better than average, and the quality of life is good. However, this idea may be disputed by members of the neighborhood who do not want these teens, many of whom come from deprived neighborhoods, living there. Their goal is to maintain the value of their homes, which they believe may be affected by the presence of a small family group home. They are suspicious and fearful of any crime and vandalism that might occur.

Each group of citizens differs in their ideas about the ends that a neighborhood serves, whose rights take precedence, and the kinds of values that should prevail. When an issue becomes very contentious and/or involves many communities, people may resort to arbitration, the legal system, or the political process to make a final decision.

Once a decision is reached that clarifies the values, rights, or legal issues, however, implementation is straightforward and clear, often proceeding automatically. For example, once it becomes clear to the neighborhood association opposing the group home that any six unrelated adults have a legal right to live in a neighborhood of their choice, they are no longer able to oppose the project, and the facility opens.

Quadrant IV: Social Problems—Disagreement on the Problem and Methods of Resolution

The most complex situations occur at level IV, in which there is often disagreement about the issues or problem itself as well as contention about the best way to resolve it. These are social problems. Social problems often come about because of particular incongruities in our society that tend to be difficult for people to examine or understand. They are often built into the assumptions, ways of thinking, and values on which modern society is constructed, and, as a result, they tend to be of long standing. Tinkering with particular systems in the economy or

politics will not make a lasting difference as long as the foundational assumptions and processes that cause those problems remain intact. Social problems usually lack social consensus and often involve conflicting interests and values. Even when agreement about a social problem exists, ways to resolve the problem are often controversial and sometimes themselves become contentious.

Rational problem solving is, for the most part, not useful in helping resolve social problems. In Chapter 5 you will learn in more detail that, as noted above, that the best way to approach these issues is by means of social thinking in combination with making social change. While resolving local social problems may be accomplished at the community level, unraveling broad social problems often involves the whole of society and most often can only be accomplished by means of society-wide issue organizing or social movements.

Levels of Human Problems and Macro Social Work

While all social workers can become involved at each of the four levels of human problems, macro social workers become most heavily engaged in level II community planning, level III community organization and policy advocacy, and level IV social problems. You will learn more about planning problems and how to engage them in Chapter 7. In Chapter 9, you will explore how macro social workers participate in community organization issues, and in Chapter 13, how they become involved in policy advocacy.

The field of social work has accepted that social problems and their resolution are within its specific domain. According to the social work Code of Ethics, all “social workers [must] draw on their knowledge, values, and skills to help people in need and to address social problems.”⁴⁸ Resolving social problems by means of social thinking and social change is implicit in the remainder of this book and is the subject of the remainder of this chapter as well as Chapter 5.

EXERCISE 4.2

Defining Social Problems

Although modern sociologists have developed a generally accepted definition of social problems, and this textbook presents an alternative one, as a macro social worker, one of your skills is the ability to examine such definitions, critique them, and

arrive at your own working definition. As a result of other courses and your own understanding, you already have a fund of knowledge about social problems. This exercise is intended to help elicit that knowledge and bring it to your attention so that you can build upon it as you read the remainder of this chapter. Before reading the definitions in this text offers, therefore, exercise your “sociological imagination” to complete this exercise. You will then have an opportunity to develop your own definition of social problems and compare it with the others.

In this exercise you will consider those characteristics that distinguish social problems. Choose a social problem that concerns you, such as poverty, crime, gun violence, or ethnic intolerance. Then answer the questions below. After you have finished, form into groups of five and compare your definition with your classmates’. In class, come up with a composite definition.

Dimensions of Social Problems

Size: How many people do social problems affect?

Do they primarily affect single individuals, communities, and societies, or are they global in nature?

Location: Do social problems tend to be localized in particular geographical areas or are they dispersed throughout a sector or locality. Can they be confined to one population group or can social problems cross cultural, ethnic, and political boundaries?

Time Orientation: Consider the length of time that social problems require to be solved. How long, for example, have people in North America been trying to resolve major social problems such as ethnic intolerance, crime, or economic inequality? Is the time orientation for resolving many social problems a few months, a few years, a few generations, a few centuries, longer than a few centuries?

Cost: What is the cost of social problems to the victims, to the perpetrators, and to the nation as a whole? Try to estimate the costs of the social problem you have chosen.

Problem-Solving Orientation

Diagnosing the Problem: Who is responsible for identifying and defining social problems? Is defining a social problem the responsibility of professionals such as sociologists, psychologists, or social workers? Is it the role of government,

including politicians and governmental employees? Is identifying social problems the domain of those who are particularly affected by them or is it the responsibility of every citizen to call attention to the problems that plague us?

Treating the Problem: Once a social problem is identified, who should be charged with resolving it? Should social problems be resolved by professional social workers applying expert evidence-based solutions? Is the responsibility of the nonprofit social sector to deal with social problems? Are remedies to social problems best decided and developed by policymakers, politicians, or government bureaucrats? Is it the job of ordinary citizens in civic society to volunteer their time and energy to the common good? Should we expect the victims of social problems to rise above their difficulties and resolve them? Should the perpetrators of social ills be required to resolve the problems they have created? Is a combination of some or all of these the best way to resolve our social problems?

Paying the Costs: Who should pay for the costs of social problems? Should those who are identified as the perpetrators pay for the damage they create? Should victims of a social problem be expected to pay the costs of social problems? Should citizens make voluntary contributions to pay for the cost of social problems? Should all citizens be forced to pay in the form of higher taxes?

Methods of Solving Social Problems: What kinds of strategies have been used to solve social problems in the past? Have these methods been aimed at changing people’s behavior or the social environment? Which of these methods have been successful? What new methods are being tried?

Defining Social Problems

According to Leonard Beeghly, a social problem is a harmful condition identified by a significant number of people and recognized politically as needing improvement.⁴⁹ Robert K. Merton and Robert Nisbet, two influential sociologists, have defined social problems as “the substantial, unwanted discrepancies between what is in a society and what a functionally significant collectivity within that society seriously ... desires to be in it.”⁵⁰ Sullivan and Thompson assert that a “social problem exists when an influential group defines a social condition as threatening its values, the condition affects a

large number of people, and it can be remedied by collective action,” a definition echoed by Charles Zastrow.⁵¹

Following these scholars, many sociologists have developed a conventionally agreed upon definition of social problems. This conventional definition states that social problems have the following components:

1. The problem must have *social* causation rather than be an issue of individual behavior.
2. It must *affect* a large number of people.
3. It must be judged by an *influential* number of people to be undesirable.⁵²
4. It must be *collectively* solvable rather than by individual action.

EXERCISE 4.3

Comparing Definitions

Compare the ideas you have arrived at in Exercise 4.2 with the conventional definition of social problems and answer the following questions:

1. How did your own definition compare with the most common definitions developed by other theorists?
2. How did those of your classmates compare with yours?
3. Were components the same, or did you arrive at some that were different?
4. Can you and your classmates come up with a composite definition that is even better for social work practice than those that are conventionally accepted?

A definition of social problems used in this text is the action-social definition of social problems:

A social problem is experienced collectively by an identifiable group of people, caused by a source external to them that harms their welfare in specific ways, and can only be resolved by people themselves in partnership with the public and private sectors of society.

Let’s look at this definition in more detail and use it to critique the conventional definition.

A Social Problem Is Experienced Collectively by an Identifiable Group of People The conventional definition of a social problem requires that it must *affect* a large number of people and be

judged by an *influential* number of people to be undesirable.

Affect a Large Number of People It is true that poverty, crime, and drug abuse often involve many people, but social problems are not mere statistical abstractions that occur in amorphous mass society. In reality, many social problems are more than likely to be directly experienced by relatively small groups of people. If the process of defining a social problem is limited to larger, powerful groups, the very people affected by or experiencing the problem may be excluded. The problem may be ignored, misperceived, viewed in terms that benefit the powerful themselves, or skewed to maintain the status quo.

A social problem is real and significant to the community of people experiencing it even if it is relatively inconsequential in the aggregate. For example, the low wages in the *colonias* of San Antonio, Texas, and other areas of the nation are an important problem to the people who live there, even though many others throughout the state, or the country, may not consider it to be an important issue. The rundown condition of a neighborhood may be a real concern to its residents, even though others in the city may ignore it.

Macro social workers accept people’s perceptions of social reality as valid. We insist on the right of people to own their feelings and values in relation to those experiences. It is the lived experience that people encounter in their own day-to-day reality that we value, not the perceptions of those external to them, no matter how powerful those people may be.

Influence The second part of the conventional definition is ruled by a qualitative criterion of influence. The definition states that an “influential” group of people is required to judge whether an issue is a social problem. Social problems, however, are most often experienced by people who are not at all influential. Often they alone are the best ones to judge whether issues in their social environment are problematic.

Placing control over defining what is or is not a social problem in the hands of influential or powerful individuals in our social environment not only excludes the very people who experience the issue as a problem, but also keeps them in a subordinate position, denying them the opportunity to define their life situations on their own terms or contribute to their resolution. Social problems affect people regardless of whether those

conditions are acknowledged by those who are influential or powerful, or by anyone else.

THE COST OF A SOCIAL PROBLEM

Economists Philip J. Cook of Duke University and Jens Ludwig of Georgetown University made a comprehensive assessment of the costs of gun violence in America, as reported in their book, *Gun Violence: The Real Costs* (Oxford University Press, 2000). The two economists estimated that the price the United States pays for criminal shootings, gun accidents, and suicides committed with guns is \$100 billion a year. This amount was obtained by estimating losses in the workplace and jury awards to determine the statistical value of life and costs of nonfatal injuries. The cost also involved emotional damage experienced by relatives and friends of the victims, and the fear and general reduction in quality of life that the threat of gun violence imposes on everyone in America; it included measures related to people who are not victimized, such as time lost waiting in metal detector lines and the differences in property values in neighborhoods with high and low rates of violence.⁵³

Empowered to Define Social Reality The action-social model asserts that the essence of being human lies in the ability of people to jointly examine the dilemmas of existence for themselves rather than allowing others to define social reality for them. People who experience social problems must define their own issues on their own terms and in their own way, regardless of the size of their group, their influence, or the approval of the majority of the population. When the influential usurp this right, they not only steal a part of people's humanity but also assume that victims of social problems are incapable of understanding their own social situation. The presumption that the influential should define and decide for others what is important is the beginning of social problems and the heart of oppression.

People become empowered when they share experiences with one another, confirm their perceptions, and reflect on the meaning of those experiences. They are strengthened as they gain deeper insights into the causes of those conditions and make decisions about what to do about them. Claiming the right to own one's reality is the first step toward breaking the cycle of oppression. Macro social workers are people who "continually translate personal troubles into public issues and public issues into terms of human meaning."⁵⁴

Moreover, when others presume to determine what is or is not problematic, they are essentially undermining people's social autonomy and their right to create their social reality themselves. Such a stance betrays the capacity of people to have authentic and socially independent lives. The action-social model resists such a position, and instead places the power to define problems where it belongs—in the hands of those who experience and are affected by the problem.

Social Problems Are Caused by a Source External to People and Harm Their Welfare in Specific Ways Macro social workers observe the effects that social problems cause. We must be careful to see the source of problems as located in the conditions people must endure and not in themselves.

Effects of Social Problems The effects of social problems are often seen in the lives of people who experience them and who have had to adapt to the conditions that these problems cause. These effects, for example, may be seen in people's attitudes, values, and social behavior. They may be observed in the diminished ability of parents to help their children grow into physically strong, emotionally healthy, and socially engaged individuals. Effects of social problems are displayed in the lack of opportunity to live in safe, clean neighborhoods. Social problems may be exhibited in the inability of communities to enable members to achieve the potential inherent in their nature.

Source of Social Problems While individuals, groups, or communities often display the effects of social problems in their personal life situations, the source of those problems is often, if not entirely, external to those experiencing them. We social workers must guard ourselves against confusing the effects of social problems with their causes. Simply because groups of people must live in low-income neighborhoods and receive poor education or inadequate wages does not always mean that the people are the cause of those conditions.

Locate Problems at Their Source The action-social model places the locus of social problems where it belongs. Social workers observe how social problems occur when economic institutions such as financial, sales, commercial, and manufacturing industries use the resources of communities and export

benefits for their own profit. We see how social problems grow when school systems, police, or others are unresponsive to the problems in the community. Social workers perceive how social problems develop when institutionalized discrimination occurs in housing, loan practices, and the criminal justice system. We understand how social problems arise when society not only condones but also systematically perpetuates economic, social, and political inequality. We see the origin of social problems in the attitudes and values of a society that keeps some people poor and excluded while handing privilege and affluence to others.

Social Problems Can Only Be Resolved by the People Themselves in Partnership with the Public and Private Sectors of Society The insidious nature of social problems often lies in their ability to separate and disengage people. Macro social workers understand, however, that grassroots communal action, especially when combined with the private and public sectors of society, is one of the most potent devices to overcome the social problems that work to defeat people in deprived neighborhoods. If the power brokers of society, however, are to join with ordinary people, their self-perceptions and roles must be reshaped.

Delusions of Alienation and Apathy Modern alienation causes many people to suffer from the desperation of bearing social problems alone, believing they are helpless to change things. Others may live with the delusion that the powerful and influential will disentangle the problems in which they are enmeshed, that government or big business will bring about equality or “trickle-down” prosperity. Many people fail to act collectively because they are convinced that their problems are either lodged internally in their psyches or exist externally in social megastructures over which they have little control.

Strength in Grassroots Action Macro social workers understand that solutions rarely come about if people allow themselves to be separated in apathetic individualism, rely on experts or large institutional systems to solve problems for them, or despair in social passivity. Before action can take place, people must be connected in a recognizable group in which the “personal troubles of each become public problems of all.”⁵⁵

Only when people grasp their social nature and refuse to allow themselves to be separated and alone

can they break the bonds of individualism. When people resist the temptation to let others create economic and political structures for them, they begin to see through the deception that patriarchy fosters. As they confront their common situation together, they break the shackles of dependency, gain power, forge themselves into a people, and work to improve the conditions of their lives.

Community Oriented Many macro social workers believe community “is the only possible form of social organization that can meaningfully reconnect people to their world and provide them with some degree of control over its political directions,”⁵⁶ say Kling and Posner. Empowered and engaged communities of people do not rely on the powerful to solve problems for them. They do not ask for permission. They do not wait until those in positions of influence take notice. Community members take action on their own behalf, on their own terms, and in their own time. The social environment is theirs to define, shape, and construct.

Partnership with Economy and Government Even when acting together, however, citizen groups cannot change the conditions that confront them by themselves. They engage and must, in fact, connect with other sectors of society in the economy and in government to make lasting change. People who are affected by social problems demand that those in positions of power take notice. Once they take notice, community members expect the influential to be accountable and live up to their commitments.

The modern economic and public sectors of society, which often make unilateral decisions in their own interests, must be compelled to make room for communal organizations of people united to solve their own social problems. Ordinary citizens who have the most at stake will refuse to play the role of respectful listeners or interested spectators in the affairs that affect them. The community of citizen problem solvers will be full partners and leaders, not invited guests, at the table of decision making. It is the community of an engaged citizenry that will be the catalyst of change, who will write the agendas, develop solutions, and present them to corporate and governmental leaders—not for permission or approval but for assistance with action.

Resocialize Decision Makers Macro social workers know that government and corporate managers are not familiar with sharing power or leaving control to others. They are not content with agreeing to decisions others make, helping with plans others create, or following the vision others see. These managers will need to be resocialized to their new role as partners. It is in this process of helping people redefine and restructure social reality and reformulate the relationship between community, government, and corporate America that macro social workers may make their most substantial contribution.

ORIGIN OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Some people see social problems as originating in complex organizations, in the conflicts created as interest groups struggle for dominance, or in society's large political and economic institutions. Others see social problems as originating in defective social systems or in the inherent premises on which our modern market society is based. Still others see the massive social problems in the world's developing nations as a result of the economic dominance of the West. Each of these theories about the cause of social problems helps macro social workers understand different aspects of social problems and how to direct their efforts to solving them.

EXERCISE 4.4

Where do social problems originate?

Where in society do you assume social problems primarily originate? Are social problems mainly located at one of these levels, in more than one, or is there a common theme in all of them? Form groups of three and answer these questions. Return to class and come to some conclusions.

Organizational Deviance

We live in an unprecedented society, primarily comprised of “complex organizational systems” a generic term that includes both government bureaucracies and economic corporations.⁵⁷ Modern complex organizations are among the wealthiest, most powerful, and most important systems that exist in our world today.

Yet for all their importance and necessity, some writers locate many of the problems in our society at the level of large, often transnational organizations, especially but not exclusively those in the economic sphere of our society. Because organizational systems are so important, this text will explore different facets of them in later chapters. Here you will find that modern complex organizations are often deceptive, distort the democratic process, dominate the economy, transform communal relationships, and even become our society.

Deceptive Modern complex organizations supply us with nearly all the goods and services we consume in our society. Because they are so much a part of our social world, we tend to perceive these organizational systems, particularly large corporate structures, as benevolent instruments for social good or as neutral technological apparatuses under the benign management of their owners. The more we become dependent on organizations, the more we are induced to believe that life would be unthinkable and survival impossible without them.⁵⁸ We tie our futures to these systems and work to help them increase our prosperity.

In reality, however, organizations are not always socially benevolent systems. Complex modern organizations are artificial economizing tools used to maximize the goals of their owners, whether the owner is a group of stockholders, an interest group, a legislature, or the Congress.

“Organizations in today's market society,” says Alberto Ramos, “are necessarily deceitful.” They tend to “deceive both their members and their clients, inducing us to believe not only that what they produce is desirable, but also that their existence is vital to the interest of the society at large.”⁵⁹ The goods that most organizations produce, however, are an incidental means to their ultimate ends. The ends of complex organizations are their own survival and maximizing the power of their owners. To the extent that employees are no longer useful to the owners of these systems, they tend to be expendable, as are the goods they produce.

Distort the Democratic Process The United States was founded on ideals of social equality, under which people could claim ownership of the political process that would operate on their behalf. Large modern organizations were nonexistent when the Constitution was

framed, but today they sometimes destroy equality and create power centers that usurp the power that citizens were intended to command.

Destruction of Equality Allen Jedlicka asserts that reliance on hierarchy and top-down decision making permeates the country so profoundly that every one of its primary institutions is anti-democratic, including the school system. Equality is lessened, and a blend of anti-democratic managerial practices adopted from private corporations infiltrates governmental institutions, making them more and more similar to corporations. As a result, most North Americans feel powerless; they are not allowed to become involved in the process of controlling their own lives. Their lack of participation in the country's major institutions generates a sense of futility and helplessness.⁶⁰

Power Instruments Organizations, as Max Weber commented, “are power instruments of the first order for one who controls the bureaucratic apparatus.”⁶¹ Bureaucracy generates an enormous degree of unregulated and often unperceived social power, observes Charles Perrow, and this power is “placed in the hands of very few leaders who are prone to use it for ends we do not approve of, for ends we are generally not aware of, and more frightening still for ends we are led to accept because we are not in a position to conceive alternative ones.”⁶²

Transformation of Communal Relationships

Modern organizations are not natural human associations. They were not designed to provide social goods, implement social values, or provide social capital as part of their mechanisms. Complex organizations systematically engage in the commodification, objectification, and dehumanization of people, and encourage reification of the organizational machine tool.

Commodification Organizations shape our consciousness, transforming people into economic beings. Where people have not been “socialized to adopt the collective orientation” of organization, asserts Victor Thompson, individuals “must be changed so that they will not only want more things, but will have the skills necessary to produce them.”⁶³ Organizations induce humans to become factors of production, “commodities” that behave according to utilitarian constraints of the marketplace.⁶⁴ “Students become the ‘products’ of

universities. Workers become the ‘tools’ of management, and individuals become functionaries”⁶⁵ who perform their organizational duties and do what they are told in the interest of the owner’s goal for the organization. People come to think of their worth in organizational terms rather than in terms of their intrinsic value of being human. “Each person treats the other primarily as a means to his or her end ... seeking to make him or her an instrument of one’s purposes,”⁶⁶ says Alasdair MacIntyre.

Objectification Organizations require people to treat themselves and one another objectively, impartially, and neutrally. “Objective” management of business primarily means conducting it according to calculable rules and “without regard for persons,” says Max Weber.⁶⁷ If we bring social values, altruistic attitudes, or relationally oriented behaviors into the organization, we must be induced to give them up and accept efficiency, productivity, and task behaviors instead.⁶⁸ People are taught to “live comfortably within a contrived reality,”⁶⁹ claims Alberto Ramos, as if that reality were authentic and meaningful for human life.

This “structure of objectification (transforming life and a person partly into a thing, partly into a calculating machine) penetrates all realms of life and all spiritual functions,”⁷⁰ says Paul Tillich. Organizations treat people as “cogs in a wheel,” as if we are interchangeable parts in the overall social mechanism.⁷¹ Machinelike qualities become part of the human psyche, and those qualities that personalize individual action, but are contrary to calculations that maximize the owner’s goals, become devalued and discarded.

Dehumanization Complex organizations are specifically aimed at driving out natural social relationships and transforming them into impersonal, artificial, instrumental relationships. In organizational life we tend to be denied “opportunities for engaging in full social relationships, in we-relationships, and in the mutual construction of new solutions to individual problems,”⁷² comments Ralph Hummel. Ultimately, the organizational individual tends to be *unable* to function as a full-fledged human being.

Modern complex organizations are systems that systematically deprive people of their humanity. Modern organizations have inverted social processes once considered horrific into what their controllers want us to believe are higher social goods. Max Weber, the

most perceptive analyst of complex organizations, explains in the clearest and starkest terms how that occurs:

Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly, the more it is “dehumanized,” the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation ... and this is appraised as its *special virtue*.⁷³ [emphasis added]

Reification Many thinkers have become so socialized to the organizational culture that they embed objectification of relationships into their common understanding of social life. These writers often tend to engage in organizational reification, a process that endows organizations with attributes more compelling and powerful than the human beings who compose them. And for many people there is little consciousness that this transformation has occurred.

Ralph Hummel observes, for example, that the process of reification, treating an artificial object as if it were a natural, social being as organizations often pretend, leads to a “dwindling of consciousness to the point where humans forget they have made their world.”⁷⁴ One can often observe reification in the way writers describe organizations. For example, they often talk about abstract organizations as if they are enlarged versions of human beings that have personalities, think, make decisions, and plan. They write about organizational psychology, organizational reason, organizational behavior. People begin to accept organizational systems as more intelligent, with a higher claim to economic and political resources, and entitled to more rights and privileges than the individuals who constructed them or on whose behalf these tools are presumed to function.

Such a perspective has become institutionalized in law in American society. In *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad Company*, 118 U.S. 394 (1886), the Supreme Court defined corporations as “people” that possess the same constitutional rights as individual persons. In the recent *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 08-205 (2010), 558 U.S. —, 130 S.Ct. 876 (January 21, 2010), a landmark decision held that money organizations spend to further their interests is protected by First Amendment guarantees of free speech. Congress is thus prohibited from restricting political expenditures by

corporations and unions, allowing them the same rights as individuals to contribute to political campaigns, opening a floodgate of corporate influence in elections.⁷⁵ The *Citizens United* case thus further entrenched the position that abstract organizational systems are people and entitled to full protections of the law.

Definer of Society The organization must be seen today as “defining, creating and shaping its environment.”⁷⁶ To see these organizations as adapting to a turbulent, dynamic, ever-changing environment, says Charles Perrow, is to indulge in fantasy. Instead, it is the social environment that adapts to the large, powerful organizations controlled by a few, often overlapping leaders. Perrow asserts, for example, that

the most significant failure of all organization theory [is] its failure to see *society* as adaptive to organizations. The dominant organizations ... institutionalize on their own terms to create the environments they desire, shape the existing ones, and define which sections of [society] they will deal with.⁷⁷

Bureaucracy replaces society, says Ralph Hummel. *Fortune* magazine, for example, reminds us that General Motors Corporation in the 1950s was “a leviathan whose wake touched every American. It wasn’t a question of what was good for General Motors being good for the country: General Motors *was* the country.”⁷⁸

Ecological problems such as air pollution or pesticide poisoning in a community water supply, for example, are not merely the unintentional consequences of technology that have occurred as well-meaning corporate managers provided us with goods and services. Powerful owners and managers are “very well aware of the consequences of the systems they command and intentionally create the conditions under which they operate,” says Charles Perrow.⁷⁹

They anticipate all of the possible outcomes of every decision they make. They calculate the financial costs of decisions such as lawsuits, court costs, fines, taxes, and penalties and include them in the cost of doing business. If the projected benefit/cost ratio is favorable to corporate profits, they may continue to follow policies that harm the environment, maintain poor working conditions, fail to pay living wages, or exploit laborers, even if those decisions may be harmful to the public at large.

Those who control these organizations often determine the quality of our lives. They shape our consciousness, affect our life chances, and define our humanity. They are our cultural, social, and interpersonal frame of reference.⁸⁰ Organization, as Robert Presthus has commented, *is* our social environment.⁸¹

The Organizational Deviance Model and Macro Social Work Understanding modern complex organizations is one of the key components of macro social work practice. When large corporate or public organizations become so powerful that they trample on the public interest, social workers and others work to make them accountable and change their practices. We affirm that members are irremediably social and, therefore, not subject to the impersonal, individualistic mandates of complex organizations. We resist conformity to organizational prerogatives and continually confront organizations, in both business and government, when they undermine the person and community.

Many community organizations actively confront corporate organizations that “redline” poor neighborhoods. They press large corporations and municipalities to provide living wages for employees, among other issues. Macro social workers use their understanding of organizational deviance to promote community development corporations as alternative sources of economic strength for communities. The organizational deviance model helps identify organizations that distort the public interest. We work to develop better policies instead. We challenge the efforts of transnational organizations that exploit natural and human resources in the developing world. A keen understanding of organizational deviance is key to much of macro social work practice.

Intergroup Conflict

The framers of our Constitution were wary of centralizing political power in one office. Therefore, they separated power into three branches and, within those branches, divided government among local, regional, state, and national levels, a structure called federalism. By fragmenting power over a broad spectrum of society, the framers ensured that those interest groups that attempted to control public affairs would compete among themselves; government would play the role of mediator to keep power in check and guarantee that everyone would at least have a “piece of the pie.”⁸²

In this way, many powerful interest groups find access to power at one level of government or another. They press for policy concessions and preferential treatment by which their interests can find a sympathetic voice. The theory that helps explain this process is called “pluralism,” or interest group liberalism. Problems with interest group liberalism center around the perpetual conflict that is built into the system, inevitably unequal contests between those interests, and the reduction of governance to marketplace politics.

Conflict According to interest group liberalism, because the interests of wealthy, often powerful groups do not normally coincide, competition among them results in conflict between groups occupying different levels within the overall federal hierarchy. This conflict may create “a variety of social problems, since policies enacted to further the interests of some ... create effects that work against the interests of others,”⁸³ say Soroka and Bryjak.

Today, however, modern industrialized society has become so large, Ralf Dahrendorf asserts, that while interest groups continue to manipulate government for preferential treatment, many now carry out economic, political, educational, and other important institutionalized activities on their own. They no longer try to adapt to the conditions established by government. They expect that government will adapt to their needs.

“Interest groups direct and control the activities of other organized groups seizing as much of society’s resources for themselves as they can, and in the process exploit the less powerful, often creating social problems such as poverty, discrimination, and oppression,” Jim Henslin states. “As the exploited react to their oppression, still other problems emerge such as crime, drug abuse, and various forms of violence such as riots and suicide.”⁸⁴ According to Henslin, “conflict theorists view social policies that benefit the less privileged as concessions from the powerful ... [as well as] actions designed to keep the privileged in their positions of power.” At the intergroup level, therefore, “social problems occur when powerful interest groups exploit the less powerful and as the less powerful resist, rebel, or appeal to higher values of justice.”⁸⁵

Inequality Another problem with the pluralist paradigm of policymaking is that interest group politics

does not result in equally contending actors, each of whom operates on a level playing field, but rather in unequal struggles of organized groups that press for policy prizes. E. E. Schattschneider once remarked that “the flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent.”⁸⁶ Powerful, organized interests headed by well-educated, experienced leaders in control of special interests who have access to policymakers often win out in the struggle over resources.

Marketplace Politics Public life in the United States becomes a subsidiary component of private affairs, and government an arena of imperialistic enterprise or “marketplace politics” in which private interests seek preferential treatment in the form of policy concessions. William Morrow calls this a “bazaar” model of politics, in which organized interest groups bargain in the public arena for goods, services, and special policy consideration.⁸⁷ “Government” says Morrow, “provides arenas of opportunity for those who exploit its resources to increase their power and influence at public expense. Absent in marketplace politics is the notion of the ‘common good’ or the ‘public interest’ as a whole.”⁸⁸ The interest group model reduces U.S. politics to conflict resolution between contending actors, which, in the opinion of Frank Coleman, “is corrupt, sterile and deprived of purpose.”⁸⁹

Intergroup Conflict Model and Macro Social Work Macro social workers have used the ideas of the intergroup conflict model to help bring about a better society since the beginning of the social work profession. Today macro social workers make use of the intergroup conflict model to help ordinary citizens become empowered to learn about the processes by which private interest groups work for preferential treatment from government.

Community Organization Community organizers understand that special interests often engage in practices that work to their own advantage but disadvantage others at the same time. When special interests use their influence to obtain preferential treatment or appropriate community resources by using the power of eminent domain, special zoning variances, tax breaks, or subsidies from local government that threaten the integrity of the community, for example,

community organizers mobilize communities to act as countervailing power systems to expose those practices. We assist community members as they confront businesses that want to erect office buildings or shopping centers that will destroy a community. We challenge city governments that want to give subsidies to corporations without guarantees of living wages or other concessions that would benefit community members.

Social Advocacy In addition, macro social workers who engage in social advocacy use intergroup conflict theory to understand how private interests often work to bend the rules in their favor. We challenge government when it establishes policies that funnel resources to powerful interests while neglecting the interests of citizens who lack the same access to government. We advocate on behalf of the interests of people with low incomes, children, single mothers, and persons with disabilities, whose voices are not often heard in the hallways of power.

Social Movements Macro social workers participate in social movements to ensure that the interests of the public as well as the welfare of the natural environment are protected. Social activists who understand the nature of interest group politics are familiar with the way in which private interests feed from the public trough. Private commercial interests are often eager to use public land as sites to dispose of toxic waste. Large mining conglomerates press for the right to use public land to extract mineral wealth at low cost to themselves, afterward leaving behind gaping scars on the landscape or denuded mountains. Agribusinesses pressures government for cheap water rights for irrigation. Large ranching interests lobby for the right to graze their cattle on public land, and timber industries push for permission to harvest public forests. Social activists become adept at playing the game of interest group politics to protect the welfare of the public as well as the irreplaceable ecology of wilderness areas from private exploitation.

Institutional Deviance

When health care is unevenly distributed, when poverty persists for millions, “when tax laws permit a business to write off 80% of a \$100 luncheon but prohibit a truck driver from writing off a bologna sandwich; when government is run by a few for the profit of the few,

when businesses supposedly in competition, fix prices to gouge the consumer, then society is permitting what is called *institutional deviance*,⁹⁰ claim D. Stanley Eitzen and Maxine Baca-Zinn.

Institutional deviance occurs when social problems become the operating premises on which social decisions are based, officially embedded in the major ideologies, culture, or structures of society. Ethnic intolerance in the United States, for example, was institutionalized in social, economic, legal, and governmental structures from the country's inception. Racism was one of the foundational principles that guided business, government, and legal decisions. Bribery, spoils, nepotism, and other forms of corruption were institutionalized in business and politics from immediately after the Civil War until the reforms of Progressive Era social workers such as Florence Kelley, Lillian Wald, Jane Addams, and others.

Characteristics of Institutional Deviance Institutional deviance occurs when permanent structures of society devise rules or policies that result in perennially unequal advantage. While at times the goals of large institutions diverge from their original purposes, others serve antisocial purposes under the guise that they are socially permissible. Other institutions of society overtly engage in social harm.

Institutions Define Rules According to Eitzen and Baca-Zinn, social workers must keep in mind that powerful agencies of government and business make rules that may disadvantage large segments of the population. They may define social reality in a way that manipulates public opinion, controlling behaviors that threaten the status quo. During the first 75 years of the American experience, for example, “slavery on large plantations was not considered to be a social problem at all. Instead, slaves who revolted were the problem. Racism was not a social problem of the Jim Crow South, but pushy blacks were. From the standpoint of U.S. public opinion, forcibly dispossessing Native Americans from their lands was not a social problem, but it became a problem when Native Americans refused to be relocated, resisted the destruction of their culture, resulting in their own extermination.”⁹¹

A Perennial Reality Eitzen and Baca-Zinn assert that institutional deviance is a perennial reality in the American corporate and political culture that creates

“conditions in society such as poverty and institutional racism that induce material or psychic suffering for certain segments of the population.”⁹² They say that “there are sociocultural phenomena that prevent a significant number of society’s participants from developing and using their full potential; there are discrepancies between those principles for which the United States is presumed to stand such as equality of opportunity, justice, and democracy and the actual conditions under which many people live.”⁹³

Diverge from Goals Sometimes social institutions, even those created by well-intentioned people for good purposes, may diverge from their original goals and become deviant. For example, the Second Amendment, which in 1783 permitted states to maintain armed militias to keep order, has been reinterpreted by many today as a license for nearly anyone to own handguns and other weapons, resulting in catastrophic violence to children and teenagers, especially in poor urban neighborhoods.

Antisocial Purposes Masquerading as Socially Permissible Under the guise of lawful or socially permissible premises, many transactions may intentionally serve antisocial purposes. The defense industry obtains legal sanctions and subsidies from the government to sell weapons to developing countries for profit, ostensibly to promote “a balance of power” or to protect our “national interests.” In reality, however, selling weapons of war to poor countries steals the lives of impoverished citizens, often guaranteeing that dictators will be able to continue to oppress their own people, perpetrating violence against their neighbors, and even going to war against our own country.

Do Social Harm Some businesses do not even maintain the guise of nobility of purpose behind which to hide their exploitative self-interests. After years of deceit and evasion, for example, the American tobacco industry, having finally been deflected from marketing its products to adolescents in the United States, has now developed a lucrative global market with full realization that it is endangering the health of the world’s children and creating enormous health care costs for people who cannot afford to pay.

Macro Social Work and the Institutional Deviance Model Social workers apply the institutional deviance model of social problems when we

become involved in politics and work through the political process. Early social workers, including Jane Addams, Florence Kelly, Dorothea Dix, and many others, lobbied government for reform. They challenged the laissez-faire principles of government that allowed corporations to monopolize business, fix prices, and artificially manipulate supply and demand in their favor. They contested political machines that distorted democracy and dominated Congress and the office of the president. Social workers used their political and policy skills to reform a government corrupted by bribery, graft, and favoritism. Social workers contested the premises of institutional deviance to advocate for reform of labor laws, protect women and children against exploitation, institute governmental agencies such as the Children's Bureau, and establish a juvenile justice system.

Macro social workers use their understanding of how institutional deviance is a perennial issue in government and corporate structures. When social workers look for objective causes of social problems, therefore, "we must ... guard against the tendency to accept the definitions of social problems provided by those in power,"⁹⁴ who may tend to protect the distortions that institutions develop. Berger and Neuhaus hold that we struggle to hold such large institutions accountable and forge social policies that are morally good and socially just.⁹⁵

Systems Deviance

James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock assert that "collective artificial social systems are authenticated as valid social forms in modern society, the subject matter out of which the economy and the polity are contrived."⁹⁶ One of the more common conceptions of how social problems occur is the systems deviance model.

While some systems concepts are useful because they "give us a method of conceptualizing a great deal of complexity,"⁹⁷ macro social workers must be concerned when systems understanding is applied as a general theory of human behavior and when it masquerades as natural social reality. We need to be aware when systems theory creates a hegemony of power, resists change, becomes difficult to correct, and disguises real causes of problems.

Systems and Human Behavior Systems theory tends to see people either as components of social

mechanisms or as responding organisms that adapt to and are determined by systems processes in their wider social environment. Because people are "products of social stimuli that cause them to react in often similar and predictable ways,"⁹⁸ says Herbert Blumer, social systems tend to attribute human action to impersonal "natural" forces external to human intention, and in so doing relegate humans to a passive and determined role in their existence. Systems simplify thought and human interaction by programming communication and commanding consistent, standardized behaviors from everyone.

In systems, each individual must operate in a unitary way, guided by the same methods, directed by the same ends or goals. Decisions are made by one unified rationality under which, given uniform ends, information can lead to only one decision. Provided with the rules and channels of behavior, systems generally move in one direction, limiting choices and predetermining the future course of human affairs.

Larger social systems eliminate informal, personal emotions as components of social reality. They generally exclude the need for humans to struggle with the complexities of developing harmonious relationships, understanding, mutual agreement, or the need to examine the interior life of either their own motivations or those of others.

Systems tend to reduce or even eliminate the need for revisiting complex ethical and moral choices by instituting protocols, policies, and decisions programmed in advance. Moral choice is reduced to legal/rational contractual agreements, rules and regulations that are based on effectiveness and efficiency. According to Sheldon Wolin:

[This] system selects some human capabilities, rejects others, adapts some destroys others; it encourages some of man's potential, shuns the rest, and leaves man a crippled monstrosity; it establishes a hierarchy between and within classes; it imperiously commands that the natural tempo of human life be adjusted to the rhythms of the machine—a continuity, uniformity, regularity, order and even intensity of labor.⁹⁹

Systems Masquerading as Social Reality One of the most basic problems that occurs when applying systems and systems concepts to social phenomena is the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, "the error of mistaking our abstractions for concrete realities,"¹⁰⁰ as

described by Alfred North Whitehead. This fallacy occurs when social concepts are seen as nothing but concrete physical or biological phenomena. “Its intention is to treat the human field as physical subject matter in no way different from the subject matter of chemistry or nuclear physics,” says Gibson Winter.¹⁰¹

When the subject matter of social science is handled like the subject matter of physical science, knowledge of social laws become a knowledge of laws which control man’s activity. Knowledge of society reveals man’s enslavement to societal forces. Man ceases to be a “subject” and becomes an “object” of calculable forces external to him.¹⁰²

To assert that social reality is derived from physical science-based concepts such as entropy, synergy, homeostasis, and others is to fallaciously conceive of the social environment as a system. To view social concepts as if they were biologically based is to conceive of society as an enlarged version of a human being, submerging humanity into mass systems processes. Active-social human beings are converted into passive atomistic systems components, unobtrusively draining people of their autonomy and power, and ceding much of their life decision making to artificial systems structures.

In contrast, says C. Stephen Evans, “the particular sciences that deal with man, particularly those which deal with purposive human actions, are unique and should not pattern themselves on the natural sciences.”¹⁰³ Social reality must be seen in its own special realm guided by concepts that are specific to it.

Hegemony of Power The dominance of economic systems has transformed North America into a market-centered society. The social has been reduced to an enclave constrained by the forces of economic organizations. Transnational corporations have extended their hegemony throughout the developed and developing world alike. The transformation of society into a collection of large economic megasystems is a unique phenomenon in the history of mankind. In all social systems preceding our own, says Karl Polanyi, “the economic order [was] merely a function of the social order in which it was contained. Neither under tribal, or feudal or mercantile conditions was there ... a separate economic system in society.”¹⁰⁴

Society as an entity within the larger economy has come to be viewed by many as only natural. Many modern theorists lead us to believe that our modern

rational society is “historically typical”;¹⁰⁵ that is, human life has always been organized and rationalized. In reality, however, “it is in only our Western societies that quite recently turned man into an economic being,” says Marcel Mauss. People often do not understand that “modern society is unprecedented because no other society uses the criterion of economizing as the standard of human existence”¹⁰⁶ and that systems processes are a product of modernity.

Resist Change “What makes definitive change so enormously difficult,” Perry states, is that “each system from the richest to the poorest, is constructed out of networks of interlocking forces and institutions that maintain it, and keep it in its recognizable form.”¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, “a poor community is maintained in its impoverished form by a network of self-reinforcing processes and practices. Any attempt to change one part of the network is opposed by the other forces that keep the community the way it is, neutralizing any attempt at improvement.”¹⁰⁸

As a result, social systems are difficult to fix when problems occur. Stewart Perry says, for example,

[a] strategy for change that selects just one part of the community as a focus for improvement ... is likely to be neutered in the long run by the rest of the community influences.... Any effective strategy has to consider many parts of the network of interlocking community influences and deal with them more or less simultaneously or at least in interconnected phases so that the different parts no longer neutralize improvements but actually reinforce the change.¹⁰⁹

Disguises Real Causes of Problems Social workers must be aware that those who are in charge of the megastructures of society sometimes use systems theory to disguise the real causes of social problems. Some social theorists, for example, propose that what appear to be mere “latent” or unintended consequences of social systems may actually be *intentionally* constructed components of the system. Charles Perrow, for example, reports that once a social system is in place, “it sustains the values and goals of those in control of that social system.”¹¹⁰

In our society, those in positions of power are rational and goal maximizing. They mobilize their values and seek advantage by calculating the benefits and costs of achieving their goals. Social problems do

not always occur because social change has outstripped the ability of social systems to adjust, because a feedback loop has broken down, or because systems components fail to fit properly. Neither do negative system outcomes occur because owners or managers lack information, are unaware of the consequences of their decisions, or are unable to predict outcomes. Systems are constructed by rational individuals who are fully aware of their purposes and the consequences of the systems they design.

Implications for Social Work Practice Social work relies heavily on social systems and social ecological models. However, care must be exercised in the extent to which we use these models because they may give us a distorted conception of the human condition and undermine our efforts at changing social constructs. The theories implicit in social systems theory, for example, tend to see people as atomistic rather than as social beings. *Atomistic* means that people are conceived much like atoms, autonomous bits of social matter that interact with other atoms according to physical laws. Macro social workers must be keen observers of these fallacious concepts and their subtle implications, by which people become dehumanized and depersonalized as if they were nothing but components of large megasystems of society.

Social workers who do not understand that systems can be and often are used for inhuman purposes will be unable to solve the real social problems that systems create. Social workers must not be naïve about the systems they are trying to correct. The claim that megastructures are beyond reproach because something goes wrong with otherwise well-intentioned decisions, or that social problems are the result of the failure of social systems in adjusting to social conditions beyond their control, is often a mask for simple denial or an attempt to evade responsibility.¹¹¹ Owners of large economic or governmental systems may claim ignorance or blame systems problems for the harm they do. More insidiously, they may hold society hostage to processes that are socially harmful because we are socialized to believe we cannot do without the benefits they provide for us.

The challenge for macro social workers using a systems model to solve social problems is to be sensitive in observing whom the system serves and protects. Is the system serving a latent function that advantages some at the expense of others? Are intentional patterns

of exploitation, greed, or injustice masquerading as unintended consequences or as mere ignorance? Is there an implication that the system is its own justification and is beyond criticism?

Social Cultural Premises

The social cultural premises perspective assumes that society can be best understood as a conscious, planned construct. People intentionally create societal structures, laws, and governance out of common understandings about meaning and the values that they want to maintain. People are not helpless or determined beings molded by natural societal forces to which they are subject or over which they have little control.

Rather, as the social pragmatists argue, and the action-social model of macro social work maintains, although a person's "situation confronts him with limitations and problems, he is the one who struggles to understand his situation, to master it, and to utilize it for the realization of his interests."¹¹² "Human behavior involves the interpretation of events or phenomena and the sharing of those interpretations with others,"¹¹³ and human society "rests upon a basis of consensus, i.e., the sharing of meanings in the form of common understanding and expectation."¹¹⁴

A PATHOLOGICAL ELEMENT OF SOCIETY

The Alabama legislature declared them "a menace to the happiness ... of the community." A Mississippi statute called them "unfit for citizenship." In Pennsylvania, they were officially termed "anti-social beings"; in Washington, "unfit for companionship with other children"; in Vermont, a "blight on mankind"; in Wisconsin, a "danger to the race"; and in Kansas, "a misfortune both to themselves and to the public." A Utah government report declared them to be a "defect" that "wounds our citizenry a thousand times more than any plague." A Texas law mandated their segregation to relieve society of the "heavy economic and moral losses arising from the existence at large of these unfortunate persons." Indiana decided to "segregate from the world" such individuals, and in South Dakota they were determined not to have the "rights and liberties of normal people." An opinion by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes of the U.S. Supreme Court, upholding the constitutionality of a Virginia law authorizing their involuntary sterilization, ratified the view that they were "a menace ... who sap the strength

of the state.... It is better," he ruled, to "prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind." In every state of our nation, in nearly every community, the official policy was the exclusion, segregation, defamation, and degradation of people with intellectual disabilities, those who seemed to be among the weakest and most inferior of our citizens.¹¹⁵

"The cultural perspective assumes that human behavior is guided by patterns of basic assumptions that develop over time and slowly drop out of people's conscious awareness,"¹¹⁶ states Thomas Holland. These patterns become habits that continue to influence people even when the social environment changes. Society, therefore, reflects the key ideologies and ways of thinking that were built into it in the first place, and those premises become interpreted and reinterpreted by succeeding generations, sometimes resulting in inherent defects and false consciousness.

Inherent Defects Frank Coleman asserts that the social failures of American political institutions are "a permanent blindness fixed in the nature of the institutions and the social philosophy used to design them."¹¹⁷ The social philosophy to which Coleman refers is contained in the heritage of Enlightenment concepts and the cherished social ideologies of modernity that have shaped "the consciousness of a whole people through our national inheritance," manifesting themselves "in characteristic and unvarying ways related to the American constitutional philosophy."¹¹⁸ Among these staple tenets of American political belief, Richard Hofstadter says, are the powerful legacies of possessive individualism, radical self-interest, the value of competition, and the substitution of the public good for allegiance to the rights of property.¹¹⁹ In practice, therefore, overcoming social problems becomes enormously difficult because they are built into the very fabric of our social order.

False Consciousness The modern culture many people have internalized tends to be a "false consciousness" that presents a massive presence of such strength, according to Peter Berger, that it is often difficult to change. Coleman and Hofstadter claim that the fundamental beliefs that most Americans cherish are, in reality, the causes of permanent social failure in our political and institutional landscape, which, says

Coleman, has become a "total ideology that cannot be challenged or even questioned."¹²⁰

Macro Social Work and Social Cultural Premises

Macro social workers try to change the premises on which many governmental decisions are made, employing the means of social activism and mass social movements. For example, the ecology and green movements attempt to sensitize people about the endangered natural environment. They work to shift people's thinking from viewing the earth's ecosystems as a source of plunder to a seeing it as a sustainable environment that protects the world's resources for future generations. Peace activists work to change the mentality of nations that purchase arms and engage in international conflict. Social workers and others try to change people's attitudes about handguns, urging them to see that the damage to human life they cause is far more destructive than the feelings of security that weapons may provide for people who own them.

A CONTINUUM OF PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACHES

From another perspective, both RPS and social thinking can be seen along a continuum of problem-solving approaches that are aligned with models of social change. These approaches can assist a macro social worker to understand positions that various people take. They also clarify the best stance for social workers to assume on issues that confront people. Most people tend to face the social issues that confront them in one of four ways:

1. Reactive problem solving to restore the past,
2. Inactive problem solving to preserve the present,
3. Proactive problem solving to accelerate the future, and
4. Interactive problem solving to create a just society.

Reactive Approach

Reactive problem solving is often linear, sequential, and tries to solve problems that occur one at a time. Much modern problem solving is reactive in nature. For example, reactive problem solvers often use a mechanistic systems model to "try to re-create a previous state of the system by unmaking changes that have

converted the system state into one that they find less desirable.”¹²¹ They spend a great deal of energy fixing what is broken in social systems by identifying problems and designing solutions that restore the system’s stable state. Once the system is repaired, they are satisfied if it continues to run as smoothly as it did before the breakdown occurred.

Critics of the Reactive Approach to Problem Solving

Critics of reactive problem solving point out that this approach focuses only on fixing problems after the fact, looks to the past, uses simplistic thinking, employs moral blame, or blames technological progress.

After the Fact Reactive problem solving engages in issues after the fact. It assumes that the current system functioning is simply in need of repair, ignoring the fact that the social environment may have changed and that the solution is not repair but adaptation. Diagnosing a social problem long after its inception is often impossible. Correcting a problem after it has become entrenched in the social and cultural environment is not only costly but difficult and time consuming.

Look to the Past Reactivists tend to look to a simpler, less complicated past, which becomes their operative reality. As a result, they may tune out significant aspects of the causes of social problems, pretending that by holding onto an imaginary past they can exclude the pain of the present and minimize the struggles of the future. Reactivists in the Old South, for example, contended that African Americans were happy and contented as slaves. Disturbing this equilibrium would only cause disharmony and conflict. Things should be left as they were.

Simplistic Thinking Reactivists use thinking that is often simplistic, sequential, and unidirectional in nature. Rational problem solving, for example, is a sequential model that uses one mode of thinking, that of cognition. Mechanistic systems metaphors are also dominated by unilinear processes that progress from the past to the future. People whose thinking is dominated by these processes tend to see social issues one by one, as if they were highly discrete, operating independently of each other. They fail to see that just as social systems are interactive in nature, social problems are

the result of systems interactions as well. One cannot simply solve one problem and then go on to the next. Instead, “action taken to resolve one problem may render ineffective or harmful the actions taken to resolve another.... Because the causes of social problems interact synergistically, the focus of solving social problems should be on their interactions, not just on their separate reactions.”¹²²

Moral Blame Reactivists sometimes assume that behaviors of the present are the result of abandonment of values of the past. When reactivists see social problems as the eradication of a social evil that contaminates society, they sometimes become obsessed with moral blame rather than practical reality. Attacking social evil sometimes results in entrenching the very problems that reactivists want to eliminate. Prohibitionists, for example, attempted to destroy saloons, cripple alcohol manufacture, outlaw alcohol consumption, and interdict illicit trafficking in alcohol. Rather than resolving the problem of alcoholism in the United States, however, prohibition not only failed to curb drinking but also criminalized a large percentage of the American population, created a lucrative market for illicit alcohol products, and ultimately resulted in the rise of organized crime.

Blame Technology Reactivists sometimes have blamed technology for less than desirable conditions. During the early years of the Industrial Revolution in England, the Luddites attacked new factories being built because they were convinced that technology was destroying the quality of life.

Macro Social Work and the Reactive Approach

Social workers who take a reactivist approach should ask themselves whether a return to a previous state is needed or even desirable. When problem solvers concentrate only on getting rid of what they do not want, what they consider to be morally wrong, what does not work, or become suspicious of progress, they “may not get what they do want, but may, instead, get something much worse.... [The] removal or suppression of a problem or dysfunction in the present state does not guarantee a return to a previous state.”¹²³ Rather than merely eradicate or eliminate aspects of current reality that are creating difficulty, solutions need to include reshaping or changing systems to more desirable patterns.

Inactive Approach

Unlike reactivists who want to restore a past state of affairs, inactivists work hard at preventing change. Inactivists seek to maintain the status quo and keep things just as they are. Inactivists face the future by putting on the brakes. The inactive approach conserves the present by preventing change. The world may not be perfect, but it is good enough. Implicit in the inactivist approach is a kind of social Darwinism that assumes that social systems naturally “evolve” by means of the laws of natural selection and survival of the fittest. It is not only easier but actually better, in the long run, so proponents claim, to let “nature take its course,” to leave things alone, particularly, though not exclusively, in the economy.

Inactivists believe that meddling with the natural course of events creates most of our problems. Like reactivists, inactivists tend to applaud a socially passive approach to the human condition, align themselves with the status quo, and identify with the power elite whose vested interests are protected by such an approach. Inactivists try to prevent change in the political process, economy, and society as a whole.

Political Inactivism Inactivism does not mean “not acting.” Political inactivists work very hard to prevent social action that results in change. A large number of people must be kept busy without actually accomplishing anything, or they must be kept busy keeping others from doing something. Inactivist policymakers, for example, set up commissions and committees that study problems and then do nothing, giving the illusion of progress while delaying it at the same time.

Inactivist administrators use bureaucracy to wrap processes in red tape, obfuscating and delaying decisions. Inactivist presidents use the veto to stop the work of Congress, delaying what may have taken congressional committees and the joint action of the Senate and House months of work. Inactivist politicians waste time by blaming others for problems and by engaging in endless and fruitless debates about what went wrong, the object of which is to defuse the problem and to justify their own inaction.

Economic Inactivism Economic inactivists claim that government intervention in the economy by regulation, taxation, and redistribution of wealth only

distorts natural laws of supply and demand. In the aggregate, economic inactivists argue, while some may be disadvantaged in the short run, society is better off when the free market is allowed to control itself.

Social Inactivism The laissez-faire inactivist approach also extends into the social sector. Inactivists recommend that government should not play a role in social intervention, including social planning, funding and operating social programs, or providing social services. If people want or need such services, they should be provided voluntarily. Money that is appropriated by taxation for social programs only distorts the economy and artificially diverts resources to support those who drain the economy. Moreover, public schools, libraries, parks, and other public services are best provided by the private sector and should be paid for by those who use them rather than by all taxpayers.

Critics of the Inactivist Approach Critics of the inactivist approach claim that inactivism is incapable of and even opposed to making fundamental changes in the social environment. Instead, inactivists tend to perpetuate a social system in the direction it is headed or make modest improvements in it. They blame victims or activists for social problems. Inactivists often react to problems with law and order solutions or by crisis management.

Person or Activist Blame Burdened by the consequences of their perspective, many inactivists blame victims such as those in poverty as the cause of their own problems and those who protest social injustice as destroyers of the social fabric. Inactivist power figures punish people who threaten the existing social order or who act out defiantly against its rules and practices. Officials in the segregationist South blamed “agitators” from the North for civil rights demonstrations. Others harassed and even murdered African American protesters, as if activists rather than political disenfranchisement, discrimination, and the unfair labor practices that racism created were the cause of citizen unrest.

Law and Order Solutions Inactivist politicians and policymakers see social problems in simplistic and synoptic ways. Their perspective often limits them to “law and order” solutions in the form of more laws, harsher penalties for lawbreakers, larger police forces, increased military budgets, and larger

and more numerous prisons. They tend to be incapable of recognizing that these remedies, rather than solving, may add to problems, cost money that could go to bettering society, and ultimately help prevent many of those problems from occurring.

Crisis Management Inactivist decision makers allow unattended social problems to pile up to the point where they cannot be ignored. Because inactivist decision makers try to put off decisions, they tend to respond to serious threats by engaging in what has come to be known as “crisis management.” Inactivists act when necessary for survival or stability but do no more than is required to “turn off the heat.” “Crisis management focuses on suppressing symptoms rather than on curing ailments.”¹²⁴

Macro Social Work and the Inactivist Approach

Inactivist governmental and corporate managers relegate social welfare services to a subsidiary maintenance role of “filling in the gap” where the market has failed. The welfare system and social planners are expected to clean up damage, including unemployment and poverty, that the market economy has left in its wake. Rather than getting at the roots of social problems, social welfare from an inactivist perspective simply “picks up the pieces” by treating or aiding people who are the fallout of systems processes, allowing the system to continue on its course. Inactivists often see social work as an adjunct to the economy, “balancing social welfare resources to meet social welfare needs”¹²⁵ to keep the system going.

Macro social workers, however, reject colluding with oppression or collaborating in maintaining an unequal and unjust system. Rather than appeasement, macro social workers empower people whom the economy disadvantages and joins with them to change social structures that create social problems. Macro social workers assist people in making social change rather than slowing it down or blocking it.

Understanding the inactivist approach, however, can assist macro social workers to become sensitive to the ways that public officials and those in the corporate sector attempt to co-opt social workers, using them and social service programs to further system maintenance rather than system change.

Proactive Approach

Proactivists are not satisfied with reverting to a less complicated past like reactivists or keeping things as

they are like inactivists. The watchword of proactivists is “future oriented.” Proactivists are invested in growth and technology, and often see politics as an exciting game whose goal is to win.

Future Oriented Proactivists are forward looking. They tend to ride a precarious wave of future events. Not content to merely seek “good enough” solutions, proactivists want to optimize. They try to solve rather than resolve, accelerate movement into the future rather than slow it down, and encourage change instead of resist it. For them, the future is filled with opportunity. Change is virtually synonymous with progress.

Proactive leaders attempt to forecast alternative futures and spend considerable time researching and anticipating. Proactivists approach the future by predicting and preparing. Of the two, the most crucial is prediction, because they know that if their calculations are wrong, “then the preparation, no matter how good, is either ineffective or harmful. On the other hand, even if preparation for a correctly predicted future is less than perfect, one is likely to be better off with calculations than without them.”¹²⁶ Proactivist problem solvers “try harder to avoid missing opportunities (acts of omission) than doing something wrong.”¹²⁷ It is better, claim proactivists, to ask forgiveness than permission.

Growth and Technology Proactivists encourage and facilitate technology as a crucial weapon in the struggle and tend to be enamored with its possibilities. Proactivists also are excited by growth for its own sake. “Growth is the ultimate objective of proactivists: to become the largest, wealthiest, strongest.”¹²⁸ Proactivist problem solvers attempt to squeeze growth out of the economy, shaping its confines to political and social goals of survival and dominance rather than allowing the economy to shape the society as inactivists tend to do.

Politics as a Game Proactivists, as political “game players,” enjoy using social and political systems in contests of power and progress, quickly moving systems further into modernity. In the calculus of winning, proactive “gamesmen” focus on indicators such as the standard of living, wealth accumulation, and acquisition of power to reach a goal first with the

most. To the extent that social problems create a drag on the system, proactivists engage in problem solving with some gusto, employing progressive examination and active social experimentation, particularly if there is evidence of a clear payoff for them.

Macro Social Work and the Proactivist Approach

Proactivist problem solvers are excited by change, progress, and its attendant components of power, success, and achievement for their own sakes. In this sense, proactivists are authentic modernists who revel in technology, speed, wealth, and size. Although much good can come through progress and change, macro social workers also understand that what some consider to be progress others may view as contrary to their interests, particularly when progress is imposed from the top and ultimately benefits those in power.

Many international macro social workers have seen the effects of so-called progress in developing nations. In India they have watched as massive systems of dams have left many homeless, deprived them of their livelihood, land, and culture, and destroyed the environment. The citizens of Bhopal continue to suffer the ravages of progress as pesticides poison their land and water. Indians in Bolivia have seen how progress has stolen their natural resources and left them destitute. Social workers support social change when those changes occur from the bottom up, when they are in the service of the people who make the changes, and when the benefits of social change accrue to all citizens equally, but are hesitant to applaud when progress ultimately harms the people it is supposed to help.

Interactivist Approach

The interactivist approach is congruent with the action-social model of social work and is embedded in the epistemology of active-social thinking. Persons using the interactivist approach see that individuals, groups, communities, and society interact together synergistically to form a whole. In this interaction, each part is interconnected, necessary, and essential. Interactivists also use ideas from symbolic interaction theory. They assert that the glue that binds people together is comprised of social goods such as genuineness, compassion, and caring generated by “we-relations,” to use Alfred Schutz’s term.¹²⁹ Interactivists differ from the reactive or proactive stance. Interactivists are

participation oriented, value centered, flexible, aware of the dangers of sunk costs and hazards of growth.

Interactivist versus Reactive and Proactivism

Interactivists do not resolve problems as do reactivists or solve problems as do proactivists. They want to *dissolve* problems. Dissolving social problems requires changing the institution, community, organization, system, or culture in which the problem is embedded in such a way as to eliminate the issue. Interactivists engage in active-social thinking, and often engage in project construction by means of discursive group processes.

In the same way, rather than looking to the past to discover what went wrong as do reactivists, interactivists look ahead to see what is possible, as do proactivists. Unlike proactivists, however, interactivists move beyond simple prediction and preparation. Interactivist social workers want to create a sustainable, equitable future, shaping not only its design but also its internal culture.

Participation Oriented Democratic, participatory, and people-centered, the interactive approach stems from a view that justice requires that people be given equal access to society’s resources and self-determination in making decisions that affect them and their communities.

Networking is extremely important to the interactivist perspective, bringing together people with similar interests, talents, skills, and knowledge to work cooperatively. Interactive social work is based on the idea that “all those who are intended to benefit from solving social problems should be given an opportunity to participate ... and that more development often takes place by engaging in problem-solving than implementing solutions,”¹³⁰ in the words of John Forester.

Value Centered Social welfare decisions inevitably include values and ethics. Unlike reactivists who are committed to values of the past, inactivists who are bound to values of the present, or proactivists who are enamored with values inherent in growth, power, and technology, social workers using the interactive approach accept certain values as being of overall importance but shift the way those values are implemented.

Interactivist macro social workers use ethically based social reason to understand the core values that

are inherent in a good society. Interactivists believe that social problem solving must be morally acute and that the values implicit in decisions be sensitive to the changing social climate. In the 1850s, for example, killing a whale was socially sanctioned, but now it is a morally contentious issue. Technologically improved ways to kill whales, increased demand for whale products, and the near extinction of whale species have occurred, requiring people to shift their perspective.

Flexible Interactive problem solving takes into account that plans, even those based on technology, never work out exactly as expected. Interactivists recognize that there are often both good and bad unintended consequences of decisions. Implementation requires, therefore, that the critical assumptions on which any plan is based be formulated explicitly, checked frequently, and changed when necessary. For example, as a group moves toward meeting its goals using a planned strategy of action, they will inevitably encounter difficulties and learn how to overcome obstacles. As they talk together about their common experiences, new tactics or different strategies may occur to them that may be more successful. Rather than continuing with their original plan, they may change direction or try new approaches.

Interactive social workers, therefore, seek technical solutions where possible, as do proactivists, but infuse social change with value content, consciously applying social reason to scan social systems, adjusting plans as the situation changes. Interactivists aim not only to achieve a goal but to make quality decisions.

Dangers of Sunk Costs Because organizations are powerful systems, there is always a tendency to allow previous decisions and sunk costs to determine future action. (Sunk costs are money, time, and effort already sunk into projects.) Sometimes projects that have negative outcomes are continued merely because of the resources already expended on them. One of the reasons for the government's resistance to ending the futile war in Vietnam was the faulty perception that victory could still be achieved by just a little more effort, a bit more progress, and then all of the expense and the lives lost would be justified.

Hazards of Growth Unlimited growth may have been a worthy goal at one point in our history. But

unless mediated by other worthy ends, such as environmental quality, growth becomes self-defeating or even disastrous. Interactivist social workers desire growth only if it contributes to the development of people and is consistent with the welfare of the entire social order and a sustainable ecological milieu.

ANSWERS THAT WON'T WORK

Sometimes the approaches people take to social problems delude, blind, or prevent us from solving them. At times those mechanisms are so strong that people, especially those in positions of power, condone or perpetuate the very problems they pretend to solve.

Macro social workers must seek answers that work. We must be honest with ourselves and with others when we look for answers. We must be aware that in spite of our good intentions, we may subscribe to a range of illusions about social problems and end up exacerbating rather than solving them. We must learn to recognize these escapes to illusion. Among these are social denial, avoidance, blaming, moralizing, and the quick fix.

Social Denial

Denial takes many forms. We refuse to acknowledge the existence of social problems. When we do admit their existence, we look at them as "personal" problems instead of "social" problems. We also deny their existence by excluding problem people from our lives, or by rationalizing our inaction.

Refuse to Admit the Problem Exists A major form of denial in our society is our refusal to admit that social problems exist. Many people in the United States did not often consider economic exploitation or ethnic intolerance to be social problems at all. If anything, the exploitation of women, children, and immigrants, the extermination of Native Americans, and the enslavement of Africans were seen as necessary adjuncts to the economic development of North America. Can you think of social problems that people, especially those in positions of leadership, have either denied or justified as necessary for a higher purpose? What processes or techniques would you recommend when corporate or governmental organizations engage in social denial or rationalize social harm?

Exclude Reality Excluding reality operates by the maxim “out of sight, out of mind.” What we do not see and experience is not part of our reality, and therefore not our problem. We relocated Native Americans to reservations, Chinese to Chinatowns, and Japanese Americans to concentration camps. We effectively banished intellectually, developmentally, and emotionally disabled people from our awareness by placing them in large institutions. Segregation in the South before the Civil Rights Act attempted to use this form of denial as a way of dealing with race relations.

Rationalizing Inaction One form of rationalizing is the “yes, but” game. Some rationalizations are: “Yes, gangs are rampant, but more social programs will not make them go away.” “Yes, there are few services for children, but throwing more money at social problems is not the answer.” “Yes, our cities are deteriorating, but we tried community development in the 1960s and we still have the problem.” “Yes, poor people need medical care, but a national health care system will only make inefficient medical care worse and cost too much money.”

Avoidance

We tend to avoid responsibility for social problems because it may be in our own interest to do so, because they are too difficult to face, or because we are implicated in the social milieu that creates or condones them. Sometimes we avoid social problems by ignoring them, hoping they will go away, or waiting until people adjust to their condition.

Avoid Responsibility Corporations tend not to see themselves as a cause of poverty but rather as a cause of prosperity. In addition, the political system sees itself not as preventing change but as developing solutions to society’s problems. To the contrary, however, as Coleman states, “The political system in America is marvelously well designed to enable actors to evade responsibility for events such as energy waste and widespread pollution, even when these events are the products of decisions they have made.”¹³¹

Society Heal Thyself One form of avoidance is to insist that if one ignores problems, eventually they will go away or solve themselves. It is easy to delude

ourselves that if we wait long enough, social problems will either diminish on their own or become someone else’s problem. This laissez-faire approach to social problems expects the powerless to turn down the lamp of reason and rely on the operation of a benevolent social system to ultimately work things out in their interest.

Time Heals All Wounds If we give things time, some argue, the naturally self-correcting mechanisms of the social body will cure the problem. Systems advocates argue that although there may be short-term pain or difficulties for certain groups, if we have faith in economic and political systems, everything will work out in the long run.

Social Adaptation A more subtle variation of the time heals all wounds strategy is the idea that the longer society puts things off, the more people will adapt and accept their lot. They will eventually forget injustices and learn to live with their social condition. As they adjust, however, they form a culture of victimization in which powerlessness becomes part of their milieu. The more people act the role of victims, the more they reinforce their stereotyped roles, becoming unwilling or unable to gain resources for themselves. Delaying and avoiding dealing with social problems always works in favor of those in power.

Blaming

Blaming others is a way of deflecting responsibility from those who create social problems to those who bear their effects. Those in power have honed this strategy to a fine point. There is no dearth of targets of blame. We can blame the victim, blame the providers, and blame the reformers, among other targets. Sometimes we pass the buck or engage in scapegoating. These strategies always result in a dead end.

Blame the Victim Sometimes people blame the victim for problems beyond his or her control and then try to change the individual’s behavior to conform to social norms. They say that it is the fault of the poor that they are poor. The poor are lazy, undisciplined, and lack personal initiative. Peter Breggin asserts, for example, that many mental health social workers have participated in blaming child victims by diagnosing them as having

histories of neglect or abuse, and then drugging and hospitalizing them, taking “the pressure off the parents, the family, the school and the society.”¹³²

Blame the Providers People charged with the responsibility of solving problems are sometimes blamed for causing them. “We have too many bureaucrats.” “There is too much inefficiency, too much red tape, too much regulation, too much interference, too much government.” These games beg the question of the real locus of social problems.

Blame the Reformers Sometimes social change agents are blamed for causing social problems. Socialists, pacifists, social activists, protesters, union organizers, community organizers, and a host of other social reformers have been vilified as malcontents and subversives who disturb social stability and undermine the social order. Many of these reformers have been harassed, jailed, and even murdered.

Pass the Buck Sometimes those wanting to exonerate themselves for their complicity with oppression or further their own ambitions use social problems as a means for their ends. Crime, welfare, or racial intolerance often become the focus of political campaigns. One politician blames another for being “soft on crime” or for the “welfare mess.” The president blames Congress, Congress blames the president, one political party blames the other. Social problems become political footballs. After an election has been won, however, and one politician or political party gains power, concern for resolving the social problem often seems to evaporate.

Scapegoating A social group may be blamed for the existence of a social problem even when they are its victims. Any number of ethnic groups have been unfairly targeted as “problems” and blamed for situations caused by conditions in the social environment over which they had no control. The French, for example, were blamed for subversion, Native Americans for impeding the onward march to open the West to settlement, African Americans for resisting enslavement, Chinese for causing recessions, and Japanese for threatening national security. Racially identifiable groups with little power and few resources can easily become targets of scapegoating and racial hysteria.

Moralizing

Those people who do not meet the moral standards of people in power may be perceived as not deserving help. People who are destitute, for example, have been divided into the “deserving” poor and the “undeserving” poor. Those we consider deserving will receive help; those not worthy will receive little or nothing. Retribution sometimes follows this way of thinking. In the retribution game, those enmeshed in social problems are made to pay. Punish welfare recipients by reducing payments, passing residency requirements, and increasing restrictions as incentives for people to get off welfare. Punish criminals by longer, harsher sentences. Once freed, label them so that they will find it even more difficult to find a job or succeed in overcoming the issues that led to their being imprisoned.

The Quick Fix

Most social problems are perpetuated by years of reinforcement, neglect, and denial. Those who propose one-shot, short-term, stopgap solutions and expect an immediate turnaround set up social change efforts for failure. Johnson’s War on Poverty, begun in the 1960s, was dismantled by the Nixon administration after only a few years and has been blamed for problems plaguing our cities 30 years later. The illusion that long-standing social problems can be solved by a quick fix ultimately leads to discouragement and anger.

Macro Social Work and Social Problems

Macro social workers understand that humans are ultimately in control of the extent to which social problems exist in the societies they construct. Social problems will continue as long as people are willing to either tolerate them or allow others to benefit from them.

Solving social problems cannot occur by mere technology alone. For example, today we have the technical capacity to overcome poverty in this country, to provide free medical care for everyone, and to feed our entire population. However, we have not overcome poverty, provided health care as a right, or fed our population. If we are to solve these and other social problems, we must change our attitudes and the political and cultural ideologies that prevent us from doing so. We must shift from a scarcity, anxiety, and uncertainty mode of living to an abundance-based, strengths,

certainty, and stability approach in which we go confidently into the future, trusting one another and the institutions that we have established.

People who are informed about action-social modes of being and who use social thinking are more likely to resist situations in which those in control of systems further their own interests, institutionalize social problems, and apply change to us as if we were passive recipients of conditions that often seem beyond our control.

Macro social workers engage people to solve problems and make social change. We assist people who struggle to understand themselves and their social environment. We encourage members who create meaning and construct social reality by means of active-social thinking and social involvement. We aim at helping make a healthier, more beneficial society for everyone.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you learned about a typology of problems including a range of three levels of conventional human problems. You learned that these kinds of human problems are resolvable by professional experts alone or as members of groups who use rational problem solving alone or in combination with social thinking.

You learned about social problems, the fourth and most complex level of problems that humans encounter. You explored a definition of social problems and critiqued that definition. You explored five theories that help us understand the origin of social problems and how macro social workers use those theories. You also engaged a continuum of problem-solving approaches and learned why the interactive approach is congruent with the action-social model of macro social work. Finally, you discovered a number of answers to social problems that don't work.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do social problems tend to persist in spite of all our advanced learning and technology?
2. Technological solutions to problems have increased a great deal over time, but many of the solutions for social problems have not changed from those used even in the distant past. For example, the most common solutions to crime—incarceration and physical punishment—have not changed in well over 2,000 years, despite the fact that many criminologists assert that these

methods may sometimes create more crime than they solve. Our responses to poverty still rely on the principles of the Elizabethan Poor Law, enacted over 400 years ago, yet poverty continues to plague us. Our responses to drug abuse—criminalizing drug use, incarceration, interdiction, and confiscation—were found unworkable more than 70 years ago during Prohibition, yet we continue to use those same remedies today. Why do we seem incapable of arriving at better ways of solving the social troubles that have plagued the human condition for millennia?

3. The statement was made that overcoming social problems becomes enormously difficult because they are built into the very fabric of our social order. Do you believe this assertion is true? If so, what are the implications for the future of our society?

EXERCISE 4.5

Diagnosing Social Problems

Purpose

You will practice diagnosing two social problems and deciding on an approach to them.

Process

Read the vignettes below. Develop a diagnosis of both social problems; then answer the following questions:

1. What role should the profession of social work take in trying to solve each of these social problems?
2. How would clinical social work approach the problem?
3. How would macro social work approach the problem?
4. What implications can you draw for allocating social service resources, training social workers, and strategies that the profession of social work should advocate?

Violence Toward Children

Child physical abuse, sexual abuse, serial murders, and child theft occur with regularity in the United States. Compared with 669,000 in 1976, more

than 2 million cases of child abuse were reported in 1986, and by 2009 that number had increased to 3.3 million, involving an estimated 6 million children.¹³³ In 1990 over 3,600 children died and 9,000 more were wounded by guns. In 1994 that number reached 5,820, although in 1995 it fell by nearly 10% to 5,277. In 2006, some 3,184 children and teens died from gunfire in the United States.¹³⁴ It is estimated that between 100,000 to 375,000 babies were born addicted to drugs in 1990, a number that remains unchanged in 2010.¹³⁵

Racial Discrimination

Nearly 40 years after the Civil Rights Act was passed, and despite affirmative action and equal employment opportunity laws, systemic racial discrimination continues to exist. In 1990 the Urban Institute concluded that when equally qualified for jobs, African Americans were three times less likely to be hired than white candidates.

EXERCISE 4.6

The Illusion Exercise

In class, form into four groups. Each group chooses a different social problem that is current. Ask yourselves what illusions we hold about the problem that prevent us from solving it. Develop a list of potential reasons. Outside of class, each person spends time talking to people, reading newspaper editorials and letters to the editor, listening to talk shows, and watching the news to spot instances of social denial, avoidance, blaming, moralizing, or quick fixes. Make a few notes about your findings.

In class, each group member assumes a role portraying a person who exhibits one or more answers that don't work. Form into a fishbowl, with one set of group's members seated in the center and the rest of the class seated around the outside. The members of the inner circle discuss the problem that the group studied, each member role-playing one of the answers that doesn't work. The outer circle observes the process and gives feedback.

Other groups take turns being in the center of the fishbowl and role-play a discussion of a problem and a set of "answers that don't work." After

all groups have had a chance to interact and give feedback, the entire class reassembles and discusses their reactions to the exercise.

EXERCISE 4.7

Critiquing the Origins of Social Problems

Develop a critique of one of the five models describing origins of social problems. With what parts of the model do you agree? With what parts do you disagree? Share your critique with others in class and with your instructor.

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5

Solving Problems and Making Social Change

Reason “At Large”

Men of the Enlightenment saw no end to this triumphant expansion of [instrumental] reason into all areas of social life.¹

William Barrett

How Not to Solve Problems

You cannot solve problems by using the same management strategies that created the problem. The very system that has patriarchy as the root problem uses patriarchal means to try to eliminate its symptoms.²

Peter Block

Difficulties in Making Change

It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, or doubtful of success, or more dangerous to handle than to initiate a new order of things. The reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in those who would profit by the new.³

Niccolo Machiavelli

Ideas in This Chapter

THE TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

WHAT IS RATIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING?

Practical

Unitary Decision Maker

Reason at Large

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RPS AND SOCIAL WORK

Progressive Era (1885–1915)

Social Work Problem Solving in the 1950s and 1960s

Rational Problem Solving Today

HOW TO USE RATIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Decide on a Goal or Target

Gather Information About the Problem

Generate Alternative Solutions

Assess and Compare Alternatives

Choose the Best Solution

Develop a Strategy

Implement the Strategy

Evaluate the Results

LIMITATIONS OF RATIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Values in the Method Itself

Maximize Interests of Decision Makers

Unidimensional

Inability to Dissolve Social Problems

HOW TO USE SOCIAL THINKING TO SOLVE

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Cognitive Dissonance

Access Feelings
 Engage Values
 Stimulate Cognition
 Intuition for Active Reflection
 Use Imagination to Envision
 Move to Action
 Closing the Circle
 Limitations of Social Thinking
MAKING SOCIAL CHANGE
 What Is Social Change?

Social Change and Value Absolutes
 Social Change as a Social Good
ACTION-SOCIAL CHANGE PROCESS
 Principles of Social Change
 Manage the Change Process
 The Life Cycle of Social Change
 Macro Social Work and Social Change
CONCLUSION
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
ADDITIONAL READING

THE TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS

The tragedy of the commons happens in this way: It begins with a pasture open to all. Each herdsman may keep as many cattle on the commons as he or she wishes. Normally such an arrangement works when tribal wars, poaching, and disease keep the numbers of cattle and people well below the ability of the land to sustain them all. Finally, however, the day comes when technology equalizes the ability of the open pasture to carry the burden. Conflicts are negotiated, diseases are cured, and hardier strains of cattle are introduced. At this point the effectiveness of the commons degenerates into tragedy.

As a rational actor, each herdsman wants to maximize his or her self-interest and asks, “What are the benefits to me of adding one more animal to my herd?” Since the herdsman receives all of the profits from the sale of an animal, he will receive a positive utility of +1. On the other hand, adding one more animal will result in the land being overgrazed. Because the effects of overgrazing are shared by all, the costs of overgrazing for any herdsman making with decision is only a fraction of -1 . Therefore, for a rational decision maker, it is only sensible to add another animal to his herd, and another and another.

This conclusion is reached by each herdsman sharing the commons. Each rational actor is locked into a way of thinking that compels him or her, in a world that is limited, to add to his or her herd without limit. “Therein lies the tragedy of the commons. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush. Each pursuing his own interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. Freedom in a commons becomes ruin to all.”⁴

The tragedy of the commons is a modern tragedy in which the rational pursuit of private self-interest

resists planning and, in a world of high technology, overrides the public and social good—whether that good is land, the ocean, the air or even people.

EXERCISE 5.1

Reviewing The Tragedy of the Commons

Review the tragedy of the commons and then answer the following questions.

1. Are there potentially injurious effects of technological advances for which technology itself has no solutions?
2. How can public goods be protected from overconsumption or spillovers?
3. Many proactive social planners rely on technology and growth. What are the implications of the tragedy of the commons for proactivist social planners?
4. What parallels are there between private issues and social problems? For example, does private greed become a public or social problem? If so, how?

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter you will learn a definition of rational problem solving and explore a brief history of RPS. You will explore how rational problem solving is used in social work and how to apply it step by step. You will also discover a number of limitations of RPS in social work practice. Once you understand how to

use rational problem solving, you have a powerful tool at your disposal when you intervene to improve people's social environment.

In addition to rational problem solving, you will build on your understanding of social thinking first described in Chapter 2. You will learn a definition of social thinking and explore the social thinking process.

You will learn that the most intransigent problems that humans face, such as poverty, endemic alienation, inhumanity, institutionalized violence, can only be dissolved by social thinking in combination with making social change. You will explore several theories of social change and examine some of their limitations. You will learn about the action-social model of social change, three aspects of change, and how to change social systems.

Social workers need to understand both modern rational problem solving and social thinking. Each has its place as a way to think about the world. Macro social workers need to be adept at understanding the differences between the two, in what context each is appropriate, and how to use both of them.

WHAT IS RATIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING?

Rational problem solving, also called calculative or instrumental functional reason, helps a person maximize his or her interests.⁵ It is practical. RPS is the basis for thinking and deciding from the individual to the societal levels and is specifically applied in most social systems. Because systems are nearly universal in modern society, RPS has come to be the most generally used mode of thinking today.

Rational problem solving is often used when a person chooses between several options to maximize his or her interests. When you choose an alternative that gives you more rather than less, higher quality rather than lower quality, cheaper rather than more expensive, faster rather than slower, more efficient rather than less efficient, or some combination of these values, you are being rational. For example, when you make a rational choice, you first decide on the goal you want to accomplish or the preferences you want to maximize. Then you gather as much information as you can about the choices you want to make. You test each alternative solution against your experience and the information you have collected, and you calculate its benefits and costs. You rank the alternative choices and choose the one that gives you the most benefit at the least cost.⁶

Rational problem solving is simply a way of computing a *ratio* of pros to cons, or benefits to costs, that maximizes the value you receive from your decision.⁷

Practical

Rational problem solving is logical and simple, straightforward and direct. It is systematic and sequential and helps you achieve your purposes quickly and cheaply. Because it deals with facts, RPS easily lends itself to issues that can be quantified. When you use rational problem solving, you are less likely to miss crucial issues or to skip over things that need to be considered.

Unitary Decision Maker

People's behavior is often intelligible, and in the aggregate can sometimes be predicted and to a certain degree controlled. This rational actor model can be applied, furthermore, to individuals, groups, organizational systems, and even entire nations if they act together in a unitary way.⁸ The rational model of foreign policy, for example, often assumes that entire nations act rationally in maximizing their self-interests in competition with other nations, which are assumed to also act rationally. John Harsanyi asserts that "This concept of rationality is important mainly because if a government, like a person, acts rationally its behavior can be fully explained in terms of the goals he is trying to achieve."⁹ By making that assumption, governmental decision makers can calculate how a nation might respond to challenges from another government and then plot strategies based on those calculations.¹⁰

Reason at Large

Because of its capacity to manage risk and its calculative utility, RPS, in either its basic or more complex variations, is *the* means by which nearly all problems are approached today. According to Alberto Ramos, RPS has become so generalized that rational calculation is commonly understood to be "reason at large."¹¹ Donald Schön says that "technical reason or RPS is the dominant means by which experts find the best solution for a given problem."¹² The range of issues that RPS encompasses includes "government decision making, individual consumer decisions, collective economic agents, social institutions such as the criminal justice system and the family,"¹³ says Mary Zey, and, according to Gary Becker, provides "a framework

applicable to *all* human behavior—to all types of decisions and to persons from all walks of life.”¹⁴

RPS is universally used for making systems decisions, where it is also known as “systems thinking.” It is called, for good reason, the “systems approach” by C. West Churchman.¹⁵ It has become a means of determining how many political decisions are made,¹⁶ and it is the basis for management science and public policy analysis.¹⁷ Rational problem solving is the basis of organization and administrative decision making.¹⁸ RPS not only informs abstract theoretical models in economics but also is applied in operations research and design studies.¹⁹ Complex computer programs are based on this approach, as is modern statistical decision theory and game theory.²⁰

RPS can be used at several levels of human problem solving, as you learned in Chapter 4. It is not at all surprising, then, that along with almost all other arenas of our society, social workers have also adopted the calculative logic of modern reason and rational problem solving and applied them to solving many of the problems of the human condition.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RPS AND SOCIAL WORK

Although it was not originally labeled as such, rational problem solving played a key role in the development of social casework and in many reforms during the Progressive Era of American history. It was popularized and standardized as casework problem solving in the 1950s, and was officially adopted as the primary means by which social work approaches its generalist method in the early 1990s.

Progressive Era (1885–1915)

Progressive social workers of the Charity Organization Society and settlement houses were “professional experts who applied rational planning and policy techniques to engineer the social machinery of the emerging modern American society,”²¹ says John Ehrenreich. Their goal was nothing less than to create “a rational, stable, efficient, and self-reproducing social order.”²²

The new social work professionals embraced the “value neutrality of knowledge, the beneficence of science, technological expertise, and the desirability of efficiency and order in all things.”²³ Social workers intended to carry out the task of reform on a uniform

statewide or nationwide basis by applying impartial rules of governance, interest group liberalism, social control and amelioration, and rational decision making to social policy,²⁴ according to Ehrenreich. Decisions would be made by gathering facts, comparing alternatives, and choosing solutions that best served the public good, guided by a commitment to the public interest arrived at by an open and democratic process. The goal of rationality was to maximize, if not optimize (find the one best way), a means of resolving many of the problems that plagued society.

Charity Organization Societies (COS) Originating in 1877 “in response to rapid urbanization and industrialization and the effects of the Great Depression of 1873,”²⁵ the COS movement developed a “science of charity” based on “rationality, efficiency, foresight, and planning.”²⁶ The COS movement affirmed that a collective and cooperative approach to the problems of poverty could be followed, avoiding duplication and ensuring collaboration, resource coordination, and efficiency. Committed to the principle that “poverty could be cured and prevented if its causes could be discovered and removed,”²⁷ the COS attempted “to achieve rationality in social welfare by managing an entire voluntary system based on the most respected social science principles of the time,”²⁸ says Beulah Compton. Fabricant and Fisher, for example, assert that “the ‘scientific approach’ of the COS sought to bring business principles of efficiency, management and consolidation to the administration of charity.”²⁹ COS workers devised the social casework process as a rational, systematic way of helping people make the most effective choices for themselves and their families. COS social workers turned their attention to community issues and developed a rational planning process by which charitable organizations would assess needs, avoid duplication and waste, and work together to raise and distribute funding through efficient service delivery.

Settlement Houses Settlement house workers of the Progressive Era and others pressed for “good government,” advocating for a rational basis on which political decisions would ensure fairness, equality, and an end to bribery and the spoils system. Social workers championed the Pendleton Act, which in 1883 established the Civil Service Commission and the principle of hiring the most qualified person for government

offices, using clear, consistent, rational, job-related criteria rather than hiring on the basis of favoritism, nepotism, and amicism (giving preference to one's friends). Social workers used the power of rational bureaucracy in government as a countervailing force to keep government decision making formal, unbiased, value neutral, and free from the influences of political bargaining.

Social Work Problem Solving in the 1950s and 1960s

The first person to explicitly link social work with RPS was Helen Harris Perlman (1906–2004) who, in 1957, described the social casework method as a rational problem-solving process and outlined its steps.³⁰

Rational Problem Solving Today

Rational problem solving has been described in many social work texts as the universal model by which social workers assist clients in resolving human problems,³¹ and it has become a conscious part of the core understanding of social work. In 1992 the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) adopted rational problem solving as *the* method by which social workers engage in practice. CSWE, for example, officially recommends that all social work students learn how to: (1) define issues, (2) collect and assess data, (3) identify alternative interventions, (4) select and (5) implement courses of action, and (6) monitor and evaluate outcomes.³²

Today the rational problem solving method continues to be a unifying core underlying social work practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Macro social workers use RPS successfully in task group decision making. We engage in rational thinking when we practice community planning, community development, and community organization. It is the foundation on which administration, organization development, and social policy analysis are based,³³ and it is synonymous with social work research.³⁴

HOW TO USE RATIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Rational problem solving, as you discovered in Chapter 4, is best used when approaching three major levels of problems, generically labeled as conventional human problems. RPS helps people calculate the pros and cons of every contingency to determine the best

course of action. Although there are many variations of this rational process, its constituent steps are widely recognized.³⁵ Most social workers agree that rational problem solving in social work involves the following steps (see Figure 5.1):

1. Decide on a goal or target.
2. Gather information about the problem and formulate a problem statement.
3. Generate a number of alternative solutions to the problem.
4. Assess and compare alternatives.
5. Select the best or most cost-beneficial solution.
6. Develop a strategy or plan of action.
7. Carry out or implement the strategy.
8. Evaluate the results.

Decide on a Goal or Target

Deciding on a goal or target is the most important part of the problem-solving process. It is also the lengthiest. There are three parts to deciding on a target: recognizing that a problem exists, identifying it, and choosing it.

Recognize the Problem or Issue A personal or social issue, as troublesome as it may be, is not a “problem” until an individual or group recognizes and labels it as such. Often pain and dysfunction are present, but people ignore or deny their existence. Racial discrimination against African Americans, for example, began when the first slaves were brought to this country. Racial discrimination was accepted as a normal, even necessary, way of life among many members of society. It was perpetuated even after the Civil War until the community of African Americans decided to actively resist. In the same way, the problem of drunken drivers was not a nationally recognized issue until the mother of a child killed by a drunk driver organized MADD—Mothers Against Drunk Drivers.

Identify the Problem Once your community or organization recognizes that a problem exists, members need to identify the specific issues on which they want to work. Usually RPS works best with human problems, described in Chapter 4, whose goals are clear, about which information is available, and for which agreed-upon solutions exist. Many individual problems, planning problems, organizational decisions, program and administrative problems, and staffing funding issues are ideal candidates for RPS.

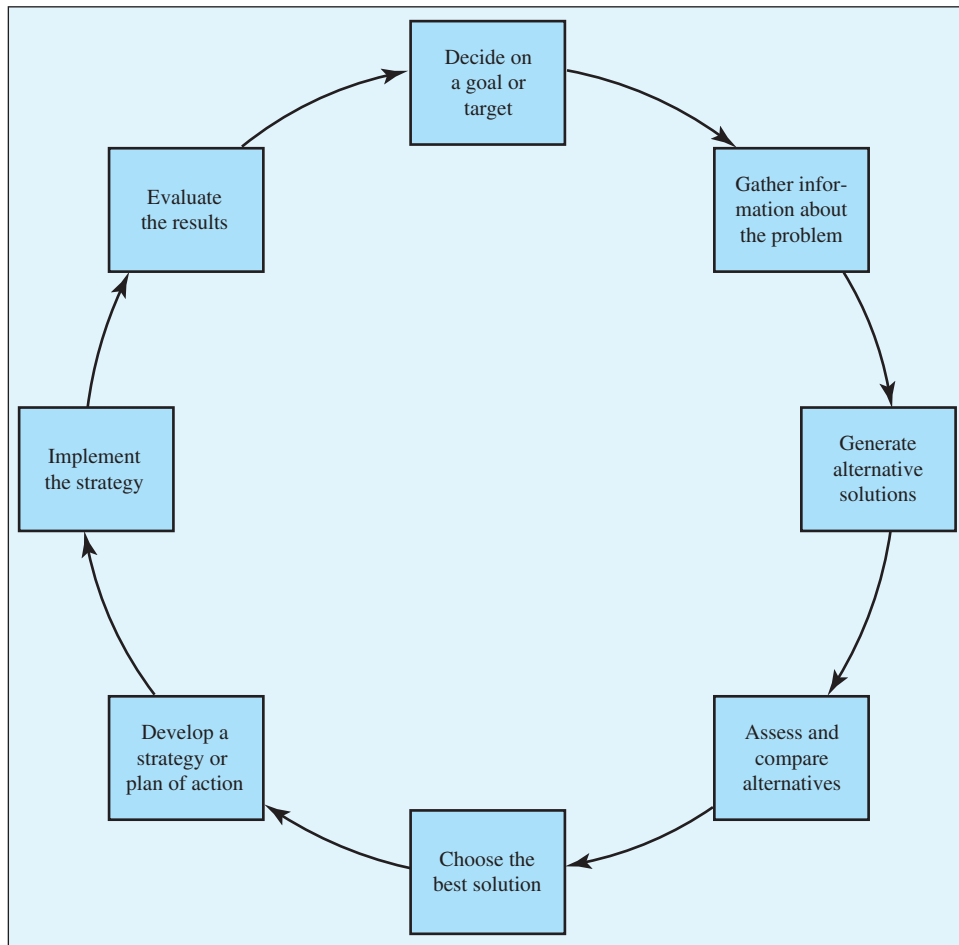


FIGURE 5.1 Rational Problem-Solving Cycle

Make a list of the problems or issues confronting your community or group, and compare your list with the following criteria to narrow your choice to one. The problem chosen should be one that can be resolved successfully, has legitimacy, and over which the group has some control. The problem should be meaningful, and solving it should have beneficial effects.

Successful Resolution Choose an issue that your group has a good chance of resolving successfully. Consider the amount of energy, time, and money available to your group. Do not choose a problem that is beyond your group's resources. Rather than tackling a large issue, choose a smaller problem that your group has a good chance of solving.

Legitimacy Select a problem in which your group has some legitimate interest. Most community problems

can be seen as legitimate. For example, your group can legitimize itself by publicly declaring its intention to cope with the problem, developing a mission statement, choosing a name that identifies its concern with the problem, and becoming incorporated as a legally recognized organization to address the issue. If your group is dependent on an agency's financial support, however, make sure that your work falls under the agency's mandate; otherwise your source of support may disappear or you may be in conflict with the agency. Sometimes the problem being addressed crosses the boundaries of several agencies or existing groups. In this case, you might develop a coalition of agencies and groups from a number of arenas to join together in the change effort.

Control Choose a problem that is potentially under the control of your group or one in which control needs to be established. Consider, for example, a

group of low-income residents concerned about the inadequate schooling their children are receiving. They may have little control over the school board or its policies. They may have no input into the amount of funding available for their children. This does not mean, however, that they cannot become empowered to gain control or change school policies. They can strategize to gain seats on the board or put pressure on local government to make funding more equitable. They can gain control over the forces that affect the lives of their children.

Meaning Choose a problem that is pressing and current. It should have meaning to your group members, be deeply felt, and be one that can excite and energize them. Its solution should be important to the community as a whole, and the members should have a vested interest in resolving the situation.

Beneficial Effects Select a problem that, when resolved, will have far-reaching beneficial effects. By changing one piece of a problem, your group may begin a process that can bring about changes in an entire system. In this way, you can initiate a series of events that may cause an entire facade to crumble. At the very least, your group can prevent future problems from occurring. The effort and energy you and your group expend should pay off in tangible benefits.

Choosing the Problem If your group has misgivings about any of these issues, resolve them before you commit yourself to working on the problem. Your group needs to be fully invested in the issue on which it will be working. After you have chosen the problem on which you will work, write down a tentative statement of the problem as it appears to your group.

Gather Information About the Problem

There are a number of ways to gather data about a conventional human problem. The people of your community or organization are the best source of information about what is wrong, and you will spend lots of time talking to them. On a more formal level, your group can administer surveys to community or organization members or interview key leaders. Your group may also collect information about the problem from agency records, newspapers, or other existing

sources. Macro social workers bring people together in focus groups to discuss the problem from various points of view. Regardless of the method you use, however, your group will need to ask the questions *why*, *when*, *who*, *where*, and *how*.

Asking Why: Observing Patterns Asking “why” gets at causation, helping you form a social diagnosis of the problem. Once you understand why a social condition exists, you have some control over it. Look at your problem definition and then ask “why” until you can go no further. Suppose, for example, you are working with a community about lack of police protection. Encourage group members to ask these “why” questions:

“Why is there a lack of police involvement?”
Because the city’s priorities are elsewhere.

“Why are they elsewhere?” Because neighborhood residents lack input to decision making.

“Why do residents lack input?” Because they have no effective voice in the process.

“Why do residents have no voice?” Because the system does not provide for citizen input.

“Why not?” Because those in power don’t want input and have excluded people from the process.

Asking “why” helps your members focus on one possible cause and allows them to see patterns that you can use to correct the problem.

Your problem solving group might want to track down the ultimate cause of a conventionally oriented problem. Practically speaking, however, this may be a waste of time. Like the ripples in a pond, one problem creates multiple effects, each of which in turn spreads out from its source, touching more and more systems in its wake. Furthermore, the ultimate cause of a problem, even if known, may be irrelevant to its effects. The series of events leading up to the Civil War in the United States, for example, began with the importation of the first slave into this country. Knowing this fact added nothing to resolving the eventual conflict and resultant racial discrimination that this action set in motion. Causation cannot be undone, but the effects of causation can be understood and dealt with. For the most part, therefore, spend your time understanding the *effects* of problems and discovering *where* in the system the problem is most acute.

Where: Locating the Pain The “where” may be a physical location. Where in a city or community do the homeless congregate? Where are slums developing? The problem may not be located in a geographical place, however, but may center on particular groups of people who experience the problem. In the past, for example, very few services nationwide were provided for persons with developmental disabilities. Parents, friends, and professionals joined together, identified themselves as a community, and pressed for changes in education, housing, and access to facilities. Bit by bit, attitudes changed and services improved.

THINKING IT THROUGH

At the first meeting the group reviewed the literature prepared by the urban redevelopment agency and began to analyze it point by point. The question was asked, “Why did the city decide on urban redevelopment?” There was little response to this question. When the leader asked, “What groups are supporting urban redevelopment?” answers came forth readily: the Chamber of Commerce, labor (because the building trades would get jobs), and the Church (the hierarchy was represented on the Urban Redevelopment Committee of 100 prominent citizens). “Who will lose by it?” Goat Valley residents.

In response to the question “What would happen if the project goes through?” it became quite clear that everyone would get something except the residents, 65% of whom owned their homes. Only a very few who had incomes of \$400 or more per month could transfer any equity and get a loan for the balance. And those who had received welfare payments in the past would have these deducted from any equity they might receive. The leader asked, “Is this fair?” At this point, Dolores Huerta asked, “What are we going to do about it? How could we win? What is the best we could get?” It was decided the Community Services Organization must fight.

Who: Discovering Victims and Perpetrators By asking “who,” your group pinpoints victims and perpetrators. Victims are those who are damaged by a problem. For example, a bank may have an unwritten rule to not approve home loans in certain areas of the city that it assesses as risky—usually areas with low-income residents. Such policies, called *redlining*, tend to discriminate against people in poor neighborhoods, making it next to impossible for people to purchase or improve their homes, resulting in rundown neighborhoods.

Redlining makes victims of almost everyone who lives in a targeted neighborhood.

Perpetrators are those who cause, condone, or provide conditions enabling a community problem to exist. The individual acts of specific leaders of businesses or organizations formalize and institutionalize problems in our social system. Encourage your group to target the individuals in charge: leaders, administrators, policymakers, executives, or others who have control over and can make changes in the system. For example, if redlining policies exist, find out which bank owners, officers, and trustees formulate and carry out those policies. The process of identifying those responsible for instigating or perpetuating community problems helps provide the victims with tangible, personal targets for change.

When: The Time Frame When did the problem arise, and how did it develop over time? Has the problem been increasing over the last six months or year? Answers to these questions help your community or group understand the history, severity, and patterns of the problem. What specific events triggered the problem, and when did they occur? Establishing a chronology of the problem will also tell you about decisions that were made, who made them, and possibly why they were made.

How the Problem Occurred If you can understand how a problem developed, you have come a good part of the way toward changing it. For instance, you may find that organizational decisions that once made sense are now outmoded. A system has failed to adjust to changing conditions. Perhaps mistakes were made that have not been corrected, and a defective system is being perpetuated. When decision makers defend the current system by saying “We’ve always done it this way,” or “don’t ask questions; these are the rules,” there is a good chance that they are allowing system inertia to carry them along. Understanding how organizational or government policies and practices came about can help extricate people from dysfunctional patterns in the social system.

On the other hand, you may find that a consciously planned series of events were made to happen to deprive people of power, control, or resources, keeping them in a position of subservience for the benefit of others. A city council allows a corporation to dump waste in a low-income neighborhood, colludes to

keep wages low, or gives tax breaks with a promise of jobs that never materialize. Discovering this history can uncover patterns of systematic abuse and give your members evidence they can use in their struggle to restore justice.

Generate Alternative Solutions

Help your project task group generate several possible ways to solve the problem, while avoiding the hazards of decision making.

How to Develop Alternatives If the problem has been well researched, generating solutions should be relatively easy. They should flow naturally from the data. Generate as many alternatives as you can that could legitimately solve the problem. One way of opening up the group to considering all possible alternatives is to list every possible aspect of the problem that can be changed, eliminating those that cannot be changed. Then combine these change variables together into various solutions. Eliminate the ones that do not help accomplish at least some of your goals. The ones that remain are viable possibilities. Your group should now have several innovative solutions to consider.

How to Avoid Hazards There are some hazards in developing solutions that you should be aware of, however. For example, there is a tendency for individuals or groups to jump to solutions before they have explored the problem in depth. If your group does this, they may be fitting the definition of the problem to their own particular solutions. Sometimes people have pet solutions they use to fit any situation, or they may have a tendency to accept the first solution that occurs to them. Try to avoid these pitfalls, because you will be prematurely limiting your search for the solution that can best remediate the problem your group is trying to resolve.

Assess and Compare Alternatives

Herbert Simon holds that “Rational decision making always requires the comparison of alternative means in terms of the respective ends to which they will lead.”³⁶ You rank these alternative choices and choose the one that gives you the most benefits at the least cost.³⁷ Assess each alternative using specific criteria

that will allow your group to compare them in a standard way. Two of the more common models are force field analysis and benefit–cost analysis.

Force Field Analysis Kurt Lewin (1890–1947), one of the most prominent social psychologists of his day, developed force field analysis. It is based on the idea that for every potential solution there are *restraining forces* and *driving forces*.³⁸

Restraining Forces Constraints, also called disadvantages or costs, are those forces that tend to keep things the way they are and prevent change. Decision makers try to minimize restraining forces. Your members may decide that the most important constraints are the amount of time, money, or manpower it will take to solve the problem. Some solutions will be more time consuming, cost more money, or require more manpower than others.

Driving Forces Driving forces are the benefits or advantages an alternative will offer that help you overcome restraining forces and provide incentives for your group to make change. Your group may decide that each alternative must provide an acceptable quantity of service, meet a certain level of quality, be effective, or other benefits.

How to Use Force Field Analysis Decide on a standard set of restraining and driving forces that your group can use to compare alternatives and assign them a weight or number. You need to estimate the strength of these restraining and driving forces on a scale and array them on a force field analysis table like the one in Figure 5.2. In this hypothetical example, I have used a scale of 0 to 5. After you array all of your alternatives on tables, your group can see how the alternative solutions compare with one another and how each of them meets your criteria.

As your group assesses the alternatives, they may discover ways to increase the effectiveness of their solutions. For example, perhaps your group can manipulate an alternative’s driving or restraining forces by developing more effective services or by reducing costs to make the alternative more attractive. Finally, add up the driving forces and subtract this number from the restraining forces. The alternative with the highest positive number is the solution that will have the most appeal.

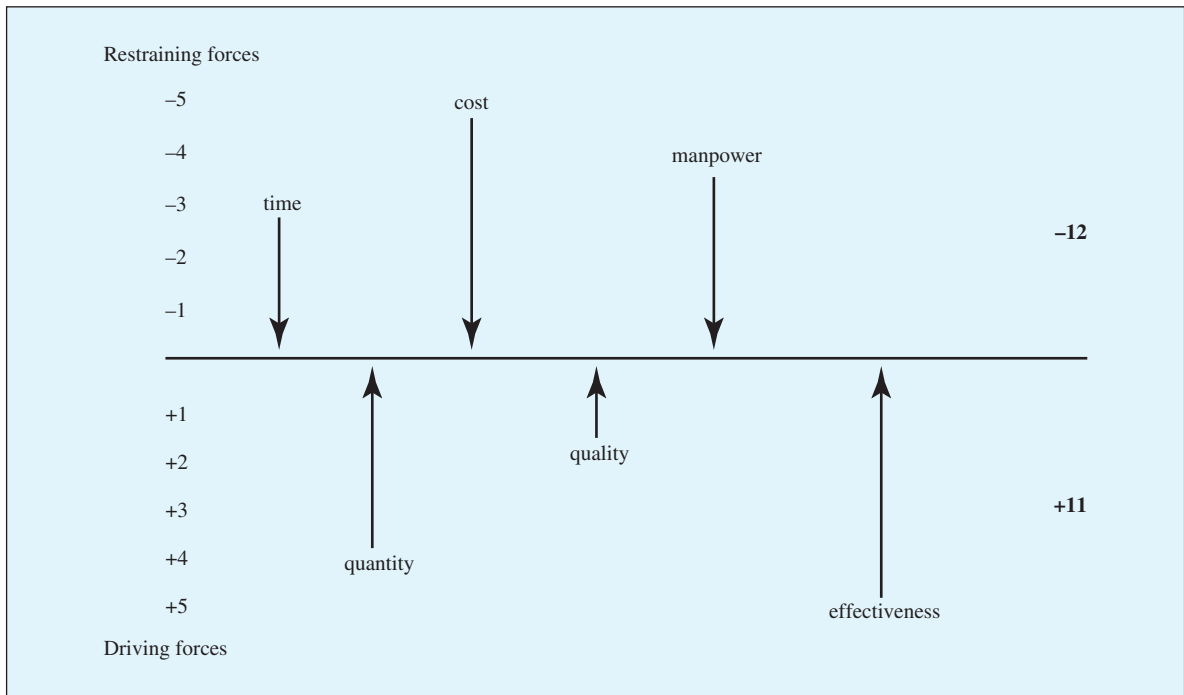


FIGURE 5.2 Force Field Analysis Alternative I

Benefit–Cost Analysis Rational problem solving is a way of computing a *ratio* of pros to cons or benefits to costs that maximizes the value you receive from your decision.³⁹ When calculating benefit–cost ratios, ignore negative numbers. Compute the ratio by dividing the sum of the weighted benefits (*B*) by the sum of the weighted costs (*C*). The closer a benefit–cost ratio comes to being equal to or above 1 ($B/C = 1$), the more attractive it becomes to decision makers. This shows your group whether the benefits are worth the costs of the project. The higher the benefit–cost ratio is, the better its chances for success.

The benefit–cost ratio of the alternative shown in Figure 5.2 is $B/C = 11/12$, or 0.916. Would you seriously consider that alternative? Why or why not? Another alternative has a benefit–cost ratio of 12/14, and a third is 10/9. Compute these ratios to see which of these three scores would give the highest return. Which would give the least? Why do decision makers always choose an alternative whose benefit–cost ratio equals or exceeds 1?

Choose the Best Solution

The solution that shows the most powerful driving forces compared to its restraining forces and has the most favorable benefit–cost ratio would be the most rational choice

for your group. Sometimes, however, a *less* rational alternative might be the best one. The restraining forces aligned against your group, for example, may seem overwhelming, and it may appear irrational to proceed. But the importance of your cause and your commitment to it, though difficult to quantify, may lead your group to choose an alternative that is risky and has a less than optimal chance for success. However, your group knows that it has the moral force of justice on its side, and your group proceeds because at times the costs are not the only considerations that matter.

Sometimes the most rational solution can fail. The “best and brightest” decision makers in the Kennedy–Johnson administration, for example, calculated that the United States would win the war in Vietnam. Their rational calculations were ultimately wrong, and in spite of its superiority of weapons and technology the United States lost the war. Rational problem solving is only a tool, not an infallible guide to success. Along with making a rational calculation, your group needs to assess which alternative aligns with its vision, values, and purpose.

Develop a Strategy

Deciding how to implement the solution that your group chooses is called a strategy for change. In many

cases your strategy will flow directly from the problem solution and be almost self-evident. However, there is a more formal way of developing a strategic plan, which includes developing goals, objectives, tasks, tactics, and targets. In the end, you review your strategy and finalize the plan.

Goals Planning for action begins with setting goals. Begin with one or two ultimate or long-range goals. On a chalkboard or newsprint, place a long-range goal on the far right. Now work backward, identifying intermediate goals and immediate, short-term objectives. List all of the events that should occur that might precede accomplishing each long-range goal.

Objectives What specific things need to be accomplished to reach the mid-range goals? These become objectives. Each objective should meet three criteria. It should be (1) time limited, (2) specific, and (3) measurable. For example, “The police department will provide one additional patrol officer on Elm Street by June 1, 2012.” Branch these objectives off from the mid-range goals. You may have several objectives preceding each goal.

Tasks Break down each objective into tasks. Tasks are specific duties or steps members must take to reach objectives. Tasks may include printing information, calling meetings, contacting the media, or other actions.

Tactics Tactics tell you how to carry out tasks, especially activities that are politically sensitive or that are complex and require coordination among members. Community organization tactics, for example, may include holding public hearings, meeting with government or political officials, or lobbying, among other activities. When deciding on specific tactics, be sure that the group members give thought to the kinds of resistance they might encounter from power figures and how they might overcome that resistance.

Targets Often your tactics will include identifying specific targets. Targets are the key power figures in business, government, or the community that your group wants to influence or co-opt. They may be decision makers whose support is crucial to the project.

Review Your Strategy There may be duplication. Some issues may be irrelevant or subsidiary. New ideas

may have occurred to your group. Revise the plan to eliminate duplication or irrelevant items or to add new ideas.

Try to anticipate what could go wrong with your strategy. For example, what if you do not meet your objectives? What alternative objectives are there? What if your tactics backfire? What other tactics or targets should be considered? Think through these issues so that your group will not be caught off guard. Then develop a backup or *contingency* plan to use in case things do not go the way you expect.

Finalize the Plan After reviewing the strategy, your group is ready to finalize the plan. Decide on the sequence of events that need to be orchestrated to accomplish your group’s goals. Do certain events, tasks, or activities need to precede others? Which things do the members need to do first, second, or third? Create timelines. Then assign individuals to those tasks and get a commitment from the members to carry them out. Make a list of the assignments and deadlines.

Implement the Strategy

Implementation means carrying out the strategy on which your group has decided. Members of your group become the nucleus around which a community becomes organized, a program is developed, or a social plan is implemented. Community meetings, for example, inform people about the problem and the proposed solutions. Members also promote community involvement, soliciting help from other community members, and begin organizing the change effort. Your group members may chair committees or lead task forces committed to carrying out the goals of the project. They may even join the board of a social service organization.

Evaluate the Results

Throughout the change process, you need to monitor its progress. Perhaps the easiest and most immediate method of evaluation is feedback. Spend time “debriefing” after meetings, after carrying out a strategy or tactic. Debriefing gives members a chance to share stories, let off steam, get recognition, enjoy triumphs, and obtain support when things have not gone well. Debriefing also allows members to critique the process, ask questions, and consciously reflect on why they did what they did.

Debriefing empowers your group and provides a learning tool for the members. The group has acquired valuable information about resistance, system dynamics, and power structures. Members learn about change and the change process by involving themselves with one another. Learning takes place as people talk about problems, share perceptions, and wrestle with what to do next. Debriefing helps group members determine whether their predictions about what would happen were correct. Armed with this new information, your group can reassess the situation, modify its strategy, plan, and move ahead.

LIMITATIONS OF RATIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING

RPS has a great deal of utility for social work, including macro social work. It can be used with most of the conventional human problems that social workers confront in their professional work. It is important that all social workers understand how to use RPS and are able to apply it to the particular issues in their range of practice. On the other hand, RPS has a number of limitations which social workers need to consider.

RPS runs into trouble when values are at stake. Two kinds of values are embedded in rational problem solving: those that are implicit in the method itself and those that the problem solver wishes to maximize. These pre-given ends tend to be assumed and are rarely questioned. Because RPS is unidimensional it gives preference to a narrow set of criteria that fail to help if clear preference orderings do not exist, and it cannot resolve issues whose goals are in dispute or that lack sufficient information. RPS, finally, cannot be used by itself to dissolve social problems.

Values in the Method Itself

Decision makers often give preference to problem situations that are logical, straightforward, contain a clear set of issues that possess most of the information on which to base a decision, and that can be easily quantified. RPS cannot often take emotions, relationships, or other nonquantifiable or non-calculative components of a problem into consideration. Values that escape calculation, including compassion, altruism, and selflessness, which are considered to be irrational, tend to be disregarded in RPS.

Maximize Interests of Decision Makers

Macro social workers should also understand that RPS tends to skew decision making in favor of those whose goal is to maximize their interests, often considered in economic terms. RPS is most useful when calculating how to make a profit or benefit from resources invested in a project. However, the question always arises whether or not the aims of a decision or a change effort are at least relatively good, not merely whether they are feasible. While RPS is very helpful in determining the feasibility of a project, it is often useless in determining the substantive merit or meaning of any particular end or change effort.

Pre-Given Ends The ends or purposes that a decision maker wishes to maximize tend to be inherent in the way the problem is defined. For example, if the end is to increase the tax base of a deteriorating urban inner-city neighborhood, RPS can assist in deciding which among such alternatives as a parking lot, a high-rise office building, a park, or a shopping mall is the most cost-beneficial means to increase city revenue. Because they meet the economic constraints chosen by decision makers, these alternatives may be the only ones considered.

The interests of the community members who live in the neighborhood may tend to be left out of the calculations, however. Sometimes decision makers forget to ask whether the tax base should be strengthened at the expense of residents of the neighborhood, partly because the existing slum has a negative or at best zero utility, and its preservation or renovation will further decrease city revenue. RPS is incapable of resolving such value issues or whether one group's rights or needs ought to take precedence. It cannot calculate the cost to people of losing their roots, their relationships, or their attachments to a social network. These intangible costs are often ignored in rational problem solving.

The ends of a decision tend to be foregone conclusions and are generally not considered or even open to discussion. Economic constraints tend to limit decision making to a narrow choice of pre-given ends, any one of which will tend to benefit the decision makers.

Macro social workers must look beyond competing alternatives and assess the values implied in the choices offered. Is minimizing cost or gaining financial benefit, for example, the most important value to be

maximized, or should other values take precedence or be considered equally? Whose preferences or values should be maximized—those of decision makers who speak on behalf of a public or private organization or those of the community members who will bear the cost of the decision? Maximizing the preferences of those who are normally left out of the decision-making process or who bear the costs is a continual challenge for social workers when using rational problem solving.

Unidimensional

Because economic decisions are usually clear, specific, and quantifiable, decision makers can almost always find a means to maximize them rationally. However, in the field of social work decision making, a clear set of preference orderings rarely exists. In fact, often there may be as many preferences as there are stakeholders in any decision. It may be difficult to obtain anywhere near perfect information about a social issue on which a decision must be reached.

It may be difficult to calculate the relative benefits and costs of various alternatives when people's social welfare is at stake, and it may be nearly impossible to frame an alternative in quantifiable, monetary terms. How, for example, does one calculate the benefits of educating children with developmental disabilities? How does one calculate the costs of ethnic intolerance or the benefits of eradicating it?

Restoration and correction of conventional human problems, moreover, is only part of the thinking process. To limit our efforts to problem solving and correction is to go only part way toward strengthening and engaging in social processes that create a good society.

Inability to Dissolve Social Problems

One of the most important limitations for macro social workers is the inability of RPS to deal adequately with social problems. You learned in Chapter 4 that social problems are often embedded in social relationships and the more fundamental issues of the human condition. They are infused with emotions and values. Because social problems deal with humanity, they often cannot be quantified or placed in neat categories. In fact, social problems often cannot be settled once and for all, but are never-ending issues that continually arise whenever human beings engage one another.

Dissolving social problems can only occur by including feelings, values, and relationships in the problem-solving process. The process must also take into account intuition, imagination, and active reflection. A way of thinking that includes these components and specifically can be aimed at dissolving social problems is substantive or social thinking.

HOW TO USE SOCIAL THINKING TO SOLVE SOCIAL PROBLEMS

In Chapter 2 you were introduced to social thinking, reviewing its history and foundations. In Chapter 3 you learned that social thinking can be a powerful means by which macro social workers assist individuals to overcome self-oppression and recover the selves they were meant to become. While social thinking is therapeutic, its importance for the macro social worker also lies in its capacity to help members engage in projects of community betterment, solve social problems, and make change.

Social thinking as a problem-solving method is suited to issues whose goals are controversial, often unclear, and nonquantifiable. Social thinking is best engaged by people when multiple views and perceptions are represented. It is a process in which people proceed incrementally depending on the situation that presents itself to them.

Social thinking is always part of a group process. It is dialogical. For example, the experience of injustice that massive impersonal institutions such as systems impose on the human condition is inevitably alienating, asserts Peter Berger.⁴⁰ Social thinking often begins when the cognitive dissonance many deprived people feel begins to become intolerable and cries out for action. As members remember the situations that created this dissonance, you help them access their values and engage their feelings. Action-social thinking stimulates members' cognition as they obtain facts and information, organize their ideas, and bring them into focus. Members use their intuition for active reflection to make sense out of what their memories and feelings have told them. They engage in conscientization to understand their experiences at a deeper level. Social thinking elicits members' imagination to inspire a shared vision, obtain a sense of direction, and strategize ways of getting resolution. Action-social thinking comes full circle as you help members move to action. Members put their skills into practice, learn by doing,

and increase their capabilities. Each of these stages is guided and shaped by the macro social worker, who helps the group through them. Let's review these steps in more detail, remembering that they will never fall into neat sequential patterns and will likely blend together in often ambiguous ways.

Cognitive Dissonance

One of the reasons cognitive dissonance is important for problem solving is that only those who experience the discontinuity between what people say about our social environment and what actually occurs will see this discrepancy and be motivated to do anything about it. Those who are comfortable with the contrived reality in which most people live today, or who are in control of it, will rarely be capable of understanding, much less have a desire to change the way things are.

When members begin to question prevailing ideology, they begin to understand the extent of the difference between principles that are presumed to operate in a democracy and those that actually drive American politics. You promote the active critical assessment of current reality among your group members.

Community members become transformed into action-oriented social critics who raise their own questions, searchers who look for their own answers, and analysts who assess the content of political and social reality for themselves. They begin to rely on their own perceptions, trust their own ideas and those of their fellow members, and call upon their intuition to visualize themselves as they could be.

Access Their Feelings

You invite your members to get in touch with their feelings. Anger helps people translate apathy into action. Saul David Alinsky asserts that you must often be like a salesperson trying to convince people to do something, showing people you are credible, creating a convincing picture of what might be, relying on emotional contagion as well as on a factual account of what can be done.⁴¹ "You pull and jolt them into the public arena. You listen and appeal to people's self-interest, work along friendship and relationship networks, as well as other formal and informal social structures,"⁴² he says,

until the people recognize that it is they who must do something about their own problems, that it is only they who can be trusted to do the right thing. Until they realize that only if they organize enough

power in their community so that something can be done about these things, nothing will get done.⁴³

Warren Haggstrom tells of a group of neighbors who, with the help of organizers, went to a district sanitation inspector to appeal for better street cleaning. During the meeting the inspector claimed that there was no point in putting more equipment into such neighborhoods because the residents didn't care whether their streets were dirty or not. When the community heard the report, they became angry at this affront, and their anger mobilized them to fight the issue.⁴⁴

As members begin to relate their personal experiences and share their feelings, they will develop a sense of unity and shared concern. Your members will identify with their common issues and feel united in a cause that gives them a sense of power.

Engage Values

For Jarlath Benson, one of the essential features separating humans from other living creatures is people's ability to articulate values and to conduct their lives by an innate understanding ethical principles.⁴⁵ For the Classical Greeks the process of trying to capture what was Good in and of itself, engaging in *areté* or excellence by means of moral or intellectual virtue, was the highest and best kind of life. This is likewise the task and process of substantive social thinking.

In many ways, this use of social thinking separates macro social workers from other professionals who attempt to always be objective and value neutral in their practice. Macro social workers are not neutral in regard to social systems or social processes that create social harm. Instead, action-oriented social workers assert values in helping society move in a direction that is better for all people. Macro social workers have a keen understanding that

the values of *human* life never come about automatically. While a human being can lose his own being by his own choices, a tree or stone cannot. Affirming one's own being creates the values of life.... Individuality, worth, and dignity are not *gegeben*—given to us as data by nature, but *aufgegeben*—given or assigned to us as a task which we ourselves must solve.⁴⁶

Macro social workers assist members understand and name those values that are of most importance. Social workers help members identify the source of the wrongs that have been perpetrated against them.

“If we can understand that the closest we can ever get to a shared sense of ‘truth’ is through listening to and understanding the frame of reference of the other, then the first step will be taken,”⁴⁷ says Janet McIntyre-Mills. When macro social workers help members engage in a deep level of understanding, looking beyond their hurts, they are moving along the right path. As Paulo Freire reminds us, the task of overcoming harmful social conditions is not simply to grasp power or exact retribution. Instead it is to expose and dispose of perpetrators while seeking out those social goods that can replace injustice with justice, anxiety with confidence, mechanistic impersonal systems with the relational communal social commons.

Stimulate Cognition

The more your members cognitively understand the issues that confront them, the firmer will become their resolve, the clearer will be their ability to think through concerns, and the stronger will be their convictions about their cause. Burton Gummer asserts that “People who present clear and convincing arguments for taking action in situations where knowledge is limited or absent will be influential in shaping the thinking and behavior of others.”⁴⁸ Your members are not simply committed to truth and justice in the abstract; they exemplify the truth in their own lives and actions.

You help members use their thinking to gain a sense of the injustices that have been perpetrated against them. Your members confront the way things have been done in the past that create troubles in the present. They challenge the way things are done today to bring about a better tomorrow. Community members use their intellects to relate to the realities of the struggles in which they are immersed and to think through the issues that confront them.⁴⁹

Obtain Facts and Information Members learn to cement their perceptions with facts and information. You mobilize them to gather facts, conduct research, and confirm what their particular experiences have told them. Without information on which to confirm your members’ collective understanding, members may lack the tools that can strengthen their cause. You help members sharpen their thinking. They increase their fund of knowledge. Members learn more about the specific conditions that have created problems for them, the often covert history of exploitation. Where they lack information, you help them engage in participative

action research, described in Chapter 7, to obtain the data they need. Members begin to look clearly at the facts of the situation they confront. Facts help people deal with the concrete reality, identify perpetrators, and find opportunities for action.

Conduct Educationals You conduct educational sessions to help members gain knowledge and understanding. Dolores Huerta, an organizer of Mexican American farm laborers in California, said, “You try to crank up your brain. You ask questions to get back to what is basic. You start with: ‘What’s hurting?’ and push on to: ‘What’s wrong?’ and ‘Why?’”⁵⁰

As people respond, you expand and go deeper. How is the problem affecting people in your community? Who is being affected by it? How many people are affected? How did this situation come about? Who is causing this problem? How long has it been occurring? Who is responsible for resolving it? What are the consequences of the problem to your community? How much will it cost to resolve the problem? This discourse helps members understand logically, empirically confirming what their feelings and intuitions have already told them.

SOCIAL THINKING IN ACTION

Even though many of the members of the Community Service Organization (CSO) had little formal education, the Stockton CSO used training sessions called “educationals” that showed it had impact. The information officer of the Stockton Planning Commission asked Dolores Huerta at the time of the fight over eliminating Goat Valley: “Where do your people learn to ask these questions? They sure are educated people.”⁵⁰

Intuition for Active Reflection

Both George Herbert Mead and psychologist Lev Vygotsky proposed that mechanisms of thought are first engaged externally, in interaction with others, as people link facts together that then become ways of understanding generated by internal reflection and action. Members must spend time using their intuition to reflect on their experiences in order understand the events that have occurred, engaging in conscientization and deeper learning.

Understand Events Just as with RPS, after an encounter or event, you create space for active reflection. Such reflection needs to be part of an ongoing

process of learning. Chris Crass recommends that “you assist members as they consciously recall what occurred, what they did, and why they did it: “What did you learn from that experience?” “What was good and what could have been better about that meeting?” “What could you have done differently?”⁵¹ You assist members to make connections between the actions they have taken and the outcomes they constructed.

Conscientization Using one’s intuition in an active and intensive process of making connections is an essential component of making the inner meaning of a situation conscious. Paulo Freire calls this conscientization.⁵² The macro social worker assists members to hold to their newly recovered emotions, but set themselves aside momentarily to allow new perceptions enter their consciousness. When this happens, members are helped to transcend ordinary reality, opening themselves to alternative visions about their world. When people in a community generate different ways of looking at things, they obtain new understandings, new ideas, and new ways of being and becoming, says Herbert Blumer.⁵³

Deep Learning Once reflection makes the incorporation process conscious and accessible to the intentions of the learner, “deep learning” occurs. “Reflection draws learning from the inner self and allows it to be seen, understood, and utilized more readily,”⁵⁴ says Blumer. As your community sees what a situation means for them, they begin to understand what may only be implicit in a situation. Their intuitive social consciousness helps them understand the meaning behind the reality that presents itself. As Lauer and Handel point out, “meaning is not an external phenomenon imposed on an individual; rather, meaning emerges from the interaction process.”⁵⁵ For many macro social workers, the process of helping members actively reflect on their experiences, bringing them to consciousness and making sense of them, is an important part of their work, if not the most important part.

Use Imagination to Envision

You help members use their imagination to inspire a shared vision and develop a direction. When your members combine cognition with emotion and intuition, they can imagine alternative strategies that they can put into action.

Inspire a Shared Vision The members of your community must have a vision to effect social change. “Every organization, every social movement begins with a dream. The dream or vision is the force that invents the future,”⁵⁶ asserts Edgar Schein. This dream gives shape and meaning to people’s lives. By challenging injustice, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. combined his thinking with an intuited vision. He “envisioned the future ‘gazing across the horizon of time’ and imagining that greater things were ahead. [He] foresaw something out there, vague as it might appear from the distance, that others did not. [He] imagined that extraordinary feats were possible ... that the ordinary could be transformed into something noble,”⁵⁷ says Schein.

Sense of Direction Community members who have a clear sense of direction are best able to lead themselves and help others develop an idea of where they want to go. According to Theodore Hesburgh, president of the University of Notre Dame, “Vision is the key to leadership.”⁵⁸ Unless your members have a vision of where they are going, they are not going to get there. Your community members “begin with imagination and with the belief that what is merely an image can one day be made real.”⁵⁹

Develop Strategies By applying active intuition, “new possibilities emerge in the process of interaction between individuals as they cooperate in common,”⁶⁰ says David Miller. Members review their joint past experiences applying different responses with each and imagining the consequences of implementing them. As members intuitively place themselves in an action framework, they visualize themselves and their outcomes. With practice they grasp the consequences of their strategies and choose those that are not only successful but right. Any number of strategies can be used. If one strategy does not work, community members can try another. Members change direction, modify their plans, and shift their strategies as the situation changes.

Strategy Failure The failure of a strategy is just as important as its success. It is the meaning of events that is important, not whether your members win the immediate struggle once and for all. In fact, the struggle against oppression and injustice is never won completely. It must be refought again and again.

Neither will everything go according to plan. Learning how to cope with failure, imperfection, and incompleteness is a sign of maturity, and it enables your members to refine their plan's direction.

Move to Action

You help people act on their renewed feelings and recovered thoughts rather than remain compliant. You bring people together, stimulate their energies, and mobilize the “rightness” of their cause. The real flesh-and-blood encounters with one another add substance to members' dreams. You keep your eye on the larger picture as your community moves ahead one step at a time. You help break larger problems into smaller units, and the community gains with small wins. “The magic in small wins is the experimentation process, or setting up little tests that continually help you learn something.”⁶¹ As you help members move to action, you engage members in praxis, learning by doing. Members increase their capabilities and learn new skills.

Praxis: Learning by Doing The act of doing is another facet of social thinking. Social thinking by doing is “hands-on” understanding that comes from putting oneself into the arena of practical action. Social thinking is also “inside” knowledge, a knowing from within in which knowledge and action are joined.⁶² The experience of praxis, in which members put themselves into the arena of action, is crucial, according to Herbert Blumer.⁶³ Social learning as praxis exceeds knowledge acquisition. Praxis is the culmination of social thinking that incorporates not only the intellect, but feelings, values, intuition, and one's entire body. This is why social thinking is also called whole-mind thinking. Learning becomes embedded in one's muscles, senses, and nerves. Understanding is not external, objective, or “out there.” Learning by doing is internal, subjective, and a component of one's inner being. This deep knowledge becomes literally “incorporated” into a person's entire self in ways that a person can make use of.

Increase Capabilities When you engage your members in action, you offer people different levels of responsibility to increase their capabilities. You give them specific jobs to do, breaking these down into tasks and concrete steps people can take. You provide

experiences that require them to work with others. You recognize the skills people already have and provide opportunities for them to develop further. You stretch them by placing them in situations to discover talents they did not realize they had, and they put those talents to use in meaningful work that contributes to the common good. You offer encouragement and support and facilitate, train, and model social leadership. You consciously use yourself as one who “commits people to action, who converts followers to leaders, and who converts leaders into agents of change.”⁶⁴

Build Concrete Skills Your members may have to acquire particular skills. For example, they may need to learn how to conduct research, lead meetings, and speak at public hearings. They may often need to write proposals and seek funding. At other times they will need to develop administrative skills, hiring staff, training a board, or offering carryout services. You assist your members in learning these skills by conducting sessions to answer questions like these: What is a meeting? How is a meeting different from a get-together? What about parliamentary procedure? How does it help? Why do we have majority rule? What makes a leader?⁶⁵

Closing the Circle

The social thinking process now comes full circle. After your members have taken action, you engage your members in reflecting once more on the process that has just taken place, helping them remember their original injustice and the feelings they inspired. Members recall the plan that they strategized. They reflect on the successes and failures they experienced and decide on a new plan of action.

Engaging social thinking often means trial and error, applying what one already knows to an unknown arena of reality and testing that knowledge. Putting values, feelings, intuition, and cognition into action is a rehearsal for testing out other new ways of action, which in turn generate new experiences and pave the way for more value generation, intuitive reflection, meaning, and more action.

Limitations of Social Thinking

Social thinking tends to be soft thinking, in the sense that it is not wholly dependent on facts or quantification, as is RPS. Because social thinking relies on such

ambiguous concepts as values, feelings, and relationships, its conclusions can be criticized as having no real validity or empirical evidence to sustain them. Social thinking is process-oriented, and its methods are often fuzzy, unlike the clearly defined stages that are a strength of RPS. It is circuitous, group centered, and time consuming. Social thinking, however, can complement and be used with RPS.

Circuitous While RPS is relatively straightforward, logical, can be applied step-by-step, and often can be practiced by only one or a few individuals, social thinking is not straightforward, but often circuitous, complex, and sometimes resistant to logic. It may require intentionally irrational solutions to problems, in which people sacrifice their specific self-interests in favor of the whole.

Group Centered Social thinking must be practiced by many people in groups and cannot be done individually. It is a discursive, dialogic process that requires the macro social worker to have group skills in order to manage it. Social thinking is qualitative, and cannot be reduced to calculation, benefit–cost analysis, or other forms of quantification.

Time Consuming Furthermore, social thinking is time consuming, and because the problems that it deals with are the most complex, recalcitrant, and difficult, members may not be able to see complete resolution. However, as various groups combine into larger social movements, each of which applies social thinking to social problems, success can eventually be achieved.

One example is the problem of discrimination in public and private services. The result of many local community organizations dialoguing, strategizing, and acting eventually brought about legislation to make discrimination illegal in the United States, breaking the power of an institutionalized system of oppression. However, while the effort has come a long way toward ending racism, the underlying social problem continues to exist, testifying to the difficulty of overcoming recalcitrant social problems once and for all. Social problems cannot often be solved completely. They can only be dissolved. They always have a propensity to reemerge time and time again.

Complementary RPS and social thinking are mutually complementary. The lack of value orientation and

emphasis on individual decision making by RPS are counterbalanced by the intense value orientation and group-centeredness of social thinking. On the other hand, the lack of quantification, complexity, lack of clear direction, and provisional nature of social thinking can be, in part, corrected by RPS. As a result, many macro social workers tend to combine RPS and social thinking into one problem-solving method, blending and accommodating aspects of each depending on the situation. It is important, therefore, to understand that RPS and social thinking are not rigid or separate, but need to be used in combination as the situation demands.

MAKING SOCIAL CHANGE

Macro social workers engage in social change for two reasons: First, macro social workers use social change by means of social thinking to solve social problems. Looked at from another direction, solving social problems is one way that social change occurs. At the center of this process is social thinking. The goal is making a better society. One can begin with social change, and as society improves, social problems can be dissolved. Or one can begin with social problems and in the process of dissolving them, one can make social change and so arrive at a better society.

What Is Social Change?

Charles L. Harper characterizes change as the “significant alteration of social structure and cultural patterns through time.”⁶⁶ Robert Lauer says that social change “refers to alterations in social phenomena at various levels from the individual to the global.”⁶⁷

Change is normal.⁶⁸ “To stress reality as process is to stress the normality of change,” says Lauer. “Change is no longer viewed as an aberration from the normal state of affairs; rather, change *is* the normal state of affairs.”⁶⁹ Two ideas about how change occurs are determinism and change initiated by people.

Determinism The concept of change being determined by external forces holds that while human beings can make some impression on the natural processes of change that are continually occurring, they can neither initiate change nor substantially interrupt those processes. Change is developed by transcendent, superordinate mechanisms that operate independently of human beings.

For the ancient Greeks and Romans, for example, forces of change consisted in fate, or *Fortuna*, directed by the gods, in which humans were often pawns or playthings. On the other hand, modern change theory tends to be based on the idea that change is determined by laws of physical science, called *scientific determinism*. Social Darwinists believe that change is determined by inherent and inevitable processes of natural selection by means of survival of fittest, resulting in social evolution. Historicists, in addition, believe that social change is determined by history moving inexorably along its prescribed path to an ultimate, predetermined end. Many see our modern global market society as a dominant force molded by economic determinism that is leading us into a new utopian world of prosperity for all. Others believe that our modern culture, in particular Western civilization, is progressing according to innate laws of nature, called modernization theory, about which you will learn in Chapter 14.

Change Determined by People The action-social model, in contrast to the historicist, evolutionist, and modernization models, reflects a trend toward a postmodern mentality in social work. This perspective is increasingly moving beyond the deterministic world view. With gathering momentum, the action-social model locates change in the intentions and interactions of people rather than in external forces beyond human experience.⁷⁰ Social change is substantially initiated and guided by the human beings who are affected by it. Social science knowledge does *not* simply conform to laws of nature. “There are no necessary laws of nature or history,”⁷¹ asserts Ellsworth Fuhrman, nor are there superordinate forces or processes in science, evolution, or culture external to human beings that determine or cause social change.

Humans are reflexive creatures capable of creating their own historical existence. While external factors beyond human control, such as climate change and environmental catastrophe, do effect change at times, social change is almost entirely a human endeavor centered in the understanding of people whose lives are collectively interacting with one another. Social change must begin with the perspective that people can control their own futures and make decisions that affect their lives.

CHANGE NEVER UNILATERALLY GOOD

Change is never unilaterally good for everyone. Social change that some people may consider positive and beneficial may be negative and harmful for others. The changes imposed on the Great Plains in the decades from 1840 to 1860 and beyond, for example, were very favorable to the railroads, mining companies, ranchers, and settlers who benefited from free government land, but were disastrous to Mexican nationals, Native Americans, and Chinese immigrants whose identities, homes, and cultures were stripped from them.

For the white settlers, the changes imposed on both the human and natural environment meant progress, the extension of an American version of freedom, opportunity, and wealth. For everyone else, it meant enclosure on reservations, lack of choice, and poverty. Change was disastrous for the ecology of the Great Plains, whose natural environment was almost completely destroyed.

Social Change and Value Absolutes

While it is imperative to locate change in people rather than in forces to which human are subject, this mandate is not without qualification. In order for change to be in the control of the people themselves, social change must also be directed in ways that claim to be centered in values that are good in and of themselves rather than aimed exclusively at individual self-interests.

An action-social approach to social change will be centered in moving society in a direction that citizens believe to be good and in the interests of all. In a post-modern future, for example, economic growth for its own sake is not revered as an unalloyed good. Science and technology, while important, are not seen as saving humankind from its own folly. Instead, alternative values such as sustainability, quality of life, and protecting the environment have become elevated as countervailing goods for many people. The action-social model maintains that human beings are autonomous beings who not only have a right but an obligation to assert their ethical values, thinking, and action in mutuality with all other similarly situated human beings to achieve a future that is good for everyone, not merely a select few.

In order for a truly emancipatory existence to come about, people need to have the inclination as

well as the time, social space, and resources, and be actively engaged in creating such a good society. The action-social model of change challenges human beings to reassert their rights to determine a vision of what is a good life, rather than allowing themselves to be carried helplessly on a river of endless desires without self-direction or control.

Macro social workers continually appraise arenas where social change can occur, explore niches of opportunity for bringing about social betterment, and examine indicators where social problems can be dissolved or conditions can be improved.

Social workers who use the action-social model do not leave social change to chance, to the will of those in power, to systems forces, to history, or to any other impersonal process removed from the community of people who are affected by change. Instead, one of the most important roles of a macro social worker is to ensure that any specific change or process of change is envisioned, initiated, directed, and established by those affected by it. Change is always for the good of these people and their companions, not the self-interest of any overarching system, interest group, power block, or individual.

Social Change as a Social Good

Social change is a social good. Social goods, in contrast to private or economic goods, are generated, in the main, by people who construct the forms and structures of the social commons. As a social good, change is “owned” by everyone. Once change is provided, it is provided to all simultaneously, regardless of their level of involvement, interest, or engagement in it. Change cannot be parceled out, bought or sold, priced or privately consumed, and since change affects everyone, it is the responsibility of all to assess its utility and benefits, and to decide how to respond to the change. No one can be excluded from social change.

Free Riders Even though there will always be “free riders,” those who are advantaged by social change even though they do little or nothing to aid the effort, getting a “free ride” is not seen as an impediment or disadvantage as it is in free market economics, where exclusion, privatization, and prevention of free riders is an important and immediate goal.

The effort to engage in social change and its outcomes is seen as a character-building process for

participants and, therefore, an honor and privilege, the intention of which is to include as many as possible, not only in the change process but also in the effects and results of that change. Every person who is not yet born, for example, will not have had an opportunity to participate in the change process, but in spite of that will benefit by it and are therefore free riders. It is the hope and motivation of social change, therefore, that future generations will reap the rewards of the efforts we make on their behalf. It is the explicit purpose of making social change that it will benefit everyone regardless of their contribution or participation.

In fact, one of the paradoxical aspects of social change, as with all social goods that occur in the social commons, is that the more self-sacrifice an individual makes to attain the good, the more personal benefit accrues to that person. It is impossible to give away or diminish one’s self-worth by accomplishing self-sacrifice for the good of others; one can only increase it. Even if a project for the common good does not materially succeed, the benefits in making the effort in good will, strengthening bonds of solidarity and community, improving citizenship, and generating leadership will almost always tend to result in an extension of the goodness and improvement in the human condition.

Democratic Process Social change, therefore, must always be directed by an egalitarian democratic process in which all member stakeholders have the opportunity to participate to the fullest extent of their energy, aptitude, time constraints, and interests. Even the concerns of the indifferent and disinclined ought to be included in spite of their lack of interest in the process. The iron law of action-social change asserts that all change must become the responsibility of those whose lives are directly affected by it.

ACTION-SOCIAL CHANGE PROCESS

Social psychologist Kurt Lewin developed a method of action-social systems change. This method can be applied to both organizational systems and subsystems of economic and political collectivities. The action-social change process begins with the principles of social change. You help your group understand how to manage the change process. You assist your members to understand and work through the life cycle of social change.

Principles of Social Change

All macro social workers are involved in creating the conditions for, developing the processes of, and helping assist in expediting social change. Social workers engaged in the process of embarking on a conscious process of bringing about change must keep in mind a number of principles to guide their efforts.

1. Do no harm.
2. Expose competing interest groups.
3. Critique and focus on dysfunctional organization systems.
4. Expose political and economic injustice.
5. Look for institutionalized systemic deviance that entrenches inequality, injustice, and discrimination.

Manage the Change Process

Your movement group understands that it has control over the strategies, timing, and where to apply their efforts. Your group can work in small increments, measure their progress, and predict eventual victory. Two factors that affect managing change are the magnitude of the problem and its time frame.

Magnitude of the Problem The greater the extent and pervasiveness of the social problem, the more resistance you will face and the greater will be the forces that oppose any change effort. The greater the degree of change that needs to be made, the more difficult it will be to make them successfully.

Time Frame Another important factor is the time frame. The longer the history of the problem, the more likely that change will need to proceed slowly toward victory. Often, the more gradual the change process, the more successful it will be. Sometimes, however, rapid changes are indicated. The massive social changes that were instituted during the Great Depression and the urgency to end the war in Vietnam are examples of the necessity for speedy change.

The Life Cycle of Social Change

Your group may be encouraged by the realization that social movements “have their own life cycles and their own internal dynamics.”⁷² Your group helps unfreeze systems that are locked into patterns of oppression by working through entrenchment, recognition, and confrontation phases of change. After you unfreeze

the system, your group shifts gears and refreezes the system in its new pattern by initiating new policies, agencies, monitoring, and enforcement.⁷³

While most change efforts move through each phases of the change cycle, every change effort is unique. You can use the cycle to decide on and change your strategies, understand where your group is in the process, and decide where you must go next. Some phases may be shortened or omitted, or there may be regression to previous phases. Inevitably the process is a slow one.

Phase 1: Entrenchment At the beginning of the change effort, the existing state of affairs—the status quo—is solidly entrenched. The status quo benefits those in power, has evolved over time, or has become part of the system’s culture and way of operating. Keeping the system going is accepted as the way things are or even should be. Sometimes the oppressed have been socialized to accept their situation, or have developed a mentality in which they perpetuate the very systems that oppress them.

Resistance to change can be seen as the enemy against which you are working. Movement activists must understand the dynamics of such resistance. You and your members often take a prophetic stance over against resistance.

Resistance to Change In the entrenchment phase, resistance to the change effort appears to be massive. Resistance to change includes inertia and homeostasis, fear of the unknown, disruption of routine, threats to security, and threats to power.

Inertia and Homeostasis. At the simplest and most mechanistic level, any system is assumed to manifest strong forces that tend to keep it moving in one direction. This is called *inertia*. It is very difficult to derail a system once it is moving along a prescribed path. Another tendency that keeps the system from changing is homeostasis. Systems have built-in mechanisms for self-correction that keep them stable; they resist external forces that would disturb their equilibrium.

Fear of the Unknown. On a more personal level, change may create anxiety. It is often less threatening to keep something old and familiar, even if it is dysfunctional, than to trade it in for something that is new, unknown, and filled with potential risk and uncertainty.

Disruption of Routine. People are creatures of habit and routine. Change in the system tends to upset

routines, disturbing lifestyles and often requiring people to change behaviors, ways of thinking, and attitudes that have served them over the years. It is sometimes difficult for people to adjust to new ways of being.

Threats to Security. One's livelihood or job security frequently depends on and is a result of fitting into a system, learning its rules and procedures, and becoming socialized to that setting. People establish security by building a family, putting down roots, and investing time and energy in that effort. Change may disrupt or threaten one's job, family, social situation, or place in a community.

Threats to Power. Entrenched powers want to keep things the way they are, often because they have developed a system that benefits them at the expense of others. They have a vested interest in maintaining the systems over which they have control. Control means that they have freedom to mobilize values, influence policy, pursue their own interests, and develop tools such as organizations to create wealth and more power. The processes of social action develop new countervailing power bases that threaten to usurp this power. Perhaps more than anything else, it is the struggle for social, political, and economic power that motivates people in influential positions to resist change.

Prophetic Stance In the beginning stage of change, therefore, social workers and other movement activists often take a prophetic stance. Like a "voice in the wilderness," you are in the minority, alone, and isolated. You and your members can expect to be openly criticized, ridiculed, scapegoated, or persecuted by whatever means the entrenched interests have at their disposal. Personal attacks on your character or attacks on members of your organization in the form of harassment, intimidation, threats, and even physical violence may be used to force you to conform to the norm and not disturb the system's equilibrium.

Harvey and Brown describe, for example, how the environmental movement began with a small group of concerned conservationists, scientists, and young people in the 1960s.⁷⁴ Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* raised the nation's consciousness about the dangers of pesticides, and the first Earth Day was held in 1970. However, opposing political forces emerged during the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, and commitment to environmental concerns waned. Environmentalists were portrayed as alarmists and radicals who were concerned about saving insignificant species at the expense of jobs and progress.

Unless you and your members understand, prepare for, and are willing to encounter such resistance, the change effort may be overwhelmed. Rubin and Rubin suggest that before commencing, you and your members consider the following issues:

1. How can you obtain the power you need to either overcome opponents or to reduce the forces that resist change?
2. How can your organization achieve legitimacy?
3. What kinds of symbols can you design that will allow the organization to get its issues high on the agendas of those who can influence change?
4. What strategies can the organization develop to increase chances of victory?
5. What can the organization do to maintain people's morale until victories occur?⁷⁵

Phase 2: Recognition As the movement for change grows, forces for and against change become more clearly defined. Your members gather facts, and patterns begin to emerge. What at first may have been perceived by some as being an insignificant issue begins to be recognized as a legitimate social problem that concerns everyone. When you engage and sensitize people to the problem, the initial threat that exposure posed begins to lessen, and your forces for change gain understanding and recognition.

During the 1980s, for example, growing bodies of evidence on a number of fronts supported the position of the environmentalists, who persisted through court actions and pressure on elected officials. Research confirmed that pollution was destroying the ozone layer in the atmosphere and that the greenhouse effect was a reality. Data on the harmful effects of pesticides, not only on wildlife but also on humans, was documented. Information showed that shrinking habitats and decimation of wilderness areas resulted in the extinction of numerous species of plants and animals. Massive oil spills brought home to people the dangers of technology. The inability to process raw sewage and dispose of nuclear waste became national concerns. The danger to the environment could no longer be ignored. In fact, it was becoming an international problem.

Phase 3: Confrontation In the third phase of change, lines have been drawn and there is direct confrontation between the forces battling for change and those struggling to maintain the status quo. Those fighting against change marshal all of their forces, realizing that they need to take the activists seriously. The

stakes are raised, and an all-out attempt is made to destroy the change effort once and for all. When this occurs, you refine your strategies, sometimes using direct confrontation tactics such as sit-ins, marches, leaflets, demonstrations, and rallies. You make use of the media, attacking specific perpetrators and gaining publicity.

In the early 1980s, for example, the environmental movement became increasingly well organized, vocal, and active on a number of fronts. Numerous environmental groups began agitating for change locally as well as nationally. Specific companies that engaged in pollution were targeted. James Watt, then secretary of the interior, one of the most vocal and visible opponents of environmental concerns, became a lightning rod for pro-environmental forces such as the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society. Demonstrations were held. People boycotted environmentally insensitive companies or specific products that harmed the environment. Media attention increased.

Phase 4: Shifting Gears If you and your movement organization are successful at persuasion and have won decisive battles, those who continue to resist begin to be seen as stubborn, ignorant, and obstructionist. Many times those who resist change become as few and as alienated as you and your organization were in Phase 1 of the change process. Even those who were opposed to change may jump on the bandwagon and try to show how they too are part of the forces for change. Corporations that were major opponents of the environmental movement, for example, begin to take out advertisements showing how they contribute to cleaning the environment. Being environmentally sensitive is now “politically correct.”

However, resistance forces can still mobilize enough power to regain their momentum. This is a time for you to shift gears, use tact, patience, and wisdom, keep your balance, and persuade those who are not openly opposed to change but may not yet be completely convinced about the need for change. Your change strategies move from direct confrontation to negotiation and policy development as your movement works to solidify the changes they have won.

Phase 5: Developing New Policies and Agencies

If your movement organization is successful in its efforts, the unjust processes that have been exposed and broken up now need to be replaced with ones that are just, helpful, and humanizing. This is the refreezing or solidifying stage of the change process.

Your organization works to change laws, turns to policy development, and establishes an agency.

Political tactics require detailed knowledge of laws and regulations, the power structure, interest groups, and the political process. Social work activists become involved in the political arena, obtaining the political support of elected officials such as local, county, and state legislators, judges, lawyers, lobbyists, and administrators of public agencies to pass new laws enforcing the changes.

Members try to establish a public agency that will operate programs and propose legislation on your behalf. In the environmental movement, for example, the struggle moved from confronting lumber, mining, and oil corporations to the development of policy, culminating in the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act, creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, and development of the Environmental Superfund. Each piece of legislation meant compromise and bargaining with agribusiness, miners, and oil interests, who continued to press for concessions favoring their interests. With each successive victory, however, the environmental movement solidified the changes it had made.

Phase 6: Monitoring and Enforcement

Even with laws, policies, and agencies in place, however, the social action process is still not complete. Battles for change are rarely finished once and for all, but often must be refought again and again. The forces against change may still be mobilized to undermine changes that have been so hard won. For example, even though the Thirteenth Amendment freed the slaves and the Fifteenth Amendment gave African Americans the right to vote, racism continued to be practiced even more virulently by means of the Black Codes, racist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, and the Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which institutionalized “separate but equal” facilities in the United States.

A mechanism of monitoring, enforcement, and imposing consequences needs to be instituted to ensure that systems abide by the new behavioral constraints. Clear sanctions or punishments for those who refuse to live by the new, non-oppressive standards must be established. An agency, usually a regulatory commission, must be authorized as a watchdog to ensure compliance with standards. The governor or the president must establish those regulatory agencies and follow through in a way that meets the spirit and intent of the law.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, for example, established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to ensure compliance with nondiscrimination

in employment. The National Labor Relations Act established the National Labor Relations Board to enforce compliance with labor laws. The California Coastal Commission was established to ensure laws protecting the California coastline were enforced.

An unsympathetic executive, however, can easily undermine all of your efforts to change policy by not enforcing the regulations. In a more subtle fashion, the composition of the regulatory commission can be so arranged that the very perpetrators of injustice and oppression become the regulators, and regulatory agencies are transformed into systems that reinforce oppression. Finally, enforcement of the laws can be twisted, loopholes found, exceptions made, delays granted, and a host of obfuscating processes developed that destroy the gains you and other activists have worked hard to achieve.

A commitment on the part of the executive branch of government to enforce the laws must be obtained. Appropriations of funds must follow the establishment of advocacy agencies and regulatory commissions so that the executive branch of government has the resources to enforce the law.

Macro Social Work and Social Change

While community and social betterment may be seen as a broad concern of all social workers, social change is one of the primary components of macro practice. Macro social workers might be considered “change agents,” people who are engaged in the profession of managing social change. Macro social workers, perhaps more than other human service professionals, are concerned with the present condition of community and society and work to improve or change those conditions for the better.

Macro social workers need to have an understanding of what others have thought about social change. They need to be clear about their own perspectives on change, and the ways they attempt to help bring about change. Their attitude toward change must be consistent with the values of the social work profession, especially in its efforts to establish the social commons and social goods which by their very nature are open, accessible, indivisible, and whose effects spread to everyone in the community and beyond. All social workers and citizens must be involved in helping the change process.

Social change must occur in a milieu of acceptance and tolerance for differing ideas as well as alternative perceptions, and insofar as possible must reflect the needs and interests of all. Most important, change must include those values and principles which reach for higher goods such as justice, mercy, truth, honor, nobility, and inclusion.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you learned that, in general, two ways of thinking exist in solving problems in social work. You discovered that the first way of thinking, rational problem solving or RPS, is a nearly universal way of thinking by which conventional human problems are solved in society as a whole, particularly in economics and politics. It is used by expert professional planners, social workers, and others. You learned a definition and a brief history of RPS. You discovered how to apply RPS to resolving conventional human problems and some limitations of RPS.

You also learned about another form of thinking that is compatible with the action-social model of macro social work, called social thinking or substantive rationality. You discovered that social problems can only be dissolved by using social thinking in combination with social change. You explored what social thinking is and learned about how to carry out social thinking. You also learned some limitations of social thinking.

You learned about social change. You explored theories of social change. You learned how to change social systems through the action-social change process, including principles of social change, and the life cycle of social change.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the strengths of RPS? What are its limitations?
2. What are the strengths of social thinking? What are its limitations?
3. It was asserted that modern calculative reason is value neutral. Why is being value neutral important in conventional problem solving? Why is it problematic for macro social workers in helping dissolve social problems? Should macro social workers be value neutral in helping people solve social problems? Under what circumstances should macro social workers understand and be engaged in the values that attend social issues?
4. You learned that the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has adopted rational problem solving as the method by which social workers engage in practice. Why has social work explicitly defined RPS as its official problem-solving method? Should social work also define social thinking or one of its derivatives as a method of solving social problems? Why or why not?

CHECKLIST 5.1

Problem-Solving Skills

The following checklist will help assess your problem-solving skills. For each item, indicate if it is something that applies to you often, sometimes, or never. Is there a pattern in the issues you have marked? What do these patterns say about you and your problem-solving skills? What areas would you like to improve?

1. I am the kind of person who generally can see larger solutions to problems quickly.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
2. I like to focus on one aspect of an issue and nail it down.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
3. I get stuck with my own perception of a problem and find it hard to let go.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
4. I usually go along when the group moves off in a direction that I feel is wrong or bad.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
5. I am able to present my position clearly and succinctly.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
6. I tend to ramble and talk around subjects.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
7. People usually listen and respond to me when I present my ideas.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
8. When I talk, people simply wait me out until I'm finished and then move on.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
9. I find myself jumping to conclusions before the group is ready.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____
10. I find myself looking at details, and sometimes discover that I have missed the larger situation.
Often ____ *Sometimes* ____ *Never* ____

CHECKLIST 5.2

Problem-Solving Inventory

This test, adapted from David Kolb's *Learning Style Inventory*⁷⁶ and based on Jungian per-

sonality functions, will help you understand how you go about solving problems.

In the following inventory, you will need to complete ten sentences. Each sentence has four endings intended to help you discover how you go about solving problems. Think of a situation in which you were faced with a problem you had to solve. Then, in the spaces provided, mark the ending with the number 4 that best fits your problem-solving style; mark with a 3 the ending that fits next best, and so on to the one least like your style. Put a different ranking in each space.

For example:

1. I solve problems best when
3 I explore what is good
1 I anticipate options
4 I use logic
2 I engage in practice

4 = most like you;
3 = second most like you;
2 = third most like you;
1 = least like you

1. I solve problems best when
____ I center myself in what is right
____ I grasp the future
____ I think things through
____ I do something tangible
2. I decide by
____ using my felt values
____ using my intuition
____ using my mind
____ using my practicality
3. When I problem solve I consider
____ others
____ all possibilities
____ only the facts
____ what is most effective
4. When I decide I pride myself on
____ my caring attitude
____ my creative insight
____ my ability to assess data
____ how I get things done
5. The best kind of problem solvers
____ are compassionate
____ have vision
____ rely on ideas
____ have common sense

6. When faced with a problem I rely on
 - how it affects others
 - my hunches
 - logic
 - what has worked before
7. The best problem solvers are
 - enthusiastic
 - imaginative
 - analytical
 - down to earth
8. Problem solving requires
 - a warm heart
 - inventiveness
 - a tough mind
 - hands-on action
9. Problem solvers should depend on
 - grounded experience
 - creative insights
 - empirically proven theories
 - practical models
10. Problem solvers should always attempt to discern
 - the meaning a situation holds
 - the opportunities a situation presents
 - what the facts say is correct
 - what is feasible

Total the scores for all the *a* answers. Then total the scores for all the *b*, *c*, and *d* answers.

- a* ____ (F)
- b* ____ (N)
- c* ____ (T)
- d* ____ (S)

To interpret your scores in the four categories of feeling, intuiting, thinking, and sensing, see Figure 5.3.

4. What kind of criteria would be useful for ranking alternative solutions to your problem?
5. What strategies can you think of?
6. How would you implement your plan?
7. How will you know whether you have achieved success?

ADVANCED EXERCISE 5.1

Examining Modern Reason

Even though rational problem solving is so much a part of us, it is not without its critics. It is important to understand these criticisms from the outset. Read the following critique of modern reason. Then answer the questions that follow.

Sociological Attack

One stream of criticism comes from a group of sociologists and social philosophers. The problem with modern rational problem solving is not that it is ineffective, but that it has been overutilized. The philosophical argument says that acceptance of pure instrumental reason is the “triumph of technique over purpose.”⁷⁷ It allows one to reach goals faster and more efficiently, but it avoids the issues of what goals and whose goals, and the important question, “Are those the right goals?” Only by infusing modern reason with ethics can we be assured that our social policies are good or proper.

While modern reason “works,” it has become so pervasive that it has all but eliminated other ways of thinking that are often more authentic and appropriate. Social thinking or substantive reason for example, challenges humans to reach for ethical constructs that are good and true in and of themselves, whether or not they can be empirically demonstrated. Other ways of thinking include spiritual understanding that goes beyond ethics and intuition.

Pragmatic Attack

The second argument against modern reason comes from practical realists. Their argument is not that modern reason doesn’t work, but that it doesn’t work well enough. This attack comes from various sources, all centering around the role of the individual in problem solving.

Herbert Simon, for example, says that the problem with instrumental reason is that it requires near omniscience, the accumulation of near-perfect information, and places nearly impossible

EXERCISE 5.2

Solving a Social Problem

Choose a conventional human problem in macro social work. Outline how you would use the rational problem-solving process to solve it. Try to be as specific as possible.

1. Give your definition of the problem.
2. What facts would you need to obtain? Where would you get those facts? How would you collect them? Whom would you need to contact?
3. How would you decide on alternative solutions?

Each of the four groups gives an indication of one aspect of the personality functions problem-solvers use. These functions are Feeling—group *a* (F); Intuiting—group *b* (N); Thinking—group *c* (T); and Sensing—group *d* (S).

On the diagram below, place a dot on the scale corresponding to your T, N, F, or S scores. Connect the lines. You will get a kite-like shape. The shape and position of your scores will show which of the functions you prefer most and which you prefer least.

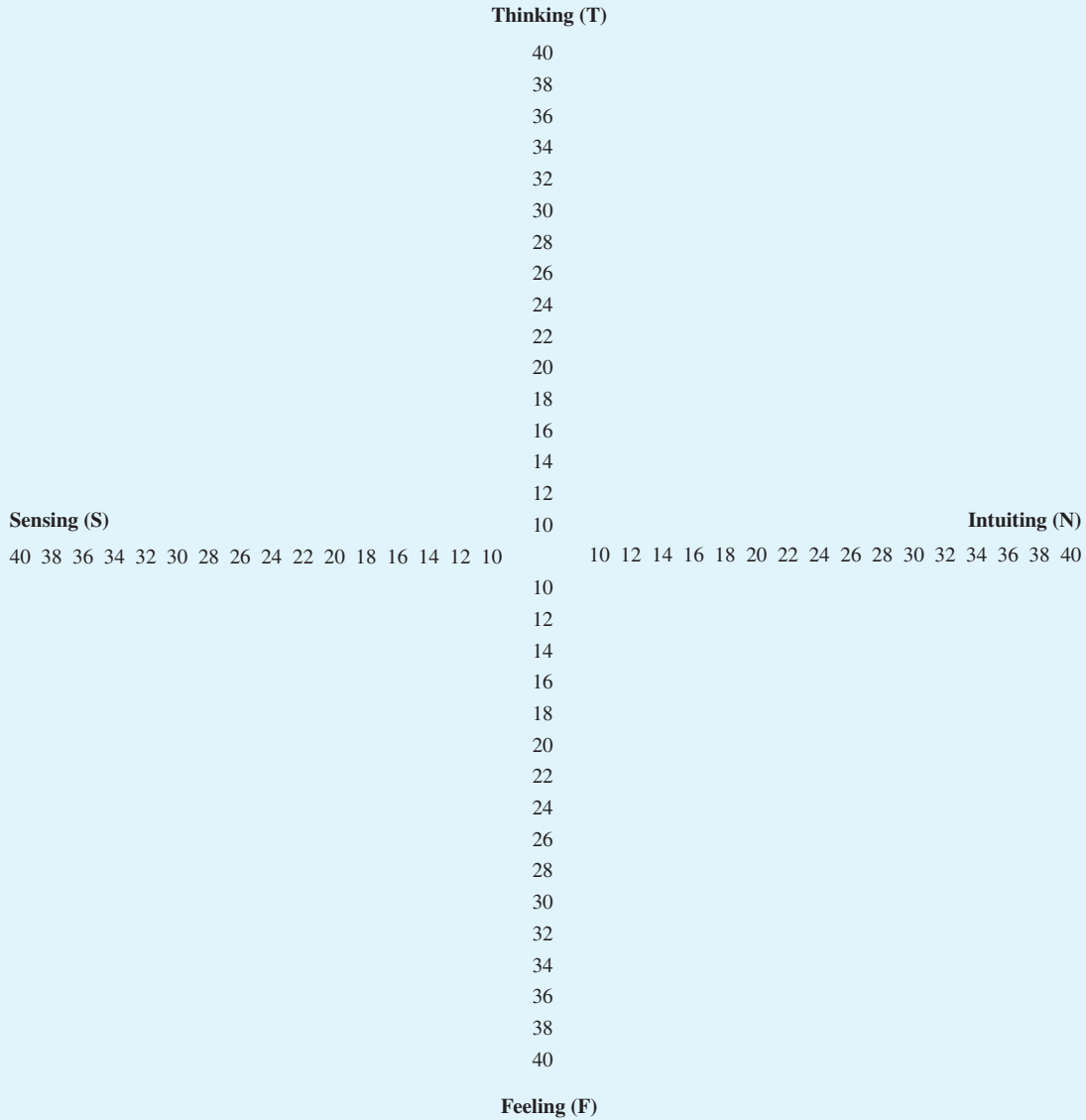


FIGURE 5.3 Understanding Your Personality Functions

demands on the human intellect. As a result, it has “little discernible relation to the actual or possible behavior of flesh and blood human beings.” Instead, says Simon, “human behavior is intendedly rational, but only limited” because “administrative man can make his decisions with relatively simple rules of thumb that do not make impossible demands upon his capacity for thought.” Because human beings cannot possibly be fully rational, there needs to be another kind of system into which they can be integrated that allows them to reach full rationality. This system is the organization. According to Simon, the “organization permits the individual to approach reasonably near to objective rationality.” This is so because “the behavior patterns we call organizations are fundamental ... to the achievement of human rationality in any broad sense. The rational individual is, and must be, an organized and institutionalized individual.” Therefore, for Simon, modern reason is no longer a function of the individual but the organizational context in which the individual is embedded. The more integrated the individual in the organizational milieu, the more nearly he or she can attain complete rationality.⁷⁸

Political Attack

The third attack on modern reason is leveled by Aaron Wildavsky and William Morrow, who assess the role of politics in organizational life.⁷⁹ The political attack claims that organizational systems are not really rational either. In fact, while organizations pretend to be fully rational, they are highly irrational. Decisions are really made, say these writers, by any number of factors in organizations such as expediency, survival, self-interest, and short-term gains.

While calculation occurs, it is not often used for lofty goals or for the achievement of principle, but rather for the specific interests of people who are out to further their own particular agendas.

Therefore, rationality is rarely a smooth process in which agreed-upon goals are easily achieved in a linear fashion. Instead, there is pulling in all sorts of directions as individuals in positions of power seek to have their own preferences ratified by means of the political process. In this game, any number of strategies are employed that will guarantee success. There are many political actors, each applying pressure to extract concessions from public organizations in an atmosphere of bargaining and negotiation.

Normative Attack

Robert Formaini employs a normative attack rejecting rationality in the change process. He says that scientifically based (i.e., justified) public policy is a dream that has grown ever more pervasive since the Enlightenment and that perhaps reached its apogee at the close of the 20th century. Rational policymaking is a myth, a theoretical illusion. While science can supply information and facts, inevitably those facts are often disputable, subject to distortions, and will always be used by decision makers who will apply their own norms or values to them. In the last analysis it doesn't matter what the facts are. What really matters is that “eventually someone has to decide the issue on purely normative grounds.”

In the United States that normative model is the democratic process, a system of checks and balances, combined with adherence to certain rights. In spite of its weaknesses, Formaini says that “there is no better way to decide such issues. Reliance on tradition, whether cultural or legal, is unworkable.... It is the virtue of a democratic political system that its mechanisms for change are available to those who wish to organize and use them.”⁸⁰

1. Social work, and society in general, has tended to adopt premises of rational problem solving as the means by which decisions are made. While this chapter claims that rational problem solving has considerable utility, it also points out its weaknesses. What is your assessment of the utility and importance of rational problem solving?
2. The sociological/philosophical attack claims that modern reason is a truncated or partial way of thinking, primarily because it does not allow for ethics and other ways of thinking to emerge in problem solving. Is this a fair criticism? Is there a way of overcoming this defect?
3. Herbert A. Simon claims that individuals are not fully rational, but that rationality is provided extraneously to people by organizational systems, without which humans would remain only “intendedly rational.” Is Simon right or wrong? What are the implications of his assessment?
4. Aaron Wildavsky and William Morrow attack modern reason because they suggest that decision making is ultimately “irrational,” at least in the political arena. Is political problem solving ultimately irrational?

5. Formaini asserts that rational problem solving is a myth. Instead, procedural democracy is the best available system we have for solving our social problems. What is your opinion of this assessment?
6. Can you think of other difficulties in applying modern reason to social issues? For example, modern reason assumes that one has complete knowledge of the consequences of alternative decisions. Is this ever possible?

ADVANCED EXERCISE 5.2

Rationality and Social Work

While the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) officially recommends that schools of social work teach RPS to all students,

Mary Zey says that “We do our students a disservice by teaching them that the rational choice models of decision making are the only acceptable models. Students may perceive rational choice models not only as explanation, but also as justification for making decisions on rational bases only. That is, students make not only economic decisions, but also family and personal relationship decisions on a rational, self-interested, even narcissistic basis.... Carried to its extreme, the rational choice models define *competition* as the core human value, and therefore the higher the level of competition, the better for humans and collectives.... If these are the values we teach, winning is the rational choice for all politics, and maximized wealth is the rational choice of all economic behavior.”⁸¹

Examine Zey’s reasons for not using rational choice as the only or even the preferred model. What are your opinions about this issue? Break into threes and discuss Zey’s objections to RPS. Reform into class and come to a conclusion.

ADDITIONAL READING

Learning Theory

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PART TWO

Social Work Practice with Communities

Community social work is social work.¹

Hans Falck

A Time for Community

It's time to look toward the small but vigorous civic community based on grassroots initiatives. It is time to focus on the churches, voluntary associations and grassroots groups that are rebuilding America's civil society one family, one block, one neighborhood at a time.²

William A. Schambra

COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORK

Part Two focuses on social work with communities. You will explore how people mobilize themselves for action and take responsibility for the well-being of their communities. When they become part of these changes, people determine their own futures rather than allowing themselves to be passive recipients of a future handed to them by others. They develop the power to critically examine the social world in which they find themselves. They come to see society not as a static, impenetrable presence but as a reality in the process of transformation.

You will discover how you can become engaged in this community revolution and make a lasting impact on many people's lives. You will find that you can become a part of a renewed social work, reclaiming its original heritage, building meaning, purpose, and a sense of obligation for the community and revitalizing the lives of people from the bottom up.

Chapter 6: Community

In Chapter 6 you will explore what macro social workers mean by "community." You will explore whether community is dying, as several theorists suggest. You will review a brief history of community in North America and discover several kinds of community with which social workers engage themselves. You will learn how to empower communities of people in taking responsibility for their own neighborhoods.

Chapter 7: Community Social Research and Planning

In Chapter 7 you will discover that community planning is an important means by which individuals implement grassroots democracy and make fundamental decisions about their communities. You will learn community research and planning skills, how social planning is connected with community development and community organizing, how to carry out community planning processes, and how to develop a planning project.

Chapter 8: Community Development

Chapter 8 will help you learn how community development has emerged as a new mode of community effort conceived and developed by African American community members over the past 50 years. You will discover that community development has become a major force for community empowerment and change, and that it has spread throughout the United States, Canada, and the global society as well.

You will learn that three forms of community development have emerged in the past decade. You will discover how community development corporations combine with community planning and community organizing to form a three-pronged approach to change. You will learn how to construct a community development corporation.

Chapter 9: Community Organization

In chapter 9 you will discover that community organizations, coalitions, and federations are slowly reshaping the social landscape of North America by pursuing political empowerment. You will learn what community organizing is and what a community organization consists of. You will discover how to create a community organization and how to carry out community organizing activities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Alliance for National Renewal, <http://www.ncl.org/anr/index.htm>.

National Association for Community Leadership, <http://www.communityleadership.org/>.

National Community Building Network, <http://www.ncbn.org/welcome.html>.

Chronicle of Philanthropy, Non-Profit Handbook, 1255 23rd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037; Phone: 202-466-1227.

6 Community

City on a Hill

We must delight in each other, make other's conditions our own, rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our community as members of the same body.¹

John Winthrop, first governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony

The Local Community

The strength of a free people resides in the local community. Local institutions are to liberty what primary schools are to science; they put it within the people's reach; they teach people to appreciate its peaceful enjoyment and accustom them to make use of it. Without local institutions a nation may give itself a free government, but it has not got the spirit of liberty.²

Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America

Community and Democracy

Democracy must begin at home, and its home is the neighborly community.³

John Dewey, Later Works

Community and Society

Community must be seen as antagonistic to modern society, as essentially critical of it, and as challenging its basic way of thinking, politics, values and premises. But such a community must be lived to be embodied. It is not a theoretical construct that can simply be thought about.⁴

Herbert Marcuse

Ideas in This Chapter

THE MIRACLE OF LE CHAMBON

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

Ties of Personal Relations

Natural Social Environment

DOES COMMUNITY PERSIST TODAY?

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY AND ITS THEORISTS

The British Enlightenment (1550–1800)

Community in Early America (1600–1800)

The Industrial Revolution (1800–1920)

Community Sociology (1887–1920)

Urbanization (1920–1990)

Community Theorists (1990–2000)

FORMS OF COMMUNITY

A Continuum of Community

COMMUNITY AS LOCALITY

Inner-City Neighborhoods

- Inner-Ring Suburban Neighborhoods
- Rise of Suburbia
- TRoubles in Local Neighborhoods
- Suburban Sprawl
- Economic Shifts
- Health and Housing
- Poor Schools
- HOW TO STRENGTHEN URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS
- Assets/Resources Approach
- Community Control Approach
- RURAL COMMUNITIES: VILLAGES AND TOWNS
- Shifting Population
- Rural Economy
- HOW TO STRENGTHEN RURAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES
- Rural Attitudes
- Developing Innovative Solutions
- Devising Policies

- RELATIONAL COMMUNITY
- Ubiquitous
- Action Centered
- Socially Centered
- Kinds of Relational Community
- Macro Social Work and Associations
- VIRTUAL COMMUNITY
- Internet
- E-Mail
- Social Networking
- Web Journalism
- Macro Social Work Practice with Virtual Community
- Criticism of Virtual Community Organizing
- CONCLUSION
- QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
- ADDITIONAL READING

THE MIRACLE OF LE CHAMBON

A plague was sweeping through the Western world. In the name of progress it produced a holocaust that wiped out one-third of the entire Jewish population with the complicity of established religion and occupied governments. In 1940 France fell to Nazi Germany, and by 1941 the puppet Vichy government began systematic deportation of Jews. The Nazis appeared triumphant.

To the people of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon in southwestern France, a poor farming community 350 miles south of Paris, however, that was beside the point. Here, over the course of four long years, 5,000 Christians sheltered 5,000 Jews. Outwardly the people of Le Chambon were much like those of any other small French village. Most were peasants and villagers descended from Huguenots, the first Protestants in Catholic France. Once they, too, had been persecuted for their beliefs, their rights abolished, their men deported as slaves in galleys, and their women imprisoned in towers where they left notes to their families that said “resist.” The persecution they called “the wilderness” lasted for 100 years.

In spite of this, the people of Le Chambon clung to their beliefs, their land, and their community. The memory of their past was the key to their survival. In

every challenge there would be an echo of their forebears’ faith and struggle. It was not only their religious beliefs but the persecution they had endured that made them different. At the beginning of the 20th century, when industry exploited women and children in mass numbers, Le Chambon welcomed sickly working-class women and children from neighboring cities and took them in. In the 1930s they sheltered refugees from the Spanish Civil War, and in 1940 they took in “guests,” offering them hospitality because “it was only a natural thing to do.” Nothing that occurred during the war years was unfamiliar to the people of Le Chambon.

In the beginning, only a few Jews made their way to this tiny corner of the world. At great risk to themselves, villagers took in the Jews. The Jews kept coming, and the people of Le Chambon kept taking them in: individuals, couples, families, children, the elderly, those who could pay, and those who could not—doctors, merchants, intellectuals, and homemakers from Paris and Warsaw, Vienna, and Prague.

One day during a church service a man came into the congregation. “I have,” said he, “three old testaments,” meaning three Jews who needed shelter. Without hesitation, an old farmer raised his hand. “I’ll take them,” he said. Never once did the people of Le Chambon ask if the strangers were Jews, even though

they knew that they were. To them it did not matter. They took in the strangers, protected them, and helped them on their way.

The day before the Nazis threatened the people of Le Chambon with occupation, Pastor Trocmé delivered a sermon that exemplified their resolve and the roots of their resistance. “The duty of Christians is to resist the violence that will be brought to bear on their consciences through the weapons of the spirit. We will resist whatever our adversaries demand of us that are contrary to the orders of the Gospel. We will also fear, but without pride and without hate.”⁵ It was a conspiracy of compassion.

The people of Le Chambon started schools for the refugees, boarded the Jews, and even helped them observe their own religious services. They began a center for forging documents, identification cards, and passports, giving the Jews false identities. Even when Nazis occupied Le Chambon, the villagers continued to hide the Jews, once in a hotel directly across the street from where soldiers were quartered. Le Chambon became a center of the French resistance.

The community of Le Chambon and the Jewish people were anchored in community. The Jews were the people of God, and the Huguenots of Le Chambon were also a people of God. The Nazis, on the other hand, considered themselves the epitome of progress, modernity, and technological efficiency. How they despised and attempted to destroy community! And yet the community of compassion and resistance survived, while only a few short years later, all that remained of the Third Reich was the memory of appalling death and destruction.

and bring them to class, where you will form into trios and come to some conclusions about community and its strengths. After discussing and coming to a conclusion, return to class and share your ideas.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

Our society is “building a culture in which a sense of community tends to be lacking,”⁶ according to Patricia Martin and Gerald O’Connor. For a large number of people in North America, community appears to exist only in marginal ways, in increasingly diminished form, and occupies little existential space in our lives. The result is a perception that many people live lonely, isolated, and alienated lives. Children and adolescents have few opportunities for healthy social group engagement. Most adults find their main source of meaning in career-oriented pursuits, often in large impersonal organizational systems.

Yet, as you will find in this chapter, community is one of our most important social structures, if not our most vital social form. In this chapter you will explore a definition of community. You will examine the question of whether community is dying. You will explore an action-social model of community and review a number of important components of substantive community. For example, you will find that community is the way that we are transformed into a people who solve our common problems and generate a culture that is transferred from generation to generation.

You will learn about three different kinds of community. First, you will learn about communities of place, or communities as localities. You will explore communities as central cities, inner-ring suburbs, and suburbs. You will learn about rural towns and villages. You will also learn how macro social workers help revitalize these various forms of community localities.

Second, you will explore relational community as a form of the social commons including social goods, social networks, and communal associations. Third, you will learn about virtual community, including social networking and how virtual community is a valuable asset in community organizing and social

EXERCISE 6.1

The narrative of Le Chambon demonstrated that community can survive not only in spite of, but often because of threats and attempts to destroy it. Do you believe that Le Chambon is unique and not typical of community as a whole, or do you think that this story represents characteristics of community in general?

What are the characteristics that make such communities as Le Chambon capable of survival even in the face of opposition and terror? Are oppressive regimes, for all their power and attempts at intimidation, inevitably doomed to eventual failure? Write out a few of your thoughts

action. You will explore the future of social networking for macro social work. You will discover that macro social workers use community as both a means and an end of social work practice through community social planning, community development, and community organization.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

With one relatively rare exception that occurred in late modernity, community has been *the* form of human associated life throughout history. An individual self cannot, in fact, reach its full realization in isolation but *only* as a person is nurtured, guided, and suffused first with family, then groups, and finally with the life of communal social relationships. Our predisposition to community ensures that we become the persons we were meant to become, discover who we are as people, and construct a culture that would be impossible for single, isolated individuals to accomplish alone.

Ties of Personal Relations

Community is an informal structure comprised of communal social relationships. These ties of personal relationships and the shared experiences that result from them help provide meaning in our lives, meet our needs for affiliation, and accomplish interpersonal goals over the long term.

Natural Social Environment

Every one of us needs community that arises spontaneously out of the innate sociality of the human condition. Communities are natural human groups, networks, and associations of people related to one another by at least one common or compelling factor in more or less loosely linked forms of connection. Communal social relationships in turn exist in a milieu of emotions, values, and interactions that I term “social goods.” Social goods such as honesty, trust, friendship, and public spirit, among others are only generated in the close ties of family and community. Communal social relationships and social goods, moreover, survive in an environment of the social commons, the arena of sociality and communality that suffuses the “social” component of the human condition.

EXERCISE 6.2

Is Community Alive Today?

Community exists wherever and whenever human beings exist together. Community may take a variety of forms and express itself in a variety of ways, but its persistence is part of the human condition. And yet there is confusion about whether or not community even exists today.

For over a century many people have observed that as impersonal, organizational, and systems structures claimed more and more social space, a simultaneous loss of communal social relationships has been evident, along with a distinct destruction of community itself. A number of scholars have either predicted its demise or assert that community as we have known it no longer exists. Even more dismaying, as Barry Wellman claims, we are “well on our way to killing [community] in developing countries,”⁷ and many social scientists have tended to agree with him.

As you read the following section, think about the resilience of community and its implications. Does community persist? What is the role of social work in helping to foster communal relationships, and why is it important to do so? What is the future of such communal forms in contrast to the seemingly solid, strong, and powerful complex systems-based organizational mechanisms on which modernity relies?

DOES COMMUNITY PERSIST TODAY? A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY AND ITS THEORISTS

Human beings engage in and seek communal relationships as a fundamental component of the human condition. In every early society that we know of, people typically engaged one another on an informal, personal basis by means of communal social relationships. Community was also the way people structured their social and political lives.

The early Greeks, for example, did not split the life of a person into one’s communal relations and one’s duties as a citizen. The two were indivisible and congruent. However, members of Classical Greek society were concerned that economic activities not spill over and contaminate civil society. They relegated calculative activities such as bargaining,

negotiation, and buying and selling to a physically and culturally restricted enclave called the *agora* or marketplace.

Throughout medieval Europe, formal economic relationships also tended, in the main, to be a less important aspect of structured social existence than communal, personal relationships. Community was the primary way people formed their associated life together.

The British Enlightenment (1550–1800)

During the British Enlightenment, however, for the first time in history community was rejected as a legitimate social form on which society ought to be based. Society was conceived by Thomas Hobbes as an artificial, impersonal system constructed on immutable physical science concepts devised to replace communal relationships.⁸ Joint stock companies were invented to serve as representatives of societal systems, and quickly evolved into international trading companies, including the Honorable East India Company and many others, which established colonies around the globe, initiating what was eventually to grow into our global, organizationally based market society.

Community in Early America (1600–1800)

In spite of the development of embryonic systems structures in Britain, civic life in early North America continued to be characterized by community solidarity, primarily because people resided in small towns. These communities submerged the economy as an enclave of the larger society and engaged in consensual political discourse.

Community Solidarity Thomas Bender says that “the social experience of early 17th century Americans ... was not divided between communal and non-communal ways of life.” The whole of life “was framed by a circle of loved, familiar faces.”⁹ Each of its several hundred provincial communities was “consciously separate” and often “surprisingly different.”¹⁰ Local Puritan communities, for example, were based on a covenant that members agreed to and joined. Membership was “fundamentally spiritual and experiential, often based upon previous and long established friendship” in which “like-minded people sorted themselves

out among diverse towns.”¹¹ Men and women came together to form small, intensely parochial local units that made up the kaleidoscopic life of the American social landscape.

Size and Structure As late as 1790 there were only 24 towns in the United States with a population of more than 2,500 people, and in a village or town of this size or smaller, everyone and everyone’s business was known by all. As small as they were, towns were subdivided into even smaller sections and became “redefined as a confederacy of smaller communities.”¹² Within these sections, people divided themselves into even more compact neighborhoods, each of which developed its own separate identity, and in which the full range of one’s social life was lived. Social networks held together by personal interaction and mutual friendship characterized these neighborhoods.

Submergence of the Economy The local community provided a focus for the economic, political, social, and religious lives of the townspeople. Communities, claims Bender, “were not so much segments of the larger commonwealth as they were miniature commonwealths.... While townspeople engaged in trade, their lives were not shaped or even touched by participation in a competitive market society. They were in the market but not of it.... Trade did not dominate local society; rather it was itself dominated by local society.”¹³

Communal Politics The personal relationships that maintained the essential unity of the town also produced a strong impulse toward political consensus. The town, not the individual, was the basic unit of political representation. Political decisions were made through discussion and accord rather than through modern interest-group conflict.

When decisions were made, the town records indicate simply that they were reached by general agreement that allowed the town to speak to the larger society with one political voice. Bender states that this unified expression often went beyond voting. The “returns from the towns after votes on the Constitutions of 1778 and 1780, for example, include detailed criticisms and suggestions, and each of these was phrased as the sense of the town, which indeed it was.”¹⁴

The Industrial Revolution (1800–1920)

The process of social change over the next two centuries altered all of this, however. The rise of factory towns and industrialization, following the pattern of Great Britain, created a bifurcation of North America into communal and non-communal society. The economy grew until the social commons became little more than an enclave embedded within the market society.

Science, Technology, and Factory Towns Modern organizations, fed by the power of science, technology, and the growth of rational, self-interested markets, had a major impact on communal relationships and the structure of community in North America at the turn of the 19th century. The invention of machinery and the factory as a means of mass production gave a boost to the developing market society. Factories needed sources of material supplies and outlets for their goods. Locations that favored certain factories also became the site for other manufacturing and commercial businesses. Industry attracted numbers of unskilled laborers from the countryside.

Because the mode of human transportation was mostly by foot, workers needed to live close to their work-site. Sometimes factories constructed housing for workers and profited not only from their labor but from providing accommodations as well. In these “factory towns,” life was often regulated and organized around the factory. In other areas, densely packed, cheap housing surrounded the factories. These “slums” became notorious in London and in America’s large northern cities including Boston, New York, and Chicago.¹⁵

Communal and Non-Communal Society The growth of industrialism and its dislocations transformed the structure and meaning of community, but community was not eclipsed. Communal and non-communal spheres were gradually distinguished from each other, and the distinctions between public and private spheres were sharpened. The mass of Americans became involved in two distinct but intertwined patterns of social relations, one communal and the other not.

Community Sociology (1887–1920)

Increasingly at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, a group of thinkers called sociologists became concerned with the increased organization

and mechanization of social life and what they observed as a diminishing communal orientation. Among the most prominent were Ferdinand Toennies, Émile Durkheim, and Max Weber in Europe, and Edward Ross in the United States.

Ferdinand Toennies: Personal Communal and Impersonal Systems Relations Ferdinand Toennies (1855–1936) explored the transformation of community in modern times more deeply than any other sociologist of his generation. In his book *Community and Society*, published in 1887, Toennies observed that a phenomenon was occurring in which one form of human association he called *gemeinschaft*, or personal relationships, was giving way to another form of social relations called *gesellschaft*, or impersonal relationships.¹⁶

Personal Relationships In normal society, communally based “personal relationships ... focus around emotional commitment, loyalty, emphasizing common ties and feelings and a sense of moral interdependence and mutual obligation,”¹⁷ says Roland Warren. Personal relations are natural, face-to-face, “informal, intimate, most commonly found in families, small groups and communities,”¹⁸ say Hassinger and Pinkerton.

In traditional family-like community relationships, for example, a person is perceived “according to *who* he is rather than on *what* he has done, what he can produce, or the amount of wealth he can command.”¹⁹ With personal relationships, “ends and means are not separate. Action is based on emotion and sentiment.”²⁰ People are seen as totalities and are appreciated for their innate qualities.

Impersonal Relationships Ferdinand Toennies observed that in capitalistic industrial society impersonal systems-based relationships had become the dominant mode of being. Toennies asserts that

this change reaches its consummation in what is frequently designated as individualism... . “Capitalistic society” captures individualism and impersonal economic relationships with which it is associated, increases in power, and gradually grows to ascendancy.²¹

Impersonal systems relationships require the universal application of rational/legal forms of control,

and an institutionalized power orientation characterized by formal, artificial, contractual economic relationships designed and controlled by others. People engage one another as objects that can be used as a means for another person's ends. Encounters with others tend to be directed toward achievement of specific utilitarian goals. A person's worth is determined by the uses to which his or her labor can be put. An individual is considered valuable if he or she possesses skills that are needed, is in command of resources, or has power to obtain others' compliance.

Ultimately in organized systems a person becomes transformed into an object, a functionary who plays a role in return for some benefit such as a salary or the hope of security. A person comes to view him- or herself and others as commodities.²² Impersonal relationships result in dehumanization of human beings, often with little conscious awareness that such a transformation has occurred.

Two Alternative Forms of Relationship By the time Toennies observed the dominance of systems-based impersonal relationships over natural communally based personal relationships, formal, functional relations had become so universal that they had become the norm for European society as a whole. For Toennies, this transformation did not mean the death of community as a form of association, however. Both forms of human interaction were available in modern society. Toennies anticipated that both forms of interaction were likely to be permanent aspects of all social life. Even though the space in which communal relationships existed was shrinking, community continued to be and would remain an irrevocable component of the human condition.

Émile Durkheim and the Division of Labor In *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893), Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) asserted that the Industrial Revolution had resulted in an “increased division of labor in more advanced societies that leads to the interdependence of specialized parts,”²³ a structural form that not only was found in the market economy but was increasingly present in government, art, and science as well.²⁴ This new mechanistic form of society, Durkheim said, was inherently destructive of the human condition.

Developing his concepts of “mechanical” and “organic” solidarity independently of Toennies, Durkheim similarly believed that modern society

contained both of them simultaneously. “These ‘two societies,’” Durkheim wrote, “really make up only one,” just as Toennies claimed.²⁵

Max Weber Bureaucracy and Instrumental Reason In *Economy and Society*, Max Weber (1864–1920), the most brilliant sociologist of our time, described the societal transformation that was occurring in Europe in ways virtually identical to those of Toennies.²⁶ However, Weber's unique contribution was his observation that the cause of the demise of communal relationships in modern society was the rise of systems-based organization and functional calculative reason. In his classic article “Bureaucracy,” Weber asserted that in either the economy or government, modern organization is *the* means of transforming informal, personal, communal action into formal, impersonal, rationally organized action.²⁷

The way by which organizations change our thinking is the key to understanding how a new, more impersonal society is created. As they acquire power, grow in size, and impose their imperatives on more and more social space, complex organizational systems shrink the arenas where people can express communal social relations or exercise value-based social or “substantive” thinking in their lives.

Urbanization (1920–1990)

In North America, where urbanization was growing with amazing speed, social thinkers, including Edward Ross and Louis Wirth, began to assert that impersonal organizational relationships were a key component of an inevitable, historically determined process. Others, including Robert Redfield and new community theorists, tended to align themselves with Toennies and his followers, who claimed that organized impersonal relationships, while dominant, are not inevitable.

Edward A. Ross and Social Control Writing at the turn of the 20th century, Edward A. Ross (1866–1951), one of America's most influential social theorists during the Progressive Era, rejected Toennies' dualistic notion and offered a linear model of change. Ross saw society as progressing step by step from a personally oriented communal society to an impersonal, rational, mass urbanized society. In his book *Social Control*, for example, Ross argued that “powerful forces are more and more transforming community into [a

systems-based organizational] *society*; that is, replacing living tissue with structures held together by rivets and screws.”²⁸ With the erosion of all traditional or communal forms of social cohesion in modern urban society, it was essential, Ross argued, to develop artificial or formal institutional mechanisms of social control.

Louis Wirth and Urbanism In 1938, Louis Wirth (1897–1952) wrote what is “possibly the most-cited, most influential article ever written in American sociology, ‘Urbanism as a Way of Life.’”²⁹ This article explored how population size, density, and heterogeneity combined to create the conditions for impersonal organizational relationships, increasing the need for specialized division of labor, more impersonal relationships, competition, and the need for more social control.

Wirth argued that in modern society “communal ways broke down and were replaced by a new pattern of life called ‘urbanism.’”³⁰ He insisted that urbanism is both the cause and the result of “weakening kinship bonds, the declining social significance of the family, disappearance of the neighborhood, and the undermining of the traditional basis of social solidarity.”³¹ With the collapse of communally based personal relationships, Wirth supposed that “competition and formal control mechanisms [would have to] substitute for bonds of solidarity that hold a communally-oriented society together.”³²

Early Communitarians “If, in American social science, there was a clear tradition extending from Ross at the turn of the century to Wirth in the late 30s that emphasized one aspect of Toennies’ theory and denied or deemphasized the other,” says Thomas Bender, “there was also an important group of progressive social theorists including Jane Addams, at the turn of the century continuing with Charles Horton Cooley, Robert Park, Mary Parker Follett, John Dewey and Robert Redfield who maintained the dual perspective of Toennies.”³³ Although acknowledging that the advent of modern, urban society meant increasing impersonal systems-based relations, they agreed with Toennies and Durkheim that community was still vital.

Social worker Jane Addams (1860–1935), for example, embraced Cooley’s advice that the reinvigoration of informal and intimate groups in the city should involve “trusting democracy more, rather than less.”³⁴

Through her work she enhanced democracy while making the local neighborhood a community within the city.

Mary Parker Follet (1868–1933), administrative thinker and social worker connected with the Settlement House movement, “theorized about the necessity of revitalizing the neighborhood as a social and political group that might counterbalance the modern tendency toward bureaucratization and centralization.”³⁵ Robert Park (1864–1944), sociologist at the University of Chicago, viewed society as “double-voiced.”³⁶ Rather than society replacing community, he believed each individual was involved in alternative forms of human interaction.

John Dewey (1859–1952) denied the existence of any inevitable evolution of society from individualism to collectivity. “There is nothing intrinsic in the forces which have effected uniform standardization, mobility, and remote invisible relationships,”³⁷ he said. For Dewey, the small community remains vital. Until “local communal life can be restored, the public cannot adequately resolve its most urgent problem: to find and identify itself.”³⁸

Finally, Robert Redfield (1897–1958), who exhaustively studied both communal and urban society, asserted that we need to think of local society as “an interpenetration of two opposite kinds of living, thinking and feeling: an isolated, homogenous, sacred and personal community” and simultaneously “a heterogeneous, secular, and impersonal society that we find in cities.”³⁹

Community Theorists (1990–2000)

In the 1980s and 1990s three ideas about community gained popularity, including civil society, introduced by Eastern European activists, Amitai Etzioni’s communitarianism, and Robert Putnam’s social capital.

Eastern European Activists and Civil Society

During the 1980s, Eastern European activists struggled against communist dictatorships. These dissidents discovered that even the most efficient police states could not stamp out all vestiges of independent social life, which survived in cafés, churches, workplaces, and families. Eastern European rebels used these enclaves of civil society to incubate the idea of a free social commons that eventually triumphed.⁴⁰

Their struggles created renewed interest in the idea of civil society that “offered a language of volunteerism and freedom, and those forms of communal and associational life that are organized neither by the self-interest of the market nor by the coercive potential of the state,”⁴¹ says Alan Wolfe.

Amitai Etzioni and Communitarianism Communitarians, led by Amitai Etzioni, present strong communities as the solution to contemporary social ills. “Our ultimate purpose is to provide an opportunity for deep human satisfaction, the kind found only when we are engaged with one another, and to strengthen the community as a moral infrastructure,”⁴² says Etzioni.

Communitarians focus on the value of local self-sufficiency, civic responsibility, and the importance of strengthening the social infrastructure of local communities through civic engagement. They believe that a stable, well-functioning society is characterized by strong local communities working together to solve problems:

As a rule every community ought to be expected to do the best it can to take care of its own.... Whether the problem is mounting garbage, crime, drug abuse, or any of the well known host of social problems that beset us, the first responsibility lies with those who share a community.⁴³

Robert Putnam and Social Capital The communitarian emphasis on rebuilding local capacity that began in Eastern Europe has been echoed in the writings of civil society theorists Robert Bellah, Robert Putnam, and others. Putnam, for example, emphasized the importance of social capital: those products of human association that are indispensable in our common lives and without which we could not exist.⁴⁴ Kristina Smock, comments, for example,

In any comprehensive strategy for improving the plight of America’s communities, rebuilding social capital is as important as investing in human and physical capital.... Social capital is not a substitute for effective public policy but rather a prerequisite for it and, in part, a consequence of it.⁴⁵

Community social capital is a measure of how much collaborative time and energy people have for each other, the amount of time parents have for their children, the attention neighbors give to one another’s families, the quality of relationships people

in congregations have, and the relationships people form in associations such as PTAs and scout troops, among others.

For Putnam the store of social capital and hence of communal relationships, however, is diminishing in today’s modern society. He cites evidence of the decline of traditional associations and social goods such as trust, loyalty, and honesty in modern society.⁴⁶

Toennies Revisited All social workers must have a clear perspective on the role of community in today’s modern urban society. While modern impersonal systems culture may seem to be triumphant, community as a social form is not disappearing. “Community has never been lost,”⁴⁷ asserts Barry Wellman. Since the 1960s,

research has shown that neighborhood and kinship ties continue to be abundant and strong. Large institutions have neither smashed nor withered community ties. To the contrary: the larger and more inflexible the institutions, the more people seem to depend on their informal ties to deal with them.⁴⁸

What may appear to some as the demise of communal relationships is a process of community change, adaptation, and transformation. As community changes, we must reconceptualize our long-held beliefs about the nature of urban community. “Community is alive; it is our old conceptions of community that are no longer viable,” say David Karp and colleagues. “We find that we are no longer bound or restricted in our view of what human community is or can be in the city. As the city becomes progressively more impersonal, persons must create new sources of sentiment, meaning, and identification.”⁴⁹

As our modern society changes, therefore, an increasingly important role for social workers will include becoming keen observers of new forms of emergent communal relationships. We need to apply our assessment skills to understand how community is being transformed, how to help people define new communal ways of being, and develop the social commons for the future.

FORMS OF COMMUNITY

Sociologists sometimes see community either as locality based, as a form of relationships, or as a combination of both. J. Bernard, for example, says, “a community is

a territorially bounded ... set of interlocking or integrated functional subsystems ... serving a resident population, plus the material culture or physical plant through which [they] operate.”⁵⁰ Karp, Stone, and Yoels, however, deemphasize such a spatial or territorial systems basis for community. They describe community in terms of networks of interaction, or “interactional fields.”⁵¹ Phillip Olson, taking another perspective, asserts that many urban sociologists today no longer see community “as a territorial unit, but ... [rather] as a variety of linkages among persons sharing common interests and activities.”⁵²

A Continuum of Community

When social workers consider community we often think about two things simultaneously. Community is a locality in space and time, but community also exists as a form of relationships. For example, social worker Carel Germain says that community “is both locality specific and non-place specific,”⁵³ and social worker Elizabeth Lewis says that “both a perspective of locality-based community and non locality-based community have value for macro social workers.”⁵⁴

This textbook takes the perspective that community exists on a continuum from those that primarily identify themselves as a locality with few non-locality-based relational aspects, on the one hand, to communities that are almost purely relational with few or no locality aspects, on the other.

Place-Based At one end of the continuum community may be experienced as locality-based villages, towns, or urban neighborhoods⁵⁵ in which fewer deep relationships are experienced. Physical proximity does not necessarily mean that people have much to do with each other, comments Mark Smith.⁵⁶ There may be little interaction between neighbors. A generic name for these communities is *locales* where people often live side by side with few close or intimate relationships.

Place Plus Relationship-Based Community may also be seen as middle-range combinations of social groups, associations, networks, and religious congregations that are primarily relational but also are locality- or place-specific. The name for this kind of community is *relational community*.

Non-Place-Based At the other extreme, community also may be seen as newer forms of *virtual community* that exist in social networks, user groups, and others on the Internet. Virtual communities are almost exclusively comprised of social relationships and are almost entirely lacking in any locality sense whatsoever.

COMMUNITY AS LOCALITY

In small and large cities, locality exists in the form of specific neighborhoods that are self-identifying and often contiguous with one another. These neighborhoods are further differentiated in larger cities into inner-city neighborhoods, inner-ring suburban neighborhoods, and suburban neighborhoods. Localities often have differing characteristics and different issues confronting their residents. In rural areas, locality-based community exists as small towns and villages.

Inner-City Neighborhoods

Following World War II, many white Americans moved out of the inner cities, causing a breakdown of local support networks. This movement was exacerbated by northward migration of African Americans, increasing poverty, and intentional public policies that cemented changes in many inner cities.

Breakdown of Support Networks Population movement contributed to a breakdown of local support networks and produced social polarization. John McKnight observes that “The number and solidarity of ethnically-based associations, the many civic and

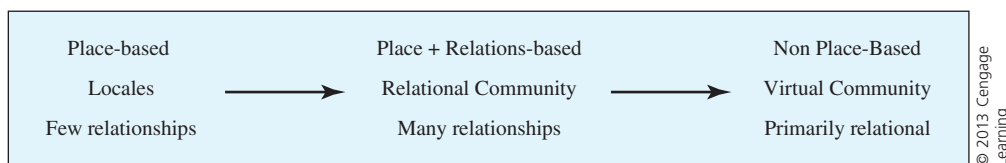


FIGURE 6.1 Community Continuum

political organizations that once flourished began to disappear as many second- and third-generation ethnics left their old neighborhoods.⁵⁷ Problems around city neighborhoods were exacerbated by the movement of people, retail establishments, and job opportunities into the suburbs. This movement created urban sprawl and effectively robbed many inner-city neighborhoods of much of their charm, services, diversity, and political influence.

Northward Migration At the same time, say Hassinger and Pinkerton, “many African Americans, discouraged by racial inequality and lack of opportunity in the rural South, migrated to the congested inner cities of the North in the hope of a better life, creating one of the most significant population movements in our history.”⁵⁸

Increasing Poverty “As people became more mobile and worked long distances from their neighborhoods, their identification and commitment to the community diminished,”⁵⁹ says McKnight. Harry Boyte asserts that “corporations often used their accumulated capital to purchase locally owned industries and businesses, transferring community wealth from inner cities to national and even transnational conglomerates.”⁶⁰

Government Policy A unified government policy subsidized suburbia with government-insured mortgages and tax breaks for primarily white middle and upper strata of American society, while providing bulldozer urban renewal and government housing in depleted inner cities for low-income, primarily African American citizens. As a result, banking institutions, plants, factories, and retail and wholesale operations that had been convenient targets of community organizing lost their usefulness because “they are no longer there,”⁶¹ says John McKnight. Even those cities that transformed their downtowns into administrative and financial centers for service industries were unable to stem the growing tide of poverty in inner cities.

Inner-Ring Suburban Neighborhoods

“Neighborhoods that improved in the 1990s were predominantly located in the inner portions of the central city and the outer rings of the suburbs,”⁶² say Kingsley

and Pettit. In contrast, tracts that worsened were more prevalent in the outer portions of the cities and, in particular, the inner ring of the suburbs.⁶³

Today, according to Peter Dreier, “a growing number of middle-income Americans find themselves trapped in older inner-ring suburbs that look more and more like troubled cities.”⁶⁴ Inner cities and their inner-ring suburbs have much in common. Many face a number of the same problems: crime and violence, high rates of infant mortality, crumbling infrastructure, inadequate housing, and chronic fiscal crises. In fact, when older communities are taxed to fund the massive supporting infrastructure for new, more exclusive development, the poor are further enervated, the process accelerates, and injustice increases. “As polarization continues, the concentration of poverty creates waves of socioeconomic decline that roll onward at an astonishingly fast pace,”⁶⁵ asserts Myron Orfield.

Rise of Suburbia

During the 1980s Los Angeles grew by 17.4%, while its suburbs grew by 29.5%. Baltimore lost 6.4% of its population while its suburbs grew by 16.5%. By 1989 income in the cities had fallen to 84% of suburban income. In every region of the country, even where city populations were increasing, the fastest-growing parts of the metropolitan areas were the surrounding suburbs,⁶⁶ reports Peter Dreier.

The 1992 presidential election campaign was the first in which an absolute majority of voters came from the suburbs. Even more important, the number of congresspersons representing cities has been declining, while the number representing suburban areas is increasing. After the 1992 redistricting, the House had 98 urban districts, 170 suburban districts, and 88 rural districts. The rest were a mix of urban–suburban or rural–suburban populations. In 1996 more than three-quarters of all Americans lived in metropolitan areas, two-thirds of whom, about half the nation’s population, lived in the suburbs.⁶⁷

TROUBLES IN LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS

In their introduction to *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, John Kretzmann and John McKnight argue that these are troubling times for our cities.⁶⁸ At the root of the problems are suburban sprawl and massive

economic shifts resulting in a lack of well paying jobs, inadequate health care, and poor housing and schools.

Suburban Sprawl

“By the 1980s,” according to Hilda Blanco, “combined with economic trends that have made suburban, middle-class life more difficult to attain, the effects of continued suburban sprawl have become clear: suburban traffic congestion, air, water, and land pollution, loss of open space, municipal financial distress, class and ethnic segregation, and unmemorable, placeless landscapes.”⁶⁹

Economic Shifts

“Underlying the economic problems of many inner-city residents is an absence of steady, well-paying jobs,”⁷⁰ says Sean Zielenbach. Unemployment rates in some low-income urban communities exceed 40%. Hundreds of thousands of industrial jobs have either disappeared or moved away from the central city and its neighborhoods. “While many downtown areas have experienced a ‘renaissance,’ the jobs created there are different from those that once sustained neighborhoods,”⁷¹ says Alan Shaw. Shaw says that either these new jobs are highly professionalized, requiring elaborate education and credentials for entry, or they are routine, low-paying service jobs without much of a future.⁷²

Individuals who are employed may have to work multiple jobs in order to maintain an acceptable standard of living, since many positions do not pay a sustainable wage, and frequently there is no guarantee that those low-paying jobs will provide any sort of health insurance or other benefits.

These shifts in the economy, and particularly the disappearance of decent employment possibilities from low-income neighborhoods, have removed the bottom rung from the fabled American “ladder of opportunity,”⁷³ Shaw says. “For many people in older city neighborhoods, new approaches to rebuilding their lives and communities, new openings toward opportunity, are a vital necessity.”⁷⁴

Health and Housing

Many residents of low-income urban communities lack access to quality health care. Untreated ailments not only reduce the quality of life but also hamper the

residents’ ability to find and hold jobs. Part of the health problems poor people face, says Zielenbach “typically stems from inadequate housing.”⁷⁵ In addition, a significant percentage of housing units within a distressed urban neighborhood are substandard, and many others become that way as a result of overcrowding. Many low-income individuals spend as much as 75% of their incomes on housing, leaving little for food or other life essentials.⁷⁶

Poor Schools

Schools in urban America are experiencing enormous difficulties adjusting to the changes in the surrounding social setting. Alan Shaw notes that as issues concerning crime, violence, drug use, and teen sexuality become more prevalent, we are seeing record high dropout rates and declining academic performance.⁷⁷ Practically all big-city public schools struggle with the attrition of a large percentage of teenage students, and many social theorists claim this will “worsen with no end in sight, especially in light of political realities that include shrinking budgets and declining commitment to public education.”⁷⁸

Without better methods for understanding the difficulties involved in urban experiences, much of the public debate is centered on how to *force* schools and students to perform, often by threatening to purge schools and students who fail. School departments are being blamed, teachers are being blamed, parents are being blamed, and the children themselves are being blamed. Assigning this blame, however, has done little to change the situation, says Alan Shaw.⁷⁹

EXERCISE 6.3

Social Leadership

American cities continue to have a number of problems including health and housing, low-paying jobs, pockets of poverty, deteriorating schools, and suburban sprawl, among others. Consider the leadership role of the profession of social work in helping preserve the nation’s social welfare. What do you believe is the responsibility of social work in helping deal with these issues. What has the profession of social work actually done at the turn of the 21st century to help reduce poverty, improve schools, reduce urban sprawl, and deal

with other issues of national importance? Compare this with what early social workers did about these same problems at the turn of the 20th century. What do you conclude about how the profession of social work has changed? What do you propose social workers do to make community localities more beneficent in the 21st century?

HOW TO STRENGTHEN URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

Macro social workers help people use the assets/resources and community control approaches to reverse poverty, poor health, housing, and schools.

Assets/Resources Approach

The assets/resources approach to community revitalization developed by Kretzman and McKnight builds on the strengths/capacity perspective of the action-social model of macro social work.⁸⁰ Social workers believe that when people are aware of available resources, have access to them, and claim their rights to benefit from what society offers, they can build lives of meaning. The assets/resources approach asserts that “communities that are better integrated into the urban and metropolitan markets typically attract more outside resources and therefore increase the opportunities available to their members,”⁸¹ according to Zielenbach.

Every community has resources and assets that it can use to improve its social environment. You begin by tracking existing assets. Two broad categories of resources are economic resources and social strengths. When you explore people’s resources, look for anything that can activate their confidence and create an empowering atmosphere. After you have an updated inventory of available economic and social capital, focus your attention on what you want to accomplish, and think of all the resources that could apply. You devise strategies to build on existing resources and develop those that are lacking. In addition, you build community wealth and develop the social strengths of the community.

Building Community Wealth According to Sean Zielenbach, “people who live in more affluent neighborhoods typically fare better socially and economically than individuals who live in areas of high crime and

high poverty.”⁸² While self-sustaining social and political involvement may be ultimate goals of macro social workers, many of these objectives can be achieved by first helping neighborhoods and their residents develop economically. Not only is economic enhancement often a means to the end of deeper and more intrinsic capabilities, it may even be an end in itself. When individuals or institutions invest in a community, they are participating in what is known as the “community wealth approach.” Community wealth includes obtaining infusions of money into the community from government and foundations, and especially developing long-term private monetary capital.

Private Foundations and Government Most community revitalization occurs by increased private economic investment. Most individuals and businesses, however, are risk-averse and not often willing to be the first investors in a troubled area. They often depend on foundations and government to go in before them, alleviate some of the investment risk, and lay the groundwork for individuals and private institutions.

Private foundations and government funding can more easily make an initial high-risk resource commitment in deprived communities. In addition, Zielenbach says, “significant private investment requires a well-developed local physical infrastructure which only the public sector can provide.”⁸³

Convincing Private Investors and Bankers Revitalization is a product of numerous individual decisions. “People make those choices in response to and in conjunction with the decisions of others.”⁸⁴ Because investors rarely have all the information they need, many decide on the basis of trust, relationships and community safety.

Trust. Investors look favorably on neighborhoods with greater social organization and stability. They risk their organization’s resources because they believe that a particular neighborhood will improve. They trust in the abilities of people within that community to manage resources effectively and promote positive change when those people have strong personal responsibility to the community.

Relationships. Developing trust often depends on the presence of strong networks of interpersonal relationships in a community. Investors often generate trust from relationships they have with those in the community who are firm in their hope and aspirations for change.

Safety. Zielenbach claims that “While real estate developers base their initial decisions primarily on a community’s locational attributes, the long-term viability of their projects often hinges on such factors as the safety of the community.”⁸⁵

Building Social Strengths Building social strengths using the assets/resources approach includes developing personal skills, building social networks, strengthening leaders and residents, empowering youth, and generating social capital.

Develop Personal Skills Community members who are integral to conceptualizing, planning, and carrying out community enhancement efforts will often develop personal skills that make them more competent. As local residents learn to participate more effectively, members develop capacity for further successful collaboration in solving problems. They gain confidence and self-presentation ability, learn to work in groups, carry out tasks, share information, all of which can be useful on the job.

Build Social Networks Members also develop networks of shared learning and community cohesion that, if correctly directed, can lead to jobs and job creation resources. Job creation resources include community development corporations, social enterprises, cooperatives, and employee-owned firms, among others about which you will learn in future chapters. The social infrastructure that results becomes a lasting foundation upon which economic capacity can grow.

Strengthen Leaders and Residents While individual leaders play a significant role in creating capital, their efforts are only part of the process. Local residents need to feel comfortable interacting with others in order to build the trust necessary to pursue their collective goals. They need to have a sense that their efforts matter, that they can do things to improve their lives.

Talents of individuals in the community, even those who may seem to be less capable, such as the elderly or those with disabilities, provide the fundamental base of community assets. “Raising levels of participation in community projects ensures that the needs of local residents get heard not only the interests of service providers, policymakers, developers or businesses,”⁸⁶ says John Pierson.

Empowering Youth According to John McKnight, “A tremendous amount of resources and careers, unfortunately, have been invested in portraying youth as ‘problems’ for society.”⁸⁷ The founder and director of the Youth Development and Research Fund stated it eloquently: “Basically, what decision makers are telling us is that there is little value placed on the potential contributions of ... young adults. At-risk young adults have become undervalued by society and overlooked in policy.”⁸⁸

Instead, macro social workers using the assets/resources approach seek to change this perspective. Melvin Delgado, for example, sees youth as an asset—“a group that can be embraced for current and potential contribution to society. This view sees youth in a position to help rather than to receive assistance.”⁸⁹ The assets/resources approach directs youth away from problems such as drug abuse, crime, and pregnancy toward enhancing their potential. The youth emphasis offers rewards for society as well as youth and their families. However, says Delgado, “such a shift is not possible unless we embrace a perspective that specifically sets out to achieve this goal.”⁹⁰

Generating Social Capital The impact of institutional commitments and strong local leadership ultimately depends on the amount of social capital present within a community. “Institutions hesitate to commit resources to an area unless it has enough capable local leaders, committed residents and social organizations for the resources to have an impact,”⁹¹ says Zielenbach.

Assets/Resource Approach: A Caveat Melvin Delgado cautions that sometimes the assets approach operates as if putting resources into the community is equivalent to strengthening and empowering. The presence of assets or absence of deficits, he reminds us, does not guarantee success or failure in building individuals, groups, communities, or society as a whole.⁹² According to the Search Institute, “assets themselves are not a panacea. Circumstances do not dictate destiny.”⁹³ The challenge to macro social workers is how to use existing assets in creative ways, rather than simply locating new assets.

The key to neighborhood betterment often begins with the market, but must not be limited to it. Macro social workers try to help original residents ensure that when more lower-income residents move in,

conditions in the neighborhood are maintained. For example, your local neighborhood organization can make extra efforts to keep the streets clean, enforce codes to sustain property maintenance, engage in community policing to keep the crime rate low, and offer services for the new entrants to help them adapt to and sustain themselves successfully in their new environments.⁹⁴

Community Control Approach

A second method of community revitalization is to increase the community control of the locality and its resources by the people who live in the community. Such control already exists in wealthier neighborhoods whose members are often influential. Less powerful members can also achieve the control they ordinarily lack by means developing positive policies, promoting enhanced relationships with local governmental, securing institutional actors, and engaging social organizations.

Develop Positive Policies If the neighborhood that is the focus of your efforts is already worsening, first help your neighborhood planning group, CDC, or local community organization ensure that local public policies are not re-concentrating the poor by locating too many voucher recipients or subsidized units in any neighborhood,⁹⁵ recommend Kingsley and Pettit.

If public policies are not creating problems, however, your community association may find that sizable numbers of low-income families are moving into some new types of neighborhoods on their own. Your members should not prevent lower-income families from the inner cities and elsewhere from moving into better neighborhoods, but should find ways to guide the process so that current residents from higher-income families will remain and a sustainable, mixed-income community will result.⁹⁶

Promoting Enhanced Public-Sector Relationships "Only the federal government has the resources necessary to address the lack of affordable housing and the decay of the physical urban infrastructure of many communities,"⁹⁷ says Sean Zielenbach. Most importantly, the federal government has responsibility for shaping the national economy. The federal government can leverage assistance by means of its policy position regarding community revitalization.

Often, under pressure from community organizations, the federal government has passed key legislation giving community residents more leverage in their own neighborhoods. The War on Poverty improved conditions for community members. The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program has encouraged corporations to invest in affordable housing projects and has directly contributed to the development of tens of thousands of housing units in low-income neighborhoods. The Home Mortgage Disclosure Act has compelled banks to disclose the extent to which they make loans to local residents. The Community Reinvestment Act has forced banks to be more responsive to the credit needs of the communities they serve. More recently, the Community Development Financial Institution Act has encouraged investment in organizations specifically addressing local economic revitalization. Each of these measures adds to the amount of control residents have over their local communities.

Secure Institutional Actors The existence and commitments on the part of major institutions including financial institutions, hospitals, manufacturing and retail companies, foundations, and major religious infrastructures, among others largely determine the long-term health of the community. The extent to which local residents can develop positive relationships with these institutions securing their commitment to a community, the stronger will be the community's base.

Engage Social Organizations Macro social workers "should focus on increasing community control through formal organizations as a mechanism for decreasing gang violence and other social problems in disorganized communities."⁹⁸ says Donna Hardina. But more than simply solve social problems, social organizations add to the content of the social capital available in a community.

Moreover, although they lack the size and resources of major corporations, locally based non-profit social organizations not only have a direct financial impact in local communities; they are crucial actors in contributing to local revitalization efforts. The number and involvement of local social service and group work agencies, Community Development Corporations (CDCs), and community organizations are important to providing a network of support services to a community. Community centers, faith-based communities, and service associations such as

Lions Clubs, Jaycees, and Kiwanis add to the social commons, making the community a socially healthier and more inviting locality. The scope of health, education, and cultural organizations in a community indicates the extent to which members provide for its social infrastructure.

Social organizations, in addition, can offer information, facilities, expertise, materials, equipment, and access to power and leadership in communities. Some government agencies, especially those in small towns, can offer access to information about valuable public programs and services. In addition, small businesses can often become resources of support and financial assistance, a source of volunteers, and even partners in local projects.

RURAL COMMUNITIES: VILLAGES AND TOWNS

Until recently the agricultural village was the most prevalent form of settlement in the world,⁹⁹ say Walzer and Deller. The year 2007 marked the date when the global human population became predominantly urban.¹⁰⁰ At the turn of the 20th century the United States was also a mostly rural nation.¹⁰¹ As urbanization began to take hold in the first half of the 20th century, however, many rural residents migrated to urban centers. As agriculture and other natural resource-dependent industries underwent fundamental structural shifts, many rural areas were left behind.¹⁰²

Shifting Population

According to the USDA Economic Research Service, an exceptionally severe farm crisis and economic recession in the 1980s focused heavily on goods-producing industries, making it harder for rural areas to retain current residents or attract new ones. Rural areas and small towns again received an influx of migrants during the 1990s, however, and the overall nonmetropolitan population rebounded, reversing the downtrend of the 1980s.¹⁰³ The higher nonmetro population growth of the 1990s, however, did not extend throughout the decade. The rising movement of people from metro to nonmetro areas peaked in 1994–95 and steadily lessened over the rest of the decade.¹⁰⁴ Rural nonadjacent counties grew only 4.9% in population, whereas large urban adjacent counties grew more than seven times as

much, 35.8%.¹⁰⁵ Relatively slow growth continued to characterize nonmetro America during 2000–2005, increasing by just over 1 million, a 2.2% increase compared with 5.3% for the nation.¹⁰⁶ While rural population did continue to grow in 2007 and 2008, it did so at less than half the rate of the metro population.¹⁰⁷ Today, nonmetro areas contain 17% of the U.S. population even though they cover 80% of the land area.¹⁰⁸

Populations in declining, chronically poor, agriculture- and forestry-dependent counties are aging as young adults leave, older residents remain, and reproduction rates fall.¹⁰⁹ “As the population shrinks, public funding is no longer adequate to shore up housing, schools, healthcare, transportation, telecommunication systems and other key community institutions,”¹¹⁰ according to Hamilton et al.

Rural Economy

Except for an unprecedented renaissance during the 1970s, in which rural areas kept pace or exceeded the urban economy, economic development and growth in rural America has almost consistently lost ground to their urban counterparts, a pattern that continued into the 1980s and early 1990s.¹¹¹ The recession of the early 1980s, for example, was particularly hard on much of rural America.¹¹² Nonmetro unemployment rates were lower than metro rates during the rural population “rebound” of the early to mid-1990s, but they were consistently higher from 1996 to 2002 as nonmetro net migration slowed.¹¹³ Coupled with a restructuring of many manufacturing industries, the agricultural crisis crippled many local economies, resulting in rural poverty rates that have exceeded the national poverty rate since 2001.¹¹⁴

While nearly half of all nonmetropolitan counties rely upon natural resources, including agriculture, forestry, energy, non-energy mining, and fishing, all have experienced declines over the past decade.¹¹⁵ Increased mechanization in these industries continues to reduce the number of workers needed and increase the skills required of those who remain.¹¹⁶ Sparsely populated areas dependent upon traditional agriculture seem most at risk in terms of economic stagnation and decline.¹¹⁷ Globalization, in addition, is changing the rural agricultural economy, and low-skilled manufacturing is no longer a key economic driver, according to a study by the University of New Hampshire.¹¹⁸

Rural Economy Today Today the rural economy is plagued by inadequate federal policies, including a lopsided 2008 farm bill and environmental and other common problems. However, rural communities are diversifying. Many are becoming active in manufacturing and government. Others are looking at retirement communities as a source of revitalization.

The 2008 Farm Bill In June 2008 Congress passed a \$300 billion farm bill. On the plus side, parts of the five-year bill reflect a shift in policy to encourage healthier eating habits, funding for conservation, nutrition, food stamp programs, subsidies for farmers who grow “specialty crops” (fruits and vegetables), and new attention to farmers’ markets as a way to make healthy foods more accessible.¹¹⁹ But the main purpose of the farm bill was to provide subsidies to corporate farming interests.¹²⁰ “Under the new bill, a farming couple making up to \$1.5 million will be eligible for subsidies, and the bill even includes tax breaks for race horse breeders,”¹²¹ according to Hamilton et al.

“National policy should better reflect the true economic nature of rural America, and redirect funding from agribusiness subsidies to forward-looking rural development programs,” says a Carsey Institute Report.¹²² The longstanding underinvestment in America’s chronically poor rural communities, especially in education, exacts a high toll on those living there, leaving them with few options in the new economy and in the future.¹²³

Environmental Problems In addition, traditional and extractive industries have left a scarred landscape and depleted resources in many places, especially in persistently poor and declining areas. Climate shifts and more frequent severe weather create new problems for rural life. Rising energy costs are especially devastating in rural areas, where people must often travel long distances for work, services, or daily life.

Common Problems A number of common problems continue to face rural localities. Rising fuel costs in the era beyond peak oil will create serious challenges for all rural regions. Many rural communities face a need for advanced telecommunications technology, access to affordable health care, effective educational facilities and staff for children and adults alike, affordable housing, and jobs that offer living wages. Hamilton et al. note that “for many residents, more

accessible and efficient public transportation, within and between local communities is problematic, already hampering access to the often minimal health care, educational opportunities, jobs, housing, and shopping that does exist.”¹²⁴

Diversification As a result of these problems, “a number of rural localities are working to diversify their economic base,”¹²⁵ say Flora et al. For example, some are beginning to look to value-added processes that enable a local labor force to process foods or agricultural products for shipment to urban markets. Where the landscape is scenic, counties dependent on forestry and mining are trying to build tourism and recreational opportunities.¹²⁶ They, too, are exploring strategies that enable the local community to add more value to wood and mineral products before shipping them elsewhere. Where agriculture is failing, a growing service sector is taking over, including some jobs that require greater skills, education, and training than in the past.¹²⁷ Three areas of diversification are manufacturing, government, and retirement communities.

Manufacturing and Government. Around 1950, manufacturing industries began moving from metropolitan to nonmetropolitan areas. By 1979, manufacturing had become the largest single employer in rural areas, providing jobs for 40% of the rural work force.¹²⁸ Economists report that rural manufacturing continues to rebound and will continue to be important to rural areas.¹²⁹ In addition, about 23% of all nonmetropolitan counties depend on government employment for their economic base.¹³⁰

Retirement Communities. The newest economic base in rural areas is the rapid growth in high-amenity retirement developments,¹³¹ say Hamilton et al. A strong service-based economy near metropolitan areas is attracting a cohort of newcomers—baby boomers seeking to retire, and young professional families looking for jobs and safe environments in which to raise families.¹³²

As larger populations move into amenity-rich regions, however, they tend to exert pressure on the natural environment, placing new demands on the water supply, waste management systems, traffic patterns, and housing. Resulting urban sprawl threatens the ability of many locales to maintain their rural and traditional character. Areas dependent on recreation or tourism, however, will see periodic drops in visitors, as vacationers opt to save money and stay home.¹³³

HOW TO STRENGTHEN RURAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES

“The complexity of rural places necessitates a nuanced approach that takes into account the diversity of its residents as well as economic, political, and environmental changes,” according to Hamilton et al.¹³⁴ Striking an economically viable balance between human and natural capital while retaining the valued characteristics of rural life is a challenge.¹³⁵ Among the challenges for macro social workers are rural attitudes and developing innovative ways of dealing with them, devising useful policies, and an ability to work creatively with existing federal programs.

Rural Attitudes

Social workers who engage themselves in rural communities will have a deep appreciation for the people, their struggles, and their heritage. They will understand that many members of these localities are deeply attached to the land and to the survival of their communities, which are often seen as indistinguishable from one another. They will tend to have strong solidarity while experiencing social divisions.

Solidarity Many rural places are often depicted as tight-knit and homogeneous communities, sharing a common history and values, but also having deep ethnic roots in highly integrated social networks. Not all communities share this dominant civic culture, however.¹³⁶ For example, Native American and Latino communities have taken a number of positive steps to maintain or retrieve their cultural heritage in the face of a generally white culture, establishing a profound and even spiritual attachment to their land and history.¹³⁷

Social Divisions While numbers of persistently poor white, Hispanic, and Native American localities have a number of strengths, many are also marked by deep economic and social divisions that lead to dilemmas.¹³⁸ Among these are dilemmas posed by fear of difference. Another is resistance to change.

Fear of Difference A strong sense of solidarity offers members a sense of belonging, but also demands a certain amount of conformity. On the one hand, unity can provide a culture that may be supportive,

friendly, and welcoming of those with whom members are familiar. On the other hand, solidarity can result in prejudiced, intolerant, and rejecting attitudes toward those who are strange or different. What some may see as caring and intimate, others may find judgmental and stifling.

Resistance to Change The need to maintain community solidarity while acknowledging problems sometimes poses a real dilemma for small communities.¹³⁹ The solidarity that may make rural communities strong may also be a liability by blocking change or limiting the choices that members consider. When local residents attempt to identify and resolve problems, they may run the risk of reducing solidarity by exposing internal divisions and conflicting perspectives. It may sometimes be easier to avoid an issue, blaming those who raise unsettling questions rather than risk the solidarity that protects them from disunity.¹⁴⁰

Developing Innovative Solutions

A challenge for social workers in rural localities is how to assist new arrivals, who often bring differing social, cultural, and political views into an existing community even as they expect an array of goods and services. “Given the cultural, generational, and income diversity that characterize changing communities, it is important that all segments of the population feel that they are included and can benefit from community decisions,”¹⁴¹ say Hamilton et al. Some ways of building inclusion are by linking people with common interests, building common projects, and networks.

Linking Linking related businesses in a regional approach will often maximize economic potential. As retirees, immigrants, educators, health care workers, craftspeople, and others combine skills and blend a community’s resources, they will maximize their human capital.¹⁴²

Common Projects Community efforts to build inclusive arts, cultural, and heritage programs have proved effective in some areas.¹⁴³ Careful planning and regional partnering in common projects among rural businesses, communities, and government may be beneficial in creating workable solutions to common problems in rural areas.

Develop Networks While the small size of many rural businesses makes them more vulnerable to the effects of population fluctuations or fuel prices, small firms become more economically viable when they operate in networks or clusters. But the idea of partnering and depending on others sometimes goes against the traditional rural ideals of independence.¹⁴⁴

Devising Policies

Social workers who work in rural areas recognize that state and federal programs, largely centered around agricultural policies, are not sufficient to ensure sustainable patterns of growth and development in their localities. Specifically, “one size fits all” types of policies do not capture the diversity of rural America. Instead, you help local leaders and members assess local conditions and create new initiatives and programs to build a better future. You help your members sculpt policies and programs that specifically meet your local needs and address your unique issues.¹⁴⁵

Flora et al. recommend that “policies must center on solutions that will enhance the beauty of the natural environment while attracting new economic opportunities.”¹⁴⁶ In addition, Hamilton et al. assert that “educational outreach programs, affordable health care, and improved transportation systems adapted to the changing fuel economy should be high-priority issues.”¹⁴⁷ Telecommunications improvements and virtual networking, for example, can help address issues such as education and training that are hampered by distance and low population density.

Federal Initiatives The New Homestead Act offers financial incentives to those who commit to living and working in rural regions that are losing population. These incentive programs stimulate existing businesses and encourage entrepreneurship.¹⁴⁸ In addition, the federal government has developed a wave of new strategic planning and visioning programs using a combination of the Department of Agriculture’s Business and Cooperative Programs (BCP), Rural Development, the Cooperative Extension Service, and Business Services, along with and state and local agencies to assist local localities become successful.¹⁴⁹

Rural Development, Business and Cooperative Programs (BCP) The BCP works in partnership with the private sector and community-based

organizations to provide business planning and funding for projects that create or preserve quality jobs and/or promote a clean rural environment to individuals, corporations, partnerships, cooperatives, public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Indian tribes, and private companies.

Regional Centers for Rural Development (RD)

Regional Centers for Rural Development play a central role fostering many community-level strategic visioning programs such the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI). RCDI offers grants to intermediary organizations that provide financial and technical assistance to Community Development Corporations (CDCs) for housing, community facilities, or community and economic development projects. In addition, The Native EDGE, a White House Interagency initiative, facilitates sustainable economic development within Native American and Alaska Native communities.¹⁵⁰

Cooperative Services Program (CP) The Cooperative Services Program (CP) assists people interested in forming new cooperative social enterprises for marketing and distributing agricultural products. CP offers Rural Cooperative Development Grants to begin new cooperatives and improve the operations of existing cooperatives. CP has recently helped form cooperatives for rural women, for example, who produce handcrafted gift items, a vegetable growers’ cooperative which provides increased market access for its members, and a divers’ cooperative which harvests and processes sea urchins for export to Asia, as well as training for cooperative directors.

BCP Business Services (BS) BCP Business Services (BS) programs are also part of the arsenal of tools that social workers can use in helping rural towns and villages. The USDA funds a number of loans and grants for economic enterprise and empowerment zones, rural energy, and others. The 1890 Land-Grant Institution Initiative assists in developing jobs and income-producing agricultural projects for underserved rural communities. Among others, for example, the Bio-based Products and Bio-energy Program (BIOMASS) finances technologies needed to convert biomass into bio-based products and bio-energy.

RELATIONAL COMMUNITY

Communities are always a form of human-associated life in which people inevitably connect with one another. While having a location where members meet, relationally oriented communities are not permanently identified with that locale, nor is the locale itself the central feature of the community. Relational community exists because of values, sentiments, and feelings of shared identification and commitment that are held in common by a group of individuals.

Relationally oriented communities include a vast array of larger social groups, variously called networks, associations, societies, congregations, leagues, unions, interest groups, and clubs, that comprise the social commons. Relational communities are ubiquitous in modern society. These communities are action and socially centered. Of the many kinds of relational communities, social networks and associations are especially important for macro social work

Ubiquitous

Relational communities exist in some form in every neighborhood, town, and city in the nation. While nearly 100,000 professional, business, trade, and other societies are listed in directories of American associations,¹⁵¹ the vast majority of social groups, associations, and networks that comprise relational communities, do not appear in census figures, statistics, or tabulations in the data of the social universe, nor are they listed by those who calculate the size or content of the social sector. As a result, many relational communities are nearly invisible to the social scientists, who depend on formal reports. “Their existence is rarely acknowledged, and except for brief mention, many pass unnoticed by many scholars,”¹⁵² says David Horton Smith.

While often perplexing, this communal fluidity is, in fact, one of the prized features of the social commons, enabling groups of people to meet together to pursue common purposes without having to seek official approval or even acknowledgment by the private sector or government. At the same time, however, it makes it exceedingly difficult to calculate the size of the commons with any absolute accuracy or assurance.¹⁵³

In spite of our inability to clearly measure their extent, we continually see and experience the evidence of communal forms wherever we go in our daily lives.

Many of us belong to at least one or several community groups, associations, or social networks. In spite of its relative statistical invisibility, relational community is one of the most fundamental social forms in existence.

Action Centered

Relational communities are not only self-conscious collectivities of shared sentiment but take on important projects and develop programs that express their core values. If “community is to signify more than general feelings about common concerns, it must show itself in the activities people undertake to express those shared values,”¹⁵⁴ say Smith and Lipsky. This action is often expressed by establishing social programs and organizations.

Establish Social Benefit Organizations Relational communities establish nearly all of the existing public benefit organizations known as not-for-profits that exist in the United States,¹⁵⁵ about which you will learn in chapter 10. Communities of people working together provide the context within which groups organize to solve common problems. They establish schools, faith-based organizations, social service organizations, group work organizations, cultural organizations, and others that allow them to inject their values into the society for the benefit of their communities and the concerns for which they were established.

Communities of workers, for example, give rise to unions. Women’s groups sponsor shelters and advocate for public policy dealing with spousal abuse. Concerned parents organize services for persons who are developmentally disabled, children with special health problems, family care centers, and many others. Neighbors brought together by environmental threats turn to organizations such as the Sierra Club.

Socially Centered

Relational community is irrevocably socially centered. It is a component of the self, comprised of “we-relations,” and provides a refuge from the impersonality of the market society.

Ineradicable Component of the Self Relational community is more than merely a social habitat in which people fill ecological niches. We become selves by means of our relationships and interactions with others, as you discovered in Chapter 3. Community is

the milieu in which humanity receives its character and substance. Communities are important because it is in their midst that our most deeply held values are expressed. Relational communities assist members to contribute in common journeys, ventures, and activities. They engage in shared work that requires many talents, and communicate through telling stories that often include remembrance of important historical events in the life of the community. In addition, they engage in celebrations that rejoice in members' triumph and victory as well as commemoration of tragedy, death, and suffering. Relational communities participate in efforts that reach toward social justice.

We-Relations According to Alfred Schutz, communal social action occurs in the “we-relationship.”¹⁵⁶ We-relations are the means by which community comes together. “In the pure we-relationship I create my social life with others who have intentions similar to mine,”¹⁵⁷ Schutz asserts.

What makes social life appear human is a kind of intimacy I gain from interacting in depth with my consociates—the members of the little world whose center I am and which I enlarge by including you in the we-relationship. In fact, the more I make an effort to understand you in your complexity and the closer to you I feel, the more meaningful and satisfying life in the social world appears to me.¹⁵⁸

Refuge from the Market Relational community can be a place of refuge from our economic society in which everything has a price, buying and selling become the preeminent activity of human beings, and people are seen as little more than commodities in the marketplace. In community we are prized for ourselves, not for what we produce.

Communities and the social goods they create shelter us from the “getting and getting all the more” mode of being. By fostering caring social relationships, communities become centers of sociality, helping overcome the emptiness so common in today's commercially oriented mentality.

Kinds of Relational Community

While many relational communities are important for macro social work, of special interest are social networks and associations.

Social Networks Networks are “connections” that are created through stable, recurrent, formal, or informal interactions among individuals. According to J. Steven Ott,

Network structures serve both as important opportunities and barriers to actors' performances and their realization of ends... The social structures generated by networks of social ties have important consequences both for the individual actors and for the system within which they are embedded.¹⁵⁹

The phenomenon of networking is an important feature of how the world at large is organized,¹⁶⁰ say Karp et al. “It is the nature of the relationships between people and the social networks of which they are a part that is often seen as one of the more significant aspects of ‘community.’”¹⁶¹ “When people are asked about what ‘community’ means to them, it is such networks that are most commonly cited,” says Mark K. Smith. “The nature of the networks within a particular place or grouping is, thus, of fundamental importance when making judgments about ‘communities’—and the extent to which people can flourish within them.”¹⁶²

Network structures may often be stronger in communities of ethnic minorities. In 1991, for example, Lee, Campbell, and Miller conducted research that suggested that informal networks and associations are actually more prevalent in African American communities than in white communities.¹⁶³

Kinds of Networks For Norman Long, “Social networks are composed of sets of direct and indirect relationships and exchanges.”¹⁶⁴ In fact, the well-known urban sociologist Barry Wellman proposed that the city itself be viewed as a “network of networks.”¹⁶⁵ Networks evolve and transform themselves over time, and different types of networks are crucial for pursuing particular ends and engaging in certain forms of action.¹⁶⁶ They include informal support networks for getting by, networks for getting ahead, friendship networks, and identity networks, among others.

Networks For Getting By Support networks, or “networks for getting by,” are close, supportive forms of association embedded in everyday relationships of friends, extended families, or close-knit community,¹⁶⁷ says John Pierson. Personal community networks are core aspects of people's lives, contributing important resources that enable people to go about their daily

affairs, handle chronic stresses, and cope with acute crises.

Support networks are built around companionship, calming domestic difficulties, filling gaps in child care, looking after people when they are ill, providing small loans and cash to make ends meet, and participating in family celebrations or rites of passage.¹⁶⁸ Networks for getting by provide havens, a sense of belonging and being helped. “These are not trivial pursuits as few people want to place themselves at the mercy of markets and institutions when they need to deal with their needs,”¹⁶⁹ according to Wellman and Gulia.

Networks for Getting Ahead: The Strength of Weak Ties Some networks provide crucial information for individuals and families on jobs, education, training, and a range of options for advancing individual interests. In many ways, “they are the opposite of networks for getting by but can achieve so much more,”¹⁷⁰ says John Pierson. Mark Granovetter has summed up this kind of network as the “strength of weak ties.”¹⁷¹ The “weak ties” he refers to are found outside the immediate neighborhood, family, and friends. They are occasional and episodic in nature and are more tenuous than close personal relationships.

Networks for getting ahead may be based on “someone who knows someone” about a job. Weak ties may consist of a link obtained through a skills agency half a city away, which a person visits only occasionally. Because the contemporary jobs market has become extremely formidable for those from poor urban neighborhoods, weak ties can be very powerful in providing information and opportunities for self-development.¹⁷² Figueira-McDonough says that such “informal networks can help individual members transition off welfare, provide information about public programs and services, or help mitigate the effects of substance abuse.”¹⁷³

Friendship Networks According to Tracey Mears, “Friendship networks make it easier for residents to identify who ‘belongs’ and who does not.”¹⁷⁴ Local friendship networks that are reinforced through individual participation in church groups, PTAs, community policing organizations are very likely to increase supervision of teenage peer groups in a community,¹⁷⁵ and this, according to Sampson and Groves, “leads to

lower levels of both victimization and offending.”¹⁷⁶ Friendship networks might also create another form of social capital by facilitating information transmission among a community’s residents. These information channels may be especially important to residents of crime-prone neighborhoods in central cities,¹⁷⁷ says James Coleman.

Identity Networks Identity networks are relatively recent innovations with a self-conscious “community” identity, such as the “gay community,” the “feminist community,” or the “business community” that do not rely on shared locale or physical meetings for their existence.¹⁷⁸ These groups are loosely linked in the sense that they rarely if ever all meet together or have face-to-face contact with one another, although meeting together, when it occurs, strengthens those connections.

Identity networks share common concerns and issues with which people identify. They include people whose interests and sometimes lifestyles are similar. Social workers, for example, form a community of professional identity even if they may sometimes not join professional associations or attend meetings. Many social workers share common concerns, values, and beliefs about social justice, equality, human rights, and the need to provide opportunity for people who have been left out of the mainstream.

Macro Social Work and Networking Networks are important in macro social work. Donna Hardina says that “Many programs that community-based nonprofit organizations and public agencies offer rely on informal networks to get the word out about their services. They may have linked up with existing networks to provide services.”¹⁷⁹ Community organizations, moreover, use informal networks to recruit volunteers and organize social action campaigns. Community development efforts often focus on creating strong informal networks as a means of reducing feelings of alienation among community residents. They increase a neighborhood’s ability to address problems such as drug dealing and gang violence.¹⁸⁰

Social workers use identity networks to help members who are excluded to find connections, friendships, and jobs. Social workers who are familiar with the gay community, for example, can help gay teens find support, and those who have been excluded or bullied find connections. In the same way, social workers who are

knowledgeable about the business community can help clients find jobs.

Associations Mark Smith defines an association as “a group of people who join together in companionship or undertake some task.”¹⁸¹ According to Malcolm Knowles, “associations are the foundation stones of our democracy. Their goals largely determine the goals of our society.”¹⁸² Today three kinds of associations exist: formal associations, middle-range not so formal associations, and informal associations.

Formal Associations Formal associations allow people to freely combine together to further some agreed purpose. They have members, officers, and committees, structures and ways of working that allow those involved have a say and a vote.¹⁸³

Politics “Local associations are part of larger political processes. Many were formed with the definite purpose of representing people’s interests such as tenants action groups and residents associations,”¹⁸⁴ says Mark Smith.

Mutual Aid Many local groups may be thought of as mutual aid organizations. Associations usually carry within them values of cooperation and a commitment to those who are members.¹⁸⁵ They involve people joining together to produce goods and services for their own enjoyment. They are reciprocal involving relationships that carry within them some idea of give and take. These groups help provide a sense of belonging and identity as well as a setting to meet and make friends with others.¹⁸⁶

Kinds of Formal Associations Community associations, civic associations, and fraternal and sororal service associations are one means by which people often maintain identity and connection in today’s society. The Knights of Columbus, founded by Irish Americans in New England in 1882 as a fraternal insurance society, spread nationwide and eventually became the largest Catholic laypersons’ group in the world. The Sons of Italy provides an arena in which Italian Americans can share and celebrate their culture. The League of Women Voters is committed to the enhancement of the political process by providing fair and impartial information about issues and candidates.

Fraternal and sororal organizations such as the Lions Club, Shriners, Ys Men’s Association, Rotary, Junior League, Soroptimists, Kiwanis, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and others provide arenas in which people come together for mutual interaction but also perform community service and voluntary projects to improve their communities. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is dedicated to social justice in race relationships, equality, and an end to discrimination. The Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) exists to promote business interests and connections among people seeking to establish themselves in the world of commerce.

A Brief History of Formal Associations “Historically, what made U.S. associationalism distinctive was the linking of thousands of local, face-to-face groups into powerful, trans-locally organized networks—many of which closely paralleled the local-state-national constitutional structure of the U.S. federal government, including its representative aspects,”¹⁸⁷ says Theda Skokpol. Moral reform movements; farmers’ and workers’ associations; fraternal brotherhoods devoted to ritual, mutual aid, and service; independent women’s associations; veterans’ groups; and many ethnic and African American associations—all were organized in this way.¹⁸⁸

For decade after decade in U.S. civic life, major voluntary associations involved considerable popular participation and mobilized people of different occupational and class backgrounds into the same or parallel groups.¹⁸⁹ Local clubs or lodges offered countless leadership opportunities to average members. Even persons of non-elite background could move up ladders of organizational leadership into state and national positions. “Because of their structure and cross-class patterns of recruitment, American associations served as schools for democratic citizenship, providing an unusually large number of citizens with chances for active participation and democratic leverage,”¹⁹⁰ says Skokpol.

Formal Associations Today Theda Skokpol claims that about three-quarters of these large-membership voluntary federations still exist, yet most of the surviving older associations soldier on with shrunken networks and dwindling, aging memberships.¹⁹¹ The PTA and the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, the Masons and the Elks, and the

great veterans' federations and their women's auxiliaries are no longer "where the action is" in U.S. society or in politics.¹⁹² Once-hefty labor unions have declined, from enrolling more than a third of the labor force in the 1950s to less than a sixth now.¹⁹³

New Wave of Formal Associations At the same time, says Skocpol, "new waves of national associational launchings have dwarfed in sheer volume even the waves that occurred after the Civil War."¹⁹⁴ In 1959, the *Encyclopedia of Associations* listed almost 6,000 national associations in the United States, growing to more than 10,000 by 1970, to nearly 15,000 by 1980, and to almost 23,000 in 1990 before stabilizing at about that level thereafter.¹⁹⁵ Until recently, membership in voluntary associations continued to offer millions of Americans pathways into community and public affairs.¹⁹⁶

Using survey data on the attitudes and self-reported behaviors of citizens of Germany, Britain, Italy, Mexico, and the United States, Almond and Verba's analysis revealed that Americans are intensely involved in voluntary groups,¹⁹⁷ and the same phenomenon has been occurring in Great Britain. "In the early 1990s," Mark Smith reports, "Konrad Elsdon and his colleagues undertook a large scale survey of local voluntary organizations in Britain. Two things were striking about their work. First, the sheer scale of involvement. Around 12 million women and men were involved in running 1.3 million bodies—and these were what we might describe as associations—'small democracies.'"¹⁹⁸

Not So Formal Associations McKnight says that "A second kind of association is not so formal. It usually has no officers or name. Nonetheless, it represents a gathering of citizens who solve problems, celebrate together, or enjoy their social compact."¹⁹⁹ These associations could be a poker club, a coffee klatch, or a gathering of neighbors who live on the block. The fact that they do not have a formal name or structure should not obscure the fact that they are often the sites of critical dialogue, opinion formation, and decision making that influences the values and problem-solving capacities of citizens. Indeed, many Americans are primarily influenced in their decision making and value formation by these not so formal associations,²⁰⁰ asserts John McKnight.

Informal Associations A third form of association is less obvious because one could describe the place where it occurs as an enterprise or business, says McKnight.²⁰¹ Much associational activity takes place in restaurants, beauty parlors, barbershops, bars, hardware stores, and other places of business.²⁰² People gather in these places for interaction as well as business transactions. "In the eighteenth century," McKnight notes, "some of the most basic discussions about the formation of the government of the United States and its Constitution occurred in inns and taverns, and similar settings provide the backdrop for some of the most fundamental associational life today."²⁰³

Macro Social Work and Associations

Macro social workers become engaged with formal, not so formal, and informal associations. Many social workers are themselves members of formal associations. They may even be instrumental in forming associations to conduct their work by forming planning, organization building, community development, and community organization associations. We use not so formal and informal associations to engage people in their neighborhoods and to form relationships wherever we go. Macro social workers are continually engaging and relating to people in associations.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

The last of the three models of community on the continuum from completely locale-oriented to completely non-locale-oriented is virtual community. Virtual community has no physical location. It is community in cyberspace. Today people communicate by means of texting, e-mail, video cams, blogging, Twitter, and Facebook, placing the idea of community beyond place-based contact, a concept that was unknown even a few years ago. Wireless technology gives us greater mobility and connectivity than ever before. We can go and be wherever we want, yet we're always online.

In a 2004 survey, 60 million Americans said they had used the Internet in the past two years to help make an important life decision.²⁰⁴ The new technologies are central to the process of opening up the social space, providing unparalleled opportunities for linking disparate and scattered elements into a fluid but structured whole.²⁰⁵ The individual floats freely through his

world, joining or creating online social networks when and as he needs them. Among the most powerful technologies for cultivating and maintaining virtual community are the Internet, e-mail, social networking, and web journalism.

Internet

The Internet is essentially a tool for connecting people and information. The Internet knows no geographical boundaries. It is completely non-local. There is no “there” there. It enables what some researchers have termed *glocalization*, the free flow of information between local and global social networks.²⁰⁶ In an era of instant communication, it is much easier to keep in touch with a wide network of both strong and weak ties. The Internet makes it possible to leap outside of your offline social network entirely, finding and connecting with people whom you would never have met otherwise.

E-Mail

Studies show that e-mail—far more than phone calls—is the most effective way to keep in touch with a large network of acquaintances. According to a 2006 report by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, no matter how large their social network became, respondents still e-mailed an average of 20% of their “core” ties every week.²⁰⁷

Social Networking

The exclusive purpose of social networking sites is to build and maintain relationships. They allow friends to stay in touch and help users maintain social capital by supporting existing offline connections. Even more important, people can network together and form virtual communities, sharing information, developing contacts, providing support, and combining their resources in ways that have never before been possible.

Social networking sites are expanding rapidly to accommodate new users and adding new features daily, so it’s difficult to say what the future holds. Large corporations and organizations are tapping into the power of online social networking by adding social networking components to their existing websites. Nike, for example, has launched a community site called *Joga* to bring together soccer lovers from around the world. The idea is to build brand awareness and

loyalty by creating an online destination where people want to hang out.

Build Your Own Another emerging trend is to “build your own” social network. Websites like Ning and Me.com allow anyone to create or join stand-alone social networks built around specific themes or interests. Companies may often use these sites to build social networks around their brand.

Networking for Social Purposes Individuals can use social networking for social purposes. They can build more tightly focused communities than on the larger social networking sites. For example, numbers of people who have experienced extremely rare genetically based medical conditions not only can engage in their own research online, they can communicate with researchers and health organizations working on these conditions. The same is true for people working actively on the resolution of particular social problems. Professionals, family members, affected individuals, educators, policy advocates, politicians, and others can communicate and form compact communities working together to identify and develop policy agendas and take action without ever meeting face to face.

As these communities coalesce across the nation and the entire globe, they demonstrate the possibility that location is no barrier to solving problems and engaging in social change. Where one person working alone could find it nearly impossible to engage in action, virtual communities are developing spontaneously worldwide. User groups, news groups, chat rooms, chat groups, and social networking are virtual tools by which communities of people communicate and relate internationally on a daily basis, becoming socially active in any number of different causes.

Policy Networking The idea of virtual community will become a more and more important reality, especially as local groups share face-to-face relationships via town meetings. People gather in different locations but communicate visually and share data and issues electronically, as occurs with California Speaks. California Speaks is a political policy network in which people simultaneously communicate statewide about issues important to them. These new virtual communities may be called communities of commitment or communities of action.

Networked Individualism According to the Pew Internet & American Life Project, when e-mail, cell phones, and the Internet work together, they empower something called networked individualism.²⁰⁸ Networked individualism is the idea that we switch back and forth between many different social networks based on the particular information we're seeking, whether it be advice on which car to buy, information on single men or women in the area, or a collaborator on a work project. On the other hand, John Urry argues that virtual interaction rarely substitutes for "corporeal travel," since "intermittent co-presence" appears to be essential for some types of social interaction to flourish, particularly those that give rise to social capital.²⁰⁹

Perhaps the most persuasive analysis of virtual sociality has been that of Sherry Turkle. Based on many years of observation and direct participation in gaming and other online communities, Turkle draws striking conclusions about the relationship between interaction in cyberspace and reflexivity of the self: "When we step through the screen into virtual communities, we reconstruct our identities on the other side of the looking glass,"²¹⁰ she asserts.

Turkle suggests that the Internet serves as a "significant social laboratory for experimenting" with self-identity, particularly where people are able to take on and build a quasi-fictional character and work through the consequences of their choices, as in the MUDs (multi-user domains) used by gaming groups.²¹¹ Even so, Turkle argues, the possibilities offered by virtual experiences are relatively shallow ones; her studies of gender swapping lead her to conclude that some people are encouraged to believe that they have achieved greater depth of identity change than is, in fact, the case.²¹² Constructing and building social capital, according to the Pew Internet & American Life Project, "is likely to be qualitatively different than that which is created by face-to-face interaction."²¹³

Web Journalism

More than even websites, e-mailing, and social networking, web journalism is a means of communicating and interaction informing people about issues of the day. Web journalism seeks to engage in a dialogue with citizens and provides avenues to participate in public life and civil society. Web journalism is one of the most important and clearest examples of the

expansion of the social commons. It focuses on projects centered around either developing citizen agendas for elections or specific community problems and issues.

While web journalism includes newspaper websites, more important for social work are the range of independent news websites, hyper-local news sites, citizen journalism, and blogs that are oriented toward local community-oriented issues and concerns. These technologies can be used in macro social work to disseminate news, opinion, and editorial views, and serve as a means of social critique, supporting social action, engaging citizens in community planning, as well as social advocacy. They are a way to generate community concern, generate support, and mobilize people about issues in ways that print and visual media cannot do.

Independent News Websites Independent news websites are often found in larger cities that tend to specialize in hard-news coverage of municipal government, city agencies, law enforcement, and schools. Many of these independent news sites are nonprofits funded by a mix of ad revenue and contributions from donors and foundations.²¹⁴ These independent news sites, including, for example, *VoiceofSanDiego.org* or *MinnPost.com*, are ideal venues for nonprofits to publicize issues, for macro social workers to engage in social critique, and to generate information about wider social movements.

Hyper-Local News Sites Typically produced by local freelance writers and bloggers, hyper-local news sites specialize in coverage of small, specific communities, down to the individual neighborhood, often focusing on extremely localized events: the police blotter, the agenda of the town board meeting, the performance of a school play. Hyper-local sites can be independent or run by newspapers as extensions of their websites such as, for example, *The New York Times Local*²¹⁵ and *The Bakersfield Voice*.²¹⁶

Citizen Journalism Sites Citizen journalism sites run a wide gamut. Some are basically just online platforms where people can post video reports or pictures on virtually any subject. Others focus on a specific geographic area and provide more targeted, specific coverage. Content for citizen journalism sites is usually provided by a loose affiliation of writers, bloggers, and video reporters with varying degrees of journalism

experience. Examples are CNN's iReport²¹⁷ and *The Journalist*.²¹⁸

Citizen journalism is an ideal media for community planning, community policymaking, and community organization, as well as for nonprofits and social enterprise organizations to engage in policy and social issues, help community members get involved, and for social workers to engage in social advocacy.

Macro Social Work Practice with Virtual Community

Macro social workers use virtual community in community organizing and political and policy action.

Virtual Community Organizing Today, social workers who engage people in virtual community organizing are expanding the capacity to help members of these communities engage one another in identifying and acting on a variety of social problems in ways that have never before been possible. Members concerned about particular social issues can mobilize themselves more quickly, with more information than ever before.

Political and Policy Action Virtual community is a part of the new political action movement. The most well-known example is the MoveOn organization, which organized millions of people in political campaigns in 2008.²¹⁹ In addition, policy activism engages people in dialogue and discussion over long distances. Founded in 1995, AmericaSpeaks has engaged over 130,000 people in over 50 large-scale forums in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. AmericaSpeaks is dedicated to advancing citizen deliberation and aims to one day create an infrastructure in the United States that deeply incorporates citizens into the decision-making process.²²⁰ In 2008, California Speaks, for example, brought together groups of interested individuals from ten different cities in California, all of whom met together simultaneously by means of the Internet and television. The groups could see, hear, and communicate, sharing information and ideas in a virtual town hall across the state. The governor sped from group to group by plane and helicopter. Afterward information was shared with legislators, policy analysts, and interested citizens, and follow-up conference calls were organized.²²¹

Criticism of Virtual Community Organizing

Even though communication and relationships can occur in ways never before possible, critics argue that when community is no longer territorially based, cyber interaction upsets and challenges the idea of territorial government. "Instead of having to listen to and confront people with different views, people can simply interact with those who think the same way; people may be more involved in virtual reality and less involved in actual reality in their communities,"²²² claims Robert Wuthnow. Furthermore, overall use remains quite small, even if there are benefits; and as far as Internet and e-mail correspondence between citizens and elected officials is concerned, politicians are probably too busy to respond, so citizens can receive information but not interact as much as they would like. In addition, Wuthnow warns, computer bulletin boards may provide forums for extremists.²²³

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you learned to understand a variety of ways community expresses itself today. You discovered what community is and examined a brief history of community theorists. You learned that from Classical Greece and before, community has been the center of society, continuing into the 16th century. You discovered that although community relationships *seem* to be disappearing, community is a perennial and universal component of the human condition. The presumed triumph of modern rational artificial systems based on impersonal social relations is a Pyrrhic victory.

You learned that there are at least three kinds of community today: community as locality, relational community, and the newer virtual community.

You learned how community social workers become active in locality-based inner-city neighborhoods, inner-ring suburbs, suburbs, and rural communities. You discovered how to engage resources/assets and community control models of community enhancement. You explored rural communities and ways in which macro social work helps rural communities develop. You also learned how social work engages relational community including networks and associations. Finally, you learned about virtual community and how it is affecting our world today.

For citizens to be authentically free, we must experience and have free communities available to us from which we can draw strength and which act as centers of values and character. Authentic social work is nothing less a professional endeavor that assists people to choose the kind of social world they decide is best, and then help people struggle, against all odds, to make this world real.

You learned that social workers help people engage in and define new, emerging forms of community. We assist in community building and enhancement, helping develop groups of citizens who work together to strengthen social bonds and relationships, create healthy neighborhoods, and energize people in creating community. Today community is alive and well, a perennial construct of the human condition that continues its role as the fundamental building block of human society.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The point was stressed in this chapter that “While community may take a variety of forms and express itself in a variety of ways, its persistence is part of the human condition.” In contrast, a number of scholars, most notably Robert Putnam, claim that community, and its expression as civil society, is deteriorating. He asserts that the lack of public spirit and civic mindedness points to a dying Western culture.

What is your opinion about this issue? Is community dying or deteriorating, and is this a symptom of larger social decay? Should we worry that community may eventually disappear in the face of ongoing technological advancements? What should the profession of social work in general and macro social work in particular do about the status of community today?

2. Some people assert that humans are irrevocably social by nature and, as such, cannot exist without community. Others believe community is an idea whose time is past and, in fact, because it emphasizes personal, irrational emotions, is often the cause of strife and conflict. These individuals look instead to modern organizational systems as a means of stability, security, and power. What are the benefits of community, and what are its limitations? What are the benefits of organizational systems as a societal structure and what are its limitations?
3. One of the transformations that community has made in the last decade is the phenomenon of virtual

community. What do you believe is the future of virtual community? Will the social commons take the form of more and more virtual communities or will more traditional community continue to evolve?

4. Le Chambon-sur-Lignon is an example of a modern locality-based community. Which components does it have? Which components does it not have?
5. This chapter opened with the statement that “With one relatively rare exception that has occurred in late modernity, community has been *the* form of human associated life throughout history.” To what exception do you believe this sentence is referring?

EXERCISE 6.4

The Ideal Community

This exercise gives you a chance to design an ideal local community. Think of communities you have known or read about. What qualities constitute a human environment that not only provides for meeting needs but also inspires people to reach excellence as well?

After you have thought about the components of your ideal community, consider what it would take to actually implement it. Compare your vision with those of your classmates. What are the qualities that make up an ideal community? What are the difficulties in constructing such a community?

EXERCISE 6.5

The Future of Community

Social work needs to refine and develop alternative models of community, and to advocate for social policies and programs that support community in the face of increasing anomie, alienation, loneliness, and social despair.

For some, the traditional view of community in a particular locale is already becoming an anomaly, and “locality development” social work is, for some, growing out of step with modern reality. People are moving so frequently that many have little sense of community locales as permanent structures in their lives.

For example, a report by the World Bank indicates that, all things considered, the United States remains the global leader in internal mobility.²²⁴ On average,

an American moves 11 times during his or her life, three times as often as Europeans.²²⁵ Between 2005 and 2010, nearly a half of all homeowners moved. In 2006, nearly 40 million people changed residences, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2010, 12.5% of Americans moved within the county and one in ten Americans moved to a different state.²²⁶

Consider the following statement: "Community cannot exist under conditions in which neighborhoods are continually shifting membership and where there is no real central focus that binds people together. Neighborhoods today tend to be simply places people are housed, not where people commune together."

1. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?
2. What alternative forms of community can you conceive of by which people can retain social relationships but adapt to our highly mobile and technologically sophisticated society?

EXERCISE 6.6

Understanding Community

This exercise is aimed at helping you examine the extent to which community organization/agencies integrate into your community. Divide into at least six groups. Each group will choose a different agency in the following categories: social group work, family counseling, developmental disabilities, alcoholism/drug treatment, child welfare, domestic violence, or others. Within the categories each member will select a community-based social organization in your locale that you want to know more about. Each member will administer the following interview schedule with six randomly selected members of the community who are familiar with the selected agency. Assemble and collate the responses according to the Summary Response Sheet.

Agency Interview Schedule

Name of the agency _____

Short description of the purpose and services of the agency: _____

Questions:

1. Are you familiar with agency?
Yes. _____ No. _____
If yes,

2. Does it meet the community needs?
Very much _____ Somewhat _____
A little _____ Not at all _____ Don't know _____
3. To what extent does it reach out to the community?
Very much _____ Somewhat _____
A little _____ Not at all _____ Don't know _____
4. Does it include community members as volunteers on its staff?
Very much _____ Somewhat _____
A little _____ Not at all _____ Don't know _____
5. Does it include community members on its board of directors?
Very much _____ Somewhat _____
A little _____ Not at all _____ Don't know _____
6. Does it provide community-related activities?
Very much _____ Somewhat _____
A little _____ Not at all _____ Don't know _____
7. Does it "fit" into the environment of the community it serves?
Very much _____ Somewhat _____
A little _____ Not at all _____ Don't know _____

Summary Response Sheet

What was the distribution of answers to each question according to the type of organization?

What was the mean response overall to each question?

Which type of organization scored the highest in each question category?

Which scored the lowest?

Which type of organization scored highest overall?

Which type of organization scored lowest overall?

What do these responses say about the amount of community engagement/involvement of social agencies in your community? Based on the responses, what recommendations would you make to the agencies in your community?

ADDITIONAL READING

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7

The Practice of Community Research and Planning

Visionary Planning

A vision without a plan is just a dream. A plan without a vision is just drudgery. But a vision with a plan can change the world.

Proverb

The Iron Law of Action-Social Community Planning

It is better to plan for ourselves, no matter how badly, than to be planned for by others no matter how well.¹

John Forester

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A TOWN CALLED EMBARRASS

Embarrass, population 822, is a mining town in northern Minnesota. One hundred years ago immigrants from Finland worked the open pit iron mines near Embarrass. They labored for the lowest wages, took the dirtiest, most backbreaking jobs, and helped one other build houses, barns, and saunas. As the ore was used up, however, the jobs disappeared. In 1982, the Reserve Mining Company, the largest single employer in the area, shut down. Unemployment rose to 80%. Some families were forced to move away to find work. In the month of August 1984 alone, eight families of teachers and community leaders moved away. The only people who kept their jobs were independent farmers, loggers, and merchants.

The people who stayed looked for some way to make a living, but it was not easy for the community to come to terms with the situation. Many felt that the situation was only temporary, that things would improve on their own. Others did not believe things would change and began to look at who they were and to decide what their community meant.

John Kosta, a social work community organizer from the Minnesota Project, says that the underlying issue facing the people of Embarrass was understanding what they had to do to survive as a community. The local people had to develop their own analysis, make their own decisions as to what was critical for their community, and buy into it.

One idea was to have the local high school, which had stood empty for the past ten years, declared a national landmark. The National Trust for Historic Preservation said no to the school but was interested in the old Finnish houses and barns. The local volunteer fire department had been routinely burning down these old Finnish homesteads so they wouldn't become fire hazards. To the National Trust, however, these were "diamonds in the field." With backing from the Trust and the Minnesota Project, town leaders began work on renovating and stabilizing the Gable house-barn—the only one of its kind in the United States. Their vision was a renewed town based on tourism.

Even though major skepticism still existed and despite the drawbacks, Margaret Kinaanen and other leaders pushed on with their vision. The town drafted an economic development plan to restore the Finnish architecture and the heritage of Embarrass, forming an

organization called the SISU Heritage Project. *Sisu* is a Finnish word variously translated as stubbornness beyond reason, blind determination, foolhardy perseverance, or simply as "guts." As one community member said, "Finland lost forty-six wars with Russia, but she kept her independence. That is *sisu*."

The leaders of SISU applied to the state for help but did not receive it. They went to the federal government but were turned down. Then SISU applied to Finland, and the Finns responded by sending foreign aid to the American town of Embarrass. As a result, 165 log buildings were discovered, putting Embarrass on the map as a kind of Finnish Williamsburg and creating a market for Finnish home-based crafts and businesses.

The townspeople of Embarrass are discovering all sorts of skills and abilities they never realized they had: woodcarving, sculpture, painting, restoration, and weaving. But most of all, they have discovered their community and their heritage. They have found one another, and that discovery is the key to their survival and their future.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

This chapter explores community research and planning. You will learn what community planning includes. Because planning is fundamental to community and organizationally based macro practice, you will learn that it provides a framework you can apply to community development, community organization, program development, and administration. You will discover, in addition, that community planning is an important and fundamental method in and of itself that often results in improved services, community engagement, and strengthening the democratic process. Very little macro social work can occur without planning.

You will explore a brief history of community planning. You will learn about a conventional approach to planning, and you will learn the principles of action-social planning. You will explore how to engage the planning process, from organizing a planning group to implementing the plan. You will learn that social workers who engage in community planning play one of the potentially most important roles in the field of social work today.

EXERCISE 7.1

Developing Community Values

While the town of Embarrass is unique because of the leadership and resources that it commanded, it is a story that reflects what can happen in some of the most deprived communities. The members of the town identified the key quality that prompted their survival as *sisu*, a headstrong courage beyond all reason and against all odds. Do you agree that *sisu* was a key part of the qualities that meant success for the townspeople? What other factors were involved? As a social worker, is it possible for you to help instill such qualities in the people you work with? If so how do you do this?

What Is Community Planning?

Community planning is a process by which citizens gather together, often with the assistance of a macro social worker, to explore community strengths and needs, and develop proposals to create community betterment.

Why Community Planning?

Planning is a fundamental task that cuts across every macro social work process. Social workers cannot engage in community development or community organization, develop new social programs, or begin a new social enterprise without first engaging in research, assessment, strategizing, and planning. Neither can social work administrators assist organizations in carrying out their missions without planning for their future needs. Those who engage in policy advocacy understand that recommendations must be based on research and planning to give direction to their concerns.

Role of Social Work in Planning

Macro social workers train citizens to be involved in civic affairs and press local government to include neighborhood members as active participants in planning. We teach members about the operation of local government and explain city budgeting processes, agency operating procedures, and state and federal program requirements. We assist them to obtain information about publicly and privately initiated plans that

may affect their neighborhoods. When community planning groups are asked to comment on city-initiated plans and public services, we help citizens develop criteria for evaluation, analyze city plans, write reports to city government, and provide input.

Most importantly, social workers insist that communities of people who have fewer resources, less power, and little influence be given opportunity to develop plans that compete on an equal footing with those developed by powerful businesses and government bureaucracies. We help form community planning groups to conduct research and develop proposals. Social workers act as liaisons between city politicians, staff, and the neighborhood planning group, providing members with contacts to work effectively through government bureaucracy. We assist the group to write reports, present their plans to local officials, and work to have their plans implemented.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING IN AMERICA

Progressives and Social Work Planning (1885–1915)

During the Progressive Era many social workers advocated that government develop plans to organize and place the provision of public services on a more rational and secure basis. Community planning has its origins with the Charity Organization Society and settlement houses, and continued with Councils of Social Agencies and cooperative fundraising.

Charity Organization Society The Charity Organization Society (COS) movement pioneered planning as a way of developing improved services at the local level and is “generally credited with being the beginning of modern social work,”² asserts Beulah Compton. From its inception, social work and social planning were seen as largely synonymous, having common roots and common methods.³

Settlement House Planning Settlement houses engaged in local planning for neighborhood services. Hull House social workers collected, analyzed, and based their solutions on empirical evidence, exemplified in the “3 Rs” of the Settlement House movement: residence, research, and reform. Guided by Julia Lathrop (1858–1932), who later became the first director of the

U.S. Children's Bureau, Hull House settlement workers undertook an extensive survey of the neighborhood environment to expose the abysmal living conditions of the area. Published in 1895, the *Hull-House Maps and Papers* was an enormously influential research and statistical survey examining the neighborhood conditions faced by immigrants who lived within a third of a square mile around Hull House.⁴ The survey reported on health conditions in the tenements, contaminated food, and crowded slums, correlating these conditions with tuberculosis and other diseases. Hull House workers used that research to push for municipal reforms, including waste disposal and the regulation and inspection of food to prevent disease and illness.⁵

Councils of Social Agencies (1911–1928) Francis McLean, executive of the national association of 62 charity organization societies in 1911, saw the need for a new coordinating device, a citywide “Council of Social Agencies” that brought community agencies together to plan for community needs and services as well as to coordinate the funding and operation of social agencies. Social services would be organized in an effective and efficient way, producing greater centralization of operations and more emphasis on professionalism.⁶ Soon, these councils sprang up in many cities throughout the country, emphasizing “efficiency, centralization, and specialization in the planning and delivery of services by private agencies within the community.”⁷

Community Chests and United Way By World War I, cooperative solicitation agencies called Community War Chests were developed to “centralize planning and administration and achieve greater efficiency in utilization of community resources.”⁸ They were “early attempts to assess community needs and for rational decision-making in projecting the development and location of community agencies,”⁹ emphasizing planning for the use of funds, efficiency, and a willingness to respond to community priorities.¹⁰

Community Planning from the 1920s to the 1950s The Great Depression of the 1930s depleted many communities of resources. Community Chests and Councils of Social Agencies were the major efforts of community planning for social welfare. So important were these councils that the influential 1939 Lane Report

cited the Council of Social Agencies as the only urban community organization on the scene that organized resources to meet community needs. During World War II community planning tended to be quiescent, focusing local and national concerns on the war effort, and, in the latter half of the 1940s, on postwar recovery.

Community Planning in the 1960s

Lyndon Johnson's “Great Society” programs, initiated in the 1960s as part of his War on Poverty, particularly Community Action Agencies (CAAs) and the Model Cities programs, encouraged planning and community action at the local level.

Community Action Agencies CAAs were created to improve public services, mobilize resources, and plan programs in people's own neighborhoods. An important requirement of CAAs in improving inner cities, Linda Ruth Pine writes, was “maximum feasible participation by the poor in planning, development and execution of the programs that the CAAs coordinated or sponsored.”¹¹ Though this requirement became highly controversial, the CAAs represented individuals with low incomes in dealing with bureaucracies, trained individuals for leadership, and “helped institutionalize citizen input concerning federal programs and agencies for all members of society.”¹²

For “civil rights organizations in poor black communities, CAAs presented an opening to get some real power to force changes in the community ... the poor were to play a major role in both planning and directing the services they selected,”¹³ says John Ehrenreich. The redistribution of power in poverty programs meant not “simply ‘helping’ the poor, but empowering impoverished people to help themselves and to challenge anyone who got in their way.”¹⁴

Model Cities The Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (the Model Cities program), was intended to bring “resident groups, business interests, and social welfare agencies together in a planning network for developing the physical and social aspects of the community,”¹⁵ as well as increase the supply of housing, enhance the social environment, and improve delivery systems. Cities that qualified for an initial planning project were provided with funds as well as helped to utilize the active engagement of residents in planning and executing programs.¹⁶

Neighborhood Planning Councils in the 1970s

While CAAs and Model Cities programs broke new ground, they were not renewed after Johnson left office. However, another effort at community planning continues to see progress today. In 1968 the National Commission on Urban Problems, appointed by President Johnson, recommended decentralization of municipal services to the neighborhood level by establishing Neighborhood Planning Councils. Neighborhood Planning Councils were broad-based organizations of residents, usually elected, with official recognition by city government and assigned advisory roles on matters affecting their neighborhoods.

During the first half of the 1970s, new city charters authorized neighborhood planning councils in Honolulu, Pittsburgh, Birmingham, and the District of Columbia, as well as in St. Paul, Wichita, Anchorage, and Eugene, Salem, and Portland, Oregon, among other cities. New York City, for example, created 62 local planning councils to screen proposals for development in their respective neighborhoods. Cincinnati formally recognized self-generated neighborhood organizations, and after consulting with them, drew up official boundaries for its 44 neighborhoods. Washington, Baltimore, and other cities provided money and technical assistance to neighborhood organizations.

Among the most comprehensive was the plan in Dayton, Ohio, where 149 residents were elected to Dayton's five neighborhood priority boards in 1971. In that same year, the California legislature adopted an act authorizing counties to establish municipal advisory councils in unincorporated areas, and by 1977, 27 councils were active in eight different counties.¹⁷ By the late 1970s neighbors were becoming active participants in planning in their own communities in nearly every large city in the United States, and increasingly in middle and smaller sized ones as well.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING IN ACTION: ATLANTA'S NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT PROGRAM

Atlanta's Neighborhood Unit program was established in 1974 by Atlanta's first black mayor, Maynard Holbrook Jackson, to ensure that citizens, particularly those who had historically been disenfranchised, could comment on the structure of their

communities. Firmly established in law, the NPU can only be changed by an act of the Georgia legislature.

Citizens participate actively in the developing the city's Comprehensive Development Plan, comprising the city's vision for the next 5, 10, and 15 years. Citizens express ideas and comment on city plans and proposals while assisting the city in developing plans that best meet the needs of their communities.

Staffed entirely by citizen volunteers, each of the 25 NPUs meets once a month to review applications for rezoning properties, varying existing zoning ordinances, applications for liquor licenses, applications for festivals and parades, any changes to the city's Comprehensive Development Plan, and any amendments to the city's zoning ordinances.

The NPU is assigned a City of Atlanta planner who attends the monthly meetings. Planners are charged with recording official votes, responding to questions about issues of land use and zoning, and present the various items that are sent by the city government for NPU review. Once an NPU has voted on an item, that vote is then submitted to the relevant body, which makes the ultimate determination as the official view of the community.

Each NPU creates its own bylaws and operates as the citizens see fit. Once a year the bylaws are voted on, and every resident and business owner is permitted to vote on those bylaws. Each NPU sends a representative to the Atlanta Planning Advisory Board, which addresses issues of citywide concern and sends its recommendations to the city council and/or the mayor, depending on the issue being addressed. The Board makes various appointments to city commissions and boards on behalf of the citizens.

Community Planning in the 1980s

During the 1980s, community planning sponsored by local city governments continued. The city of Houston, for example, provided technical assistance through workshops, a newsletter, and consultation. In Raleigh and Wilmington, local government provided staff assistance to help citizens develop local plans and analyze development proposals. Cincinnati and St. Paul provided funds directly to local groups to hire their own staff and to fund projects, as well as for operating expenses and capital improvements in neighborhoods. Boston expanded the role of neighborhood planning, creating citizen participation organizations, including the neighborhood councils.

Citizen-Based Planning of the 1990s

Building on neighborhood planning councils, more active, egalitarian, socially oriented, and inclusive planning efforts occurred in the last decade of the 20th century. Members of community-based organizations were beginning to propose changes in city ordinances and zoning laws, new laws governing the allocation of city services, or they asked for watchdog commissions with authority to investigate police brutality, discrimination, and human rights violations. In Richmond, Virginia, for example, a Neighborhood Team Process including 1,000 people participated in monthly meetings in nine planning districts. In Charlotte, North Carolina, citizens in 60 neighborhoods devised neighborhood plans whose priorities city officials used to orient policy and program decisions. In Minneapolis, a joint venture between residents, government, and the private sector, called the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), encompassed 79 of 81 neighborhoods, using government and private funds to leverage service delivery and revitalization initiatives.

In St. Paul more than 80% of the neighborhood projects recommended by community action planning groups were funded. Cincinnati community planning groups obtained funding for neighborhood improvement and housing programs that led to improvement in police services, crime prevention, and witness assistance programs. A district council initiated a neighborhood dispute board to address local conflicts and minor criminal acts such as vandalism, and a youth federation to provide counseling and advocacy.

In other communities, economic development and job training projects, drug education and counseling for local youth, day care cooperatives, tutoring, youth and after-school services, emergency paramedic units, and a multiservice center emerged out of the community planning process. Neighborhood planning programs established many new neighborhood organizations in areas where they did not exist, developed more equitable public resources, made major improvements for poorer neighborhoods, and increased the quality of life in neighborhoods.

Comprehensive Community Planning in the 2000s

In the first decade of the new century, several major foundations and city governments launched pilot projects in an effort to test the effectiveness of a

comprehensive approach to community initiatives that included community planning, community development, advocacy, and service provision. The Ford Foundation's Neighborhood and Family Initiative (NFI), the Annie E. Casey Foundation's New Futures Program, the Rockefeller Foundation's Community Planning and Action Programs, and the Pew Charitable Trust all target urban neighborhoods with comprehensive planning projects that utilize corporate and community partnerships to address neighborhood needs.¹⁸

Community Planning Today

The planning initiatives of the Progressive Era, the New Deal, and the federal initiatives of the Great Society provided encouragement and an infusion of hope for people at the local level. The Neighborhood Planning Council movement established community planning on the practical reality that this is the best way to conduct governance. Today, planning at the community level is increasing, engaging citizen planners as part of an ongoing, conscientious process. At the federal level, for example, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) seeks to develop viable communities by promoting integrated approaches that provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons. CPD develops partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector, including for-profit and nonprofit organizations.¹⁹

CONVENTIONAL PLANNING

Many planners typically see their work as providing a service to their clients as professional experts who advocate or plan for people in the same way that lawyers advocate for clients or doctors treat patients. Many public planners exercise rational problem solving to resolve conventional planning problems on their own or make plans for people independently of community members. Moreover, even civic-minded professionals who seem to be committed to community citizen-based planning often typically respond to community controversies and conflict by appealing to neutral, technical solutions, say Bellah et al.²⁰

When planners exclude ordinary people from the necessary and crucial processes that determine their

futures, they place members in a passive dependent position. They may tend to disallow citizens from exercising their own value choices. Often citizens are not even aware that decisions that affect their lives are being made for them by others.

Dominant Rational Model

Often professional planners use the dominant rational model, maintaining a “clear alignment in public policy with the state and little mention of the community,”²¹ says Hilda Blanco. In his seminal essay “The Policy Orientation of Political Science,”²² for example, public policy was envisioned by Harold D. Lasswell (1902–1978) as improving the rationality of decision making through “intimate techniques of communication among research workers, policy advisers, and the makers of final decisions,” without even mentioning the role of ordinary community citizens as participants in the process.²³

Professional planners often “fail to recognize that solving problems involves a democratically oriented process and sustaining community,”²⁴ says Hilda Blanco. Without a substantive theory of community, public analysts and planners, therefore, are left to rely solely on their claim to rationality, and are thrown back into a view of planning and policy as exercises in analytic expertise. But planning cannot legitimately be reduced only to exercises in instrumental rationality, asserts Blanco.²⁵

ACTION-SOCIAL COMMUNITY PLANNING

Citizen-based community planning, in contrast, is in large part derived from an action-social model of macro social work. Action-social planning asserts, on the one hand, that people need to be active and included beings in the construction of their own social reality even when conventional human problems are at stake. It insists, in addition, that community planning involves constructing the community commons, the social arena that belongs to everyone. As a common good, planning is fundamentally substantive and social, rather than a merely technical functional process. Such an action-social model is participation directed, empowerment oriented, democratically infused, leadership based, goals oriented, advocacy centered, practically engaged, and future aimed.

Participation Directed

Macro social workers, guided by the action-social model, press for grassroots engagement of citizens who not only insert their values in policy/rule making, but expect members to carry out those plans at the local level. More than nearly any other process, community planning assists local neighbors to become involved in creating the shape of their own neighborhoods, using both rational problem solving and social thinking. Citizens express ideas, help develop projects, and forge a sustainable, livable social environment from which everyone benefits. Members learn about grassroots democracy and how to build community from the ground up.

DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

In 1984 residents of the Dudley Street, one of the poorest communities in the Boston area, came together out of fear and anger to revive their neighborhood, which had been devastated by arson, disinvestment, neglect, and redlining practices, and to protect from outside speculators the staggering 1,300 parcels of vacant land that the destruction left in its wake. Citizens formed the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), a nonprofit community-based planning and organizing collaborative.²⁶

By 1987, DSNI had developed a comprehensive five-year strategic plan that included housing development, job creation, environmental health projects, and more, and then invited the city to participate. Residents gained control by convincing the authorities in Boston’s city government to take the unprecedented step of granting DSNI the power of eminent domain over much of the vacant land. Dudley Street acquired valuable assets, established a community land trust, set criteria for development, and gained a “place at the table” for the planning and development of the community.²⁷ In 1993 construction began on housing for 77 families in the first phase.²⁸

In 1996 over 180 residents and organization representatives updated the 1987 plan, affirming many of its elements, adding important refinements, and renewed their commitment to creating an “urban village.”²⁹ While the creation of CDCs and the construction of housing continues to be a vital centerpiece, the overall plan is multifaceted, involving the construction of a town common, a community center, and a number of social activities including neighborhood cleanups, youth

training and employment initiatives, multicultural festivals, homeowner classes, and more.³⁰

Growing into a collaborative effort of over 3,000 residents, businesses, nonprofits, and religious institutions, today DSNI works to implement resident-driven plans, partnering with nonprofit organizations, community development corporations (CDCs), businesses, and religious institutions serving the neighborhood, as well as banks, government agencies, corporations, and foundations.³¹ Its diverse, 34-seat board of directors includes 16 residents from each of the four major ethnic groups (African American, Latino, Cape Verdean, white) plus two additional board-appointed residents, three youth, seven nonprofit agencies, two churches, two businesses, and two CDCs.

More than half of the 1,300 abandoned parcels have been permanently transformed into over 400 new high-quality affordable houses, community centers, new schools, the Dudley Town Common, community greenhouse, parks, playgrounds, gardens, an orchard, and other public spaces.³² Key to much of the DSNI's success is the "bottom-up" approach, reflecting the belief that community residents must be central participants in both the planning and implementation processes.³³

Trust the Citizens A plan not devised by the people is morally destructive to the people upon whom a plan is imposed. To allow planning or policymaking professionals, government officials, politicians, and corporate managers to devise and put their plans into action without citizen control and direction means that members are disenfranchised from creating their own dreams, making their own decisions, putting their ideas into action, or developing their own culture. When this happens, others have appropriated the most important processes at the center of one's humanity.

Guided by action-social planning, social workers insist, therefore, that community members are not only capable of planning for their own future betterment, but that community welfare cannot be achieved without their personal engagement and involvement. Where people are deprived of the opportunity to plan for themselves or make the rules that guide government processes, social work planners assist people in reclaiming their rights to self-determination. When community members are provided with only token involvement in policy, social workers help press for total inclusion.

Community planners not only work to achieve goals but help members make quality decisions.

While we want our plans to succeed, we understand that "more development takes place by engaging in planning than as a result of the implementation of plans," and that "*it is better to plan for ourselves, no matter how badly, than to be planned for by others no matter how well.*"³⁴ This is the iron law of action-social planning.

Working with Participants It is unfair and unrealistic to expect members, often with low incomes, little experience or time, and without advanced education, to engage in some of the most complex processes and tasks in community renewal. Macro social workers assist members develop the personal skills and obtain resources to accomplish viable plans for their communities.

Skill Building We work at the individual level, helping people gain skills and learn how to plan. We provide technical assistance to members in research and in management science techniques, and train community members in the planning process. Training and supporting citizens is at the heart of action-social planning.

Resource Development Where citizens lack resources, a macro social worker will work to ensure that funding is available to provide administrative, education, and information services to strengthen community members as part of the project.

Local Access We help members gain *entre'* to government and corporate power structures, and ensure that members have access to local planning meetings. Members must have the opportunity to review proposed activities and program performance. The process must provide for timely written answers to member complaints and grievances. It must identify how the needs of non-English speaking residents will be met in the case of public hearings where such residents will participate.

Accept Different Personal Agendas People will want to be involved for a variety of reasons: academic enquiry, altruism, curiosity, fear of change, financial gain, neighborliness, professional duty, protection of interests, or socializing. These motives need not be a problem, but it helps to be aware of people's different agendas.

Accept Different Issues Neighborhood planning groups take on any and all issues that residents bring before them. Some of these are developed informally at monthly meetings; others come out of a formal survey process. Many issues grow from individual residents' concerns; others are responses to city initiatives or to a dramatic event, such as discovery of toxic materials in the water supply.

Accept Limitations No community planning activity will solve all the world's problems. But that is not a reason for holding back. Limited practical improvements will almost always result, and community planning activity can often act as a catalyst for more fundamental change.

Accept Varied Commitments Every person has his or her own priorities in life, and these should be respected. If people do not participate, it is likely to be because they are happy to let others get on with it, they are busy with things more important to them, or the process has not been made sufficiently interesting.

While not everyone can be expected to participate directly in a community planning process, however, the numbers have been impressive. Thomson and colleagues found, for example, that in Birmingham, Dayton, Portland, San Antonio, and St. Paul 16.6% of the population has been involved in community projects and 10.7%, or 150,000 people, are active in dealing with their cities' concerns at least once a month.³⁵

Often at the core of participation in these cities are small natural neighborhoods where regular face-to-face discussion of the issues takes place by all who choose to become involved. Rules of operation are informal; people join and leave as their interest peaks and wanes, and generally everybody who attends has a chance to put in his or her two cents worth.

Accept Different Kinds of Processes "In Atlanta," said one participant, "you have the whole spectrum of types of participation from New England town meetings to elected councils. If people can't participate in the way they feel comfortable, then the process won't work."³⁶ Portland's Target Area Designation Program (TADP), administered by the Bureau of Housing and Community Development (BHCD), donated staff assistance and awards up to \$100,000

over a three-year period to enable members of low and moderate neighborhoods to plan and implement their own revitalization strategies.

In St. Paul one district planning council boasts more than 250 block associations, each with its own block captain and active members. In Portland district coalition boards and staff represent the planning process, and in Dayton priority boards are utilized. San Antonio uses community representatives, a citizen's advisory board, and the citywide COPS community organization; in Birmingham community resource officers do this work.

Empowerment Oriented

Citizen planners using the action-social model are learning that when they plan the future of their own communities, they have a chance to construct their social environment in ways that no one else could accomplish. Members gain a sense of mastery, strength, and empowerment over their lives that is rarely offered as a component of normal economic and political processes.

In addition, community planning organizations are gaining formal legal empowerment that guarantees entitlement to active engagement in the planning process. In St. Paul, Raleigh, Wilmington, and Cincinnati, neighborhood planning councils have been authorized by resolution of the city council. In other cities they are brought into being by executive order of the mayor; in others they are sanctioned by city charter amendments giving community planning organizations a firm legal basis.

Democratically Infused

Community planners believe that planning must be carried out by means of a deliberative, substantive, and transformative democratic process. While formal representative politics tends to consist of manipulating self-interested power, resolving conflict, and arriving at decisions by simple majority vote, grassroots planning is the democratic way to generate consensus on social issues.³⁷

Many planning initiatives exert political power by speaking for their neighborhoods at council meetings and through personal contacts with the mayor or members of the council. They seek out politicians to discuss local issues, and they use the media. Such face-to-face democratic engagement is often the daily

experience of neighborhood planning groups, providing essential ingredients of openness that Benjamin Barber calls “strong democratic talk,” the basis for productive citizen action.³⁸ As a result, from Seattle to Jacksonville, citizens across the country are showing that “participatory democracy can grow and develop within the bounds of America’s existing political framework ... opening broad avenues for citizen roles in policymaking extending far beyond that which is possible though electoral politics.”³⁹

Leadership Based

Community social work planners use their skills in task group leadership, assisting neighborhood residents to organize themselves into effective community planning groups, identifying potential local leaders, and helping them learn how to lead the group through its stages of development. Social workers assist members to learn group discussion and decision-making techniques. We help community members organize neighborhood leadership training workshops. “When we get educated by city government, we learn how to get things done,” asserts a Wilmington, Delaware, citizen planner. “The program brought out a whole new leadership in neighborhoods,” resulting in increased community awareness and competence, and improved relations between citizens and government.⁴⁰ One member who served as chairperson of a neighborhood planning organization said, “I helped meetings get more information. I was asked to help plan the community development budget. Some of my ideas were incorporated into the plan.”⁴¹ Supplemented by more formal leadership training offered by the neighborhood planning program, a number of these chairpersons have gone on to hold elected or appointed offices in the city.

Goals Oriented

Many planning projects define short- and long-term goals that guide them in the process. In Sandtown-Winchester, neighborhood citizen planners identified goals in health and human services, education, physical/economic development, and community building. Citizens of Tucson developed a comprehensive list of 17 goals that embody the values and aspirations of the community to maintain and improve Tucson in the future.

Advocacy Centered

Action-social community planning uses understanding of the neighborhood and its members to advocate on the behalf of citizens. We are concerned about the effectiveness of programs, but also about welfare of all people, and the eradication of hurt. We assist members of planning groups to implement a vision of the public interest and the public good that equalizes power and service arrangements for those who are powerless, and speak for those who have little voice.

Resist Co-Optation There is an ongoing danger for community planners to be pressured to divert their attention from addressing the needs and issues of the people. We resist these pressures. We reject the temptation to sacrifice members’ interests to expediency, procedural issues, or the self-interest of others. We work to “anticipate and counteract pressures that stifle public voice, that manipulate democratic processes of consensus-building, and that ignore the many so that a few may prosper,”⁴² asserts Alan Walker. We use our skills to manipulate influence on behalf of those who have been manipulated by the influential.

Practically Engaged

Community planning can be considered effective to the extent that things are changed in a direction that is better. One example is Tucson, Arizona, where more than 1,200 community members, businesspeople, and city employees have participated in the Livable Tucson Vision Program to address the real concerns of the community, laying the groundwork for the development of new and enhanced programs and services.

Future Aimed

Action-social planners are not bound to the past as are reactivists, or committed to the present as are inactivists; nor do we rush into the future as do proactivists. Social workers are “interactivists” who assist community members in learning from the past to reshape the present and work to transform the future.⁴³ We use our intuition and help community members “try to idealize”⁴⁴ the future for themselves.

Together with our members, “we become credible inventors of the future, designers and analysts who are also involved in selecting supporters and mobilizing the implementation of plans,”⁴⁵ says Guy Benveniste.

We learn to calculate what is possible and at the same time nurture emergent ideas. Moving beyond simple prediction and preparation, we help community members create and control their future, shaping not only its design but its internal culture as well.

HOW TO ENGAGE ACTION-SOCIAL PLANNING

In each community planning initiative, volunteer citizen planners meet together, share ideas, and, with the assistance of a macro social worker, engage in participative action research. Members then use their results to develop solutions to the issues they are examining. When working with a community or neighborhood planning group, social workers often follow a series of steps, arriving at a plan to achieve an ideal future state.

This process, however, cannot always be routinized. There are too many unknowns, too many variables for planning to be limited to a rigid process or method. Almost every process is different depending on the particular culture, situation, and needs of the citizens in locales where the planning takes place. Methods need to be contingent on the particular situation that presents itself to the citizen planners.

In Sandtown-Winchester, Maryland, for example, community residents developed a set of guiding principles that framed the design process, including the involvement of community residents in increasingly central roles in all initiative activities. In other cities, planning officers are elected directly by members of the community organization. Staffs of the individual district planning councils work closely with city agencies and city council members.

In Portland, the planning coordinator provides technical assistance and support to the neighborhood planning organizations throughout the planning process and can access more specialized consultants if needed. Neighborhood group members in St. Paul, Minnesota, elect a local council, which selects a chairperson.

Though each action planning effort is unique and takes its own direction, social workers understand the broad process of engaging in community planning and assist the planning group in its various steps. Generally, planning begins with a sponsoring agency, which develops a planning agenda and fosters a community planning group. You assist the group decide on its approach, and define the problem. The process

continues as members carry out assessments, and define and relabel the real issue. Participants develop alternative solutions and decide on the best solution. You assist members in developing a proposal and presenting it to the community and to the board of the sponsoring agency. After the planning group has developed its plan, you work with the board to help implement the proposal to bring about new or improved services in your community.

Sponsoring Agency

Planning usually is usually initiated by a sponsoring organization that has a mandate, funds, and support systems to carry out the planning project. This organization may be a local government agency or jurisdiction, a social agency, a private foundation, a coalition of social organizations, or a combination of government, agencies, and foundations. In Minneapolis, local neighborhood planning groups collaborate with city and county agencies. Each target area in Portland is sponsored by a community-based organization that coordinates the planning and implementation process through a paid staff coordinator in the city government. In Sandtown-Winchester, the city of Baltimore and the Enterprise Foundation combined to form a planning coalition along with neighborhood residents.

Role of the Social Worker

After the sponsoring agency has initiated the process, your role is to work directly with the planning group, helping members progress through the stages of development. You often act as a liaison between local neighborhoods and city government. You may provide communication linkages from members to government officials and from government to the neighborhood. You inform members about the politics of city government, developing working relationships between community members and government officials, and assist local neighborhoods in funding and implementing local initiatives.

Social workers use contacts with neighborhoods to keep local government in touch with neighborhood needs. You help city planning commissions, city councils, mayors' offices, and other public officials understand the concerns and desires of neighborhood groups. You assist neighborhood residents to explain the position of a neighborhood to the mayor or city manager, present proposals to the city council, or

provides input on neighborhood conditions to other public officials. If there are misunderstandings or conflicts, you may bring parties together to discuss the issues and promote compromise, understanding, and smooth working relationships.

Develop a Planning Group

After your local neighborhood is either invited by a sponsoring agency or locates a planning sponsor, local citizens form a community planning group. This process often consists of three steps: With your assistance the sponsoring organization and/or key neighborhood leaders may recruit members, compose the group, and orient them to the process.

Recruit Members One of the key skills of a community planner is the ability to bring people together around an issue of concern to them and help them seek its resolution. Because we bring people together to discuss difficult social issues for which answers may be unclear, opinions may differ, and goals may conflict, social work planners need to be good listeners. Community planners must be able to relate to a variety of people who have vested interests in the issues. Some of them may want more rather than less while contributing less to the process rather than more.

Look for Committed Community Members In every community there are numerous individuals, vested interests, groups, organizations, and agencies that may be affected by, have information about, and have a stake in the outcomes of the planning process. These are the stakeholders. There are two minimum requirements for stakeholder membership on a planning group. Any community planning group should be composed exclusively of community residents who reflect the culture of the community. Second, these residents should be supportive of the goals of the sponsoring organization. Within these two categories, individual members of the group may be chosen because they represent particular segments of the community population, its various interests, or its alternative values. Out of a pool of potential representatives, members could be asked to volunteer or could be democratically elected.

Other stakeholders may be people in positions of power, such as representatives from government agencies and corporations that operate in the community but who do not reside there. While these stakeholders

can provide input, give advice, offer information, and develop support, they should not be invited to become members of the community planning group itself. When you recruit members you look for committed community stakeholders, often using a series of public forums or focus groups.

Public Forums Public forums are general open meetings held in districts or neighborhoods to generate interest and input into the planning process. In Tucson, for example, public forums are held in each ward to engage the community in identifying a common vision and strategies for achieving a sustainable community. Other forums target businesses, youth, and Spanish speakers. An Internet site also gives citizens the opportunity to contribute their priorities, and City Council offices often establish bulletin boards for community input.

At the forum, explain the details of the planning process, solicit ideas, and describe the kind of commitment required. Provide an application form for those interested, explaining in more detail the role group members will play and asking for information about particular skills, abilities, interests, and experience.

Using Focus Groups Another way to develop a planning group is to conduct a series of focus groups. Focus groups are small groups of about eight to ten stakeholders who come from a specific local geographical area of a community and/or who represent particular interests such as businesspersons, faith-based organizations, ethnic populations, professional groups, or others. When you develop focus groups you are beginning a process of grassroots democratic participation. You invite selected individuals, using an interview guide with each group to ensure consistency in responses.

Invite Selected Individuals. Invite specific members of your selected interest group and try to arrange to hold the meeting in a neighbor's home. These members will informally represent the thinking of the interest group with which you are talking. Explain to the members that you are going to develop a neighborhood planning group and want to solicit ideas and interest from them. Donna Hardina says that focus groups work best when participants are asked to describe how or why community situations have developed rather than simply identifying community problems. "Responses to 'how' and 'why' questions often produce a group perspective about the issue under discussion,"⁴⁶ says Hardina.

Use an Interview Guide. A moderator administers an interview guide to the participants with six to eight open-ended questions. The moderator allows each participant some time to answer each question. Responses may be recorded, with the permission of group members. Although each participant may provide detailed information about community conditions from his or her own perspective, the group process encourages full discussion of the issue. Focus groups permit “interactions among and between group members which stimulate discussions in which one group member reacts to comments made by another.”⁴⁷ Ideally, after the meeting, one or more participants will be willing to become members of your community planning group.

Hold a Number of Meetings. Hold as many focus group meetings as you need to generate community interest and involvement in the project. Ask those who volunteer to join the planning group to periodically report back to their focus group to give information, solicit feedback, and keep the community involved in the process. If a member of your group decides to stop his or her participation, ask the member to try to recruit a replacement from his or her focus group.

Forming the Group Make sure that membership on your planning group represents all stakeholders and includes members of ethnic, gender, age, disability, and religious groups in proportion to their numbers in your community. When you have 15 to 20 members, you can form a planning group. This number is large enough to represent a variety of interests of the community but small enough for face-to-face meetings and for getting work accomplished. It is also large enough to break into smaller groups that can be assigned smaller projects and report to the larger group.

Orient the Members At the beginning of the process, you may need to assist in leading the planning group until it has developed sufficient readiness to elect its own leaders. Spend time orienting members in the planning process and how task groups carry out their work. The task group process described in Chapter 3 can help you do this. Assist members to agree on rules, boundaries, and guiding values.

Agree on Rules and Boundaries There should be a common understanding among all principal interest groups of the approach you and the community

planning group adopt. It is vital that everyone understand and agree to the rules and boundaries, particularly in communities where there is fear that others may be trying to gain unfair advantage.

Mobilize Guiding Values When a group begins to orient itself, it should discuss its guiding values. These values may diverge from those of the county planning commission or other governmental agencies, which are often used as tools by developers and corporations to obtain variances, policy concessions, and rulings that benefit them. Community planning groups need to clearly understand what values are most important to them, why they are important, and how to present the content of those values to others. For example, among your group’s values may be community sustainability, economic justice, social inclusion, neighborhood empowerment, or others.

Your members must also understand the values that powerful interests represent and learn how to counteract them if they are antithetical to those of your group. As a social worker, you can often be an important resource in helping the neighborhood group to discuss and articulate the content of their values, and especially to understand the interests of those in power with whom they may have conflict.

Provide Feedback to the Sponsoring Organization At every step in community planning, it is vital to give feedback to your sponsoring organization and public officials in positions of authority. Make sure your group regularly informs those people from whom they will seek support, approval, or funding. If officials have questions, concerns, or conflicts about what your group is doing, it is better to have those issues examined earlier rather than later. If you wait until your group has finished its process and then discover your members lack support, you will have complicated or damaged your planning process.

Feedback to the Community at Large In addition, the community as a whole, on whose behalf the planning process is being conducted, must be regularly apprised in a series of public forums about its progress and expected outcomes. At these informational forums individuals from the community at large can also give valuable periodic feedback to the group about the feasibility and utility of its planning objectives.

Including additional community members in the process as they express interest, moreover, can ensure that those who were not initially involved can take part. Keeping community members informed may provide an army of volunteers to take on various parts of the project. The more open and inclusive the planning process is, the greater its impact and success may be.

Decide on an Approach

Community planning includes several approaches. These are the needs/services approach, the deficit/problem approach, the asset/strengths approach, and a modified strengths-based approach.

Needs/Services Approach Assessments that focus mainly on individual needs will tend to be directed toward recommending additional services or programs to meet those needs. In this case, an exclusive concentration on needs will almost inevitably presuppose a solution that is based on the particular question that researchers ask.

Looking primarily at needs and services, moreover, may tend to avoid issues such as developing community strength, empowerment, and leadership, or alternative policies to improve and enhance the betterment of communities. While examining needs and service gaps is important, planning must always look toward broader and more inclusive issues and concerns.

Problem/Deficit Approach A problem/deficit approach is an extension of the needs/services model. It is based on the modern idea that systems, including people, eventually experience entropy or become dysfunctional. The cause of problems is often lack of information, uncertainty, or other system deficiency. The problem/deficit approach is aimed at conventional rational problem solving as the preferred method of remediation. Alternatively, this model often requires the repair of systems deficits or defects in community service provision.

Limitations of Problem/Deficit Approach

While there is nothing intrinsically wrong with social repair, the problem/deficits process often comes to an end once the system is fixed. Then the focus becomes one of system maintenance. A problem/deficit approach will, at best tend to assist a community or system to overcome its dysfunctions, enabling it to move along its former predetermined path rather than assisting members to move in a different direction.

It may tend to rely on services of expert specialists to assess needs and gaps in community or systems functioning rather than engaging citizens themselves in the process or looking at the different attitudes or opinions about local problems that people may see as important. Examining only problems and deficits may overlook strengthening citizen involvement, avoid participation, and fail to account for additional issues that may arise in the future.

Asset/Strengths Approach Kretzmann and McKnight present an asset/strengths approach to community intervention in their book *Building Communities from the Inside Out*. They argue, “Communities cannot be rebuilt by focusing on needs, problems, and deficiencies. Rather, community building starts with the process of locating the assets, skills and capacities of residents, citizens associations, and local institutions.”⁴⁸ From this perspective you help members assess their community by examining a community’s combined assets and resources, empowering members to devise plans, recommending policies, and creating concrete positive projects that can not only strengthen and improve their neighborhoods but build member skills. The strengths perspective helps develop leadership, enhance opportunity, and generate social capital. Its goal is to provide solutions, develop social bonds, and cement participatory democracy at the grassroots level.

Modified Strengths-Based Approach Community planning should not only look at needs/services or problem/deficits, ignoring community assets and strengths. Neither should it only focus on assets/strengths overlooking real areas of needs or problems, however. Many communities use a modified strengths version of the Kretzmann and McKnight approach that balances community problems and needs with community resources, assets, and people’s strengths.⁴⁹ This modified version is congruent with the action-social model of community planning.

Using a modified strengths-based approach, your group should gather information about the assets, strengths, and resources that exist in your community. In addition, there are the needs that your community members have uncovered, such as gaps in services or areas that may require attention. This information can give your planning group different perspectives and facilitate the generation of a comprehensive community plan or policy proposal.

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), for example, used such a modified approach. They identified a number of problems, such as arson, poverty, poor housing, and sanitation in their neighborhood, but also built on local strengths, including community pride, racial harmony, tolerance, and their determination to keep the area livable. They found extensive resources such as vacant land, but also human assets. They identified a number of strong community leaders who were able to mobilize the membership.

This modified approach is also reflected in federal EZ (enterprise zone) applications, which require applicants to assess problems and needs as well as identify local assets, both economic and institutional, and incorporate them into the EZ proposals, says Lori Messinger.⁵⁰ The initial assessment of the Warren County, North Carolina, Comprehensive Community Initiative (CCI), conducted by low-income residents, assessed areas of perceived strength along with areas of weakness. Members applied strengths-based strategies with individuals, families, agencies, and the community at large to overcome local deficiencies.⁵¹ Action-social planning described in this text is based on a modified strengths-based approach using both rational and social thinking.

Define the Planning Issue

You help members avoid pitfalls in defining the issue. After the group defines the concerns facing the community, they develop an issue statement.

Using Dialogue to Identify Common Issues

Issues may often be seen in negative ways or as deficits affecting a community. On the other hand, what at first may seem like a problem may, from another perspective, be viewed as an asset. The vacant housing in the Dudley Street community turned out to be an asset that DSNI used to develop housing, parks, gardens, community centers, and other community assets, for example. Rather than portraying community concerns using a language of deficits or problems, therefore, the modified strengths model looks at them as issues that members want to address. Issues may contain both positive aspects and problematic ones. Framed in this manner, issues are challenges that prompt a community to action.

Dialogue is an important component of social thinking, about which you learned in Chapter 5.

According to Donna Hardina, “The purpose of dialogue is to enable a group of people to develop a shared understanding of community problems and agree on a joint action to address them.”⁵² You engage in dialogue with group members, looking for common concerns that affect more than one person.

Pitfalls in Defining the Issue Solutions may seem very obvious. It is tempting for members to pull solutions out of the air. However, your group needs to be able to work through the issue definition process systematically. As you assist members in defining the concern, you help them navigate through a number of initial pitfalls, including premature labeling, fitting preconceived solutions to an issue, accepting the leader’s definition, or giving in to group pressure.

Premature Labeling Labeling helps you see concerns in a clear way, restricts the range of choices, and identifies what is and what is not to be considered. Labeling an issue too early in the process, however, may prevent the group from considering it completely. Premature labeling may lead group members to be concerned with symptoms rather than causes, with causes when symptoms are all that realistically can be treated, or with the wrong issue altogether. At the beginning of the planning process, leave all options open until the real concern emerges clearly.

The Solution in Search of a Problem Sometimes people come to the table armed with a full repertoire of solutions gleaned from articles, meetings, research, or their own experience and values. As soon as they encounter a condition that one of these ready-made solutions might fix, they may phrase the concern to fit their preconceived solution, so that their answers are the best and most logical remedies. Each of these solutions may appear logical and, to the individuals proposing them, necessary. If they are lucky, their solution will fit the issue, but more than likely the situation is more complicated and, having already made up their minds, they may have foreclosed other possibilities. In the battle of solutions that ensues, each group member attempts to persuade the group that his or her idea is best.

This process is almost always destructive. It rarely leads to effective resolution because the issue challenging the group has not been clearly defined based on its own unique characteristics. Moreover, the group may

eventually accept a statement with which most, if not all, are uncomfortable.

While those whose ideas prevailed may “win,” it is at the expense of those who may feel they were forced to capitulate or compromise. They may go along but not be really committed to the issue. If the planning group seems to focus on solutions before clearly examining the community concern, they may be playing the “solutions in search of a problem” game, which can end in members disengaging themselves from the process.

Accepting the Social Worker’s Definition As a social worker, you may have a highly developed intuitive sense and a knack for putting your finger on the crux of community challenges. Allowing your own intuitive sense to dominate the issue identification process may work for you some of the time, but it won’t work all of the time. Your community planning group may accept your version of the concern because of your expertise, track record, or power position. None of these is a valid reason for deciding on a problem definition.

If you happen to be wrong, you will have wasted valuable time and tarnished your own reputation. If you have a hunch about what the real challenge is, it is best to wait, watch, and use the group process to confirm your intuition rather than make a pronouncement. Keep in mind that you need to help the whole group work through a process in which all can learn. You are not helping if you move too far ahead of your community group.

Personal Influence Be careful of those who tend to be most persuasive, influential, or assertive. Often the group may initially accept their version of the community concern. Parts of different perceptions may be pieced together, or a compromise may be reached among dominant members. None of these may reflect the ideas of the group as a whole. The result is an issue statement based on the personalities and personal influence of the members and not centered on the real concern itself.

How to Avoid Pitfalls There are two ways to help your group avoid pitfalls in deciding on a challenging issue. One is to help the group be objective by asking themselves questions and looking at facts. A second way is to use a variety of decision techniques, all of which are aimed at avoiding pitfalls in decision making.

Ask Questions Help your group obtain evidence-based information. Explore questions such as when, who, what, where, why, and how in relation to the community issue.

Ask When. Explore the origins and history of the area of concern. When did the issue first appear? Through what historical events or circumstances has it evolved to the present state of affairs? Did it come about suddenly, or does it have a long history? Knowing these antecedents will help your group understand the variety of factors that have led to the present situation, the length of time the problem has been in existence, its scope, and its severity.

Ask Who. Who are the major actors? These may be decision makers, agency or organizational administrators, various interest groups, community leaders, or legislators. Who has contributed to the social concern? Are there groups of perpetrators or potential targets that may have caused or added to the issue? Who are the prime victims? Who has the most to gain, and who has the most to lose by resolving the community challenge?

Ask What. “What” questions include consequences, solutions, and what aspect of the condition is important.

1. *Consequences.* What are some of the major consequences of the community issue? This question deals with symptoms. What are the economic, social, and political effects of the concern? What social situations or social conditions have contributed to the issue’s continuance or added to its complexity?
2. *Solutions.* What kinds of solutions have been tried in the past? How effective were they? Knowing what has been tried in the past will help avoid dead-end solutions or blind alleys, and understanding what has worked will help prevent your group from reinventing the wheel.
Alice Kitchen says, however, that simply because a policy recommendation did not work in the past does not mean that a similar action won’t work the next time. The wrong people may have been in leadership roles, receptivity to the proposal may not have been strong, or the urgency may not have been felt. The time may now be ripe for your group to try again.⁵³
3. *Aspects.* What part of the condition does your group want to resolve? Is your group interested

in certain aspects of the issue, or should they try to tackle the concern as a whole?

Ask Where. Where are problems or needs located? Is the concern generalized throughout the community or are particular areas affected more than others? Obtaining an idea of where the issue is located will give your group an idea of a place to start.

Ask Why. Why did the issue come about? What events or conditions have led to the current state of affairs? Are there particular cycles or trends that tell you which factors may be causally related to the problem?

Ask How. How important is the challenge facing community members? How widespread is it? How many people are affected by it? How does your group define the issue so it is resolvable, given the limitations on your resources—time, manpower, funding, and expertise?

Use Decision Techniques When your group examines complex questions, you may find it helpful to use one or another decision technique. Common decision techniques include brainstorming, reverse brainstorming, and the nominal group technique (NGT).

Brainstorming. Brainstorming allows a group to obtain the maximum amount of input in an orderly manner. Brainstorming reduces dominance by cliques and disruption by overly assertive, excessively garrulous, or domineering individuals. It also eliminates group dependency on a single authority figure and allows those who are generally silent to contribute. Brainstorming is useful when the solution to a problem requires the group's cumulative wisdom. It provides a means by which a number of ideas about a topic can be generated in a short amount of time.

When you use brainstorming, explain the purpose and rules to ensure an orderly process, especially in the early stages of a group when members are still getting to know one another. The rules for brainstorming are as follows:

Expressiveness—express any idea that comes to mind.

Nonevaluation—no criticism allowed.

Quantity—the more ideas the better.

Building—try to build on one another's ideas.

Brainstorming should be fun, exciting, and interesting. Thought will be stimulated, and members will build on one another's ideas or come up with new and different combinations. You may improve the group's proficiency if you provide some training and practice before your brainstorming session.

Write the issue on a blackboard or sheet of newsprint. Explain that the purpose of brainstorming is to generate as many ideas as possible, without thinking about the quality of the ideas. Any idea, no matter how far-fetched, is appropriate. In fact, the wilder and more audacious the idea the better, because one goal of brainstorming is to break through old ways of thinking and come up with new, innovative courses of action. The more ideas the members generate, the greater the likelihood that they will discover a superior idea.

While members are coming up with ideas, they should not make comments about, criticize, or discuss the quality of any ideas. Limit members to one idea at a time. Write ideas down as quickly as members can think of them. Ask participants to suggest how the ideas of others can be made better, or how two or more ideas can be combined into another idea. Encourage shy or reluctant members to participate. Make sure everyone has a chance and that all of their ideas are elicited. After members have finished, help the group review all the suggestions, prioritize them, and vote on those that seem worthwhile. Donald Forsyth adds that sometimes it may help to “ask members to record ideas that were stimulated *after* the brainstorming session is over.”⁵⁴

Reverse Brainstorming. Reverse brainstorming is a technique for considering negative consequences of ideas that are generated through brainstorming. After your group has generated lists of ideas and members are narrowing them to the best ideas, ask “What might go wrong with this idea?” When members look at the negative consequences of ideas, they can often eliminate unworkable ones.

Nominal Group Technique. André Delbecq and Andrew Van de Ven developed an approach that combines group brainstorming with the benefits of working alone to generate ideas. They called their technique the “nominal group technique,” or NGT, because the members form a group in name only—that is, a *nominal group*.⁵⁵ NGT differs from brainstorming in that the process is not freewheeling but is structured in a

series of steps to ensure that every member has equal input. Members may initially feel uncomfortable using this controlled process, but this discomfort usually diminishes after some practice.

Before you begin, introduce the issue in writing on a blackboard or newsprint pad, explain the theory and procedure of NGT, and answer questions.

1. *Silently generate ideas in writing*: Working alone, each participant writes ideas about the concern to be discussed for about 10 to 15 minutes. These ideas usually are suggestions for a solution.
2. *Round robin sharing*: After everyone has finished generating ideas, ask each member to read one idea from his or her list in turn, and write it on the board. If members have an idea that is the same as one on the board, they move to the next new one on their list. Members continue until all of the ideas are on the board. There is no discussion of ideas until every person's ideas have been presented for general viewing.
3. *Discussion and clarification*: Ask members to look over the entire list to ensure that it is accurate and nonrepetitive. Refine the list, but do not debate the merits of differing ideas. Ask members to openly discuss the ideas to become clear about them, but not to evaluate them. This part of the discussion tends to be spontaneous and unstructured.
4. *Group voting*: Because a large number of items may be on the board, you may want members to decide by group voting. Ask members to give 3 points for their first choice, 2 points for their second choice, and 1 point for their third choice. Each person should write his or her top three preferences on a card and pass it to the leader. Add the total points for each idea and divide by the number of group members to obtain a score. Compare and rank order the results.
5. *Discussion (optional)*: If several rankings receive close scores, ask members to explain why they voted the way they did.
6. *Re-voting*: Repeat the voting process among the top scoring items until a clear winner emerges.
7. *Devil's advocate (optional)*: Sometimes the facilitator assigns a member to play the role of devil's advocate, challenging the assumptions and assertions made by the group. The devil's advocate forces the group to rethink its approach to the issue and to avoid reaching premature consensus

or making unreasonable assumptions before proceeding with solutions.

8. *Dialectical inquiry (optional)*: Dialectical inquiry is similar to a devil's advocate approach. However, in this approach you assign groups to challenge the underlying values and assumptions associated with the definition of the community concern. For example, the facilitator might form a Red Team and a Blue Team to critically examine prevailing assumptions that underlie the issue.

Assessing NGT. NGT protects individuals from group pressure because anonymity is assured and discussion is not allowed. In the idea generation phase, each person is given the assurance that he or she will have an opportunity to generate as many ideas as possible. This stimulates creativity, but in a quiet atmosphere in which everyone can give the problem their full concentration and attention.

The round robin phase provides face-to-face contact and interaction at an appropriate time and in a controlled atmosphere. Each person knows that his or her ideas will receive equal and legitimate attention. The voting process provides an explicit mathematical solution that fairly weighs all members' inputs. Finally, in the discussion phase, members' subjective feelings, perceptions, and input can be factored into the final vote, and individuals understand that there will be joint group commitment to the final decision.

Develop a Planning Statement Help your members write out a concise statement of the planning issue in the form of a question. For example: "How can the Fairlawn community improve its schools?" "How can our community become safer?" "Protect its environment?" "Become more sustainable?"

Carry Out Research Assessment

After your group has decided on an issue, it will need to carry out research assessments. Community planning uses participative action research, which incorporates the principles of the action-social model into its method.

In some cases, participative action research consists of elaborate processes, involving surveys, one-to-one meetings, small group discussions, and large community meetings over a period of a year or more. The Neighborhood of Affordable Housing (NOAH),

for example, nearing the end of one of these planning processes, produced a final plan addressing economic development, housing, community safety, human services, education, open/green space, health, arts/culture/heritage, and transportation.

Other grassroots planning processes are not so elaborate. They might focus on a single issue, such as housing, and use a more targeted, small-scale approach. The scope of your research must always fit the time, resources, and capacity of your members. At a minimum, however, your group will confirm the community's strengths, resources, and assets, as well as assessing its needs and deficits.

What Is Participative Action Research? Participative action research is participative, action-oriented, and socially infused.⁵⁶

Participative In participative action research, “people are not objects and a neighborhood is not a laboratory,”⁵⁷ says John Lambert. Neither is it carried out for the purpose of building theory in the splendid isolation of the research experiment. Nor is action research conducted out of the social worker's own research interests independently of the subjects he or she investigates. Action research is participative, carried out in real-life settings.

Rubin and Rubin assert that participative action research “is the systematic gathering of information by people who are both affected by a problem and who want to solve that problem.”⁵⁸ “The divide between practitioner and researcher is thus closed down,” says Robert Louis Flood. “The two roles become one. All involved are co-workers, co-researchers, and co-authors of reports and research output.”⁵⁹

Participative research helps bring truth to light about the social conditions people want changed, and devises ways of doing that. Action research “not only finds out what community members feel the problems are, but what in particular about the problems disturbs them, and what they hope to accomplish by solving them.”⁶⁰

Community members conduct all of the steps of the research process. Control of defining the concerns, for example, is in the hands of those affected by those issues, because “people won't work to solve the problem unless they feel it is important,”⁶¹ say Rubin and Rubin. Members formulate the questions to be asked,

gather information, and analyze the data. They use the results to strategize solutions to the issues they have addressed. Members carry out strategies to bring about an improved neighborhood and ultimately a better society

Action Oriented Two meanings of action guide participative research. First, research is conducted in a turbulent action setting. Louis Flood reports that “practitioners and researchers participate in action and research about action.”⁶² Second, researchers themselves engage in projects to implement the results of their research findings.

The Turbulent Action Setting. The setting of participative action research is unlike that of a traditional social scientist, who attempts to control as many variables as possible so as to develop social theory. Instead, members have little or no control over the conditions they are studying. The research arena is the hustle and bustle of communities that are continuously changing while simultaneously being the targets of the researchers' investigation.

Even as your members begin to examine the milieu of the change effort, for example, the research arena is shifting. Members of communities and organizations continually enter and leave the setting. “The environment is continually making demands on it,” notes Norman Smith, “and people in those settings react, or adapt to those demands.”⁶³

Implementation. Participative action research is conducted to give members information they can use to improve their communities. The goal of action research is to implement its findings. Members are actors who engage themselves in the construction of social reality, actively taking a part in determining their own futures.

Socially Infused Participative action research is social research. The focus of social research is the “face-to-face encounter,”⁶⁴ which places it in a context of “concrete experience and is, therefore, the most elemental—and, in a sense, real—unit of human interaction,”⁶⁵ asserts Michael Harmon.

Participative action research “focuses on the study of the subjective meanings that people attach to their own actions and the actions of others,”⁶⁶ placing people at the center of social construction. It validates the way that social constructs develop. Action research, therefore, is not “an autonomous form of knowledge,

or discipline which operates one step removed from people and is something that occurs to others,”⁶⁷ claims Peter Leonard. Participative action research is, instead, intimately involved *with* and *for* others.

Assessing Community Strengths You want to energize the community so it will recognize and use its strengths. Every community has resources that it can use to improve its social environment. When your planning group looks at a community’s resources it will perform a strengths/assets inventory, giving your members an assessment of available community capital.⁶⁸ You will then want to gather more specific information about those assets. You can use geographical information systems (GIS), community mapping, and social network analysis.

How to Perform a Strengths/Assets Inventory

Help your group focus their attention on what they want to accomplish, then think of all the resources that could apply. Kretzman and McKnight offer the following as categories of items to examine.⁶⁹

Capacities of Individuals. Talents of individuals in the community provide the fundamental base of community assets, even those who may seem to be less capable, such as the elderly or those with disabilities.

Associations. Faith-based communities, Girl and Boy Scouts, service organizations such as Lions Clubs, Jaycees, Kiwanis, and others empower individuals and add to participation and social capital.

Private, Nonprofit, and Governmental Organizations. These organizations can offer information, facilities, expertise, materials, equipment, a source of volunteers, and access to power and leadership in communities.

Physical Assets. Land, buildings, streets, parks, forests, rivers, and lakes enhance the community and can be a focus of unused resources that can be developed, enhanced, or preserved.

Capacity Finders and Developers. Local community leaders, professionals, and experts can help use and discover assets. They can mobilize, encourage, and empower one another in the community.

Geographic Information Systems A geographic information system (GIS) is a tool for mapping

community assets and resources.⁷⁰ GIS systems allow the planning group to input data on street addresses or other types of location information on a street or area map, says Donna Hardina.⁷¹

GIS allows members to plot information in several layers or overlays including street grids, cities or towns, and zip code boundaries so that multiple features of a specific geographic area can be viewed, according to Hofer et al.⁷² Planning members can map points such as specific addresses, buildings, parks, as well as streets, railroad lines, or bus routes. They create a geographic identifier such as a census block or tract number, zip code, city, or state that creates a link to a specific spatial area. Your members can then change the overlays to explore different questions about community problems.

Community Mapping

Community mapping uses color-coded pins on neighborhood street or area maps to chart the location of buildings, parks, neighborhood institutions, or trouble spots in the community that your group wants to pinpoint. Your group can also use the mapping process to examine whether residents have access to services, availability of shopping within the community, or ease of access to the nearest clinic or hospital. Hardina recommends that “community residents be involved in creating community maps and examining ways that existing facilities or open space can be used to promote economic development and neighborhood well-being.... Often their perceptions are essential for preparing maps that accurately reflect how land in the community is actually used.”⁷³

Social Network Analysis

In their Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) model, Kretzmann and McKnight use community mapping in a different way. Rather than spatial analysis, they suggest that your members perform relationship analysis by creating lists of skills, facilities, institutions, relationships among residents and between residents and institutions, and potential external investors.⁷⁴

Social network analysis (SNA) is the mapping and measuring of relationships and flows between people, groups, organizations, computers, URLs, and other connected information/knowledge entities.⁷⁵ Donna Hardina says that your members can use SNA to examine the strength and density of relationships in a neighborhood as well as how communication, resources, and services flow through the community. It is often used to examine relationships among

community-based organizations, both membership groups and social service agencies. SNA can also be used to examine interconnections among elite members of the community, interlocking boards of corporations, and activities of interest groups on a variety of community issues.⁷⁶

In addition, your members may conduct social network analysis to examine relationships between individuals, households, families, or peer groups; relationships between organizations; or relationships between organizations and individuals or other small units. They may survey individuals or organization administrators about relevant people or organizations in their networks and the resources that these individuals or entities provide. S. Murty explains that your members can also create a list of people or organizations that are service providers in their community, ask them to check whether they have received specific services, and assess the strength of their relationships.⁷⁷

After your members gather data they can either construct a matrix to indicate a set of interrelated relationships among members of the network or draw a map or graph illustrating the relationships among individuals or organizations in the network and the strength of relationships among network members, resources given or exchanged, and density of networks.⁷⁸

Assessing Community Needs Performing a needs assessment is a critical step in the development of many social plans, policies, and social programs. Your group must first decide the kinds of needs it wants to examine. Then it should carry out a needs assessment to verify the need for the program or service.

Needs assessments are surveys that focus on gaps in service and areas where people's needs are not being met. Francis Yuen says that "they provide information that guides development of program plans to meet identified needs."⁷⁹ Hornick and Burrows add that the primary purpose of a needs assessment "is to verify that a problem exists within a client population to an extent that warrants the existing or proposed service."⁸⁰ Needs assessments also "describe the target population or community, including demographic characteristics, the extent of relevant problems or issues of concern, and current services."⁸¹

Why Needs Assessments? When a community cannot sustain its members or meet its members'

goals or when the community has unmet needs, a needs assessment can help you identify barriers to community economic and social capacity, and raise community consciousness and commitment to action. The assessment can assist your community members realize that unmet community needs are a result of failing to use resources effectively or, says Mark Homan, "the assessment may help members demand their fair allocation of resources from the broader community."⁸² A needs assessment, moreover, is often required with a grant application to fund a project, because the funding source wants to ensure that your project will serve a real need.

Identify and Verify the Need Three different kinds of needs exist: normative, comparative, and demand needs.

Needs Determined Normatively. Normative needs refer to conditions that are below recognized social standards. Rubin and Babbie state that "if needs are defined normatively, then a needs assessment would focus on comparing the objective living conditions of the target population with what society ... deems acceptable or desirable,"⁸³ such as people living below the poverty line. The same may be true of dental care, medical care, or housing for the homeless. These populations may be in need of services, whether or not they express the need or claim dissatisfaction with their current condition. When this occurs, your group members may advocate for such "underserved" populations, developing "precise estimates of the number and distribution of individual or social units exhibiting the problem."⁸⁴

When you perform a needs assessment, Homan recommends your group ask, "What's not here that should be here? What's not happening that should be happening?" This is quite different from asking, "What are all the bad things in this community?" he says.⁸⁵

Comparative Need. Comparative need refers to people whose circumstances are relatively worse off or less desirable than those of other people. If your group members are evaluating services for persons who are developmentally disabled, for example, they may discover that some lack equal access to educational services afforded to others in a particular geographical area.

Needs Determined by Demand. One indicator of service need often used in needs assessment is demand. "Demand for service is a measure of the number of

people who have actually requested the service. This figure may be very different from the number of people who have received the service,”⁸⁶ says Donna Hardina.

When needs are defined in terms of demand, “only those individuals who indicate that they feel or perceive the need themselves would be considered to be in need of a particular program or intervention,”⁸⁷ say Rubin and Babbie. Demand data are helpful when mobilizing community support for a program. However, if need is defined solely in terms of people who press for it, those who do not understand the service, are not aware of its benefits, or actively resist it will not be included in determining the extent of the need.

Donna Hardina asserts that “Ideally, your group should conduct assessments to determine what services or interventions community residents want, need, or will utilize.”⁸⁸ Demand data should be combined with normative data to determine the extent to which those eligible for a particular program would actually use it. Normative data may show that there is a need for additional shelters for persons who are homeless, for example, whereas demand data would give an indication of the number of people who would actually use the shelters.

How to Carry Out a Needs Assessment Different groups in the community may have very different attitudes or opinions about local problems. To gain a comprehensive understanding of these differences, your planning group should use a combination of assessments allowing them to examine the problem from different perspectives. “Collecting data from a variety of sources improves the reliability of the needs assessment,”⁸⁹ says Hardina. “If data from a number of sources point to the same conclusion, the researcher can be confident that he or she has correctly identified the problem.”⁹⁰

The most common ways of assessing need include (1) existing data, (2) the focused interview or key actor approach, (3) conversational interview, (4) community forums and focus groups, and (5) community surveys.

Existing Data. While you may wish to develop your own needs assessment, your group may often find that a needs assessment has already been performed by a social service or planning agency. Existing data is information that has been collected by universities, policy organizations, government, private health and welfare agencies, private research organizations, and others.

Data on crime, abuse, housing, and health, for example, can be gathered from local public and private agencies concerned with these issues. Health services agencies, both locally and nationally, collect data on incidence of diseases and health of the population, including disabilities, aging, and specific diseases. Local, state, and federal justice agencies compile data on crime.

Federal agencies including the Centers for Disease Control, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) develop existing data that you can use. A number of private databases constructed by advocacy organizations also compile statistical indicators that are available to the public, such as Children Now, the Children’s Defense Fund, and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities. The National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (<http://www.neighborhoodindicators.org/>) provides a wealth of information including guides and catalogues of information sources.

Existing data used in needs assessments include social indicators, rates under treatment, census data, and data from the Internet.

1. *Social indicators:* Social indicators are “inferences of need drawn from descriptive statistics found in public records and reports,”⁹¹ according to Warheit et al. They are markers by which your planning group can spot underlying social issues. Lots of information exists to help your group members discover indicators of social problems in your community. Although “using social indicators is unobtrusive and can be done quickly and inexpensively,” Rubin and Babbie caution that “this must be weighed against potential problems in the reliability of a particular data base ... and the degree to which the existing indicators can be assumed to reflect future service utilization patterns accurately.”⁹²

2. *Rates under treatment:* The rates under treatment approach is one way of obtaining demand data. The rates under treatment approach “attempts to estimate the need for a service and the characteristics of its potential clients based on the number and characteristics of clients who already use that service.”⁹³ Your group assesses the extent to which people utilize particular services within a community over a period of time. For example, if the planning group is interested in developing a shelter for battered women, your members can study the utilization of shelters in one or

more communities of similar size and demographics. This will help determine whether such a facility would be used in your area and the amount and kinds of services the facility should offer.

3. *Census data:* The most common form of existing data is that collected by the U.S. Census Bureau. Every U.S. household is asked to participate in a survey conducted at ten-year intervals, and smaller samples are collected for more specialized populations more frequently. The most recent complete census was conducted in 2010. Data the general census collects include the age, gender, and ethnicity of each resident; quality and type of housing; occupation of each adult resident; and income.

The Census Bureau makes its data very accessible to the public. Your group can contact the Census Bureau at www.census.gov/. The census data is available to the public by individual request, in published reports, on CD-ROMs that can be purchased, or through the Internet. In addition to its website, the Census Bureau also maintains partnerships with data banks maintained by state agencies and universities, much of which can easily be used for community analysis.

Using census data, your group can learn about the ages, nationalities, average income, and educational levels of people in different local areas, for example, and data is available for comparative purposes across census tracts and municipalities,⁹⁴ say Hardcastle et al. Comparisons can also be made for geographic areas over time, so that community changes can be examined. Social indicators of the relative well-being of a community can be developed, for example, by tracking crime statistics, infant mortality rates, and various other health statistics to identify needs, particularly needs associated with poverty and population density.⁹⁵

The census provides a number of different kinds of reports that make social indicator research user-friendly. The Bureau's home page contains a link to "Quick Facts." Users can easily find information from the last census by city block, census tract, county, congressional district, and state. In addition are the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, the American Community Survey (ACS), and maps.

a. *Statistical Abstract of the United States:* The annual *Statistical Abstract of the United States* contains aggregate information about the numbers of people, births, deaths, homeownership, occupations, income and expenditures, labor force,

employment and earnings, health and nutrition, business enterprise, manufacturing, and more.

b. *The American Community Survey (ACS):* The ACS's multiyear data allows small towns and communities to track how they are changing on an ongoing basis. Instead of every ten years, the ACS collects and produces population and housing information every year on about 3 million housing unit addresses from every county in the nation. It releases a new set of multiyear estimates annually, giving a statistical portrait of more than 2,500 mid-sized counties, cities, and towns nationwide with populations between 20,000 and 64,999. Topics include age, race, income, commute time to work, home value, veteran status, and other important data. Collecting data every year provides more up-to-date information throughout the decade about the U.S. population at the local community level.

c. *Maps and other reports:* The Census Bureau makes detailed street-level maps available to the public free of charge directly on the Census Bureau website. Maps generated through the TIGER mapping service can be used with GIS technology and may be useful when investigating community strengths. In addition, the Census Bureau makes its own forecasts using indicators such as poverty and income.

4. *Using the Internet:* Data can also be obtained via the Internet. Thousands of internet sites, including state and local advocacy organizations, provide information about social problems such as homelessness, mental illness, hunger, child abuse in the United States and Canada. The departments of many states post welfare utilization, social service, and health statistics on their web pages.

The Focused Interview or Key Actor Approach. The key actor approach is "a research activity based on information secured from those in the area who are in a position to know the community's needs and utilization patterns,"⁹⁶ say Warheit et al. The quality of information you receive from key actors will depend on the objectivity and depth of knowledge of the people you contact. A key actor, for example, can often provide detailed historical data, knowledge about contemporary interpersonal relationships, and a wealth of information about the nuances of everyday life of the population about which you are concerned. In addition to getting information, the key actor approach can help your members build connections

with key community resources. When your group uses this approach, members should understand who are key actors, how to find them, and those who may be opposed to your plan.

1. *Who are key actors?* Some key actors may not always identify themselves as being community leaders or experts, or think of themselves as well informed. Nevertheless, they are crucial persons, from whom you should gather information. For example, a neighborhood planning group concerned with homeless persons with emotional disabilities should interview key persons from the grass roots who are homeless and can help your group understand the perceptions, difficulties, struggles, and lifestyle as well as the strengths and resources these individuals have.

In addition, key actors may represent a variety of constituencies and interest groups, including elected officials; businesspersons; members of local associations; professionals employed by county departments of health, social services, or criminal justice; members of support groups; friends; and family members.

2. *How to locate key actors:* One way to discover the best sources of information is to simply begin asking for names of the people who have been in the community the longest, who have the greatest involvement, or who those at the grass roots identify as key figures who are well-informed members of the population about which you are interested. When several people give you the same names, you have probably located a key actor. When you obtain a referral for one person, ask for other names; one person will lead to others just as a snowball grows larger as it rolls down a hill, hence its name, “snowball sampling.”

Be aware, however, that if you confine your discussion to those who have positions of power, who represent the ethnic majority, or who have acquired social standing in the community, you will not hear the views of those who are poor, people from ethnically diverse communities, or those who tend to be overlooked, such as persons who are developmentally disabled, elderly in nursing homes, or children and youth.

3. *Talk to key actors who oppose your plan:* Talk to a variety of key actors who are antagonistic to the issue with which your group is concerned. Ask for names of people who share opposite or differing points of view, who are leaders of groups that would block or even fight against your efforts. For example, if your group is planning community housing for persons who are

former criminal offenders, it is important to talk to members of local neighborhood associations, the chamber of commerce, support groups for victims of assault, and families with small children. These groups may have strong feelings about locating a group home in their neighborhood or even in their town.

If your members find that many key actors express skepticism or rejection, try to discover why they feel this way. Talking with these people is crucial because they may give your planning group valuable insights about restraining forces or issues in the community of which the group may have been unaware.

Conduct Focused Interviews. Before you conduct focused interviews, decide on your questions and practice your interviewing skills. Introduce yourself to a variety of key actors, ask each question the same way, use a funneling technique, keep a notebook and journal, and develop relationships.

1. *Decide on questions and practice:* Focused interviews tend to be semi-structured. Harvey Gochros asserts that they “center on selected topics but specific items are not entirely predetermined.”⁹⁷ Develop a series of four or five questions you want to ask, and decide on follow-up questions for each one. The questions should be open-ended and broad, allowing the person to answer in any way he or she chooses.

Usually when your members conduct focused interviews, they practice beforehand and critique each other’s performance. Ask follow-up questions to get more depth, and make sure your members are alert for leads that will help them discover new areas no one has mentioned.

2. *Introduce yourself:* Members should introduce themselves, give the name of the planning group and its sponsor, and explain the purpose of the interview and the use to which the information will be put. Tell people how many questions they will be asked and how long the interview will take. People tend to be busy, and their time should be respected. Let people know that what they tell your group will be confidential and that you will not quote them or otherwise misuse their information. This will help them be open and honest with your interviewers.

3. *Ask the same questions the same way:* Have your members ask the same questions each time so that they can compare answers. If members ask different questions of different people, they will get incomplete or fragmented answers. Although you want to cover the

same ground with all respondents, make sure questions are flexible enough to go into more depth, drawing people out. Focused interviewers may obtain unanticipated information that will help define the problem better.

4. *Use a funneling technique:* Generally, use a “funneling” technique, going from the general to the specific. For example, ask whether a respondent is aware of the drug problem in the Hillcrest neighborhood. If she or he answers yes, go deeper and ask questions such as whether the person has personally been affected by the problem, if it is an important issue, or what the individual thinks might help alleviate it. Make sure your members keep their eyes open for nonverbal cues such as a raised eyebrow, an unexplained smile, a laugh that may seem out of place, a tone of voice, or a hesitation about answering. All of these cues may open the door to asking for more information.

5. *Keep a notebook and a journal:* Ensure your members keep a notebook to jot down names and phone numbers of key people they meet, names of key actors they may want to contact, items they want to keep in mind, and issues to track down. It is frustrating to meet key people and not be able to follow up because members can't remember names or phone numbers or issues that need to be explored.

6. *Develop relationships:* As your planning group members interview people, they get information about the strengths, assets, resources, or needs that people see, but they will also be developing relationships with them and gathering insight into the kinds of services that exist. Let people know that your group will be using information to bring about positive changes in the community. Your members may want to ask these people to help later in your change efforts. Key community leaders can be very important in opening doors, and using their influence can help your planning group accomplish its goals. Everywhere they go your group should build bridges, make connection, and develop relationships.

Conversational Interview. Planning group members can use conversational interviews to both gather information and begin to build relationships around an issue. Though a member may have a topic that he or she wishes to examine, questions are rarely prepared in advance. Hardina says that “Each question asked flows naturally from the informant’s previous responses and the interviewer’s informational needs. The respondent may not even recognize that an interview is taking

place; he or she is simply participating in a conversation with the organizer.”⁹⁸

The Community Forum and Focus Group. Forums or focus groups may often help your group generate new ideas, obtain a sense of community interest, or test the climate of opinion about the issues with which your members are concerned. Forums and focus groups provide an alternative means of gathering data.

If the planning group wants to expand its list of issues, for example, your members can ask participants to identify important community concerns and propose solutions to them. Your group can solicit information about specific issues. They may give participants a brief description of a specific concern and ask them for comments and feedback. Your members may ask participants to rank issues on a scale of most important to least important to get a sense of community values.

However, forums and focus groups have limitations for giving your members accurate information about community needs. People with vested interests, with a particular ax to grind, or who feel negative about or threatened by a proposed action may be overrepresented in forums or focus groups. When attempting to establish the need for a home for people with emotional, behavioral, or developmental disabilities, for instance, your group may discover that many people who attend your meetings may oppose the idea because they do not want such a facility in their neighborhood—the phenomenon of NIMBY, “not in my backyard.” Conversely, strong social pressures may prevent some people from speaking or from expressing minority viewpoints at community forums.

“One way to overcome these threats to the validity of data is to hold closed meetings,” say Rubin and Babbie, “one for each preselected homogenous group of people,”⁹⁹ allowing your group to control the representation of members in the forums or focus groups. Use structured approaches for soliciting information, such as the nominal group technique. These methods can be used to bring participants to a shared perception of the issues with which your members are concerned.

Community Social Surveys. Community social surveys give your group members the opportunity to quantify information and ask specific questions to which you need answers. A survey is a systematic inquiry of perceptions or attitudes about strengths, assets, needs, or issues affecting a community. Surveys can be used to “explore, describe, or explain

respondent's knowledge about a particular subject, their past or current behavior or their attitudes and beliefs concerning a particular subject."¹⁰⁰

Because surveys ask specific questions, however, they are limited in the depth of responses you may obtain. Therefore, surveys are best used when you want to narrow down issues, ask respondents to rank the importance of particular concerns, or give an indicator of a range of preferences among items. This can be very important for a community because it gives specific information members can use about the direction in which they should go. Three factors are important in designing a survey or needs assessment: when—the time frame; who—the population you wish to survey; and how—the manner in which the survey will be accomplished.

1. *When—the time frame:* The time frame of your research may be important. If the planning group members are applying for a grant, the foundation or government agency may require a needs assessment. These funding sources have deadlines for submitting applications. Your planning group must conduct their needs assessment by that deadline.

Community planning groups are often interested in legislation. For example, a bill on gun control in which your community is interested may be scheduled for a public hearing. A survey can provide data to support your community's position, but they need to have it ready in time for the hearing.

2. *Who—the survey population:* If your group is surveying a sample of a population, it is important to select the subjects using a valid sampling procedure to ensure that the sample is representative, accurately reflecting the composition of the population surveyed. Decide on the size of the sample, and use as large a sample as possible. The larger the size of your sample, the smaller the error. Rebecca Guy and colleagues, for example, recommend that “for most research endeavors, samples will be adequate if they are within the limits of 30 and 500. Samples of less than 30 are usually too small, while samples greater than 500 are seldom necessary.”¹⁰¹ If you want to reach a particular level of statistical accuracy, your group can use statistical formulas to help you determine a sample size that will give you a level of accuracy of 99% or higher.

3. *How—accomplishing the survey:* When your group performs a survey, they will need to decide what kind of survey to use, prepare the questionnaire, write a letter or compose an introduction, pretest the questionnaire, and analyze the data. They will need to consider their resources of time, energy, and money to

decide whether they should administer the questionnaire by means of an interview in person, over the telephone, or by mail.

a. *Face-to-face interview:* Interviewing 100 people in person is time consuming and takes a lot of energy, particularly if the people are spread out over a large geographical area. Your group may also have to deal with not finding people home. Face-to-face interviewing requires skill and training. On the positive side, doing interviews face to face ensures that you will get the information you need and often ensures accuracy. A face-to-face interview decreases the number of “don't know” answers, and the interviewer can sometimes clarify survey questions that are vague. A good face-to-face interview will allow you to obtain a completion rate of 80–85%, which is usually required if you are conducting a survey funded by the federal government.

b. *Mailing questionnaires:* Mail-out questionnaires are popular because they reach people living in widely dispersed geographical areas at a relatively low cost. If you mail questionnaires, however, you must weigh the advantages and disadvantages of this method, given the problems in accuracy associated with low response rates. Rubin and Babbie state that for mailed questionnaires, “a response rate of at least 50 percent is usually considered adequate for analysis and reporting. A response rate of at least 60 percent is good and a response rate of 70 percent is very good.” However, the response rate for mailed questionnaires may be “well below 50 percent.”¹⁰² A mailed questionnaire, therefore, may not give you enough data. You can overcome this by increasing your sample size, sending out reminders, or making phone calls to non-responders.

c. *Telephone interviews:* Telephone interviews can reduce the cost and inconvenience of personally interviewing respondents. Telephone interviewing allows your members to dress as they please without affecting the answers the respondents give. Telephone interviews allow workers to operate in comfort and safety, which is particularly important if the survey is being conducted in an unsafe area of a city.

A disadvantage of telephone interviewing is the tendency for people to refuse to talk because of the number of calls they get from solicitors. However, if the interviewer introduces the issue as one that is of interest or concern to the respondent, and if the questionnaire is short, telephone interviewing can be effective.

Using Information After your group has gathered as much information as they need by means of their strengths/assets or deficit/needs approach, or both, your members' perceptions of the problem may bear little resemblance to the issue they initially formulated. Your group should welcome this because the members' perceptions of the problem will have been clarified by the new information they have developed.

Define the “Real” Issue

Even though there may be many perspectives about the issues in your community, your planning group has control over the way they define them. There is no one best issue statement, nor is there only one real concern. “Each problem situation contains within its boundaries—however vague and fuzzy those boundaries might be—numerous potential ‘real’ problems,”¹⁰³ assert Bellavita and Blum. As you assist your members, help them explore their own perceptions about what issues are important, whether the concern is meaningful, whether it is of sufficient size, and whether it is solvable. Then relabel the issue.

Look for Member Perceptions Most social issues are laden with subjective perceptions and values. For example, if your group explores its concern about violence in your neighborhood, any number of ideas may occur to them. Does the issue involve the availability of handguns, assault rifles, or hunting weapons? Does it concern the number of shop owners or dealers who sell guns? Does the condition involve laws that permit easy access to weapons? Is your group interested in violence on television or about specific kinds of violence such as domestic violence, rape, or violence used in the commission of robberies? Are they concerned about youth-oriented violence such as gang violence?

Meaningful Help your members choose an issue or arena of betterment that is meaningful and valid for the community. Certain concerns will intuitively speak to your group members. The challenge should be important and be one that will mobilize the community to action.

Issue Scope Look at the scope of the issue. Some may seem so large or unwieldy that they appear unsolvable. The group may have to break them down into smaller, more manageable pieces. On the other hand, members may see patterns of smaller concerns that they want to group together into a larger one.

Solvable The condition should be one that the community members can actually do something about. It doesn't make sense to try to solve elder abuse in general, for example. But you can help your group choose the individual aspect (elder abuse hurts individuals), the family aspect (elder abuse is on the rise in families containing an elderly member), or the institutional aspect (elder abuse occurs frequently in institutional settings). The group could narrow its focus to a particular neighborhood.

Relabel the Issue Help your group relabel the issue and come up with a working statement from which they will continue the process. For example, using the hypothetical concern about elder abuse, your group may redefine the issue as focusing on family and institutional elder abuse in Northside.

Develop Alternative Planning Solutions

After the neighborhood planning group has a clear vision of the issue, members need to look at the variety of alternative planning solutions and assess their effectiveness in achieving the community's goals. Your members can use brainstorming or NGT to formulate alternative plans.

Once the planning group has developed two or three alternatives for reaching its goals, members need to compare them. Force-field analysis or benefit–cost analysis, described in Chapter 5, can give your planning group an estimated relative cost for various possible plans. The most rational, least costly option, however, may not always be one the community would choose. Community members should ultimately make the final decision about a community plan based on their values and those issues that they believe will enhance the welfare of the community as a whole.

Develop a Preliminary Proposal

Assist your members to develop a proposal in language that people can understand. An analysis not communicated well, asserts John Forester, is “worse than useless—it can be counterproductive and damaging, just as it might also at other times deliberately serve to obfuscate important issues.”¹⁰⁴

Present the group's conclusion and major caveats first. Be concise. Use examples and anecdotes. Avoid jargon. Discuss the effectiveness of several of the group's alternatives. Explain why each received its

ranking. Offer short- and long-term recommendations, as well as strategies for implementation.

Present the Preliminary Proposal

Present the preliminary proposal in a series of public forums or focus groups to community members as a whole, interested community associations and government agencies, professionals and providers. Personally invite the original focus group members with whom you began the process. These meetings should be informational, but your group members should also solicit feedback, advice, and changes from participants. Keep in mind the limitations of using public forums and focus groups described above.

Make sure that everyone has a copy of the preliminary proposal. Explain that the purpose of the meeting is to give feedback to the community and solicit advice. The community planning group gives a short history of the planning process. Members describe how it collected information, decided on issues, and generated its alternative planning solutions and recommendations.

When members of the audience have had time to reflect on the process and consider the merits of the various alternative proposals, your members ask a number of specific questions. For example, they may want participants to help rank alternatives, decide on the best of several recommendations, or offer differing ones for consideration.

Group Voting Your planning group can use group voting to help a large audience come to a decision. Ask the audience to consider all the alternatives and rank them according to the solution that they think is best, assigning 3 points for their first choice, 2 points for their second choice, and 1 for their last choice. Calculate the total scores for each alternative and divide that score by the number of participants. This gives an accurate assessment of the rankings of each alternative.

If you have a large number of people in the audience, divide them into small groups and ask a recorder to calculate the rankings. A panel will then combine the rankings and calculate the final score. After the voting process, ask for feedback from the audience about the rankings and why members voted the way they did. This will give your planning group some insight into the perceptions and attitudes of community members.

Break the audience into smaller buzz groups or use brainstorming or NGT to solicit opinions, advice, or

changes to the proposal. After the public forum, the action planning group should revise the policy proposal to reflect any additions or changes recommended by those persons attending.

Revise the Proposal

Using input from the public forums or focus groups, your members should revise the preliminary proposal into a formal document that will become the official proposal reflecting the work of the planning group, including its final recommendations and conclusions. This document will be made public and become the instrument that the sponsoring organization and the community as a whole will use to help resolve issues and make specific changes as needed.

Sponsoring Organization Your planning group has struggled through an often arduous process, considering questions that are of importance to the sponsoring organization and the community as a whole. The planning group should request a special meeting with the sponsoring organization and/or its board to formally present the revised proposal. Send copies of the proposal with a cover letter to board members in advance so they can review it.

At this meeting members of the planning group should briefly summarize the project and its conclusions, offer board members a short period for questions, and afterward ask for its formal adoption, and propose that the board devise a mechanism for its implementation.

Once the board accepts the proposal, they give members of the planning group recognition for their hard and dedicated work. Members of the group should be congratulated. The sponsoring organization and board should give a tangible or symbolic reward to the members for their achievement. The sponsoring organization should feel a sense of victory and success as well, having accepted a challenge from the planning group to turn its recommendations into a reality.

Implement the Plan

A plan, even if it is well thought out and well designed, is of little use unless it is implemented. Having worked as staff for the planning group, you may agree to act as a consultant to the sponsoring organization or help community members facilitate implementing the plan. Implementation may include developing a community development

corporation, community organization, or new social organization, about which you will learn in later chapters. The implementation of services or programs may frequently mean engaging in advocacy as well as political action.

Community Advocacy If the planning issue involves ineffective local government or inadequate administration of the law, one of your chief strategies will be community policy advocacy. Community advocacy occurs as social workers extend themselves on behalf of those who are unable to speak for themselves. Policy advocacy involves the everyday experience of standing up for justice and right causes against those who would exploit or take advantage of others for their own benefit.

In Raleigh, North Carolina, for example, neighborhood planning groups discovered that undesirable planning proposals were being submitted to the city by developers, and they took a stand on nine zoning amendments. The groups appeared eight times before the city's Board of Adjustment to voice their opinions. Now "developers have begun to work with the local task forces before submitting proposals to the city."¹⁰⁵ This is due in part to the personal relationships, communication, and trust developed between neighborhoods and government. "Our credibility came from responsible recommendations and building a rapport with developers and the council," commented one citizen planner.¹⁰⁶

Political Action Help your implementation group and community members learn how to engage in political action, network with key leaders, negotiate, build coalitions, and create consensus on behalf of their community plan. Try to even the scales, balancing power misalignments so that truth will win out in the end, encouraging "democratically structured, publicly aired political argument, not covert wheeling and dealing."¹⁰⁷

How do you assist community members in such political action? According to John Forester, you accomplish political action by "informing the 'affected but unorganized' earlier rather than later in the planning process," as well as by helping members "check and double-check information, consult experts, seek third-party counsel, clarify issues, expose assumptions, review and cite the record."¹⁰⁸ Your members

appeal to precedent, invoke traditional values (democratic participation, for example), spread questions about unexplored possibilities, spotlight jargon and reveal meaning. Your group negotiates

for clearly specified outcomes and values, works through informal networks to get information, bargains for information, [and] holds others to public commitments.¹⁰⁹

Counter Opposition You and your group must not be naïve about this political process. A community group that assumes that dominant interests are bound by rules, facts, or rational arguments will miss the point of organizational power and self-interest and be out of touch with the real operating principles of conventional politics.

Many interests compete for attention and approval. These claimants press for policy and legal concessions to further their own interests and may actively challenge and undermine the efforts that your group has so carefully expended. The political process can be highly irrational, fraught with high emotion, and dependent on compromise.

Your group, for example, may use evidence-based facts or sophisticated decision techniques to develop a very rational analysis, but when they present their case to politicians, developers, and citizen groups, they may find that no one seems to be listening. The merits of the case, if they are not in the interests of those in power, are beside the point. Your group must be able to communicate with and present its proposal to political leaders who have the power to implement the plan, and do it in a way that will capture their attention and help your members set it in motion.

Help your group get involved, talk, and argue, especially when confronted by misinformation, misrepresentation, disparities of power, and subversion of the process that advantages some and disadvantages others. Forester reminds you to "anticipate misinformation in time to use strategies effectively, rather than looking back and saying, 'Well, what we should have done was ...' A good idea presented the week after a crucial meeting (or too late on an agenda, or on the wrong agenda) will no longer do any good."¹¹⁰

Carry Out Tactics More specifically, we assist our members in a variety of local community tactics including recruiting individuals, door knocking, establishing hotlines, distributing flyers, petitioning, holding house meetings, lobbying, fact gathering, position taking, committee work, giving testimony, serving on boards or commissions, and direct social action.

Recruiting Individuals. Anyone directly or indirectly connected with the planning issue is a potential recruit for

an organizing campaign. Begin with people who are already working on the community concern and those who have a direct personal stake. You can conduct outreach in many ways: Visit organizations and community groups where people come together. Ask members of the organization or group who you or someone else knows to introduce you to key leaders and other members.

Door Knocking. Knock on doors. It's very time consuming, but door knocking is a great way to make one-on-one contact with people.

Establish a Hotline. During the statewide campaign to pass racial-profiling legislation in California, advocates established a toll-free number for people to report incidents of racial profiling. The hotline became a tool for identifying people willing to participate in the Racial Justice Coalition, spokespersons to address the media and decision makers, and potential plaintiffs for lawsuits.

Distribute Flyers. Stand outside grocery stores, shopping malls, post offices, or any other venue that community members frequent. Hand out materials that present the issue in a compelling manner, to which people can relate on both a practical and an emotional level.

Petitions. Petition signing can indicate public support for a particular solution to an issue, publicize your community's planning proposal, and develop public awareness. "It informs decision-makers that there are people 'out there' who have a stake in the decision,"¹¹¹ say Prigmore and Atherton. When you present a petition to legislative officials, especially from members of the districts they represent, many are bound to take notice.

Host House Meetings. People who are already part of the effort can invite friends and neighbors to a meeting at their home to talk about the issue, encourage them to join the effort, and maybe even take some action on the spot, such as writing a letter to the mayor or knocking on doors to recruit others.

Lobbying. You and your group can lobby face to face, by telephone or letter, or by giving testimony. Keep in mind that a legislator needs your information and assistance. Be honest and factual. Know your issue thoroughly. Anticipate the opposition's claims and formulate persuasive counterarguments. Acknowledge the merits of competing proposals. If

your group members are unwilling to acknowledge the strengths of alternative proposals or the weaknesses of your own group's proposal, however, your members may be seen as propagandists and damage their credibility.

Straightforward presentations with data are generally the most persuasive. Be able to answer two critical concerns of legislators: What will the proposed legislation cost? and What will be the bill's social impact? Provide succinct supportive documents. Thank legislators for their time and for being open-minded. Follow up with a thank-you letter that includes a synopsis of the position taken by that legislator during the meeting and anything that you have agreed to do.

Fact Gathering. Having the right information in a form that can be used gives your members leverage and influence for change. Members can use facts they developed to urge those in positions of authority to make needed changes, or they can continue to obtain more facts that cement their recommendations more firmly.

Position Taking. Issue a public statement or report that puts the sponsoring organization on public record as a participant in a change process. Taking a position informs people about where it stands, clarifies your objectives, and provides a point of identification. You put agencies and politicians on notice that your organization is fighting for change, and you make clear what you want to accomplish.

Committee Work. Government policy committees provide public forums for discussion of ideas and publicize potential alternative solutions. Your sponsoring organization can often help the community by recommending community citizens to serve as committee members or consultants to governmental policy committees.

Direct Social Action. If the efforts of your members fall on deaf ears, use your organizing skills to mobilize local leaders to develop activist community organizations. Direct social action tactics may include citizen protests, as well as packing council meetings, forming delegations, and voting as a bloc to support political candidates or to propose specific referenda or initiatives. When the Public Works Department in Wilmington wanted to expand a garage for city vehicles with Economic Development Administration funds, for example, the local citizens' planning council fought the proposal

and was able to stop the project. In East St. Paul the city wanted to redevelop an old hospital site and put up townhouses. “The city was really pushing saying, ‘Hey, we need the tax base!’ but members of the community asserted, ‘No, we don’t want that; we want a park,’ and they got what they wanted.”¹¹²

Giving Testimony. Local citizens can offer their opinions on policy issues at public hearings of city councils and commissions such as mental health commissions, human rights commissions, planning commissions, or may be invited to give testimony as experts.

Serving on Boards or Commissions. Local citizens may be appointed or elected to the governing boards of special districts such as a community college district or board of education that guides the policies of educational institutions or others.

Monitor and Evaluate the Plan

The planning process is not complete until a plan for monitoring and evaluation is developed. Often this will lead to a revision of the original plan, incorporating new developments and changing conditions. If the sponsoring agency obtained a foundation or government grant to carry out the planning project, a program evaluation component will often be part of the grant proposal. A common model of program evaluation is the program logic model described in Chapter 12.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you discovered that community planning is one of the most important and potentially powerful means by which macro social workers achieve their goals. You learned about the roles social workers play in assisting members through the planning process. You learned a definition of community planning. You reviewed a brief history of community planning. You discovered that community planning engages citizen participation in ways that have not often previously occurred. You learned that many cities across America today have officially designated neighborhood planning councils that take responsibility for carrying out plans in their communities, often sponsored by and/or in partnership with social agencies, foundations, city councils, mayors’ offices, and planning commissions. This is a substantive shift in decision making and politics, demonstrating a new era of grassroots democracy and local responsibility, with people planning for their own futures.

You explored the principles of action-social planning and how to carry it out, including how to form a planning group, decide on an approach, define the issue, and carry out research. You learned how to redefine the community concern, explore alternative solutions, develop a proposal, and present it to the community and sponsoring agency’s board. You looked at how to implement the proposal by a variety of advocacy and political strategies and tactics.

You discovered that community planning should make a difference—changing something that would otherwise not have changed. Planning has great potential for empowering people in a community to take direction over their lives.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The point was made in this chapter that community planning is a foundation of the democratic process in small communities and towns in America. Do you agree or disagree with this assertion? Why may planning be considered central to a locally based democratic process?
2. DSNI is a nearly 30-year-old comprehensive community planning and organizing collaborative that has created Community Development Corporations (CDCs) to provide economic, social, and political community development; construct new social organizations; and provide community services. Do you think that DSNI is a model that can be replicated in other communities? Could such a model be developed in the community where you live?
3. Are there any community-based planning initiatives in the town or city where you live? If so, meet a citizen planner and report on your experiences to the class. What did you learn about the role of a citizen planner and the planning process?
4. What are the advantages of using a number of different research methodologies for gathering data from a number of different groups in conducting the needs assessment? What are the disadvantages?
5. What is participation action research, and how does it differ from traditional social science research? How do you feel about involving community members in conducting planning research? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using participants?

EXERCISE 7.2

Practicing Focused Interviews

This exercise will give you an opportunity to perform focused interviews, record answers, obtain data on community attitudes, collate and assess data, and come to conclusions about the community.

Divide up in twos. Each research team will randomly choose a shopping mall or street corner and conduct focused interviews with ten subjects. In each interview, one student is to be the interviewer, the second student the recorder. After each interview, students reverse roles so that each student serves as interviewer for five subjects and as recorder for five subjects, completing a total of ten short interviews.

Role of Interviewer: The interviewers strike up a conversation with a random selection of people at a shopping mall or street corner. The interviewers introduce themselves and ask potential respondents if they are willing to engage in a two-minute survey. If a respondent agrees, the interviewer administers the "Community Quality Interview Schedule."

Role of Recorder: The recorder tallies the number of people asked to participate, including the number who refused and the number who agreed. In addition, while the interviewers are asking questions, the recorders complete the "Community Quality Interview Recorder Form." After the interview, the recorders add the data to the "Supplementary Summary Sheet."

Data Analysis: After the ten interviews have been completed, the pairs collate and assess the data using the "Focused Interview Data Collation and Analysis" form. Using the collated data, each pair is to write its conclusions about the following:

1. The willingness of people in this community to talk about their community.
2. Their perceptions about the community.
3. Their ideas about how to improve the community.

When the class reassembles, the instructor summarizes the experience by asking the following:

1. Describe your experience of doing focused interviews.
2. When you interviewed, did you stay on track or get off the subject?
3. Did you observe body language and make guesses that led you to progressively get deeper into the subject and get more information?
4. Did the recorder find it easy or hard to collect information?

5. To what conclusions did you come about the willingness of people to be interviewed?
 - a. Was it easier to interview men or women?
 - b. What general attitudes prevailed about the community?
 - c. How many felt the community was a good place to live?
 - d. How many felt the community was not a good place to live?
 - e. What things made the community desirable?
 - f. What things made the community less desirable?
 - g. What suggestions did people make about improving the community?

Alternative

The instructor can ask the pairs to prepare a written report of their experience and hand in interview schedules along with the "Focused Interview Summary Sheet."

A Community Quality Interview Schedule

Identify yourself as students performing a community survey. State that the survey is comprised of three or four questions and will take two minutes or less. Ask if the respondent is willing to be interviewed.

If the respondent agrees, the interviewer asks the following questions:

- a. Are you a resident of the community?
 yes no
 If yes, for how long? _____
- b. Is this community a good place to live?
 yes no
 If yes, what are the desirable things about this community?
 If no, what are the undesirable things about this community?
- c. What can be done to improve this community?

Community Quality Interview Recorder Form

Respondent no. _____ Gender _____

1. Are you a resident of the community?
 yes no
 If yes, for how long? _____
2. Is this community a good place to live?
 yes no
 If yes, what are the good things about this community?

- If no, what are the less desirable things about this community?
3. What can be done to improve this community?

Focused Interview Summary Sheet

Summary Sheet

1. Number of male respondents _____
2. Number of female respondents _____
3. Percentage people willing to be interviewed: _____
Percentage not willing to be interviewed: _____
4. Characteristics of those who agreed to be interviewed:
5. Characteristics of those who refused to be interviewed:
6. Length of residence in the community: Range: (Longest minus shortest = range); Average length of residence:
7. Is this community a good place to live?
_____ yes _____ no
8. If yes, what are the desirable things about this community?
9. If no, what are the less desirable things about this community?
10. What can be done to improve this community?

approach may be called a “contingency” approach to planning.

Consider whether a contingency approach is appropriate or even possible.

1. Do you agree that there is a best way to do social work planning?
2. On what principles do you base your answer?
3. If there is a best way, which approach would you consider the best?
4. If you believe that a contingency approach is best, what “contingencies” or factors would you use to determine which approaches should be used?

EXERCISE 7.4

An Enemy of the People

Read the following summary of part of Henrik Ibsen’s play *An Enemy of the People*,¹¹⁴ or, better yet, read the entire play in its original form. In class, discuss the questions that follow the play’s summary.

Great excitement is in the air. Dr. Thomas Stockmann, a physician, planned a series of baths that would increase the health of the community and could be used for a profit. Though a different model of construction than the one recommended by Dr. Stockmann was developed by the town leaders and the baths committee, the town is beginning to anticipate their opening and the prosperity that is on the horizon. Peter Stockmann, the doctor’s elder brother, is the town mayor and chairperson of the baths. Peter is a man of action who took the doctor’s idea and made it into a practical reality. He is an administrator, one who enjoys doing things, turning ideas into tangible results and manipulating people for power and profit. Dr. Stockmann, on the other hand, is an imaginative, creative, and idealistic professional who chafes at the bureaucratic process that seems to contaminate ideas by compromise and hidden agendas.

When the doctor tests the water because of some isolated cases of typhoid and other complaints, he discovers that the water, instead of being pure and healthy, is polluted by tanneries upstream. If the baths open, a serious public health problem would occur, with a major outbreak of illnesses. Seeking out a sympathetic ear, Dr. Stockmann tells the editor of a liberal newspaper, who agrees to print the doctor’s findings.

EXERCISE 7.3

One Best Way

Social planners advocating one or the other approach to social planning often tend to assume that theirs is the one best way. Read the following excerpt from *The Road to Serfdom* by Friedrich A. Hayek, a Nobel Prize-winning economist, and the statement about a contingency approach. Answer the questions that follow.

The dispute between the modern planners and their opponents is *not* a dispute on whether we ought to choose intelligently between the various possible organizations of society; it is not a dispute on whether we ought to employ foresight and systematic thinking in planning our common affairs. It is a dispute about what is the best way of so doing.¹¹³

Another stance is to assume that there is no one best way, but that each social issue might be addressable by matching differing different approaches depending on the situation. Such an

Immediately, Dr. Stockmann sends a copy to his brother, expecting the mayor to shut down the baths and praise him for saving the lives of people and the reputation of the community. His realist brother, however, is not at all happy with this news. The future economy of the town is based on the success of the baths. If this news is published, it would ruin the town's plans as a health resort. Not only that, but the repairs the doctor recommends would take years to accomplish and would be extremely costly. The town has already invested a great deal of money, energy, and hopes in this project. In addition, Peter Stockmann rationalizes, there is no proof that people will really become ill, and if they do, it is the doctor's responsibility to treat them.

Dr. Stockmann, the mayor asserts, has a moral obligation to the town not to attribute any illness to the baths unless it can be definitively proven. Moreover, the doctor himself is an employee of the baths, and frightening people without a clear scientific basis would display disloyalty as an employee. His brother, the mayor, as his boss, orders Dr. Stockmann to keep quiet.

Shocked and indignant at his brother's insensitive and authoritarian response, Dr. Stockmann refuses to back down. A shrewd strategist, the mayor talks to the leader of the tradespeople's organization, telling them that if Dr. Stockmann has his way, the mayor will be forced to raise taxes. Threatened with financial ruin as well, the editor of the newspaper decides not to print the doctor's report. Seeing his support crumbling about him, the doctor decides to go directly to the citizens themselves.

The mayor, however, refuses to allow him to use a public building, so Stockmann decides to give his speech at the home of a friend. The night of the speech, the bureaucracy surreptitiously has stacked the cards against the doctor. A chairperson is put in charge, who permits the mayor to speak first. The mayor repeats how the baths are the lifeblood of the community, turning the crowd against the doctor even before he speaks. But Dr. Stockmann begins anyway, accusing the people of being poisoned by their own greed. "A community that lives on lies deserves to be destroyed," he says.

The crowd shouts, "He is an enemy of the people." The chair of the meeting makes this sentiment official: "I move that we embody this opinion in a resolution." Dr. Stockmann, the responsible planner, is now the official enemy of the people.

Read the rest of the play to find out what happens.

Here are several questions that will help direct your class discussion of the play.

1. In your opinion, is Dr. Stockmann an enemy of the people?
2. Though the play was written over 100 years ago, what parallels can you think of today?
3. How would you characterize the ethical dilemma of planning the baths?
4. We read about "whistleblowers" who expose corruption, waste, and fraud in government or the private sector. What often happens to these whistleblowers?
5. What lessons in social planning does Ibsen's play uncover?
6. What would you have done if you were Dr. Stockmann?

EXERCISE 7.5

Planning for the Homeless

Review the planning principles and planning process described in this chapter. Form into planning task force groups of five members each. Read the case study below, "Planning for the Homeless in Los Padres." Each task force is to develop a process by which plans for the homeless in Los Padres can be implemented. In the planning process, task force members should consider the following:

1. How would you gather information about the extent of the need?
2. What groups or individuals would you contact?
3. What planning alternatives and courses of action would you consider?
4. How would you implement your plan?

Planning for the Homeless in Los Padres

What may be a charitable response to the poor and homeless may, in the long run, sometimes be an excuse by the larger community to ignore and abdicate its responsibility. Twenty years ago there were no services for homeless men in California's Central Valley community of Los Padres. Today, only two services exist. One is the Los Padres rescue mission, which provides 25 beds and meals for

50 persons. However, the need is much greater than that. Although it cannot expand its services without additional funds, the rescue mission has a strong policy against accepting government aid. In addition, the Salvation Army provides a small residential facility for alcoholic men. The quality of services is good, but this facility can only house six men at a time.

The problem is exacerbated during the summers, when migrant workers move into the valley to work in the fields. Often the laborers are laid off if the crops are not large. During these periods, many homeless single men end up staying in Los Padres, adding to the growing population of the homeless.

Recently a number of muggings have occurred in the downtown area. Homeless, alcoholic men are being preyed on. Furthermore, the police and Department of Social Services have received complaints from businesspeople about vagrants sleeping in alleys and on street corners, as well as approaching customers for money. Ernesto Rivera, director of Social Services, has asked you to develop a plan that he can present to the county Board of Supervisors.

ADVANCED EXERCISE 7.6

Deinstitutionalizing Jefferson State Hospital

The following is a real-life planning problem. Names of persons, places, and facilities have been changed. This exercise can be used as a final assignment or as a class presentation. It is best if one person is assigned the role of planner and other class members take different roles to assess the situation from their own particular perspective. There are no right or wrong answers to this problem.

Class members are to form into groups called the Deinstitutionalization Planning Task Force. Task force members assume roles of representatives from the state hospital, the regional center, the county schools, the mental health system, the local Aid to Retarded Citizens organization, and the Association of Residential Operators. Your task is to develop a plan for deinstitutionalizing the hospital. The planning proposal needs to be presented at the next Area Developmental Disabilities Board meeting.

1. Define the planning problem facing DDA IV.
2. Develop and prioritize a plan for assessing client needs, services, and other data.
3. Assess what other impacts need to be considered, such as number of GPRC program developers, case managers, and administrative and staff specialist employees, numbers of ancillary services that may need to be developed, and the estimated costs of these additional services.
4. What are the political feasibility and social impact constraints that will need to be considered?
5. Decide on at least two alternative plans. What is the likelihood that the Area Developmental Disabilities Board, the State Hospital, and the regional center—the three agencies mandated with responsibility for carrying out the court orders—will not be held in contempt for not complying with the court order?

Vignette

The Jefferson State Hospital for developmentally disabled, which is located in Jefferson City, is under court order to deinstitutionalize residents by the year 2025 in order to provide a “least restrictive” environment and more normal life for its current residents. Over 2,000 persons currently reside at the hospital.

The court has set strict timelines by which the deinstitutionalization will occur. The hospital is to release 100 adult residents, 50 adolescents, and 25 children annually beginning in the year 2015.

In addition, except for severely medically fragile, severely autistic, and Prader-Willi clients, a moratorium on new hospital placements has been imposed.

The state office of developmental disabilities appealed this ruling but lost the appeal. What creates major stress is the fact that because the hospital is located in Jefferson County, all patients over 18 years of age are officially considered residents of the county. They have a right to remain in the county if they desire.

Jefferson County is part of a Developmental Disabilities Area (DDA), a four-county area served by the Great Plains Regional Center (GPRC) and the Area Developmental Disabilities Board, a monitoring and planning agency. GPRC is the central agency responsible for case management, residential placement, and resource development

services for all persons with development disabilities in the region, including those residing at the Jefferson State Hospital. GPRC staff estimate that at least 100 developmentally disabled adults, adolescents, and children will enter the DDA each year for the next ten years, most of whom will want to remain in Jefferson County.

The specific needs or levels of service needed by the hundreds of adults who will be released from Jefferson State Hospital over the next year are not currently known. At a minimum, however, they will need housing, day programs such as workshops, vocational training services, and probably a variety of specialized dietary, speech, community awareness, recreational, and mental health services. Under the most pessimistic assumptions, however, it is clear that the counties in Area IV do not presently have the capacity to absorb an additional 100 persons per year, all of whom will need housing, day programs or schooling, and other services, as well as additional social workers and funding to pay for the additional housing and service.

Further complicating things is that, while the hospital does have information about individual clients, actual release of clients from the hospital will depend on having facilities and services available for them. Obviously, a plan for deciding who will be released and when must be coordinated with service development. Any plan must be coordinated with GPRC, the Area Disabilities Board, the county school system, the county mental health system, and individual service providers.

Workshops and day programs in the DDA are currently able to handle the regular number of additional clients who have grown up in the area, but adding 100 additional clients per year would outstrip service capacity, especially in Jefferson County. Few services, particularly day programs or residential facilities, currently exist in outlying counties.

Normally, a workshop or day program operates with about 30 to 40 clients. It takes at least 6 to 12 months to develop a workshop or day program from scratch. Existing workshops or day programs can develop new programs more quickly, but this means existing programs must be willing to expand beyond current limits as well as adding other ancillary social services.

A small family care home can be licensed for up to six persons but usually has fewer than that number. Assuming that most residential facilities would be small group homes that can accept a maximum of six residents, at this rate, the area

would need an additional 17 homes per year for ten years. Under the most optimistic condition it takes a minimum of three months develop one small group home assuming operators are available who have four-bedroom homes (one bedroom for the husband/wife operators and three bedrooms with two clients per room). This process could take longer depending on renovations that may need to be made. If an existing operator intends to purchase a home and staff it, the process could take longer, depending on obtaining a loan, licensing, hiring, training, and getting staff approved, and making renovations.

Group homes can accommodate more than six residents but require live-in staff. It takes at least 6 to 12 months to develop a residential care home, including forming a board, becoming incorporated, applying for loans, finding an appropriate site, purchasing or renting a home, deciding on level of disability and type of clientele, applying for and obtaining licenses, making physical renovations to the facility, hiring and training staff, and accepting referrals from the regional center. A caseload for a residential social worker at the regional center is about 40 clients.

EXERCISE 7.7

Midcourse Correction: Mutual Problem-Solving

Students will have an opportunity to correct behaviors, which can improve learning. Students will learn how to give feedback, engage in mutual problem solving, and negotiate solutions. Students will also have an opportunity to give feedback to the instructor about the course as a whole and negotiate with the instructor to change the course objectives or procedures.

The instructor asks the class to think about the following points.

1. Things that students like about the class. These are things that are positive and have helped enhance learning. These are items either about individuals or the class as a whole that members want to keep on doing or do more of.
2. Items that are getting in the way of learning or impeding members from reaching their goals. These are items that individuals can do differently or do less of. They can also be

areas that the class as a whole can change or do less of.

3. Which persons would have to do what specific things to make these changes?

Written Assessment

Outside class, each class member and the instructor writes down specific things that each person in the class does that affects him or her:

1. Things that the person should do more of or do better.
2. Things that the person should do less of.
3. Things that the person should continue doing.
4. On a separate piece of paper, each person writes recommendations for the class as a whole. This will go to the instructor.

The instructor collects the recommendation sheets for the class as a whole. Each person, including the instructor, tapes his or her sheets to a piece of newsprint and these are fixed to the walls of the classroom. Some time is spent by class members reviewing the sheets.

Feedback

Class reassembles and a time of feedback occurs.

This is a time for clarification and understanding.

Members may try to paraphrase what others have said to make sure that they accurately heard the message.

The instructor asks for clarification and feedback about the overall course. After everyone is satisfied that they understand the messages, each member reviews his or her list.

Deciding on Issues

Each member chooses one or more specific issues that he or she is willing to change. Each member reviews the lists of other class members and chooses and initials items that he or she feels are important for class members to change. These issues become those that are negotiable.

Negotiating Rounds

Each person collects his or her statements. Depending on the size of the class and the amount of time available, students may choose one or more issues to negotiate. The negotiation phase

begins. Students divide up into pairs with others who have initialed their lists and negotiate for changes. The bargaining consists of statements such as "I will do X if you do Y." For example, one student may ask another to participate more. The student may agree if the first student agrees to stop interrupting when he talks. Achieve a balance of mutual responsibility, in which each person receives as well as gives something up.

After each class member has found a satisfactory balance, the instructor negotiates changes in the course as a whole in the same way. For example, students may request shorter lectures. The instructor may agree if students come better prepared to engage in discussion.

Contracts are written up and signed, with a mutual agreement as to what consequences will occur if the agreements are not kept. Set a date for a follow-up to determine if contracts are being kept. If time is available, a follow-up meeting can be held to review contracts.

Assess items that were met and those not met.

Give recognition for progress and renegotiate contracts if necessary.

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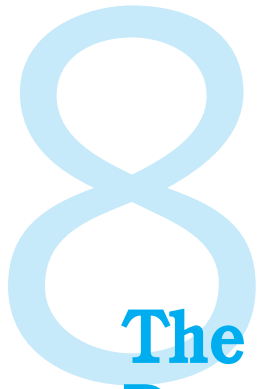
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Web Resources

- Children’s Defense Fund (contains a state-by-state database on the status of children). <<http://www.childrensdefense.org/>>.
- Children Now. <<http://www.childrennow.org/>>.
- National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. <<http://www.calib.com/nccanch/>>.
- National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership. <<http://neighborhoodindicators.org/partners/profiles>>.
- U.S. Administration for Children and Families <<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/>>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. <<http://www.census.gov/>>.
- U.S. Census Bureau, TIGER Mapping Service. <<http://tiger.census.gov/>>.
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control. <<http://www.cdc.gov/>>.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (contains information on food programs). <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/>>.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. <<http://www.hud.gov/>>.
- U.S. Health Care Financing Administration (contains information on health care funding and hospital utilization). <<http://www.hcfa.gov/>>.
- Youth Indicators. <<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/YouthIndicators>>.



The Practice of Community Development

Social Change

Social change isn't going to come as quickly as any of us would like it to come. Building a community is a subtle, delicate, long-term process.

Sam Brown, community organizer

Community Vision

Each person in a community must do his part. All have gifts and an area to do. Together we can accomplish great things. Where there is no vision, the people perish. If we don't continue with that vision before us then in essence our community will perish.

Margaret Kinaanen, community leader, Embarrass, Minnesota

Ideas in This Chapter

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINDS ITSELF

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

WHAT IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION?

Size and Scope

Programs and Services

Innovative Alternatives to Private Business

Community Based

Citizen Participation

Funding

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

First-Wave CDCs (1966–1970)

Second-Wave CDCs: Expansion in the 1970s

Third-Wave CDCs: Achieving Economic Success in the 1980s

Fourth-Wave CDCs: Diversification in the 1990s

New Directions for the 2000s

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TODAY

New Community Economic Development

Community Political Development

Community Social Development

HOW TO BUILD A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Community Identification

Generate Interest in the CDC

Build a Community Development Action Group

Assess the Community

Devise a Community Development Plan

Develop the Corporation

Construct a Community Development Project

End the Process

E-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CHALLENGES IN THE SECOND DECADE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

CONCLUSION

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

ADDITIONAL READING

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINDS ITSELF

It was clear to many leaders of black communities in the middle to late 1960s that while the civil rights demonstrations had been a powerful mechanism to achieve justice and restore rights, the riots and disension had created problems, both in urban ghettos and in rural America. Between 1962 and 1965, at least 12 major disorders occurred in large metropolitan centers. In 1965 a racial disorder in Los Angeles was the worst that the country had seen since 1943, when massive World War II riots took place in Detroit.¹

In the first nine months of 1967, the nation experienced 167 outbreaks of civil disturbance. In that one year, major riots occurred in eight cities, involving damage to property, violence, and death. In Detroit, 43 people were killed; 33 cities experienced serious disturbances; and lesser disorders occurred in 123 more.² Twenty-five cities suffered disorders at least twice, and New York City suffered five times. Major riots in Cleveland and Rochester involved loss of life. In the spring of 1968, the evening of the day that Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, cities across the nation again erupted in looting and burning, collectively announcing to the nation that “enough was enough.”

African American neighborhoods seemed to hit rock bottom. When the looting and burning stopped, however, a growing black consciousness began to stir. It was, after all, African American citizens of all classes who were suffering most from the riots. The urge to burn was destroying their own neighborhoods. The riots mobilized middle-class and working-class blacks in a new and different kind of struggle, joining poorer and more alienated people in reassessing the African American agenda. All over the stricken areas, independent neighborhood groups formed to work out the meaning of these events and to light a different beacon.

As neighborhoods in each city puzzled out their local scene, pieces of the answer began to fall into the same pattern. Whatever was wrong went far beyond the acts of those who set the fires, looted, and taunted the police and firefighters or shot at them. The community itself had not taken enough responsibility to direct its own destiny or counteract the systemic

inattention, degradation, and exploitation by the larger society. The rest of society had forgotten black communities, but it seemed that their residents had forgotten them as well.

Black community leaders understood that demonstrations and picketing, although effective in breaking the back of racial inequality, were not going to build communities again. Neither would stricken neighborhoods improve through natural and spontaneous market forces, or because government agencies would eventually do something. If change was going to happen in these neighborhoods, only the people themselves could make it happen. Residents would have to consciously take their destiny into their own hands and build all of the necessary resources—the institutions and social tools—that make a community work.

As communities began to “shift their perspective from an individually based legal conception of African-American civil rights to the socio-economic concept of black community,” says Stewart E. Perry, community members began to look to themselves and toward local self-determination.³ Across the country awareness grew that community members themselves needed to develop and control the economic infrastructures in their own neighborhoods.

A decisive turning point in the life of community had occurred. Members of these communities were committed to their own recovery. They would no longer allow their communities’ resources to be drained or exploited. They would not be dependent on government or on the efforts of sociologists, planners, or policy advocates from outside.

The turning point came out of the pain and struggle of an entire people who were determined to change their individual conditions in and through their communities, and to do it together regardless of the interest, permission, or agreement of those in power. People in impoverished black communities across North America would find in themselves and in one another the will, the power, and the resources to revitalize their communities, and in the process find themselves as well.

As a result of their determination, combined with ingenuity, opportunity, and talent, a number of different African American communities spontaneously invented a new social and economic tool, the community development corporation (CDC). Community in America would never be the same again.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

In this chapter, you will learn that one of the decisive efforts at community self-empowerment and independence is the growth of community development (CD) and community development corporations. This is a process that is ripe for social work today and those macro social workers who are dedicated to helping improve their communities economically, politically, and socially.

You will learn what community development and community development corporations are. You will explore a brief history of community development. You will look at the components that comprise a community development corporation. You will examine community economic development (CED) and its various approaches to CD, including the market-based approach, the community investment approach, the community wealth approach, and the partnership approach. You will learn about community political development (CPD) and its community organization, consensus, and community benefits approaches. You will discover what comprises community social development (CSD) and how social workers help community development corporations use CSD to build the social infrastructures of their communities. You will also learn how macro social workers help community members construct CDCs from beginning the process to ending their involvement. You will explore the importance of e-community development and how to use it. Finally, you will discover some challenges that community development faces in the 21st century.

This chapter will help you understand that along with community planning and organization, community development has the potential to revitalize community and assist in remediating social problems that have gone unresolved for generations. Community development is one of the most important arenas of community social work today.

EXERCISE 8.1

Community development is a story of how descendants of former slaves, who had been deprived of their political franchise, stood together

and overcame their anger, turning the gift of their communities into a shining example of how good things can often arise out of the most evil circumstances. This story demonstrates that neither corporations nor government can provide the answer to America's depressed communities. The mega-structures of society, no matter how powerful, have neither the will nor the capacity to solve the problems faced by inner-city and rural poor. Only the members of a community itself, in partnership with government and business, can resolve their common concerns.

Consider for yourselves the role of social work as a profession and its commitment to action in assisting in the CD movement. Think about who developed these structures and why. Think about your own future and your role as social workers, placing your efforts where they count the most. Do you think that community work with CDCs might be a worthwhile venture for your future?

WHAT IS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

Community development is a method by which social workers assist residents to plan, design, and carry out economic, political, and social projects by means of community development corporations. Antonia Pantoja and Wilhelmina Perry define community development as a means by which members of economically dependent and politically disenfranchised communities and, increasingly, middle-class communities work together to:

1. Understand the forces and processes that have put them—and keep them—in their state of poverty and dependency.
2. Mobilize and organize their strengths and develop a plan of action based on information, knowledge, skills, and financial resources.
3. Eradicate from individuals and from group culture the deception that makes them participants in their own dependency and powerlessness.
4. Act to restore or develop new services and social programs for the well-being of its members, often starting with the economizing function.⁴

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION?

Community development corporations are typically neighborhood-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, with a board composed of at least one-third community residents and whose populations are often significantly below the local median income.⁵ Their purpose, asserts Michael Owens, is to reconstruct the physical, economic, and social environment in their targeted area or neighborhood.⁶ Alan Twelvetrees says that CDCs are “locally-based, community-oriented nonprofit organizations whose thrust is to develop profitable community resources such as commercial/industrial/business enterprises, housing projects, and financial institutions for the benefit of the community in cooperation with private and government sponsorship.”⁷

Community development corporations vary in both size and scope and provide a variety of programs and services. They operate as vital innovative alternatives to private businesses. CDCs are community-based and are dependent on citizen participation. Their funding comes from multiple sources.

Size and Scope

In virtually every major American city with a substantial African American population, black churches have undertaken community improvement efforts. In some cities, the African American church-associated CDC is the preeminent means by which black residents have reformed the conditions in their neighborhoods. Nowhere is this more true than in New York City, where nine African American church-associated CDCs work to make areas of black settlement decent and stable.⁸

Although the population and size of the target areas vary, most CDCs select relatively small, manageable, geographically defined inner-city neighborhoods and low-income rural neighborhoods. CDCs vary from small agencies, often sponsored by one faith-based organization serving one neighborhood, to corporations sponsored by coalitions of faith-based organizations that develop and administer services and represent their communities to public and private institutions of power. In these cases, CDCs extend far beyond the bounds of a single community to cover an entire city, county, multi-county region, or even an entire state.⁹

CDCs that can do these things well have acquired fame beyond the limits of their cities. National political and financial elites celebrate them as among the country’s best community development organizations including, for example, the Los Angeles Renaissance Development Corporation, an affiliate of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church; Detroit’s REACH, Inc., an affiliate of the Twelfth Street Missionary Baptist Church;¹⁰ Argenta Community Development Corporation in North Little Rock, Arkansas; Bethel New Life in Chicago; Chicanos por la Causa in Phoenix; Coastal Enterprises, Inc., in Wiscasset, Maine; Southeast Alabama Self Help Association in Tuskegee; and the nation’s largest CDC, New Community Corporation in Newark, New Jersey.¹¹

Most CDCs, however, depend on fewer resources; they have sparse staff, small annual budgets, and modest reputations, and receive little publicity. But all are formed by residents, small business owners, congregations, and other local stakeholders whose mission is to revitalize low- or moderate-income communities and provide development projects for residents in their neighborhoods.¹²

Programs and Services

In spite of their relatively small size, CDCs generally have extensive records of accomplishment. A 2002 Urban Institute study of 23 cities found that CDCs had noticeably improved multiple neighborhoods in eight cities, one neighborhood in each of another eleven cities, and had more limited “block-by-block” impacts in the remaining four cities.¹³

CDCs perform a wide variety of roles. Their community social development (CSD) components provide a range of social service programs, coordinate local planning initiatives, or function as mediating structures between government and community networks. CDC political development (CPD) ventures comprise a variety of community organizing activities. Most engage in community economic development (CED), including job creation and commercial and retail development services. They stimulate and build businesses that benefit community members, provide jobs, and assist with community improvement programs such as improved lighting, streetscapes, and others.¹⁴ CDCs provide a source of government-subsidized capital for small businesses and cooperatives and compete with for-profit enterprises at the

local level. Many emphasize housing construction and financial services.

Housing Construction and Development Many CDCs produce affordable housing. Some CDCs build and rehabilitate owner-occupied housing; others develop and manage renter-occupied housing. CDCs operate as investors, sponsors, developers, property managers, and service providers. They assist in raising funds for development and secure support for housing projects among residents. They help select sites, engage in construction, market the housing, and bear the responsibility for property and building maintenance. They provide services to the tenants of the new housing following completion of the housing project. In New York City, CDCs in primarily African American neighborhoods, for example, have developed approximately 5,000 units of affordable housing, including low- and moderate-income rental housing and moderate- and middle-income owner-occupied units. Since 1960 CDCs have produced about half a million units nationwide,¹⁵ says Community-Wealth.org.

Financial and Other Services Other CDCs develop and own commercial property and lease the space for profit. Some offer economic development services through small or micro loans to small businesses in low-income areas and provide revolving loan funds. Others establish financial institutions such as savings and loans to ensure a supply of funding to homeowners and local businesspeople. Some create jobs for community residents and promote private investment. A few of the younger CDCs seem more creative in the types of services they deliver. For example, the Bridge Street Development Corporation, which operates a free neighborhood computer lab, is the only African American church-associated CDC among the nine in New York City to have computer literacy as a primary program objective.¹⁶

Innovative Alternatives to Private Business

CDCs serve as vital alternatives to privately owned for-profit businesses. Rather than leave the local economy dependent on outsiders, CDCs work to increase the economic power of the community and strengthen its leveraging ability. The surplus income accruing from

various CDC ventures reverts back to the community and its members, and can be used for running the CDC, stimulating other businesses, engaging in political action, and providing additional social services.¹⁷

Another reason CDCs are successful is their ability to innovate. The cadre of leaders trained by Leadership Arkansas/Searcy County (LASC), for example, developed a 4,000-foot paved airstrip, a 90-acre industrial park with a new industry, and a new post office and bank that serves tourists stopping in Leslie and Marshall on their way to Branson, Missouri.

In 2004 Community Development Works (CDW) in Central Louisiana (Cenla) developed Brokering Professional Services, providing financial management, technological assistance, legal aid, and public relations assistance to area organizations. The CDW Resource Center enables members to network and access technical assistance, information, publications, and databases that support their community development efforts.¹⁸ Opa-Locka CDC in Florida manages the Opa-Locka Airpark and is using this experience to attract other business development and to develop retail shopping in Miami Gardens.¹⁹

Community Based

Just as important as CDC projects, however, is their community-based focus, the process of neighbors getting together, making decisions, seeing a project through to its completion, and then using their finished products. The CDC builds a sense of community control and enhances individual and collective empowerment. CDCs provide community leadership, tailoring projects and programs to the community's specific needs and situation. Their boards of directors are representative of the communities they serve, with community residents and stakeholders serving as members.²⁰

A well-established CDC knows community needs and can access charitable and private dollars, develop numerous interlocking successful projects, and serve as a financial stimulus for the community. It can become a means by which a community plans and develops its own economic, political, and social future.

Citizen Participation

Citizens attend CDC neighborhood meetings, play leadership roles in community development planning committees, and volunteer for hands-on economic

and political projects. Resident participation provides the CDC with social and political legitimacy, but it also increases residents' willingness to commit to a project. A recent U.S. General Accounting Office evaluation of several community initiatives, for example, concluded that "significant community development takes place only when residents are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort."²¹ Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), and the CDCs it has created, have been able to unify an extremely diverse target area through the use of an inclusive participatory process designed to give all members of the community a share in decision making. And because of the initiative's strong community support, DSNI has gained the respect and support of the Boston city government as well as numerous funders and partners,²² says Kristina Smock.

Funding

CDC funding varies depending on the location, size, and the resources available, but all are nonprofit/social enterprise organizations. Most CDCs put together projects with diversified financial help from government, businesses, foundations, and development intermediaries. They have become astute in fiscal management so that their funding is used with maximal efficiency.

Government Funding "City and state funds," comments the director of a Queens-based African American church-associated CDC, "go hand in hand in terms of our programs and projects." In New York, for example, one CDC uses New York State funds for administrative expenses through the state's Neighborhood Preservation Development Companies program. The CDC also taps New York City for funding. Much of its funding is in contracts and fees for service, particularly with the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Human Resources Administration, and other city agencies.

CDCs participate in federal programs such as the U.S. Federal Housing Administration's Section 203(k) Rehabilitation Mortgage Insurance program and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 202 Elderly Housing program. Two government programs most useful to CDCs are HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) administered by HUD.

Corporations, Foundations, and Development Intermediaries Some CDCs develop cooperative relationships with private-sector businesses including banks, real estate, insurance, and contractors. Many CDCs receive funding from national foundations such as the Ford Foundation. Increasingly, however, important sources of funding are development intermediaries such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC). The LIHTC is introducing new, and sometimes very large, sums of private, corporate dollars into low-income neighborhoods and CDCs.

Astute Fiscal Management A mix of private and public funding gives CDCs the financial resources needed in their efforts to "restore broken places and rebuild communities."²³ CDCs often manage these funds so that their income provides multiple reinforcement. Their projects feed into one another, and operate in the wider marketplace as well.

Multiple Reinforcement Many CDCs operate so that funding they receive multiplies and reinforces itself in their communities. If the CDC engages in housing, for example, it may set up its own construction company to do the work and establish a management company to administer the property. It may also act as a broker to help local businesses obtain inexpensive rentals, and even operate a revolving loan fund to assist local businesses, including its own, to establish new spin-off companies, and establish other community controlled financial institutions.

A CDC may also move into real estate and develop shopping centers or industrial parks, and it may use federal or foundation grants to provide job training for minority youth in the projects it runs. Thand Williamson adds that it might even set up its own community foundation to serve as a source of funds for community social service projects.²⁴

Feed into One Another The CDC's various subsidiaries often feed into one other so that the whole becomes more than the sum of its parts. If a grant is obtained to rehabilitate housing by setting up a construction company, for example, the CDC can ensure that local people are employed and more money circulates in the neighborhood. This assists in the profitability of the new shopping center that the

CDC is also trying to establish. The shopping center encourages the growth of minority businesses by renting space and creating jobs. Job training programs ensure a supply of capable and committed local employees for its various projects.²⁵

Operate in the Wider Marketplace The subsidiaries of multipurpose CDCs are sometimes encouraged to operate in the wider marketplace. For example, a construction or management company can obtain contracts from organizations other than its parent body, thus contributing further to the profitability of the main CDC and reversing the normal money flow out of the community.²⁶ Because of its diversified economic base and government support, financial institutions may be more willing to provide a wide range of loan products and guarantees to the CDC that make the market work for people in ways that have never been done before,²⁷ asserts Alan Twelvetrees.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community development corporations have their immediate origins in the turmoil of the 1960s. Since the first phase of CDCs, they have grown in numbers and sophistication, gathering strength through four successive waves and continuing with successes in the first decade of the 2000s.

First-Wave CDCs (1966–1970)

In 1966, Senator Robert F. Kennedy made an historic tour of Bedford-Stuyvesant, stimulating the vision of New York City's Bedford-Stuyvesant activists. A subsequent Special Impact Amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act led to the formation of the nation's first CDC, the Bed-Stuy Restoration Corporation in Brooklyn.²⁸ The Bed-Stuy project was quickly followed by The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) in Chicago, and in 1968 by the Hough area project in Cleveland. In their steps a first wave of about 100 CDCs were formed, from Roxbury, Massachusetts, to the Mission District in San Francisco.²⁹ Many of these first-wave CDCs discovered that the best way to cure problems in low-income neighborhoods was to generate home-grown businesses in their own neighborhoods, mainly in housing³⁰ and job creation.³¹

Second-Wave CDCs: Expansion in the 1970s

In 1974 President Gerald Ford signed the Housing and Community Development Act, replacing the Johnson administration's model cities, urban renewal, and neighborhood facility grants with a single community development block grant program. "By limiting citizen participation to a purely advisory role the act was generally seen as a setback for community development efforts,"³² argues Susan Redman-Rengstorf.

Community development, however, continued to grow in the second half of the 1970s. Between 500 and 1,000 of these second-wave CDCs were formed from activist community organizations that had originally addressed redlining and displacement-based urban renewal, factory closings, or irresponsible landlords who abused tenant rights.³³

As the idea of community development caught on during the Carter administration, the Housing and Community Development Act was amended to allow for more citizen participation, requiring citizen involvement in planning, execution, and evaluation,³⁴ according to Robert Fairbanks. In addition, funding under Title VII of the 1974 Community Services Act, the federal government's Community Services Administration, and the Office of Neighborhood Development provided additional assistance.³⁵ The Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation (NRC) stimulated the creation of local partnership efforts for comprehensive housing rehabilitation services.³⁶

The Neighborhood Self-Help Development Act of 1978 recognized "the neighborhood to be a national resource which ... deserved to be conserved, revitalized."³⁷ As a result, by the late 1970s CDCs had become central components of a limited but significant federally assisted neighborhood development movement.

Third-Wave CDCs: Achieving Economic Success in the 1980s

The third wave of CDCs in the 1980s expanded the numbers to nearly 2,000 organizations and continued to climb.³⁸ The privatization and market mentality of the 1980s forced most third-wave CDCs to become oriented to achieving economic success. CDCs became much more businesslike than their predecessors. They were less like community organizations and more like

small businesses and investment projects. As a result, many CDCs were not able to completely sustain their work of community empowerment. Most tended to avoid political controversy, became dominated by professionals with technical orientations, narrowed their membership bases, and rejected social action.

In this market-centered phase, African American communities and others were determined to support “a non-white middle class by developing highly specific and measurable development projects in which community people could work for their own economic betterment,”³⁹ say Pierce and Steinbach. The bottom line for CDCs was to develop the capacity to “correct the market’s failure to provide jobs and services to the community.”⁴⁰

CD was often aimed at inspiring locally owned and operated housing development, increased employment, helping people learn business skills, and building neighborhood capital as a way of revitalizing neighborhoods. Many exhibited “business talent and development skills once thought to be the exclusive province of the for-profit sector,” as one report put it.⁴¹

In late 1988, Renée Berger conducted a study of 834 CDCs and found that in the five years prior to the study, CD projects had produced some 125,000 units of owner-occupied and rental housing and repaired 275,000 additional units. They developed 16.4 million square feet of office and retail space as well as industrial parks in poor communities; loaned money to some 2,000 enterprises, mostly for amounts under \$25,000; and created or retained nearly 90,000 jobs.⁴²

Fourth-Wave CDCs: Diversification in the 1990s

CDCs as an industry, asserts Christopher Walker of the Urban Institute, made strong gains in their numbers, size, outputs, and contributions to neighborhood revitalization throughout the 1990s.⁴³ In 1993, for example, well over 3,000 CDCs existed in the United States. Six years later, according to a national census of CDCs conducted by the National Congress of Community Economic Development (NCCED), their numbers had grown to 3,600 CDCs, with more in Canada.⁴⁴ The total value of CDC projects receiving support from intermediaries doubled between 1991 and 2000, and the overall size of CDC industries grew as well.⁴⁵

At the same time, a new generation of neighborhood initiatives began emerging within the context of a growing national consensus about the importance of rebuilding communities.⁴⁶ CDC efforts in the 1990s diversified and often took a multifaceted approach. According to Williamson, “By the 1990s most people engaged in community development were recognizing that the effective revitalization required CDC/public/private/intermediary partnerships or a ‘four-legged stool.’”⁴⁷

CDCs continued to create low-income housing, but they increasingly included middle-income apartments, single-family subdivisions, and homeless shelters. They developed credit unions, retail companies, and shopping centers in major urban centers. CDCs began to develop commercial real estate to bring retailers back into the neighborhoods, along with services that were difficult to find nearby, including insurance agents, doctors, supermarkets, and others. Some even developed loan funds to offer small business loans in the neighborhood when bank financing was not available.

As a result, CDCs substantially boosted their productive capabilities. In 1993 two-thirds of U.S. community development corporations had completed at least one concrete development project and had created roughly 100,000 jobs. By 1998 urban CDCs had built or renovated 435,000 units of housing, both rental and owner-occupied; developed approximately 48 million square feet of commercial and industrial space; and created 113,000 jobs.

New Directions for the 2000s

In the first decade of the new century, CDCs received major attention from government and private funders as a promising way to improve urban neighborhoods and the lives of those who live in them. CDCs showed increased productivity and leadership capacity. Associations and intermediary coalitions expanded. Some CDCs developed into comprehensive community initiatives, and others focused on sustainable community development.

Increased Productivity CDCs substantially boosted their productive capabilities. By 2006, an industry survey found that CDCs had developed a yearly average of over 86,000 units of affordable housing and 8.75 million square feet of commercial and

industrial space.⁴⁸ CDCs created 75,000 jobs per year in the seven years between 1998 and 2005, and in 2005 CDCs created a total of 199,000 jobs. Forty-five percent completed nonresidential projects;⁴⁹ in most cities residential property values were rising in at least one neighborhood, and CDCs were most likely responsible. In two-thirds of cities, this has happened in more than one neighborhood.

Increased Leadership Capacity In the first half of the decade of the 2000s, because of their increased visibility and success, CDCs rose on the political agenda of many cities. Leaders across multiple sectors moved into community development, primarily because of the new collaborations forged in the 1990s. The Community Development Society (CDS), the first national professional association of community developers and citizens, was formed.⁵⁰

Expansion of Associations and Intermediary Coalitions By 2002 over 4,600 CDCs in the United States and Canada had organized into statewide, province-wide, regional, and national associations of community development organizations.⁵¹ According to the Urban Institute, the number of intermediary community and economic development coalitions had expanded.⁵² In addition, new collaborative and capacity-building intermediaries provided multiyear grants, allowing CDCs to establish larger and longer-term programs while simultaneously holding CDCs to stronger performance standards.

Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs) The idea of comprehensiveness guides the direction of a new form of community development corporation called the comprehensive community initiative (CCI). These new initiatives encourage all community stakeholders to work together collaboratively rather than in a confrontational mode and stress citizen participation in all aspects of their activities. CCIs view the problems of urban neighborhoods as interconnected, and they approach them in a holistic way. Unlike piecemeal approaches, CCIs address issues such as poverty, inequality, disinvestment, and unemployment as a web of interrelated problems. CCIs address these problems on multiple levels with individuals and families, and at the neighborhood and city levels as well,⁵³ says Kristina Smock.

Sustainable Community Development In the second half of the decade, many CDCs and other community groups worked to find creative, sustainable solutions to the problems facing low-income communities. Sustainable community development focuses on the whole community instead of just disadvantaged neighborhoods. It depends on the existence of a social infrastructure that provides for the basic needs of shelter, jobs and income, health, education, and social support.⁵⁴

Sustainable development seeks improved public health and a better quality of life for all its members. It limits waste, prevents pollution, maximizes conservation, promotes efficiency, and develops local resources to revitalize the local economy. Sustainable community development supports a vision that includes healthy ecosystems, using resources efficiently, a pervasive volunteer spirit, and enhancing the local economy.⁵⁵

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TODAY

By 2010 community development expanded into a multidisciplinary field identifying itself with three arenas of action: new community economic development (CED), community political development (CPD), and community social development (CSD). These different arenas of developing and strengthening communities take different approaches. Community development works best when these approaches are interrelated, self-reinforcing, and occur on a variety of different levels.

Community developers often combine economic development aimed at community self-sufficiency with political advocacy to attain economic justice. Some feminists, for example, assert that bottom-up CED strategies, such as microenterprise development, can lead to women's empowerment. They create "new patterns of social interaction" that promote feelings of enhanced social and political capacity,⁵⁶ asserts Scott Cummings.

Sometimes CDCs combine economic models with social development so that surplus income remains in the community and benefits wider social purposes, developing goods and services for the community as a whole. Finally, while CD originated in urban neighborhoods, many have expanded into rural communities as well, and have spread geographically to encompass

projects in nearly every developing country around the globe.

New Community Economic Development

CED is a method of counteracting the deterioration of communities through the development of community-oriented for-profit mechanisms and social enterprises that increase local economic capacity for sustainable growth and enhancement.⁵⁷ CED today has moved beyond conventional market approaches.

This new community economic development involves action taken locally by a community development corporation, often by means of comprehensive community initiatives, to provide economic opportunities and improve social conditions in a sustainable way within low-income neighborhoods. According to the Canadian Community Economic Development Network, “problems facing communities—unemployment, poverty, job loss, environmental degradation and loss of community control—need to be addressed in a holistic and participatory way.”⁵⁸ The new CED includes both a community investment and a community partnership approach.

Community Investment Approach The new community economic development uses the community investment approach to press the good work in commercial, industrial, and housing development already begun by large numbers of local development corporations in the last decade.⁵⁹ Community investing is financing that creates resources and opportunities for economically disadvantaged people in the United States and overseas who are underserved by traditional financial institutions. It provides access to credit, equity, and capital for small businesses, basic banking products that these communities would otherwise not have, and vital community services, such as child care, affordable housing, and health care and education facilities.

Community developers who engage in community investment take a thorough look at the public dollars already being spent in the neighborhood and “devise strategies aimed at shifting their uses away from traditional transfer and maintenance functions toward investment approaches so that both resources and real authority are transferred to the neighborhood,”⁶⁰ says John McKnight.

Building these local productive capacities often requires new relationships with the public sector. Every improvement in the physical, economic, social, or political power of a locality is seen as an investment in the strength and well-being of that community. Community development, however, does not depend on one family, business, or social organization to make a difference, but rather on the mutual investments of all for the common community good. If the community of neighbors sees their neighborhood as a social commons in which each person is interdependent with one another, and as an arena in which they all have a stake, any improvement one person makes will benefit the whole.

How Does Community Investing Work? Community investing utilizes investor capital to finance or guarantee loans to individuals and organizations that have historically been denied access to capital by traditional financial institutions. In the United States, these loans are used for housing, small business creation, education, or personal development. They are also available to local financial institutions abroad to finance international community development.

The investment process begins when an investor makes an investment into a Community Investment Institution (CII), an intermediary that accepts investor capital and provides financial services to the community it serves. In turn, the CII lends capital to credible individuals and community organizations and provides training and support to ensure the success of the loan. At the end of the investment term, the investor receives her or his principal plus returns from the CII.⁶¹

Partnership Approach Partnerships, including communities, private-sector corporations, and public-sector agencies, must be based on equality, not simple participation. Equality is defined as equal power in decision making, making agreements, and enforcement. In the past, communities were often not included by business or government in key decisions that affected the lives of citizens. Neither were they consulted or invited to participate, much less treated as equals. People in positions of power made decisions independently, often not considering the impacts those decisions would have on communities—or if they were considered, it was often as an afterthought.

Today, that situation is changing. Communities are seeking to be and are increasingly being treated as equal partners in decisions that affect them. One way such partnership occurs is by means of nonprofit economic development organizations (NEDOs).⁶² NEDOs are subsidiaries of larger CDCs that carry out its economic development function, serving as its representative partner in engaging business and government.

According to Daniel Sullivan, for example, “case studies have shown that the main benefit of these public-private partnerships is that city government and business organizations have unique resources and expertise that complement one another.”⁶³ NEDOs help improve communication and build strong bonds of trust between government officials and business leaders, facilitating cross-sector cooperation and minimizing conflict. They ensure that communities are involved in, and party to, the services, resources, and decisions that are made. They make use of city governments that possess vital public powers such as eminent domain and zoning, and have exclusive access to public funding, including development funds from the county, state, and federal governments. NEDOs involve business leaders who have a set of skills that complement those of the city government, including marketing, accounting, negotiating with businesses, writing contracts, and performing cost-benefit analyses.

Community Political Development

Many neighborhoods suffer from unequal distribution of political power, which often drives economic inequality in neighborhoods. For example, established corporations, developers, lobbyists, and the law firms that represent them often use political connections to pursue economic ends in ways that people in many communities are often not aware of, not included in, or both.

CPD works to change all that. By giving communities a visible presence in the halls of power, CPD ensures that people are not excluded when policy concessions are handed out or decisions made that affect the well-being of their neighborhood. Three models of CPD practice have emerged: community organizing, consensus organizing, and the community benefits approach.

Community Organizing Approach One model used in CPD is the integration of CED and community organizing. This integrated approach can more effectively advance shared goals of community building and economic redistribution. “Organizing can support CED efforts by holding private sector partners accountable to low-income communities, while CED can promote organizing by drawing new members into the organizational fold,”⁶⁴ notes Douglas Hess. “Overall, the advent of a strong community organizing movement has challenged CED practitioners to reclaim their commitment to structural political change and align their development activities with the work of their organizing counterparts,”⁶⁵ says Scott Cummings.

Marilyn Gittell, Jill Gross, and Kathe Newman reported in 1994, for example, that half of the 347 CDCs they surveyed in eight states identified community organizing as one of their activities.⁶⁶ By 1999 the National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED), the national trade association for CDCs, reported that two-thirds of CDCs responding to its national survey were involved in community organizing, including organizing to obtain resources, issue organizing, political organizing, and several kinds of partnership organizing.⁶⁷

Community development/community organizing partnerships, for example, provide citizens not only with economic but also political leverage. CDCs that engage in community organizing empower their members to challenge government decisions, particularly when those decisions favor large corporations or when governmental agencies give preferential treatment to companies with which they sometimes collude.

Members learn to use that leverage to demand recognition, fair treatment, and an end to unchallenged exploitation by those who have had a free hand in milking the public cow. While building an economic power base helps members develop respect and credibility in the business community, a political power base helps citizens gain attention in the offices of government. You will learn more about community organizing in Chapter 9.

Consensus Community Organizing Some communities suffer from generalized market failure, recessions, and economic downturns for which no one company or government is fully responsible. When

mining becomes unprofitable, for example, and mines begin to close, people in mining towns begin to decline. When drugs and crime affect a low-income neighborhood, businesses as well as residents suffer.

In these cases community organization and coalition strategies that mobilize people against injustice, unfairness, exploitation, or oppression are not effective because there is no one target, no one identifiable exploiter, no morally right cause for which members can mobilize. Issues are often too complex and interrelated, so that targeting one person, or institution, as occurs with traditional community organization, will not work.

What Is Consensus Community Organizing?

Consensus organizing is useful where traditional community organizing is not totally effective, or where the common enemy is outside the community or is institutionalized inside the community itself. Consensus organizing builds cooperative relationships among community leaders, business, and government to improve poor communities, focusing on moving people from welfare to work, improving school achievement, promoting inner-city reinvestment, and developing housing and businesses, among other things,⁶⁸ says Randy Stoecker.

The consensus model can foster unity and harmony among participants, strengthening their commitment to work toward a common good. In *Beyond Adversary Democracy*, Jane Mansbridge argues, for example, that when participants have shared interests, a consensus-based, “unitary” democracy can motivate people to understand one another and focus on their common goals. “While its members may initially have conflicting preferences about a given issue, goodwill along with mutual understanding and rational discussion can lead to the emergence of a common enlightened preference that is good for everyone.”⁶⁹

Social worker Michael Eichler, who pioneered the consensus organizing model, argues that “by participating in the consensual approach corporate types become more active and aware of social problems, city officials see community organizing as valuable instead of threatening, and neighborhood residents feel more empowered and get more control over community resources.”⁷⁰ While consensus organizing is nonconfrontational, it is also nonconciliatory, however.

Nonconfrontational. Consensus community building tends to use confrontation as a last resort. Instead, it seeks strategies by which communities can succeed

while still maintaining good relationships with the corporations or governments they are challenging. In this sense, consensus organizing exemplifies the best of the politics of bargaining and negotiation. Rather than confrontation, it seeks understanding, compromise, and agreement.

Nonconciliatory. Consensus organizing is not conciliatory to big business or government, however. Instead, it seeks to build cooperation, with the implied but rarely used threat that the CDC has the power, strength, and capacity to mobilize a number of people to challenge and confront the corporation if necessary.

How to Do Consensus Organizing Steps in consensus community organizing include finding an institutional partner, building the community organization, assessing strengths, participating in joint ventures, and coming to a conclusion.

Find an Institutional Partner. Consensus organizing generally begins with the identification and involvement of a local institutional partner such as a charitable foundation, business organization, or social service or government agency. The partner provides financial resources to support the organizing process and helps open doors to similar institutions as consensus organizers seek other partners and identify points of common interest. According to the Civic Practices Network, the institutional partner can also be “used as an organizing tool, giving skeptical community members a reason to believe that their efforts will lead to something tangible.”⁷¹

Build a Community Organization. Typically, community consensus organizing strategy involves building permanent, self-sustaining organizations that will operate as vehicles for community involvement, leadership development, and advocacy. Sometimes these organizations must be built from scratch; in other cases, existing CDCs make modifications in their composition, mission, and approach. Building these organizations is central to the consensus organizing model because of the quality of the participation that they demand from community members. These organizations should be community based, with broad representation.

1. **Community based:** While consensus organizations are formed with the expectation that they will engage in cooperative ventures with “downtown” interests, it would not serve the community to allow the

downtown interests to dominate or dilute the community organization's actions. The consensus organizations are, therefore, composed entirely of community members. Downtown interests, including the project's institutional partners, are not represented. "The purpose of forming the organization is to give community members the experience of responsibility and control, and to establish and implement a community agenda,"⁷² Eichler says.

2. *Broad representation:* On the other hand, the consensus organizer seeks to achieve extremely broad representation from within the community. The consensus organizer's goal is to recruit the most widely trusted individuals from every group of people affiliated with the community, and not to write off or exclude any group. For example, the consensus organizer recruits merchants with the widest set of allegiances among the merchants doing business in the community, and the public housing tenants with the greatest recognition among public housing tenants.

The result is a viable community organization that has representation from, and credibility with, every segment of the community. It is "composed of the individuals most likely to inspire commitment and enthusiasm by virtue of their involvement, with the greatest possible legitimacy in forming partnerships with 'downtown' interests."⁷³

Assess Strengths. Using participatory action research, described in Chapter 7, citizen organizers assess issues and interests that unite the community and the strengths of existing community groups. They develop an inventory of community assets. They ask, "Which issues and interests unite the community, and which divide it?" "What are the specific strengths and weaknesses of existing community groups?" "Who are their real constituents?"

They examine existing organizations, asking questions such as: "What relationships and linkages already exist among the local corporations, banks, hospitals, charitable foundations, service agencies, and government agencies?" "Who has a vested interest in supporting or opposing the community's agenda?" "Is there a culture of involvement in the community, or a history of inactivity or hostility with respect to the community?"

"The initial assessment does not have to be perfected before members take action. It is important to get members into action projects quickly, even small ones, to keep people motivated and to help them accomplish things,"⁷⁴ asserts Mike Eichler.

Participate in a Joint Venture. Organization members often develop joint ventures between themselves and organizations controlled by interests outside the community, such as community cleanups or publishing community newsletters, as well as more substantive collaborations. For example, organization members may be interested in creating job opportunities and may discover that owners of a factory, while disagreeing with residents about many issues, complain about the lack of well-trained local job candidates. "A consensus organizer," says Mike Eichler, "may be able to turn this single point of overlapping interest into a joint venture such as a training program that brings together residents and factory owners."⁷⁵

Joint ventures create windows of opportunity for developing social capital, including trust, respect, and positive relationships between community organizations and businesses. Social capital may be even more important than the tangible benefits that the joint venture provides. Because past miscommunication and misunderstandings may have distorted perceptions of the other's interests, members may discover that their agendas are less in conflict than they at first appear.

Efforts to find niches where mutual benefit can be achieved make it possible for both sides to think creatively, discovering solutions and compromises that have value for everyone. "When factory owners, hospital administrators, public officials, merchants or bankers develop relationships of respect and trust by carrying out mutually successful ventures with a group of skilled and dedicated community members, downtown interests often feel tremendous enthusiasm about participating in other, similar projects,"⁷⁶ Eichler asserts. These interests begin to feel they have a stake in the welfare of the community that they may not have felt before.

Coming to a Conclusion. Because no single event or decision becomes the focal point for the exertion of community power, the organizing process may result in no obvious climax to the community's pursuit of its long-term agenda. "Through a thousand small interactions in the course of a hundred relationships, however, the community may pursue its strategy, position its residents with respect to the entities with power, present its agenda, influence the course of events and achieve its objectives."⁷⁷ The entire process may be entirely informal, diffuse, and invisible to the casual observer. The only easily detected manifestation of the process may be its successful results.

Community Benefits Approach The community benefits movement uses the leverage and power of a community to pressure public and private interests to negotiate agreements for living-wage jobs, affordable housing, and neighborhood services as a condition for locating a commercial project inside that community. In the United States, a community benefits agreement (CBA) is a contract between community groups and a business to provide economic development to a local community or neighborhood. “Community Benefits Agreements allow community groups to have a voice in shaping a project, press for community benefits that are tailored to their particular needs, and to enforce developers’ promises,” particularly in low-income neighborhoods, according to Janis and Lander.⁷⁸ Depending on the jurisdiction, the CBA is generally legally enforceable.

The first full-fledged CBA was negotiated in 2001, when a broad coalition of community groups came to a far-reaching agreement with the developer of Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District (the Staples Center expansion project). This was followed by four more CBAs in projects across Los Angeles. Since then, dozens of additional large scale construction projects in Los Angeles and many other communities across the country have had community benefits provisions incorporated into their development contracts.⁷⁹

Successful community benefits agreements rely heavily on the formation of a multi-issue, broad-based community coalition including community, environmental, faith-based, and labor organizations. These legally enforceable agreements are particularly effective with extractive industries that take minerals, land, water, and other resources from local communities, many of which have been the focus of widespread anger and protest in developing countries,⁸⁰ says Kenneth Slack.

CBAs provide mutual benefit, accountability, and a new form of governance.

Mutual Benefit CBAs serve business interests by ensuring growth, a well-trained workforce, and a good business reputation. Community groups also benefit because CBAs guarantee that opportunities are expanding and that people are employed and earn enough to provide for their families.

Accountability Many citizens are demanding that government be more accountable. CBAs and their policy sister, living wage laws, demand that public subsidies to developers should not allow increases in

poverty as one of their side effects. “This,” Janis and Lander assert, “has enormous appeal to the public, and it better links the middle class with the fate of those with even lower incomes.”⁸¹

A New Form of Governance CBAs are a “new form of governance in which people interact to create positive change.”⁸² CBAs are a kind of direct bargain between community groups and private developers that are then presented to public sector creating space for a new kind of deliberate democracy. CBAs ensure that “development is equitable and benefits *all* members of the community, eventually contributing to stronger local economies, livable neighborhoods and increased public participation in the planning process.”⁸³

FUND FOR OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE

Economists from the Federal Reserve recently looked at the driving factors behind growth in mid-size regions—and after performing a statistical analysis of nearly 120 metropolitan areas throughout the country, found that a skilled workforce correlated strongly with economic success, but so did high levels of racial inclusion and income equality. The bottom line: Doing good and doing well can go hand in hand, and business is beginning to get the picture.⁸⁴ CBAs are one way of doing that.

Community Social Development

Community social development (CSD) is an intentional means by which CDC community members form themselves into groups to consider how to enhance the social betterment of their communities.⁸⁵ Community social development reaches for community diversity, sustainability, mutual benefit, education, and decision making. It takes a holistic perspective, but also one that is committed to citizen participation, involvement, and volunteering. CSD is also dedicated to individual growth, fostering social groups for children and adolescents, including leadership development, character building, and grassroots democracy in local communities.

The goal of community social development is to work with local members in community planning and program development, making the neighborhood a better, more wholesome arena for families, the elderly, persons with handicaps, and others. Community social development does this by encouraging and promoting

a variety of social benefit services in the locality such as community centers and health and wellness programs, as well as homes for persons with developmental disabilities, facilities for the elderly, shelters for women suffering from domestic violence, and families who are homeless. CDCs that have accumulated surplus capital, such as the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement and the Abyssinian Development Corporation, for example, provide local community residents with shelter, jobs, counseling, day care, and groceries. These CDCs may also provide adult education, job training, and mentoring programs, deliver social and neighborhood services, promote public safety, sponsor community picnics and rallies, and strengthen local schools and health clinics.⁸⁶

How to Do Social Development Social development includes the community social investment approach and the social development approach.

Community Social Investment Approach Community social investment means building community-based financial capital, investing social capital and human capital for the long term.

Financial Capital. Most direct community investments typically are administered by community development financial institutions (CDFIs), which are specialized firms that focus on communities that are underserved by traditional banks and financial service companies. CDFIs include community development banks, credit unions, loan funds, venture capital funds, and microenterprise loan funds. Investments may take a variety of forms, including interest-bearing money market accounts, certificates of deposit, or loan participation notes for a specified time period.

Investing in Community Social Capital. The emerging postmodern era emphasizes investing in social goods such as social capital. Social capital, say Warren and Cannan, consists of the “institutions and relationships of a thriving civil society—from networks of neighbors to extended families, community groups to religious organizations, local businesses to local public services, youth clubs to parent-teacher associations, playgroups to police on the beat.”⁸⁷

Investing in Families. Social workers apply the social investment approach to strengthening and enhancing individuals and families. “Investing in people is necessary

because trickle-down economic benefits of corporations, monetary and fiscal policies, and attempts to ‘make work pay’ are insufficient for durable and sustainable child and family well-being.”⁸⁸ claims Katharine Briar-Lawson. Moreover, when family support systems fail, government must apply costly welfare state programs to remediate suffering that could have been prevented with insurance-based and investment approaches.

Investing in Children. “The two pillars of income security policy for the nation—social security and welfare.” says Briar-Lawson, “should now be joined with a third pillar that involves investment ... in children’s welfare.”⁸⁹ Children need to be aided in the context of their families and communities. Social work leadership is essential for promoting child-centered, family-driven policy and practice, including family-based income security policy involving Social Security reform, welfare redesign, and investment approaches to human betterment.

Youth Investment. Investing in entrepreneurial projects for youth is an effective means of learning, motivation, and supporting community improvement. One middle school store in an impoverished community in New York City clears over \$40,000 a year from the entrepreneurial work of the students. Social services and related community-based organizations can serve as the key facilitators of occupational and entrepreneurial roles for community members.

The Social Development Model Social development is a self-help model, emphasizing the importance of the community in finding its own resources to build its own human, physical, and social infrastructure, claim its own vision, and develop its own ideals and values. Social development builds individual capacity by fostering relationships, developing plans, and implementing social programs such as job training and education projects. These tasks are often done in collaboration with a broad cross-section of a community and with outsiders.⁹⁰ The social development process includes a strong emphasis on gathering the community together to decide what it needs, as well as what it already has available to help itself. Social development consists of leadership development, creating groups, and building community.

Leadership Development. Far from the beaten track of the major centers of leadership in New York, Washington, and San Francisco, CDCs provide quality

leadership training rivaling some of the best programs in the nation. Leadership Arkansas/Searcy County (LASC), with the help of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, for example, provides training to 20 community leaders each year.

A goal of Community Development Works (CDW) is to develop diverse leaders from across Central Louisiana (Cenla). CDW provides training seminars in community organizing and nonprofit governance, and in partnership with the LSUA Nonprofit Management Program, CDW provides experienced nonprofit executives, managers, and board members with eight months of training and networking with regional and national speakers. In 2003 CDW concluded the third year of its Leadership for a Healthy Cenla program, bringing together more than 50 leaders in a year-long program in development, collaboration, and leadership.

Building Groups. Much of the emphasis of the social development model is on building groups. In addition to social and task groups about which you learned in Chapter 3, community social development projects include self-help groups, time-dollar programs, and mutual-aid exchange.

1. *Self-help groups:* The rapid rise of self-help groups, which serve more than 25 million individuals in the United States, attests to the creative ways in which self-determination results in self-help through reciprocal and mutual aid. Self-help values often promote non-elite, nonhierarchical peer power. To be helped means being a helper through reciprocal aid and advocacy for one another. “There is a need to promote and facilitate mutual aid as part of family capacity-building strategies for the next century,”⁹¹ says Randy Stoecker.

2. *Time-dollar programs:* Time-dollar programs involve skill exchanges and barter systems between people. Across the nation, neighborhoods exchange over 100,000 hours of care to meet one another’s basic needs, enabling them to stretch the value of the little income they have. They also build trust in communities and among neighbors who have become alienated because of gentrification, housing displacements, job loss, homelessness, and deep, persistent poverty.

One of the best examples of time-dollar programs is found at the Grace Hill Settlement House in East St. Louis. There, neighbors exchange over 40,000 hours of services with one another. Some of these services are

used to barter for goods from local merchants. Because of their explicit attention to complementing the market-driven distribution of goods and resources, time-dollar programs are an essential component of community and family capacity building. Such programs are not meant to replace welfare state investments, nor do they attempt to replace the market. They fill a gap and, in the process, help to build individual, family, and community assets and trust and improve well-being.

3. *Mutual aid exchange.* Some community-building and self-help movements rely on mutual aid exchange. Trained initially as paraprofessionals and enfranchised in occupational, educational, and employment ladders, former clients serve as frontline practitioners. They are seen as those with the most expertise in what it will take to solve individual, family, and community problems. Examples include members of Rainmakers and Drug Addiction Treatment Aids in South Florida, who come from the ranks of those who need services and who simultaneously received training, support, and supervision as they invented new ways to reach cocaine addicts, parents, and children caught in cycles of despair and a sense of failure.

Community-Building. Actually doing projects as part of a self-help philosophy creates a demand for technical skills. According to Randy Stoecker, “project management skills are crucial especially for the asset-based and consensus variations of CSD. That means making sure the paperwork gets handled, project tasks get accomplished, funds get raised, and the budget gets kept.”⁹² Depending on the issue, service providers can be brought together with community organizations, and even with individuals. Coalitions that partner the community with outside resource organizations, including banks, governments, and others, are common in this model.

HOW TO BUILD A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Community development corporations are among the most important community structures in Canada and the United States today. Effective community development happens through a series of deliberate steps.

A social worker must identify with the community and its people, and the people must be willing and motivated. You interview community members, use

focus groups and house meetings to develop interest in the CDC project. You build a community development action group. You assist group members to assess community needs, assets, and resources, and create a community development plan. You help your members construct the new CDC. The new CDC board and staff develop its first project, obtain financial capital, and establish relationships with corporations and government. You end your involvement in the process or move into other roles such as developing social programs and services, community organizing, or helping the CDC expand its ventures.

Community Identification

When you affiliate with a community, make sure you identify with the culture and ethnicity of its members as closely as possible. Without such identification, a community developer may find it difficult to directly identify with a community's history, values, symbols, language, and traditions. Rivera and Erlich have devised a three-tiered model based on contact intensity and influence that can help determine an appropriate role for community developers in ethnically diverse communities.

Primary Level At the primary level, you must engage the community members directly, immediately, and personally. “[T]he only way of gaining entry into the community is to have full ethnic solidarity with the community ... requiring racial, cultural, and linguistic identity with its members.” Working at the primary level, for example, would “not be possible for a Chinese American in a Vietnamese or African-American area.”⁹³

Secondary Level At the secondary level of involvement, you function as “liaison with the outside community and institutions and serve as a resource with technical expertise based on the culturally-unique situations experienced by the community.” Here, knowledge of the language, although helpful, is not absolutely mandatory, so that a Puerto Rican social worker might work with a Mexican American neighborhood, for example, “or a person identified as Haitian in an African American area.”⁹⁴

Tertiary Level The tertiary level of intensity of engagement includes an “outsider,” someone not ethnically similar, “working for common interests and

concerns of the community by using technical skills, political connections, understanding of the outside environment as advocates and brokers on behalf of the community where cultural or racial similarity is not a requirement.”⁹⁵

Generate Interest in the CDC

When you begin the process of initiating a CDC, you must generate interest from the community. You do this by interviewing community members, using focus groups, and organizing house meetings.

Interviewing Community Members When you talk to people, use semi-structured focused interviews that center on selected topics but in which specific items are not entirely predetermined. Once you have examined the community, you are ready to gather a number of community people together in focus groups to help you identify the opportunities members can activate to improve their community.

Focus Groups Focus groups help you confirm or elicit new information, begin generating ideas for change and, most important, engage people in forming a community development action group committed to developing a community development corporation. Focus groups help community members begin to see the power that information can give them. They will have more trust in the outcome of their effort if they have a hand in framing the issues and opportunities.

Organize House Meetings Organize a series of house meetings and engage members in discussing issues that are important to them. (You will learn more about house meetings in Chapter 9.) Ask one of the persons you have met to sponsor the meeting in his or her home. Generally, you should meet with people who are homogenous in background. For example, hold a house meeting for people you have interviewed from the business community. Hold other meetings for members of local neighborhoods. One group, for example, could be composed of church leaders, social workers, and other community professionals.

Discuss Issues Important to Members House meetings can be your first opportunity to begin organizing. When people get together to talk about the

issues they feel are important, they often begin to realize they are not alone. This helps take away the stigma that social problems such as unemployment or poverty bring. They begin to realize that social or economic forces beyond their control have created the conditions that cause suffering. When people share their experiences as well as their assets and resources, they begin to generate hope. You empower them to begin thinking of ways they can change things for the better. They gain skills in problem solving and planning, reducing their reliance on technical experts.

Make sure everyone understands that the goal of the meeting is to create a community development corporation and that all are invited to participate. Begin by introducing people to one another. As a springboard for discussion, present the findings of your focused interviews, the comments people have made, and center on issues that are of crucial importance to the group. Give everyone a chance to speak. After the discussion, engage people for the next step, such as joining the community development action group, serving on a subgroup, or helping out in some other way. Remind the group when and where the next steps will occur.

Build a Community Development Action Group

Follow the principles of developing a task group, leading the group through its first meeting and the life cycle of the group. Successful neighborhood initiatives require the involvement of all community stakeholders. Rebecca Stone says that “community building is rooted in the belief that strategies ... must be designed around the specific assets, needs, institutional relationships and existing power structures of the target communities.”⁹⁶ If some important members of the community were not included in the focus groups or house meetings recruit them now for your action group.

Assess the Community

Use a modified strengths model of participative research to assess your community. Your group may decide to conduct a needs assessment looking at existing data such as social indicators, rates under treatment, and census data. One of the best ways to gather information about community strengths, in addition, is by means of an assets/resources approach. This approach is capacity-oriented and emphasizes

that communities contain a multitude of resources or have the ability to acquire them. An assets/resources approach recognizes that even the most impoverished communities can manage themselves by making use of the wealth of resources available to them.

The asset/resources approach is proactive. It envisions a community as its members wants it to be and works to bring about a social environment that best enhances and enriches the lives of all of its members. Community residents and their allies seek and find the best points of leverage within the community for effective action.

Develop a Resources and Assets Inventory

While various types of capital are important, communities also need psychological, social, and cultural capacity-building tools to put together various kinds of capital that make things happen. Without those intermediary capacities, resources will go unused. Ernesto Cortes explains:

[F]or community development to be successful, differing types of capital must be mixed with each other to be productive. The items of “physical capital” such as machines alone are not enough, but require workers with “human capital” skills to operate them. Teams of workers need not only tools and skills but the trusting relationships of “social capital” to work together. They all need “financial capital” to facilitate the exchanges and investments central to economic life.⁹⁷

Stewart Perry says that a resources and assets inventory is a local review of factors of production: physical capital, financial capital, human capital, and social capital.⁹⁸

Physical Capital Every community has physical capital including buildings, land, forests, and waterways. A rural locality may, for example, have significant mineral, land, or forest resources. An inner city may have vacant lots, abandoned buildings, and unused office space. You list land, buildings, physical space, and the monetary value of these structures.

Financial Capital A community also has access to wealth, sometimes including a monetary budget surplus or a tax base, as well as access to and a means of acquiring capital through connections with intermediaries, foundations, and those at the state and federal levels.

You ask, “How much income do these sources generate?” “How much remains in the community?” “How much leaves the community?” “What is the extent of the assets these resources own?” “What salaries do people earn?” For nonprofit organizations, “What are their budgets, their source of income, and how much income do they generate?” For profit making organizations, “What are their gross and net profit?”

Human Capital Even if it is not immediately apparent, neighborhoods already either have the capacity-building tools they need or have the ability to acquire them. Every community has human capital, people with various talents, initiative, and leadership. They have members skilled in linking people with resources or connecting resources and projects, for example. Most communities are composed of citizens who can teach, advise, provide consultation, train, and provide support. In addition, many communities already have intermediary groups, networks, and relationships of people that add to the strength of the community effort and many have infrastructures of support systems for its members.

Communities often include members with skills in carpentry, masonry, electronics, and computer technology, or people who are willing to learn those skills. A rural area may have a surplus of people to mine, cultivate, harvest, or manufacture. Many communities include professionals, managers, some who have high levels of education, some who are in positions of power or possess wealth, and some who have connections with people of influence. Where communities lack members with special skills, those resources can be developed by training, education, and providing opportunities for enhancement. You ask, “What kinds of jobs, skills, and capabilities are available in your community?”

As a macro social worker, you yourself have a number of such tools and capacities to assist communities. You stimulate, inspire, and assist your action group to put resources together to develop a plan. You help community members utilize social tools that already exist or are under local control, or stimulate members to develop those that the community must have to make use of its physical, human, and social capital.

Social Capital Many communities are rich in social capital, including goodwill, citizenship, public spirit,

and a willingness to cooperate together for the good of the community. People often have abundant commitment, indigenous leadership, a sense of shared responsibility and meaning. Members of communities display loyalty, honor, trustworthiness, responsibility, honesty, and a host of other values. Communities can enhance their fund of social capital by providing character-building activities and opportunities for people to work together on common projects, which not only implement the public good but also empower people as they achieve their goals.

In order to assess the extent of social goods in your community, you may need to develop indicators for such intangible items as trust, honesty, cooperation, and community spirit. For example, you ask “What kinds of programs and services do civic and social organizations offer?” “What is the diversity of these community components?” “Are the social service networks both public and private?” The number and variety of nonprofit social service organizations and agencies will tell you about the civic-mindedness of its citizens. When you ask, “Do churches and social agencies interact and engage one another, or are they insular and disengaged?” you will have an indication of the amount of cooperation in your community.

Construct the Inventory To grasp all this information about a local area is to have a powerhouse ready to be put to use in making decisions about local development. The act of jointly inventorying assets is itself a strong community organizing device that motivates people’s collaboration and commitment to action by disclosing opportunities for change.⁹⁹ Two ways to conduct an inventory are geographically and by kinds of organizations.

Geographically Divide the community into geographical sections and then, within each section, look at specific categories of resources. For example, if your community is rural, you may want to begin with resources in town, looking first at homes, shops, manufacture, civic associations, churches, and others. Then look in the countryside, examining farms, land, homes, forests, and so forth.

Kinds of Organizations Begin with organizations in your community that are easy to categorize, such as businesses and social, religious, and civic organizations.

Assume, for example, that you are examining social and civic organizations. Develop a list of all the social and civic organizations in your community or neighborhood, and subdivide them into categories such as libraries, social agencies, schools, churches, civic associations, recreation, community services, parks, and others. Rather than inventory physical, human, financial, and social capital separately, examine them concurrently. For example, choose the first organization on your list. Look at its physical capital, then proceed to financial, human, and social capital.

If you are looking at public organizations such as schools, examine how schools are maintained and where they are located. This will tell you about community pride and the importance of education to the community. What is the racial and economic balance in the schools? Do some public schools have rich resources and higher-achieving students and others fewer resources and low-achieving students? This will tell you something about how the community views equality and discrimination.

Look for leaders. What are the qualities of leaders in the community, in government, and in business? Are these leaders socially engaged, working to build the community, or do they drain resources out of it?

Devise a Community Development Plan

Your community development action group has a wealth of information that will help lead it in a positive direction. Its next task is to combine that information into a concrete plan that the new CDC will use to establish itself on a solid foundation and develop a set of goals leading to at least one successful community improvement project.

Help your group examine the needs and resources data they have collected identifying several key concerns and potential solutions for bringing about change. Consider how the plan will include economic, political and social development of the community. Combine these concerns and solutions into a plan that will outline longer range goals, shorter range objectives and then more specific tactics. This way members can see all of the components that need to be done. Breaking things down also helps the group chart accomplishments on each aspect of their overall plan and helps make any project on which members decide manageable.

Assist members develop a written proposal and present it to the community. This proposal will form the basis for constructing the by-laws and constitution of the CDC and help guide the new CDC board of directors in their efforts at developing its first project.

Develop the Corporation

After the community action group has a plan in place, it needs to officially form itself into a legal corporation, the CDC.

Rather than a traditional non-profit social services design, Alan Twelvetrees recommends that your community development group adopt a business-oriented model such as a new social enterprise organization. This social enterprise should have a skilled executive who can direct the operation, one who can build a cadre of competent middle managers and a strong board familiar with operating a business, and who can oversee the operation, set clear goals, and ensure the financial stability of the project. Twelvetrees says, “Try to make sure that the manager of the business has incentives to ensure that the venture is profitable, as well as having the skill to run it. Lack of managerial expertise is one of the main reasons for business failure.”¹⁰⁰ In Chapter 11 you will learn how to develop a social enterprise organization including undertaking a careful feasibility study and making a good business plan, developing articles of incorporation, a constitution, and by-laws; selecting a board of directors; staffing; developing a budget; and structuring the corporation.

Construct a Community Development Project

The new CDC should take considerable time to organize itself into a smoothly functioning organization, develop relationships, consider the development plan and how to implement it leading to constructing a community development project, obtaining financial capital, and developing relationships with corporations, government, and intermediaries.

When members of the CDC decide on a specific project, they should examine existing successful CDC projects, brainstorm possibilities, aim for success, compare several projects, choose one with an assured return, and convene a public forum.

Examine Successful Projects While the community development action group has already collected information about the resources and assets in their community that will give the CDC board and staff strong indicators about the kinds of projects to consider, members will also need to gather information about the variety of projects that are possible and feasible. Members should research other successful projects. Visiting successful projects will help them get an idea of what is possible. Talking to developers of successful community development projects will give them information about pitfalls to avoid. This is also a good time to use the help of outside business experts who can provide consultation to the CDC on beginning business ventures and learning the language of entrepreneurial leadership, taking account of the risks of new ventures, and obtaining capital.

Brainstorm Various Possibilities A number of possibilities will occur to CDC board and staff members that can be used to help develop the economic resources of their community. Many members will have their own ideas. These need to be validated. But they must also be put into the context of the particular capacity of the community.

Use brainstorming to help people think creatively and not jump to solutions or become stuck on one pet project.

Aim for Success Building a community development corporation is a long-term process, the success of which may not become evident for many years. It took eight years before the Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority in Savannah, Georgia, began to see improvement in their neighborhood. Asked how long it took before he knew that the New Community Corporation of Newark, New Jersey, was making a real difference in its target neighborhood, founder Monsignor William Linder answered, 12 years.¹⁰¹

Start out with a modest project that the CDC can achieve rather quickly and that has a more or less guaranteed result, from which they can learn and test itself. Once the CDC is successful, it can build on that success and slowly develop other larger projects. Alan Twelvetrees says that many CDCs become involved in housing from the start. The kinds of projects they have undertaken include buying and rehabilitating housing

for rent to low-income families, new housing for rent to senior citizens, new housing for sale to low- to moderate-income families, buying and relocating houses displaced by a freeway, and cooperative housing. As Twelvetrees points out, however, these projects often require massive subsidies. Unless construction is completed on time and the management company is effective at collecting rents, the finances may not work out.¹⁰²

Compare Several Projects Using rational problem solving, come up with various possibilities that meet the contingencies that the CDC has decided upon. Develop pros and cons or benefits and costs of each alternative project, and try to put those benefits and costs in monetary terms so your group has a hard-headed financial basis for decision making. Rank the various possibilities using a quantitative format such as force-field analysis or benefit–cost analysis, and choose the project that will give the CDC the highest rate of return.

Choose a Project with an Assured Return Try a venture with an assured rather than a speculative return, at least to start with. Identify clearly the various objectives of the proposed venture, and distinguish between social and economic objectives—the need to give disadvantaged people jobs and the need to make a profit, for example. If it is not possible to make a profit and meet social objectives at the same time, then social objectives may initially have to take second place. Try to develop a business that “captures the outside market” rather than relying only on money circulating in the local community.

Convene a Public Forum Have the CDC board and staff present their top options to the community in a public forum. They present information about what they have done and what projects it is considering, and solicit input from the community as a whole. Make sure your constituents at the forum understand that this is not a decision-making meeting, but informational. The public forum should also have the wider purpose of engaging community members to help with the eventual project. After the public forum, board and staff members of the CDC will be able to make a final decision about the best project to choose.

Obtain Financial Capital It is not wise to start a business unless there is sufficient capital. A large chunk of that capital needs to be equity rather than a loan, unless it is at a low rate of interest and is to be repaid over a long period. Equity means money or financial resources that you have already acquired. Few businesses make money in the first three years, and loan repayments during that time can be crippling.

Many private developers are now engaging in joint ventures with CDCs because this is the only way in which they can access public money as well as invest some of their own funds to redevelop a deprived area. CDCs benefit from the expertise of the developer and, if they cut a good deal, get financial payback when the project is up and running. Some CDCs have used joint venture arrangements to establish major schemes such as shopping malls.¹⁰³ Most successful CDCs benefit from some form of assistance from a foundation, government contracts, grants, technical advice, or a start-up loan.¹⁰⁴

Develop Relationships with Corporations, Government, and Intermediaries Community development requires reciprocal relationships among the CDC, business, government, and CDC intermediaries. CDCs, for example, often need financial and technical support from government and from business. Government has public dollars that CDCs need, without which most community development projects will not get off the ground. In return, CDCs offer government a resource by which public dollars can work for community improvement, but without the burden of having to administer those programs themselves. Corporations can also provide funding, expertise, and connections in return for the goodwill that community cooperation generates. Intermediaries can help link CDCs, business, and government so that all benefit.¹⁰⁵

End the Process

There will come a time when your work as community developer is finished and you move on to other communities, other issues, and other problems. If a community developer stays in the community too long, the social worker will often inhibit the development of community leadership and independence. It is important for people in a community to become free not only

of their dependence on the power structure but also of their dependence on you, the social worker. You determine when it is time to leave, and then you work through a process of termination.

Determining When to Leave The CDC may not have achieved all of its goals, but if it has met a number of them, you can leave knowing that the organization you have helped develop is strong enough to move in a positive direction on its own. One way of determining whether it is time for you to leave is to assess the extent to which the CDC and the community members are competent, leadership has developed, the organization is established, goals have been accomplished, and political networks have been established.

Member Competence Do community members continue to identify themselves as victims and play a victim role, or have they gained skills, competencies, confidence, empowerment, and control over their community and the CDC?

Leadership Development To what extent have community leaders emerged? Do these leaders act on behalf of the community, or do they use their positions to gain power for themselves? Do the leaders actively train others to take their places? Is leadership broadly shared, or is it hoarded by a few?

Organization Is Established Is the CDC in a strong financial position? Is its board composed mainly of community residents who support and give good direction to the CDC? Do community members identify with the CDC and recognize it as “our organization”? Are community members committed to and engaged in helping the CDC grow and develop? Is the CDC, in coordination with business and government, capable of eliminating community problems over the long haul?

Goal Accomplishments Has the CDC established at least one successful, ongoing business project? Has it accomplished at least one of its subsidiary goals?

Political Networks How effectively does the CDC work with elected officials? Has the CDC established

strong and permanent partnerships with major corporations inside and outside of the community?

Power Is the community power structure responsive to the CDC and to its political strength? Does the community power structure recognize the CDC as effectively representing the needs of the community?

The Process of Terminating Your Role When you feel that the time for you to leave is coming, you need to prepare the community. Just as engaging the community took time and was a systematic process, disengagement should also be done over a period of time and with deliberation.

Reduce the Intensity of Your Involvement

Your leadership style within the community development corporation should be a low-task/low-relationship facilitating style, as described in Chapter 3. You have less and less active involvement in meetings. You tell your members that you will be absent occasionally, and then more frequently. Finally, you meet with the members, board, and staff of the CDC and explain that you will be leaving and outline your strategy for disengagement.

Terminate Community Relationships

You begin to terminate the relationships you have developed in the community. You visit as many people as you can, “attend meetings of block clubs, committees and organizations in the community” to say goodbye.¹⁰⁶ Visit members of the power structure, both those who have supported your efforts and those who have opposed you.

Assess the CDC’s Accomplishments

Meet with the CDC board and staff and present your assessment of the organization. In your assessment, explain the condition of the community when you came. Review the history of the CDC and your evaluation of its condition at present. Affirm their strengths and commend them for their victories. Let them know what areas you think they need to work on in the future to become a stronger organization.

Have a Celebration Have a celebration in which you and the CDC enjoy a closure experience. Members

will need to express their feelings toward you, and you will have a chance to say your final goodbyes to them and share what the organizing experience has meant to you.

When you leave, the community’s members should be strengthened and able to carry on its programs, implement the vision, and continue the leadership they have begun. The community should have a sense of itself, and its members should be walking their way together. There should be a sense of victory and accomplishment, and the vision of the future should be clear and easily seen.

E-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Today the use of computer technology is enhancing the work of macro social workers in community development. For example, nonprofits can participate in community voice mail, a basic telecommunications system shared by an entire community of social service agencies that help their clients get the kinds of messages many of us take for granted. By using computers linked to telephone lines and direct inward dials (DIDs) purchased from the phone company, agencies can provide clients with personalized seven-digit phone numbers that can be accessed from any touch-tone phone, 24 hours a day.

In addition, experiments in the use of the Internet to support and encourage community development efforts have drawn on the resources of government and its power to legitimize grassroots organizing through community economic planning and development. Beginning in 1994, for example, the Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (TIIAP) began funding projects such as economic development and services to homeless people. Focusing on local grassroots efforts, TIIAP works to create a social network of people who are thinking about community networking, link them together, help them conduct experiments, and facilitate the learning process.¹⁰⁷

Since 1995 the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been working with local businesses, CDCs, and others to develop community technology centers in HUD housing programs. In Harlem, a small computer technology center operating in the basement of a housing development has grown into the Community Technology Centers Network (CTCNet), a network of more than 1,000 community technology centers throughout the nation in both urban and rural

communities that provide public access hours, promote technology education in low-income communities, assist in advocacy efforts, and offer job training. These centers are also working with populations whose language and culture are underrepresented on the Internet to produce culturally relevant content.¹⁰⁸

CHALLENGES IN THE SECOND DECADE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Fifty years after the first CDCs came upon the scene in the early 1960s, the second decade of the 21st century has seen community development and community development corporations become a major force in communities across the United States, Canada, and in other parts of the globe. However, CD continues to face significant challenges.

Just as with other social programs, CDCs continue to face problems as national political administrations continue to favor spending hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars on military protection and intervention across the globe, but provide relative pittances for community development that is dedicated to revitalizing the economic, political, and social infrastructure of our own nation. The dependency of CDCs on government funding sources often makes them timid in challenging government policies and programs, putting them on the defensive and promoting a strategy of accommodation rather than proactive engagement. Community development in the second decade of the 21st century needs to become more politically engaged, and although many are advocating for this, evidence shows that this process is slow in coming.

CDCs can achieve more independence and become more politically active by moving in a more entrepreneurial direction, especially by developing new social enterprise organizations, as described in Chapter 10. Since no legal category exists defining and allowing for them, social enterprises have no official recognition, as they do in European countries. CDCs in the second decade of this century need to press for legalization of special categories of tax exemption for social enterprise organizations.

CDCs should also pursue more social programs and services, including group work services, job development, and social care. The vision of future

CDCs may be similar to the one that Specht and Courtney describe as social service centers, where a variety of social work programs and functions exist together.¹⁰⁹ Social entitlement to funding for CDCs and other social programs needs to be on the agenda of every social worker, and particularly for macro social workers. CDCs can be a significant means by which macro social workers expand the social commons.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you learned that that one of the decisive efforts at community self-empowerment and independence is the growth of community development and community development corporations. You learned that CD encourages the values of citizenship and citizen participation in the life of the community, promotes education in civic pride and civic consciousness, and sees in the community itself an arena where the public interest can become a living force for good. You discovered that from its inception in the 1960s into the decade beginning in 2010, community development has grown numerically and in its accomplishments. Community development today comprises a strong network of corporations with healthy connections with business, foundations, government, and support intermediaries, in both the United States and Canada.

You discovered that while CD began primarily as an effort of community economic development (CED), by the first decade of the 21st century its perspective had broadened to include political community development (PCD), community social development (CSD), and the involvement of a number of CD intermediaries.

You explored CED and its various approaches to CD, including the market-based approach, the community investment approach, the community wealth approach, and the partnership approach. You learned about community political development, including the community organization, consensus building, and community benefits approaches. You explored community social development. You discovered what CSD consists of, and how macro social workers help CDCs use community social investment and social development approaches to build the social structures of their communities.

You also explored how to build a CDC through its various steps and how to exit from a community when the CDC is strong enough to stand on its own. You learned how many communities use e-community development.

Today, community development is strong, but there is a need for renewed community development effort by macro social workers. Community development corporations provide an exciting, fulfilling, and creative arena for macro social work practice.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The practice of community development draws upon all of one's leadership and problem-solving skills, enhancing your growth and mastery by using those skills in a variety of ways. Think about your own needs for professional growth. How well do you think performing community development would assist you in becoming a whole, masterful individual?
2. Comment on this statement: Becoming skilled in community development allows you to expand your career options for the future. For example, a social worker trained to perform psychotherapy will, for the most part, always be a limited to psychotherapy. As a macro social worker skilled in community development, you will not only be able to work with communities but will learn how to develop new programs and services, and engage skills that could lead becoming an administrator, a community organizer, a management consultant, and engage in planning as your interests, skills, and capabilities change and develop. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? What is your perspective on the utility of becoming a community developer?

EXERCISE 8.2

Choosing a Community Development Problem

Jane Addams, upon visiting Toynbee Hall in England, caught a vision of a way to revitalize communities in Chicago. Today, many of our communities are faced with problems similar to those Addams confronted.

We have many communities of immigrants, deteriorating inner cities, increased violence, racial turmoil, and gangs. As you consider the kinds of social problems facing our cities and rural areas, think of what kinds of community development programs or solutions might work. Write an essay on ways that a social work community developer might help those communities improve.

EXERCISE 8.3

Critiquing Community-Based Social Care

Harry Specht and Mark Courtney have proposed an alternative way of revitalizing not only our communities but also the social work profession. If possible, obtain a copy of their book, *Unfaithful Angels: How Social Work Has Abandoned Its Mission*. Critique their proposal for a community-based system of social care. Could such a comprehensive approach including community planning, community development and community organization work? What are its benefits? What are its costs? What forces of resistance would have to be overcome? What political issues would it encounter? Would it solve the problem of the demise of community in our modern age? Can you think of ways to improve this model, or can you come up with a model of your own?

EXERCISE 8.4

Researching Social Development Efforts

"The Settlement House movement, the YMCA movement, the Salvation Army of the 1880s and 1890s, the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s, the War on Poverty of the 1960s, the wide variety of self-help groups, the civil rights movement, the Peace Corps, and President Clinton's National Service Corps are all models by which we can build communities that change people, give purpose and meaning to people's lives, and enable us to care about and love one another,"¹¹⁰ assert Specht and Courtney.

Research these efforts and compare them. What were they trying to accomplish? Is there anything we can learn from them about adding purpose and meaning to people's lives, and enabling us to care about and love one another? Would you recommend reviving or expanding any of these models today?

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9

The Practice of Community Organizing

The Iron Law of Community Organizing

Never do anything for people that they can do for themselves.¹

Ernesto Cortes

Liberation of the Oppressed

In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity, ... become oppressors of the oppressors, but rather restorers of the humanity of both. This is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed; to liberate themselves and their oppressors. Oppressors who oppress, and exploit and rape by virtue of their power, cannot find the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both.²

Paulo Freire

The Limits of Tyrants

Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the mighty roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one; it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle.

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what people will submit to and you have found the exact amount of injustice and wrong that will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.

Frederick Douglass

Violence

Let us not forget, when we talk of violence, that the death of a young mother in childbirth is violent; that the slow starvation of the mind and body of a child is violent; let us not forget that hunger is violent, that pain is violent, that oppression is violent, that early death is violent; and that the death of hope is the most violent of all. The organizer brings hope to the people.³

Si Kahn

Ideas in This Chapter

**WHEN YOU HAVE TROUBLE IN SAN ANTONIO,
CALL THE COPS**

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ORGANIZING?

New Program Initiatives

More Responsible Government

Overcome Corporate Deviance

Political Involvement

WHY COMMUNITY ORGANIZING?

Empowered Community

Justice-Seeking Community

Communal Solidarity

Community of Civil Discourse

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING
IN AMERICA**

Labor Organizing

The Progressive Era (1880–1915)

School Community Centers (1900–1929)

Saul Alinsky and Coalition Style Organizing
(1935–1940)

Community Organizing in the 1940s

1950s: Fred Ross and Cesar Chavez

The Turbulent 1960s

1970s: Social Networks and Issue-Based
Organizing

Community Organizing in the 1980s and 1990s

The Impact of Community Organizing in the
2000s

HOW TO PRACTICE COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Familiarizing Yourself with the Community

Choose an Organizing Model

Hold a Series of House Meetings

Form an Organizing Committee

Develop the Organization's Structure

Guide Your Members Through the Action
Process

Negotiating and Securing Your Demands

Move On to Consolidate Your Victories

End Your Involvement

**HOW TO BECOME A PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY
ORGANIZER**

CONCLUSION AND A CHALLENGE FOR YOU

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

ADDITIONAL READING

WHEN YOU HAVE TROUBLE IN SAN ANTONIO, CALL THE COPS

Mayor Henry Cisneros called the faith-based Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) “the voice of 150,000 families.” Sonia Hernandez, however, remains skeptical about the claims of politicians. “We reject expansion based on boosterism,” as she put it. She defined the relationship in a different way: “We rather call upon our public officials to challenge us as well as challenge them to be reciprocal, collaborative, and consultative as we cooperatively forge a new vision and a new consensus for San Antonio.”⁴ Behind this kind of exchange is a specific organizational philosophy: “Politicians’ work is to do our work,” Hernandez explained. “When you’ve got somebody working for you, you don’t bow and scrape. It’s not meant to show disrespect. When politicians deliver, we applaud them. Not until then.”

The point of COPS, she continued, is not politics as usual. “COPS is about people, mainly poor people,

who have decided to do something about their lives.”⁵ “There isn’t anyone around—not a mayor or a governor—who is going to come in and do anything for us. We are going to do it for ourselves. If we ever lost that touch, we would cease to be COPS,” explained one leader. “If one of our members is thinking of running for office, he will be asked to resign. We will never divide or dilute our numbers by endorsing particular candidates, but we will hold all elected officials responsible for their actions. We will be the conscience of public servants.”⁶

In 1973 Father Edmundo Rodriguez invited community organizer Ernesto Cortes Jr. and the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) to help the Mexican American community in San Antonio try to get itself together. Cortes, who grew up in San Antonio in the 1940s and 1950s, brought back with him the organizing skills he had learned at the Industrial Areas Foundation and a great zeal to see his own people gain power and new dignity. Prior efforts had failed.

A variety of advocacy groups had formed around specific issues such as school reform or the environment.

But these issue-oriented groups often ignored communities. It wasn't that people were unconcerned; it was that they had rarely been asked what they were most concerned about.

Cortes' basic approach was to listen. "I began to interview pastors and from them got the names of lay leaders in the parishes," he remembers. "I kept records and tapes of each conversation."⁷ Through the course of perhaps a thousand interviews during the first year, Cortes gained a detailed sense of what mattered most to people in the neighborhoods. It didn't turn out to be the more visible issues that politicians or Chicano militants usually talked about—things like police brutality or racial discrimination. Instead, it was the problems close to families and neighborhoods, such as housing, utility rates, and drainage. It "was like one of those lightbulbs that suddenly appears in cartoons."⁸ The issues that COPS initially addressed broke the mold. So too did those who became the leadership.

COPS built around the moderates, not the activists on the left or the conservatives on the right. It didn't begin with the politicians or people in public life; it grew from the people who run the festivals, who lead the PTAs, whose lives have been wrapped up with their children, their parishes, and their jobs. "What COPS has been able to do is give them a public life, the tools whereby they can participate,"⁹ observes Sister Christine Stepes, the staff director of the organization. Furthermore, Cortes sought an entirely different base of organizing. For Ernie Cortes, it was hard to imagine effectively organizing the Mexican American community in San Antonio without drawing explicitly on the religious language and stories of the people or building on the Catholic Church as an institution.

Cortes saw the church as the center of strength in the community. But this did not mean that the church doled out service to people. "Our iron rule of organizing is 'never do anything for people that they can do for themselves,'" asserted Cortes.¹⁰ In San Antonio such an approach meant that Cortes conducted dozens of training workshops on doing research, chairing meetings, keeping leadership accountable, dealing with the press, breaking down problems into manageable parts, and others.

COPS did not seek funds from any government, foundation, or corporate agency. Combining several principles of financial independence by charging dues supplemented with funds from a grant, the remaining budget was raised through sales of an ad book. In

addition, COPS stressed the development of new leadership. Every individual organization is free to take on local neighborhood issues it chooses. On larger issues, it can ask for aid from the whole organization. Leadership is elected at every level, and top leaders and staff directors alike must change regularly.

COPS held its first annual convention in the auditorium of Jefferson High School on November 23, 1974. More than 1,000 delegates jammed the auditorium, adopting a constitution and a plan for seeking \$100 million in city improvements in sidewalks, libraries, and parks, and strategies for fighting problems such as air pollution. To an outside observer the meetings may have seemed spontaneous and unruly at best. But behind the events were weeks of planning, discussion, research, and role playing that taught people to express themselves in a new way, simultaneously articulating and controlling their buried anger.

The previous year the organization had drawn up a Texas-wide plan with planks such as increased aid for school districts with low student achievement scores, state money to help schools cope with immigrant students, and increased funds for bilingual education. A number of organizing efforts around the state also backed the plan, and the Democratic gubernatorial candidate pledged his support. But before the education effort was ever formulated, extensive discussion had occurred in each parish of the organization.

COPS had an educational process all its own. "It's like a university where people go to school to learn about public policy, learn about public discourse, and about public life," said Ernesto Cortes.¹¹ People reflected on what schools were like in biblical times. They looked at how schools had changed and at the needs of poor people for education today. Behind such discussion is a particular approach to the organization members. "Each person is an individual and you address people as individuals.... You make sure each person has an understanding of what we are going to do and why and what his or her role is."¹²

Treating each member as an individual, capable of making a contribution, soon generated the reputation that the organization was amazingly well prepared. People gained detailed knowledge about the educational system and its problems. As reporter Paul Burke put it in the *Texas Monthly*, it soon became apparent that the COPS rank and file knew more about the issues than did supposedly expert public officials: "The authorities weren't so smart after all."¹³

The stage was now set for COPS' intervention in the political process. All during this time, COPS had been evolving a positive understanding of itself and collaborative politics as a political alternative to "politics as usual" in America. "There can be no transformation of the human spirit without development of practical wisdom and meaningful action through the practice of collaborative politics,"¹⁴ asserts Ernie Cortes.

COPS began to encourage businesses coming into the community to pay a decent wage. Comments Beatrice Cortez, an organization leader, "We realized that you could only do so much with neighborhood improvement. We did research and found out San Antonio paid the poorest wages of any major city."¹⁵ Indeed, according to the *Commercial Reporter*, wages in San Antonio were 20–40% lower than those in other areas of the country. The city establishment's protestation of innocence turned sour when COPS released a copy of the secret study it had somehow obtained called the Fantus Report, commissioned by the city's Economic Development Foundation. The Fantus Report applauded the city's "relatively unorganized" labor force and concluded that San Antonio's corporate and political leaders "must be careful not to attract industries that would upset the existing wage ladder. This would tend to dissipate the cooperative and competitive advantages enjoyed by existing manufacturers." After COPS exposed this secret citywide collusion to keep the working-class Mexican American community impoverished, their plan for inner-city economic and residential development eventually proved successful, obtaining \$46 million in drainage bonds and another \$8 million in neighborhood improvements. Over the past two decades, COPS has won more than \$750 million in new streets, parks, libraries, and other services.¹⁶

COPS is an organization of organizations, which gives it a certain solidity: parish clubs, church societies, parent groups, youth clubs, senior citizen groups, neighborhood associations, block clubs, and any others interested in seeing nonviolent change for the betterment of their neglected neighborhoods.

Pablo Eisenberg described COPS as the most effective community group in this country. A federal study of American communities commissioned by the National Commission on Neighborhoods detailed the hundreds of millions of dollars worth of improvements in streets, drainage, public facilities, and cleanup that COPS won for poorer neighborhoods in San Antonio.

It described the 5,000 to 7,000 delegates who come each year to the COPS annual convention, and it concluded: "There has been a major shift in power from the wealthy blue blooded Anglos to the poor and working Mexican American families of San Antonio. COPS has been at the center of this shift."¹⁷

EXERCISE 9.1

Community Organizer as Educator

One of the unique characteristics of many community organizations is their emphasis on training and education. As Ernesto Cortez asserted, COPS is like a university. In many respects community centers today, like settlement houses in the past, are also like universities in which action-centered social learning dominated and discussions blossomed into any number of projects for social and human betterment. Think back to Chapter 2, where action-social thinking was described. Recall that people learn in groups when they engage in projects of their own devising. Not only do people learn; they themselves become integrated as a part of the learning process, which begins to generate directions of its own. People are assisted in overcoming self oppression, learn to think for themselves and discard the passive dependent position that is often imposed on them. Consider the role of a social worker in fostering such education in the community. Is the role of a macro social worker as educator and trainer an important one? Why or why not? Is this a role that you would enjoy? How is this role different from or similar to those that clinical social workers occupy?

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

Individuals often feel impotent when facing problems of crime, affordable housing, lack of health care, unemployment and underemployment, and poor schools. Many people in poor neighborhoods have been systematically excluded from getting home loans and earning a living wage. Businesses have been forced out of local communities by large corporate enterprises. Many citizens of color feel inadequately represented by the political system and increasingly alienated from our major institutions.¹⁸

In the face of these problems, says Aaron Davis, “Community organizing must be judged a remarkable if unheralded success. Over the past 45 years organizers have built national networks of grassroots groups, nurtured a dozen training centers, and, in concert with a variety of social movements, greatly enlarged the tactical toolkit of citizen action.”¹⁹ They have improved the lives of millions of people in thousands of campaigns, winning victories in hundreds of local, state, and national issues, and increasing people’s involvement and participation in matters that affect their families and communities.

In this chapter you will learn that community organizations are local countervailing structures that exist in an environment of government bureaucracies and large corporations that sometimes ignore or minimize the needs, interests, and capacities of people in less affluent neighborhoods.

You will explore what community organizations are and many of their accomplishments. You will learn that while tangible victories are necessary, the most important results of community organizing are enlarged stores of social justice, more involved citizenry, and greater access to the political process. People have gained increased openness from governments, and a more level playing field.

You will review how community organizers engage members, build community, create an organization, and engage in action to make needed changes in their neighborhoods. You will learn how to become a community organizer and will discover that community organizing is a fundamental part of a new wave of societal change that is gradually reforming North American society. As community is being reborn, and politics reshaped, locally based community organizing is often at the forefront of those changes.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ORGANIZING?

Community organizing is a process by which citizens in their local neighborhoods articulate issues, form community organizations, and identify targets of injustice. Community organizations carry out strategies and tactics to bring targets to the bargaining table and jointly develop solutions to community problems to make neighborhoods safe and humane social environments over the long term.

In nearly every mid-size to large metropolis in America, most often in poorer neighborhoods but increasingly in middle- and working-class neighborhoods as well, today’s community organizations are permanent structures on America’s social landscape,²⁰ asserts Y. Aaron Davis. They involve millions of people of every ethnic group, religion, age, career, and income level in thousands of tenant and block clubs, churches, neighborhood associations, and social networks dedicated to improving their communities.²¹

Almost any social, political, or economic issue that affects their neighborhoods is within their arena of concern. Developed over a period of more than 70 years, modern community organizing processes, strategies, and techniques have resulted in an amazing number and variety of initiatives centered in the needs and conditions of their local communities. Community organizations have begun new programs, improved government practices and policies, and overcome economic injustice perpetrated by deviant corporate activities. Most significantly, they have contributed to greater political involvement of ordinary citizens in solving social problems that affect their lives. The process by which community members develop civic awareness and create grassroots democracy, actively and meaningfully inserting empowerment and decision making into neighborhoods, remains without doubt the most important and lasting heritage of community organizing.

New Program Initiatives

While community organizations do not often operate community service programs, they may work with planning groups or community development corporations to advocate for and help develop new services. Community organizations have initiated co-ops, credit unions, and community and economic development corporations, as well as new high schools, low-income housing, and health and transportation programs that are supportive adjuncts to political and social action.

More than ten years ago, for example, the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)-East affiliates created the first new smaller, higher-quality public high schools in New York and are considering starting several more. A new Sunday bus service provided over 29,000 trips in the first eight months of 2008 through the efforts of IMPACT of Charlottesville, Virginia. As a result of

the FAST organization's efforts in 2006, a one-stop phone number system now connects seniors to transportation services in St. Petersburg, Florida. In 2006 the LEAD organization of Dayton, Ohio, obtained commitments from two commissioners to hire a Youth Coordinator to work with youth to identify, provide input, and develop criteria to evaluate new and improved programs for youth.

LOGAN SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (LSNA)

This is the story of a group of residents, working through the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA) in the city of Chicago, who decided that enough was enough. Many of the long-time community residents felt that they were entitled to a say in the future of their neighborhood. When Cotter & Co., which had been in the community for decades, decided to sell its warehouse and office space at the intersection of Damen and Clybourn in 1996, old-time residents made up their minds to fight for a new use of the land that would continue to provide community jobs and not drive residents out. "We were very concerned that we would not be able to afford to stay in our own community," says Liala Beukema, pastor at the Church of the Good News on Wellington Avenue and a community resident. "Transformation was happening around us, and we felt that we deserved to have a voice."

The community contacted Costco and proposed to work with them to relocate on the Cotter property. Costco agreed fairly quickly to the community's requests, but there was still a lot of work to do. "City hall gave Costco the impression it would be hard to work with us. That we were antagonistic and negative thinking people. We're working very well together, in fact. And they are working with us, treating the community respectfully. And they are hiring our people."

Training was carried out in conjunction with the New City YMCA's Local Employment and Economic Development (LEED) Council, and was made available in both Spanish and English. LSNA did the recruiting. Seventy people from the immediate neighborhood went through the four-week job readiness training, and 32 were hired. Six months later, 30 of the original 32 were still working. Another couple of dozen people from Logan Square were hired who did not need the basic training. "It's great fun to go into Costco," says Aardema, "because people start calling to you. We've been in this community a long time, and we were working for this moment."²²

More Responsible Government

Community organizations keep a close watch over the extent to which local government spends money for public services, ensuring that they provide effective municipal services including maintenance, public education, transportation, health, housing, and public safety—all the things that touch us where we live.

Municipal Maintenance Community organizations expect local governments to provide equitable and efficient municipal infrastructure and maintenance including snow and garbage removal, recycling waste, or fixing potholes. Between 1996 and 2005, Jacksonville's ICARE, for example, presented lists of infrastructure needs to the mayor's office, obtaining over 250 street repairs, improved street lighting, drainage improvements and removal of abandoned buildings. In its "Dirty 30 Campaign," over half the properties it cited were either leveled or restored to safe condition. The LEAD organization pressured the city of Dayton to increase from 75 to 200 the number of dilapidated buildings demolished in 2005.

IAF affiliates have pushed for the large-scale removal of blight and reconstruction of intensely devastated areas in several cities. In May 2007, TUSA's Nehemiah Action Assembly successfully secured legislation from Ohio's Toledo City Council to issue stiffer penalties for housing code violations and the creation of ten new code inspector positions, leading to improved rehabilitation of many dilapidated houses in poor neighborhoods. In that same year, due to BUILD's efforts, the Code Enforcement Division in Fayette County, Kentucky, agreed to step up its inspections of trailer parks, some of which had rotting floors, leaking roofs, and open sewage systems.

Public Education Community organizations work to assist children to succeed in schools by getting parents more involved, slowing the dropout rate, improving performance, and implementing many interventions to help schools be more effective.

Community organizations hold public school officials accountable for training teachers to use improved reading curricula in low-performing public schools and increase literacy rates. After continued pressure from the GLADE organization in 2004, the mayor of Lansing, Michigan, agreed to double the size of a high-quality mentoring program proven to keep kids in

school and raise their grades. Direct action and research training (DART) organizations, in addition, have worked with principals and teachers to develop programs to prevent school bullying, reduce truancy, and improve school-wide behavior/discipline and school suspension policies. As a result of the TEAM organization's advocacy efforts, for example, rather than remain out of school, suspended children in Tallahassee are now provided a supervised academic environment called the Center for Student Intervention (CSI).

Because of their close relationships with local schools, DART affiliates have succeeded in helping develop quality teacher training and retention policies, correct building maintenance problems, and improve school-based health programs. Community organizations have challenged school boards to develop early childhood development, preschool and after-school programs, and post-graduation planning for high school students such as the IAF-East Child First program for children from at-risk families in Baltimore.

Public Transportation People in many low-income areas lack accessible transportation to do even basic things such as getting a higher-paying job a little further away from home, taking a child to the doctor's office within the lunch hour, or depositing a check in the bank before closing. Community organizations hold city and transit authorities accountable for ensuring that quality and affordable public transportation is available to all. DART affiliates, for example, have secured federal funds to create free, around-the-clock assistance to seniors in need of transportation, and in 2005 the TEAM organization helped prevent a reduction in funding for Dial-A-Ride, which provides transportation for the disabled and elderly in Tallahassee. Even though Ohio law does not require school districts to transport high school students, in 2008 the Springfield, Ohio, JAM organization secured a commitment to provide transportation for students living two miles beyond Springfield High.

Tampa's HOPE organization successfully leveraged the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit to spend \$1.1 million to extend late-night bus service until 1 a.m. on nine priority bus routes during the week and two extra hours on weekends. In response to pressure from BUILD in Lexington, Kentucky, the city opened two new bus routes in 2007 to provide access to dense employment areas of the city. After much research

and successful campaigning, in 2003 the FAITH organization secured a commitment from the Volusia County Council to expand the hours of Votran from 7:30 p.m. until midnight in Daytona Beach, Florida. PACT successfully pressured the mayor of Miami to double the fleet of buses in its overall transit improvement plan at a cost of \$3 billion. Through the efforts of IMPACT of Charlottesville, Virginia, a new Sunday bus service provided over 29,000 trips in the first eight months of 2008.

Improved Health Care The rising cost of health care is a growing crisis, forcing many families to decide between paying their rent, buying groceries, or going to the doctor. Community organizations are at the forefront of pressing for improved, if not universal, health care. In 2006, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO), an IAF affiliate in Massachusetts, successfully organized the passage of sweeping health care reform that codifies into law the principle that in Massachusetts all governments, individuals, and businesses are mutually responsible for ensuring the common health. It implemented this principle by providing free or subsidized health care for all Massachusetts residents who earn up to 300% of the poverty rate.

Community organizations have pressured governments to fund new primary health care and much-needed dental clinics for the uninsured. In 2004, the Lakeland, Florida, PEACE organization, for example, won a stunning victory when voters passed a ballot initiative authorizing a half-cent sales tax to fund indigent health care clinics for 120,000 uninsured in the county, the first of which opened in November 2007. Tampa HOPE's efforts resulted in increased dental services for 15,000 low-income residents in Hillsborough County, and in Evansville, Indiana, the CAJE organization secured unanimous approval to fund a Community Dental Clinic, which opened its doors on June 26, 2006. The clinic provided almost \$300,000 of dental care for 1,700 patients in its first six months of operation.

Community organizations have obtained commitments from hospitals to provide free care and discounts for families with low and moderate incomes who cannot afford health insurance. Other organizations hold private hospitals accountable for reducing wait times, providing basic health care benefits to city employees, increasing public health care for children, and making health care more accessible to non-English speaking

citizens. With the assistance of its bilingual organizer in 2004, for example, four Hispanic congregations of the Louisville CLOUT organization obtained the city health department's commitment to hire bilingual staff at municipal family health clinics. Following these victories members persuaded the city to translate a booklet on tenant rights and compliance procedures, and pressured the owners of three major apartment complexes to translate their leases into Spanish.

Better and More Affordable Housing Community organizations work to obtain funds to increase affordable housing for low-income families and make sure housing authority officials use publicly financed trust funds to build housing. In 2004, for example, ICARE won a \$1.2 million increase in Community Development Block Grant allocation toward affordable housing in Jacksonville, and GBIO pressured the state of Massachusetts to invest an additional \$100 million toward affordable housing for its low-income citizens.

DART organizations make certain that officials establish and enforce rules demanding that new housing construction include financing and affordable units for the homeless. The Columbus, Ohio, BREAD organization's Jubilee Housing Campaign, for example, successfully obtained commitment from Columbus and Franklin County to create an Affordable Housing Trust Fund, providing more than 500 units of housing for low-income families in 2007, and after continued pressure from BREAD, tripling the amount of money being invested in the Trust.

Not only do locally based community organizations help members of their local communities, but when skyrocketing costs of housing leave the option of homeownership beyond the reach of many people, issue-based community organizations work at the federal level to develop programs and obtain national housing legislation for the benefit of all communities.

In 1990, for example, the issue-based National People's Action (NPA) organization was largely responsible for passage of the National Affordable Housing Act, by which more than 450,000 affordable housing units have been acquired, constructed, or rehabilitated and nearly 84,000 tenants have received direct rental assistance. In 1996 the act was amended to provide funds for nonprofit organizations, and entire communities reclaim vacant and blighted properties, increase homeownership, and promote economic revitalization.

Improved Police Protection By addressing law enforcement, judicial, and correctional systems, community organizations throughout the country assist in removing the scourge of crime and violence from our communities. Some work to improve community-oriented policing. The Lakeview, Minnesota, Community Action Council, for example, persuaded the police chief to extend police bike patrols into late-night hours, contributing to a decrease in the number of hate crimes and gay bashing, and improving police-community relations. Grassroots Leadership, in 2007, won a major victory in Pike County, Mississippi, convincing citizens to defeat a proposal to build a for-profit private prison by a vote of 58% to 41%.

Drug Abuse Prevention Community organizations have conducted hard-hitting campaigns to prevent drug abuse and reduce racial profiling. DART affiliates increased pressure on law enforcement to make arrests in "hot spots" where drug sales, prostitution, and other criminal activities are known to occur. They created drug courts to allow nonviolent drug offenders to obtain substance abuse treatment rather than jail time. In 2008 the BREAD organization campaigned to expand the Franklin County, Ohio, drug court, achieving a rearrest rate of only 17%, compared to a 60% rate for those who had been incarcerated. As a result of CLOUT's Annual Action campaign in 2007, the chief justice of the Kentucky Supreme Court agreed to double the size of its drug court program and provide more training for judges. The BUILD organization succeeded in obtaining \$175,000 to establish a drug treatment program for women in Kentucky's Fayette County jail in 2006 and has followed up each year since to ensure that the program remains operating.

The FAITH organization secured a long-sought commitment from the Daytona Beach chief of police in 2005 to double the size of the city's narcotics unit, allowing for a much-needed focus on drug enforcement. At the national level, NPA helped rewrite asset forfeiture regulations in the 1990s to allow community groups to receive up to 15% of assets including real property seized from drug dealers, which can be used to subsidize affordable housing and other community programs.

End Racial Profiling Following department policy, Cicero, Illinois, police officers had routinely stopped drivers merely for having a foreign appearance. The

Interfaith Leadership Project (ILP) of Cicero, Berwyn, and Stickney successfully petitioned the Cicero Police Department to end its policy of racial profiling. ABLE leaders in the Atlanta area worked with the new mayor of Sandy Springs to address massive police “traffic” stops that targeted Latinos. Bringing together Muslim, Christian, Arab, Latino, and African American member groups, Gamaliel Foundation’s MOSES affiliate won an anti-profiling ordinance in Detroit in 2007. In 2008 a coalition of organizations in Minneapolis and St. Paul obtained passage of an ordinance prohibiting police officers and other city officials from inquiring about a person’s immigration status unless required by state or federal law.

Overcome Corporate Deviance

The action-social model compels community organizers to fight against corporate deviance. Community organizers understand how large corporate organizations use economic advantage and political power to serve their own interests, often to the detriment of ordinary citizens. When community organizers and members recognize corporate deviance, they confront local corporations over insurance rates, housing, finance, jobs, and health care. They create mortgage and debt counseling services, and strengthen minority hiring policies and accessible workforce training programs. They pressure banks to stop redlining, provide home improvement loans in low-income communities, demand increased production of affordable housing, renovate slum buildings, and end rent gouging. Most importantly, community organizations have forced many corporations to pay living wages, end predatory lending practices, assume responsibility for infractions of health and safety regulations, engage in neighborhood reinvestment, and promote jobs and job training.

Living Wage Legislation Through the efforts of IAF-East affiliates in Baltimore, the nation’s first living wage bill was designed and passed in 1994, and in 1996 a second such bill was secured in New York. Following these victories, IAF affiliates in Texas, Arizona, and elsewhere successfully obtained living wage legislation in their communities. A broad coalition of community organizations, spearheaded by ACORN affiliates in 1998, convinced the Chicago City Council to require all city contractors to pay their employees at least

\$7.60 per hour, and expanded this victory to win wage increases for state-employed homecare workers, nursing home workers, and group home workers as well.

In 2004 the Gamaliel Foundation’s LEAD organization won passage of a living wage ordinance in the city of Dayton. In 2006 the RISC organization won commitments from the Richmond, Virginia, City Council for a living wage ordinance for city contract employees, many of whom saw a pay increase of \$9.50 an hour. On the national level, on May 24, 2007, ACORN won an unprecedented victory when the U.S. House of Representatives raised the federal minimum wage over the next three years from \$5.15 to \$7.25 by a vote of 348 to 73, giving many low-wage workers their first boost in a decade.

Health and Safety Risks When companies pose a health or safety risk to neighborhoods, community organizations force them to correct those hazards. In 1996 a large coalition of community-based and environmental organizations known as WASTE (Westside Alliance for a Safe, Toxic-free Environment) convinced the city of Chicago to close down the Northwest Incinerator, a major source of air pollution in a densely populated neighborhood. In 2004 the IAF-East affiliate won a lawsuit against the Hudson County, New Jersey, Honeywell Corporation, forcing the company to spend \$400 million to remove toxic chromium from Jersey City sites. Property owned by the Canadian Pacific Railroad was neither secured nor maintained and presented a real threat to the safety of children in Chicago. In 1998 Blocks Together successfully pressed the railroad to secure, maintain, and monitor its right-of-way.²³

Stop Predatory Lending ACORN had a long history of demanding that financial institutions deal fairly with low-income people. In April 2004 ACORN members put pressure on Wells Fargo at its annual meeting in San Francisco, and in May protested predatory lending at its offices in Louisiana, promoting legislation and regulation, targeting specific offenders, and providing education and outreach.

Since 2005, National People’s Action (NPA) corporate accountability campaigns have resulted in national anti-predatory lending agreements with CitiFinancial, Fairbanks Capital, and Owen Financial Corporation, along with national agreements with the Fannie Mae Corporation to provide \$4 billion in home

loans to residents of low-income neighborhoods. The Ohio Coalition for Responsible Lending's 1,700 leaders at BREAD's 2007 Nehemiah Action Meeting secured passage of H.B. 545, limiting the interest that payday lenders can charge.

Jobs and Job Training Community organizations work for fair immigration policies, naturalization, and job training for immigrants and former recipients of public assistance, as well as dozens of other issues important to low-income communities. In 2008 HOPE of Tampa, for example, successfully pressed for funding birth certificates, identifications, and a voice mail system for at least 1,000 homeless people, helping them secure jobs. Several DART organizations have worked for passage of first source agreements, requiring companies that receive tax abatements to ensure disadvantaged workers are considered the "first source" for filling entry-level jobs in Ohio, Arizona, Missouri, and Colorado.

The affiliates of IAF-Southwest pioneered the training and preparation of workers for high-tech and higher-paying jobs through the Quest job training effort. The organization of the Northeast and a number of its Mutual Aid Associations improved the wages and working conditions of public employees and employees of firms with municipal contracts, adding more women and minorities to public employment, and pushed private corporations to expand opportunities for these groups as well.

Political Involvement

Many community organizations help increase citizen involvement in the political process and enable them to become politically active by organizing "get out the vote" campaigns. Just as important, community organizations become schools for democracy, instituting into their processes a means by which people can be authentic political actors rather than mere spectators.

Get Out the Vote Campaigns Since the late 1950s, community organizations, particularly Saul Alinsky's IAF and Fred Ross's Community Service Organizations (CSOs), have been heavily invested in voter rights, particularly for African Americans and Mexican Americans, helping secure the landmark National Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its extension in 2006. Many community organizations become involved in voter

registration campaigns. ACORN members and workers have gone door-to-door in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, and in 2004 helped more than 1.7 million citizens register to vote, the largest nonpartisan voter registration effort in U.S. history. In the 2008 election, ACORN helped over 1.2 million people register to vote in 26 states across the country. These efforts have resulted in more extensive political involvement of Mexican Americans and African Americans and their increased election to public office over the last several decades.

Schools of Civic Democracy While the various activities and victories of community organizations are increasingly impressive, their most important and prominent accomplishments lie in sustaining the basic principles of a democratic way of life, helping citizens act out the democratic process at the local level in their own communities. Politically engaged community organizations no longer simply accept dominant power arrangements or the existing culture as givens. They help us shift the balance of power and make politics accessible to people by providing a collective means of engaging in decision making at the grass roots. Local community organizing affiliates serve as "schools of public life," empowering neighborhood residents, especially people of color, low-income groups, immigrants, sexual minorities, and youth, who are often "absent from the table" of decision-making power, "to do something about things that [they] have been frustrated about all their lives."²⁴ Community organizations bring decision making back to the level of ordinary people, where it counts.

"Community organizing," says Mike Miller of the Organize Training Center, "transforms individuals and communities, making them mutually respectful co-creators of public life rather than passive objects of decisions made by others."²⁵ Being authentic partners with government and business not only enables those who have been routinely excluded to gain leverage and recognition; it also changes their understanding, self-perceptions, and capacity to live their lives to the fullest. Community organizations maximize the people-making capacity inherent in agenda setting, strategizing, project construction, and direct personal engagement of those in seats of power. Community organization devotes considerable time and resources to helping members enlarge their thinking, enhance imaginative reflection, develop personal skills, engage

relationships, promote leadership capacity, and increase responsibilities.

WHY COMMUNITY ORGANIZING?

Ordinary people in communities have always suspected something that government officials and politicians are only now beginning to realize—“Those macro, top-down solutions don’t work,”²⁶ says Harry Boyte. Powerful government redevelopment agencies that tear down the slums and build high-rise corporate offices will not solve our social problems. The solution to urban social problems does not lie in destroying neighborhoods but in empowering them. Politicians passing laws will not solve them. If politics is expected to work, democracy can no longer be the privilege of the wealthy but must be the concern of ordinary people.

Trickle-down economics will not solve the problems of poverty. We will wait forever before wealthy corporations trickle good jobs, good pay, or employment benefits down to us. It is becoming increasingly clear that institutional solutions generated in corporate board rooms, the Oval Office of the White House, the halls of Congress, or state legislatures across the country are often helpless in dealing with issues that matter most to people. “The *only* thing that really works,” says Harry Boyte, “is local initiative.”²⁷ Social change happens when ordinary people working with others make it happen.

Not only does community organizing assist people in making positive changes in their communities in ways that are not possible by the formal processes of society, they also create communal solidarity and civil discourse as no other process is able to do.

Empowered Community

Community organizing continually “seeks to rectify the problem of power imbalance and build a permanent base of people power”²⁸ for those who have been generally excluded from full participation in community and political decision making, asserts Mike Miller, and is a first principle of the action-social model of community organizing. When “the poor and powerless determine for themselves the actions they will take to deal with the forces that are causing them to be powerless,” says Robert Linthecum,²⁹ “and then go on to fight for changes in the distribution of power,”³⁰ they begin seeing that “dominant financial and institutional power

brokers can be challenged and held accountable to values of greater social, environmental and economic justice.”³¹

Justice-Seeking Community

Empowerment is useful only to the extent that it is used in the service of justice. The desire for justice is the driving force that urges people to organize themselves into communities, the impulse that holds them together once they are there, and the goal that those communities strive to achieve. If such a justice-seeking community is not created, says Robert Linthecum, then all that one has accomplished through community organizing is “replacement of one oppressor by another in the tyranny of the now-powerful poor.”³²

Power is never an end in itself. You engage members of a neighborhood to gain power against external threats by forging a justice-seeking community whose members reject oppressing their neighbors. “The final purpose of [action-social] community organization is not simply to enable the weak and vulnerable to confront the issues which are destroying them,” says Linthecum. “Nor is it to enable a community to act powerfully by acting corporately.”³³ The goal of action-social community organizing is to establish a society free from economic, social, and political oppression, in which the oppressed, to paraphrase Paulo Freire, liberate themselves from their self-oppression and liberate oppressors from their compulsion to oppress others. Action-social community organizing understands that if justice is to be created for any one person, it must be created for all. Justice seeking and justice creating are not one-time, short-term events, but a lifelong journey of making a liberated community.

Communal Solidarity

As your members build groups and identify issues, they are simultaneously creating an internal culture of communal solidarity, including a set of shared assumptions and ways of thinking, interpreting, and speaking about the world that help sustain their organizing work as well as maintain themselves as an identifiable and meaningful group. Your goal is to help members forge themselves into a community of moral discourse, see themselves as a community of empowerment, and become justice-seeking community of neighbors.

Community of Civil Discourse

Citizens learn that substantive democracy is “not synonymous with the centralized democratic state apparatus or the structure of mass representative constitutional democracy, nor will those structures be the vehicle of human liberation,”³⁴ say Bowles and Gintis. Instead, people organized into communities of discourse and action discover that political processes are not merely for those at the top but are the prerogative of those at the bottom as well. Members articulate their sense of justice and moral indignation, provide for the expression of diverse opinions, and develop a sense of purpose and a conviction that by coming together they can change the conditions of their lives. You help empower members to seek justice.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IN AMERICA

Labor organizing has been pervasive throughout American history. During the Progressive Era (1885–1915), macro social workers in Charity Organization Societies and settlement houses were already organizing communities. From about 1900 to 1930, the School Community Center movement was a major source of neighborhood organizing efforts. Community organizing came into its own in the 1930s and 1940s, however, with the work of Saul Alinsky.³⁵ During the 1950s and 1960s, community organizing was a major factor in the success of the civil rights and welfare rights movements. Since then, community organizing has broadened its aims, often working in partnership with corporations and government. Community organizing has been an integral, ongoing, and significant factor in the civil life of the United States throughout much of its history and continuing into the 21st century.³⁶

Labor Organizing

Labor organizing, among the most intensive and difficult organizing in America, has existed in this country for more than 350 years. Organizing for worker rights has occurred in blue-collar neighborhoods and adjacent factories, mines, and factory towns. The number of violent confrontations between labor and recalcitrant factory owners and managers throughout our history far exceeds the peaceful, nonviolent demonstrations of

today. Many direct confrontation tactics community organizers have subsequently used such as picketing, marching, boycotts, leafleting, and noncooperation with oppression originated in the struggles of labor organizing. Labor unions perfected the processes of bargaining and negotiation. The struggle for workers’ rights continues internationally today among the 80% of the world’s population who live in poverty.

The Progressive Era (1880–1915)

Community organizing was prominent among early social workers of the Charity Organization Society and settlement houses.

Charity Organization Societies (COS) As the Charity Organization Society (COS) movement evolved, it not only concerned itself with individuals but also paid increasing attention to “pauperism,” a social condition that seemed to keep some people poor. It was natural for charity organizations to focus their efforts in neighborhoods where poor people lived. COS leaders modified their organizational structure to engage communities directly, dividing their operations into districts corresponding to police precincts to get charitable services closer to the people,³⁷ says Howard Hallman.

This locality approach to poverty encouraged many Charity Organization Societies to establish new community services such as anti-tuberculosis committees, housing committees, child labor committees, and remedial loan committees, resulting in the “earliest professional community organization in social work,”³⁸ asserts Michael Williams.

Social Settlements Community organizing was one of the major activities of social settlements. While other types of neighborhood organizing existed during the Progressive Era, says Robert Fisher, “the social work approach, best exemplified in the social settlements, ... dominated the era.”³⁹ The settlement assumed a “special responsibility for all families living within the radius of a few blocks of the settlement house [and] it sustained a general relationship to the larger district encircling the neighborhood,”⁴⁰ bringing about needed changes through direct efforts, mobilization of local resources, and democratic social action.⁴¹

In Boston, for example, settlements helped organize 16 district improvement societies, whose members chose delegates to the citywide United Improvement

Associations (UIAs). These associations “played a positive role in delivering needed services, raising public consciousness about slum conditions, and called for collective action to ameliorate problems.”⁴² They developed institutional resources suited to the needs of a working-class community, including relief of distress and development of neglected recreation.

Settlement workers engaged community members, pushing for municipal reforms to improve sanitation, sewage disposal, and clean water in neighborhoods. Robert Fisher asserts that “there is no question about the sincerity or commitment to social reform of those who made the settlement their life’s work.”⁴³

School Community Centers (1900–1929)

Social reformers active in settlements, recreation, and adult education banded together as early as 1907 to lobby for the after-school use of school buildings as neighborhood social centers. The Rochester Board of Education appropriated funds to use 16 school buildings for civic and social purposes serving both youth and adults. It worked so well that in 1908 a citywide federation of school-based civic clubs was formed. They were used as “centers for voting, employment information, recreation, education, health services, and Americanization programs,”⁴⁴ says Hallman. In 1909, however, ward politicians, fearful of competition, cut off funds for the school centers.⁴⁵

In spite of its short life, the Rochester experience attracted wide attention. By 1911, 48 cities were using 248 school buildings as community centers, and by 1919 these community centers were operating in 197 cities,⁴⁶ says Sydney Dillick. By 1930 New York City alone had almost 500 school community centers, with an annual aggregate attendance of more than 4 million. The school community center was “an organizing center for the life of the neighborhood.”⁴⁷

Saul Alinsky and Coalition Style Organizing (1935–1940)

During the Depression era of the 1930s, the social work approach that had been useful at the turn of the century had much less salience. One reform after another failed to halt the economic depression. The political activist type of neighborhood organizing, most notably the coalition-style organizing of Saul David Alinsky (1909–1972) was a striking innovation. Although he was not

the first to combine political activism with an emphasis on rebuilding a specific community, Alinsky was the first to organize groups that had similar concerns into federated neighborhood coalitions across the nation.⁴⁸

Alinsky believed that mass corporate dominance induces people to accept powerlessness in exchange for security, and the surrender of autonomy in return for being taken care of by those in control.⁴⁹ Through the process of coming together, residents would discover that their individual problems are also the problems of others and that the only hope for solving these problems is by pooling their efforts and building a coalition of existing associations.⁵⁰

While there were many existing community associations in the Back of the Yards, a working-class neighborhood located behind Chicago’s stockyards and meatpacking plants, there was little cohesion among them, observed Alinsky. Beginning with groups of local residents, including neighborhood groups, ethnic clubs, union locals, bowling leagues, and an American Legion post, Alinsky immersed himself in community life to gain an understanding of members’ experiences, customs, and values. As he identified their self-interests, he developed relationships with as many existing organizations and community leaders as possible. He organized block clubs to get people involved at the base. He developed a sponsoring committee of several strong organizations that provided overall support and encouraged others to join.

Gradually, Alinsky developed a coalition of neighborhood organizations and formed an organizing committee. On July 14, 1939, the indigenous leaders of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council (BYNC) held their constitutional convention, attended by 350 delegates representing 109 local organizations.⁵¹

Alinsky’s strategy was to destroy the structure of passivity by stirring up dissatisfaction and discontent, disrupting existing complacent expectations, and breaking down the individualistic orientations of community residents. After every action Alinsky made the leaders take the time to talk about what had happened. They dissected, analyzed, and criticized each event until they understood why they won or lost. Each victory was celebrated with speeches and impromptu parties. Alinsky’s careful organizing paid off. The Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council grew into a vigorous organization,⁵² launching Alinsky on a long career organizing people in poor urban communities around the country.

Community Organizing in the 1940s

In August 1940, Marshall Field III, who was to become one of Alinsky's closest friends, joined with Alinsky and Bishop Bernard J. Shiel in establishing the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF). Alinsky began sending organizers to other working-class neighborhoods in northern industrial cities, to Mexican American communities in the Southwest, and to Kansas City and South St. Paul in America's heartland. The IAF established the Chelsea Community Council (CCC), a coalition of 77 organizations, in 1957; the Citizens Federation of Lackawanna (CFL) in New York in 1958; the Butte Citizens Project (BCP) in Montana in 1959; and in that same year, the Organization for the Southwest Council (OSC) in Chicago. By 1963 both the Northwest Community Organization (NCO) and The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) in Chicago, two of the most famous and important of Alinsky's organizations, were in operation,⁵³ says Williams.

1950s: Fred Ross and Cesar Chavez

Fred Ross and Cesar Chavez, who experienced different conditions in California and the Southwest than did Saul Alinsky in the East and Midwest, developed different but equally effective means of organizing in the 1950s.

Fred Ross House Meeting Style As a result of his organizing experience in several barrios in Southern California, Fred Ross came to Saul Alinsky's attention. In early June 1947, after meeting with Ross, Alinsky hired him as a staff member with the Industrial Areas Foundation. In 1951 the Emil Schwartzhaupt Foundation awarded \$15,000 on an interim basis to assist Mexican Americans in California form Community Service Organizations, or CSOs, with Fred Ross in charge in California and Arizona.⁵⁴

While people of the rural Southwest shared social cohesion and commitment to the locality, Ross knew that many poor people did not already have organizations representing their interests as they did in the industrial North. It was clear to Ross that among Mexican Americans an organization would have to be built house by house, and perhaps in time several organizations could be brought together into a federation.

Instead of the Alinsky coalition model, Ross and his colleagues made as many community contacts as

possible by knocking on doors, getting people's names, and talking with them in their homes, developing the "house meeting" method.⁵⁵ After finding someone willing to sponsor a house meeting, Ross would meet with about 15 local neighbors, building relationships, talking about their own personal and local concerns, and perhaps become part of an organizing committee. They would draft a document detailing issues, including something that the members could do right away.

During the next month or so, Ross and his colleagues would go door to door with those from previous house meetings, repeating the process and inviting neighbors to join an organizing committee. After talking with nearly everyone in the community, Ross had collected a great deal of information about the community, its people, and its problems.

When he had enough people willing to form a community organization, Ross formed the organizing committee. The organizing committee identified two or three key issues and set up a community-wide public meeting or forum. This was the meeting at which the new organization would be established, choose a name and mission statement, elect temporary officers, develop a temporary structure, and decide on the final issues to attack.

CSO programs included voter registration, English and citizenship classes, leadership development, and educational programs. They brought pressure to bear against discriminatory practices in the issuance of motor vehicle licenses, eligibility for welfare benefits, and police misconduct.

Voter Registration Throughout the 1950s the CSOs registered 298,000 persons, providing them with eligibility to vote in the 1960 national election and making it possible for Mexican Americans for the first time to seriously consider running for office. These unprecedented registration totals were essential in reducing much of the discrimination practiced against Mexican Americans.

English Literacy and Citizenship Classes A great deal of time and effort was invested in Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Hanford, Oxnard, Fresno, and San Jose by CSO members in English literacy programs and citizenship classes for Mexican Americans. Over a ten-year period, perhaps 30,000 completed CSO-sponsored classes in English and citizenship, and

by November 1962 virtually all those interested in qualifying for citizenship in Spanish had gone through the program.

Leadership Through the simple device of the house meeting it was possible to bring people together and help move Mexican Americans to work for the solution of their problems. As a result of the efforts of CSO organizers, many citizen leaders were active up and down the state of California, and their impact was evident throughout the rest of the Southwest, especially in Texas and Arizona.

Educational Classes The CSOs' wise leadership and their ability to take a broad view made effective use of "educationals"—groups of members who discussed problem situations, shared ideas, and learned techniques and strategies, often using a Socratic method of question and answer that we understand as social thinking today. Educationals provided skills training, leadership training, dialoguing, critiquing community strategies, and stories of victories and successes.⁵⁶

AN EDUCATIONAL HAS AN IMPACT

Three blacks were refused service by a Mexican American bartender who was a former CSO member. Discussion in the educational, led by Luis Zarate, came to the conclusion that it was just as wrong for a Mexican American to discriminate against blacks as it was for Anglos to discriminate against Mexican Americans. As CSO President Ernest Abeytia said, "We are trying to integrate our people into the community by dispelling discrimination. How in the world are we going to accomplish that if we do the same thing?"

The CSO decided to join the local NAACP in filing suit against the bartender. In view of the tensions existing among many in the black and Mexican American communities toward one another, it is a validation of how the social thinking educational process can change attitudes, and a tribute to the persons involved, that members of the CSO and NAACP could reach such a decision.

The CSO did more than any other organization in California to help the Mexican American community feel a sense of *being* something, as a prerequisite to *becoming* something,⁵⁷ reports Carl Tjerandsen. "It was one of the great contributions of the CSO that it

turned thousands, if not tens of thousands, of people around in their thinking. They became aware not only of their rights as citizens but of their responsibility to work for the benefit of the community."⁵⁸

Chavez's Organizational Linking Model In the early 1950s Fred Ross hired Cesar Chavez to begin organizing CSOs in Oakland. Chavez had personally experienced how large agribusiness interests had exploited migrant farm laborers for years, beginning at the turn of the century with Japanese and Chinese workers, with African Americans and unemployed laborers from southwestern states during the Depression, and in the 1950s and 1960s with Mexican or Central American nationals who possessed few legal rights little education or English skills. Immigrant farm laborers experienced alienation, lack of social cohesion or commitment to a locale, and had virtually no formal associations on which to build an organization, says Gary Delgado.⁵⁹

Using lessons of Alinsky's coalition building and Ross's house meeting models, Chavez realized that to organize the farm workers he would first have to provide a structure to which the laborers would feel attachment and some commitment. The workers had to be convinced that they actually had an interest in the locality and power to approach growers.

Chavez began to help build trust and a sense of community by creating farmworker food and gas buying clubs. These clubs were nonthreatening to agribusiness, but once a number of clubs were organized, they became the basis for organizing the workers. The clubs built social cohesion in the farmworker community. They gave the people a sense of solidarity, a commitment to locality, and an attachment to one another. They helped develop leadership around common issues. The clubs became a source of community strength.

Once the laborers realized that by working together they could improve their situation, Chavez linked their new associations with existing, legitimizing institutions including the church, progressive labor unions such as the UAW and AFSCME, and a number of union locals and members who donated services and time.

On September 8, 1965, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) struck the Delano, California, table grape growers. Almost overnight Cesar Chavez's National Farmworkers Association

(NFWA) transformed itself from a worker's rights organization into a union of farm workers, and voted to join the strike. A year later, shortly after Chavez led a 300-mile pilgrimage from Delano to the California state capitol, Sacramento, AWOOC and NFWA merged to form the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC), AFL-CIO, eventually becoming the United Farm Workers of America (UFWA). The UFWA launched membership drives, picketing, marches, grape and lettuce strikes, national boycotts, and media campaigns; it obtained support from political figures along with intensive negotiations that finally resulted, after five years of struggle, in an unprecedented contract with the major grape growers in California. The union then brought in thousands more lettuce workers in the Salinas and Imperial Valleys and orange workers in Florida.⁶⁰

The Turbulent 1960s

The seeds of the reformist impulses of the 1960s had already been sown by social policies of the 1950s that brought low-interest government-subsidized housing, the GI Bill, new automobiles, and the American dream to middle- and upper-income Americans while offering slums, segregated schools, public transportation, and an urban nightmare to everyone else.

Proliferating community organizations inspired by Alinsky-style organizing had plowed the ground. Community organizing with the CSO organizations and Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers in the West, aided by the Johnson administration's Community Action Programs (CAPs) in major cities of the nation, had stimulated national awareness. An almost simultaneous decision was made on college campuses, in black neighborhoods, Mexican American barrios, and in communities of single mothers on welfare that enough was enough. Community organizing became a major tool of social change, growing into the civil rights and welfare rights movements, mainly in the Northeast, Midwest, and South.

Civil Rights Movement The civil rights movement of the late 1950s and 1960s was built on existing civil rights organizations such as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), founded in 1942, and the Citizenship Schools, under the auspices of the Highlander Folk School. The Highlander Folk School focused on helping adults learn to read so they could pass the

voter-registration literacy tests, fill out driver's license exams, use mail-order forms, and open checking accounts, while secretly teaching democracy and civil rights, community leadership and organizing, strategies and tactics of resistance, building the foundations of the mass community struggles to come. Eventually, close to 69,000 teachers, most of them unpaid volunteers and many with little formal education, taught Citizenship Schools throughout the South.⁶¹ Many of the civil rights and hundreds of other local leaders in black communities across the South attended and taught in Citizenship Schools.⁶²

In addition, numerous small local community civil rights organizations like the Montgomery Improvement Association, which helped lead the famed Montgomery Bus Boycott, provided the impetus for what became a national civil rights movement. The Montgomery Bus Boycott was coordinated through local African American networks and organizations and created a model that would be used in locality-based actions throughout the South, including the development of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which organized African American communities and stimulated community action in the South to register voters and gain voting rights.

1970s: Social Networks and Issue-Based Organizing

Two different styles of organizing appeared in the 1970s: the social networks model and issue based organizing.

Social Networks Organizing In the 1970s the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) opted for a strategy of social network organizing, rooted in the belief that many faith-based institutions such as synagogues and mosques, temples and churches that display strong cohesion, a commitment to justice, and concern for the poor can be transformed into agents of social change.⁶³ Soon other organizations, including the Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO), Direct Action and Research Training (DART), and the Gamaliel Foundation, mobilized large numbers of faith-based organizations, bringing about significant improvements in marginalized communities.⁶⁴ The social networks model promotes the expectation that government will act justly by refusing to give preferential

treatment to middle- and upper-class suburbs and instead recognize the importance of inner cities and working-class neighborhoods. It also expects that corporations will no longer drain money from poor communities without reinvesting an equal amount into them.

BARACK OBAMA AND THE GAMALIEL FOUNDATION

In 1968 the Gamaliel Foundation was created to protect African American homeowners on Chicago's West Side against discrimination by banks and savings and loan institutions. By the 1980s it had progressed into community organizing and in 1982, it hired a recent graduate of Columbia University as one of its first full-time professional organizers. Barack Obama, who was to later become America's first African American president, was charged with organizing the Developing Communities Project on Chicago's South Side. In three years the project became self-sustaining and won a number of victories. After Obama entered Harvard Law School, he continued to conduct training both at Gamaliel Foundation's National Leadership Training events and at the African American Leadership Commission. Since then the Gamaliel Foundation has grown, providing leadership training, consultation, and social justice research for its more than 45 affiliates in 17 states and three provinces of South Africa.

Social network organizations generally use comparable models. When a local community requests assistance in organizing, network staff ask them to form a sponsoring committee that can raise initial funds and guarantee legitimacy for the organizing effort. The network organization provides leadership training, not only in local communities but also in regular ten-day sessions in different parts of the country. In these sessions local community leaders meet other leaders engaged in similar efforts, often with similar problems,⁶⁵ and share experiences, information, and resources. As community leaders interact with a wide variety of people, they come to see power as the craft of arguing, listening, revising views, and compromising, "in exchange for respect and a willingness to compromise from those who now hold power. What often matters is not arriving at a consensus, but a stake in the ongoing dynamic of controversy, resolution and change."⁶⁶ As a result, "hundreds of local faith-based coalitions across the country are now reaching out to

organize millions of middle class and poorer people who are frustrated by the economy, government paralysis, and anti-community corporate policies."⁶⁷

Issue-Based Organizing: National People's Action (NPA) Gale Cincotta, a community organizer for the Organization for a Better Austin, an Alinsky-style organization, joined with Shel Trapp and others to convene a National Housing Conference in Chicago in March 1972, drawing 2,000 delegates from 74 cities in 36 states. Out of this conference came a national membership association on housing, the National People's Action (NPA), and a support organization, the National Training and Information Center (NTIC).

The NPA helped 13 community groups form the Metropolitan Area Housing Alliance, which led a campaign that succeeded in getting the Commission of Savings and Loan Association of Illinois to adopt an anti-redlining regulation in 1974. Turning their attention nationally, this force, supported by grassroots organizations in many other cities and some Washington-based national organizations, pushed until they got Congress to adopt the Federal Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975, one of their most important tools for uncovering redlining practices, and the powerful Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) of 1977. The CRA resulted in more than \$100 billion being invested in neighborhoods and stimulated additional legislation, authorizing a presidentially appointed National Commission on Neighborhoods during the Carter administration.⁶⁸

The NPA fought for and won passage of 14 pieces of national legislation, including the 518(b) HUD payback program, which returned money to FHA homeowners when they were defrauded by sleazy realtors and mortgage bankers. The NPA, in addition, won a massive reinvestment program for targeted neighborhoods by Aetna Insurance Company and by Marriott International, which established school-to-work programs for youth.⁶⁹

Community Organizing in the 1980s and 1990s

By 1981 the number of national training centers, national support networks, and associations of community organizations had expanded to two dozen, including Grassroots Leadership, begun by social worker Si Kahn in the South; the New England Training

Center for Community Organizers in Providence; Heather Booth's Midwest Academy; Mike Miller's Organize Training Center (OTC) in San Francisco; and the Center for Third World Organizing in Oakland.⁷⁰ Three hundred newsletters and periodicals that focused extensively on community organizations existed in 1985,⁷¹ says Williams. The Association on Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA) was formed in 1988 to promote community organization in social work education and practice.⁷²

NPA made important contributions to passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and since 1995 it has collaborated with the Departments of Labor and Justice, and ten community groups, including the Michigan Organizing Project (MOP), Action Through Churches Together in Virginia, and Cincinnati's Working in Neighborhoods (WIN), to put unemployed people back to work.

The Impact of Community Organizing in the 2000s

According to Randy Stoecker, community organizing is experiencing a resurgence in the 21st century, with an explosion of small organizing efforts and the growth of some better-publicized efforts by the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) to obtain living wage ordinances, and by many other groups and networks including the rapidly expanding National Organizers Alliance, which has begun helping to develop job benefits, security, and advancement for organizers.⁷³

The field of community organization has long had tactical sophistication, and it is now developing a strategic vision of how to win significant structural reforms in American society. Both social network and issue-based organizing are exploring new partnerships, alliances, and relationships with labor unions, universities, advocacy think tanks, and state and local chapters of national activist organizations with middle- and upper-middle-class members.

Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N), founded by Fred Ross Jr., for example, adapted his father's house meeting model to rally progressives in the 1980s to oppose U.S. intervention in Nicaragua and El Salvador. In another innovative effort, the Peace Development Fund blends the role of foundation and training center by providing small grants, technical assistance, and leadership development to grassroots peace and social justice organizations across the country. Similarly, on a

local or regional level, the Funding Exchange Network of progressive community foundations brings together activists working on diverse issues through community advisory boards.⁷⁴

HOW TO PRACTICE COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

The action-social process of community organizing described here is a general model that can be used in many organizing situations. It provides a foundation that teaches people how to use the power of the community to make their common voices heard. It offers a means of mutual strength and cohesion in which people decide for themselves what issues are important, and it systematically engages government and corporate structures in an equal forum to pursue those issues. The action-social process uses people's strengths, empowers communities, and builds resources and assets.

You begin by familiarizing yourself with the community and choose an organizing model. You hold a series of house meetings, form an organizing committee that establishes the organization. You guide your members through the action process. You negotiate and secure your demands, and move on to consolidate your victories. When members can carry on without your presence, you end your involvement and move on to another organization.

Familiarizing Yourself with the Community

You immerse yourself in community life to gain an understanding of local social organizations and members' experiences, customs, and values. Families; employed and unemployed workers; merchants; members of ethnic, civil rights, business, civic and neighborhood associations and unions; the wide variety of faith-based organizations should all be within your realm of interest. Identify their self-interests and concerns, and develop relationships with as many of them as possible. You engage in door knocking, actively recruit members and clearly define your role. You explain the purpose of the community organization and look for potential leaders.

Door Knocking You and your volunteer organizers spend a great deal of time knocking on doors, talking to people in neighborhoods to discover issues residents

identify as necessary. “Door knocking” is perhaps the most important activity in which you will engage in the beginning of organizing. It enables you to meet people and draw them out, allows you to learn about them as they learn about you, and gives them a better sense of their collective power.

By your presence you are announcing that something is about to happen, that things are going to be changing in the community. You inspire a vision that change is possible while at the same time you develop relationships with community members, assessing their strengths: their capacities, skills, interests, and motivations.

Actively Recruit Members At the beginning of your efforts, you may need to actively overcome people’s natural reluctance, isolation, and passivity by actively recruiting them to join forces. Alinsky asserts that you must often be like a salesperson trying to convince people to do something, showing people you are credible, creating a convincing picture of what might be, relying on emotional contagion as well as on a factual account of what can be done. “You pull and jolt them into the public arena,” he says.⁷⁵ Alinsky reminds us that if change is to occur, it will only occur when people make it happen.

Until the people recognize that it is they who must do something about their own problems, that it is only they who can be trusted to do the right thing and until they realize that only if they organize enough power in their community that something can be accomplished, nothing will get done.⁷⁶

Define Your Role As a community organizer you never impose yourself on the community but always present yourself as clearly on the side of the people. Affirm your purpose in the neighborhood as someone who will “help build an organization that belongs and will belong to the members.”

Fred Ross asserted that as a staff organizer you need to be able to grasp the aspirations of the people, be sensitive to their feelings, and be able to articulate the concept of “organization” in all kinds of action. You listen and play the role of sounding board, are at ease in relating your own experiences and attitudes, and have patience, frankness, tact, and a willingness to stay in the background so as to not appear to “hog the show.”

Present the Purpose of a Community Organization You begin with your understanding that a people’s organization is open to any association, group, or individual who is concerned about community issues such as fair housing, decent wages, good schools, neighborhood services, quality of neighborhood life, crime, drugs, and jobs.

Identify Potential Leaders Michael Williams reminds you to “try to find natural community leaders as well as those already in charge of existing organizations and associations with whom you will form an organization. Talk to them, discover their concerns, and get them interested in working together on common issues.”⁷⁷

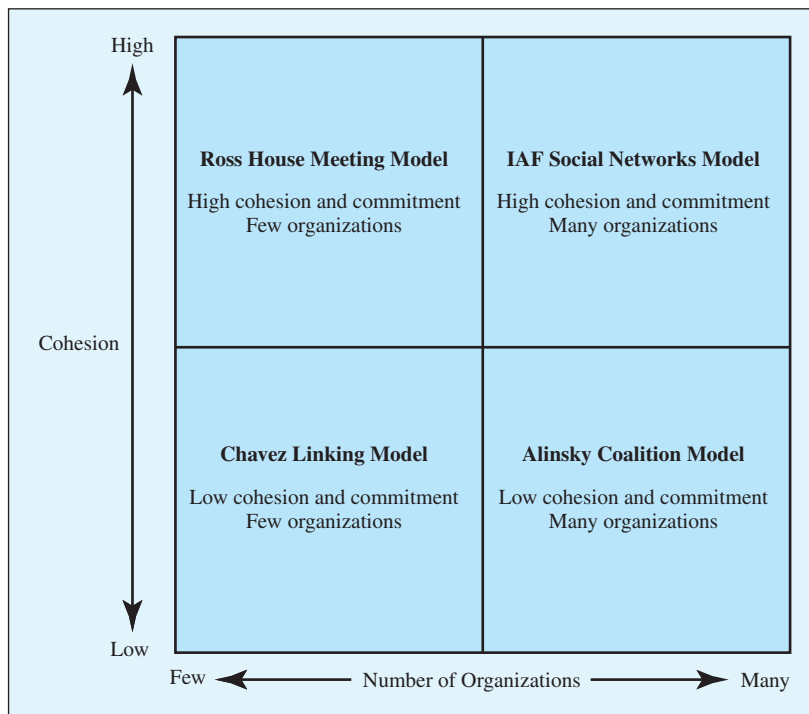
Choose an Organizing Model

After you have familiarized yourself with the community you may have a clear idea about the number of associations that exist and the amount of social cohesion among members. You can use this insight to decide on the kind of organizing model to adopt, using one of the four existing models shown in Figure 9.1. You may also develop your own modification depending on the situation that presents itself in your community.

FOUR MODELS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Saul Alinsky, Fred Ross, Cesar Chavez, and the IAF each developed slightly different ways of doing community organizing based on the kinds of social environment that they confronted. These models can give you some basic ideas, but community organizing is not a static process. Organizing emerges out of the needs of the people and out of the particular situation they confront. When deciding among these models, assess your situation based on the differences between two variables: (1) the number of local associations in the community and (2) the amount of social cohesion that exists between these organizations (see Figure 9.1).

If there are few existing associations in your community and member cohesion, or commitment to locality is low, Cesar Chavez’s linking model may work best. Fred Ross’s house meeting model is useful if there are few existing associations in your community but social cohesion and commitment of members to the locality is high. If there are many existing associations but little cohesion among them, the Alinsky coalition model is useful.



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FIGURE 9.1 Four Models of Community Organizing

Finally, if there are many existing associations in your community and members exhibit strong cohesion and commitment to the community, the IAF/PICO social networks model might be the best one to consider.

go better and the host becomes a kind of assistant leader. Make sure that the first house meeting is representative of a particular neighborhood and that it lasts no more than an hour and a half.

Hold a Series of House Meetings

As soon as you get to know enough people, invite them to an informal meeting in someone’s home. House meetings are evening sessions held in poor communities, where 6 to 12 people focus on specific problems and develop a pre-organizational infrastructure. House meetings save time, use existing resources, build relationships among neighbors, strengthen people’s investment in their neighborhood, and often provide a source of encouragement and support for those attending. You find a sponsor for the meeting, break the ice, help members find their voices, locate a common enemy, and raise expectations, identify issues, and come to a decision.

Find a Sponsor Find someone willing to sponsor the first house meeting, and talk to the host beforehand about what may occur. This will help make the meeting

YOU CONDUCT A HOUSE MEETING

You are meeting with a group of relatives and friends of Señor Sánchez in his house across from the church. Children are playing in and out of the house. You begin by introducing yourself and explaining what you have been doing in other towns in the valley. This soon leads to talk about what is wrong in this town. In no time, there is a list. There are many areas of concern: no school bus routes serving children in the barrio, politicians who pay no attention to Mexican Americans and their problems, no sidewalks or street lights in the barrio, and no medical clinic.

Why is this so? It is because Mexican Americans do not register and vote. So this must be changed. Before the group breaks up, you have commitments from several of those present to bring together their friends and relatives—meeting with them will keep you busy for most of the week.

Break the Ice As guests arrive, greet the members and introduce them to each other. Lead a short “ice-breaker” to help people feel more comfortable. The more deeply people on a block or neighborhood become acquainted with each other, the higher the level of interactive problem solving they may achieve, and the more open they may become to new views and to one another’s concerns.⁷⁸ Describe the purpose of the meeting, and let people know when the meeting will end.

Help Members Find Their Voices By getting to know people, listening to what they have to say, talking to them about issues, and encouraging them to become involved, you advance people’s understanding and their sense of commitment. Talking directly with people in the informal, intimate atmosphere of their homes helps you reach them in a personal way.

People may get involved not only because they are frustrated and angry over local problems that they feel powerless to correct, but because they like you, trust you, or are looking for something meaningful to do. “You play the role of an enabler helping people express their discontents, nourishing good interpersonal relationships, and emphasizing common objectives.”⁷⁹ Encourage members to speak their minds with a spirit of acceptance, and listen carefully to their ideas, concerns, questions, and issues.

Locate a Common Enemy While generalized powerlessness often fragments and demoralizes people, your task in forging community among people is often made easier when they can identify the presence of an external threat that is challenging the strength and solidarity of the community, harming people’s lives, or sapping resources from it. Locating such a common enemy inspires people to band together to fight. A threat helps people who may not have had strong identification to forge stronger bonds, recognize sources of commonality, and value the strengths and resources they previously may have taken for granted.

Raise Expectations You raise people’s expectations about themselves, their families, and their communities. You help people act on their feelings and thoughts rather than remain compliant. You stimulate their energies, engage them in action to gain power, and change the circumstances of their lives.

Identify the Issue The first issue your members decide to tackle is particularly important when they are inexperienced, tentative in their commitment, or when acceptance of the organization and organizers is still in question. Alinsky urges members to select an initial issue that is important to the community, highly visible, easy to win, that provides tangible benefits for the community members, but is not divisive or antagonistic to other local groups.⁸⁰

Important and Visible The issue that members choose should be one that members believe to be important. The concern should be one that most members of the community are aware of and concerned about. Even though you may think other issues are more important and could be addressed more effectively, if residents of a low-income housing project want to improve municipal services, get better health care, or resolve parent-school problems, for example, you help them act on those issues. You never define people’s problems for them or provide solutions.⁸¹ Alinsky says,

The problem must be important to the welfare of the community, and one around which people can be mobilized to action. Begin where people are and help them raise issues of acute concern—lack of police protection, crime, gangs that hang out on street corners, drug abuse, poor maintenance of a housing project, or violence that creates an atmosphere of fear in the neighborhood.⁸²

IDENTIFYING AN ISSUE

An organizer working in a changing neighborhood found three homes that whites had sold for under \$20,000. Within two weeks blacks had bought those same properties for over \$30,000, the realtor walking off with the difference. A school built for 800 had an enrollment of 1,600 (one class was even meeting in the boys’ lavatory). A slum building existed where children developed lead poisoning. All of these seemed like good issues to him but it was impossible to get people to buy into any of these issues.

Finally, he began to ask people what they thought was the issue. At one door the lady said that the thing that was wrong with the neighborhood was that shopping carts from the supermarket on the corner were being taken out of the store and left around the neighborhood. Children were playing with them in the street, scratching parked cars, and someone almost hit a child

last week. In addition, they were left out in the alley and you had to stop your car and get out to move the cart.

The organizer could not believe that anyone would be interested in such a petty issue, particularly since he had identified so many major troubles in the community. In talking with other people on the block, he mentioned that some of the neighbors were talking about the shopping carts that were out in the community. The response was unanimous—people wanted to do something about the issue and were willing to come to a meeting.⁸³

Easily Winnable Make sure that the first issue your members choose is easily winnable. It makes no sense to choose an issue that, while important, will be either difficult or impossible for your members to win. A first issue that is within the grasp of your people's abilities and skills will not only give them a feeling of success and encouragement; it will give them experience on which they can build successive victories.

Provides Tangible Benefits If the issue does not make a difference in the life of the community or offer concrete rewards from which community members can benefit, it will not often be appealing or motivate community interest. The more tangible wins in terms of better schools, higher wages, more jobs, improved services, lessened crime, more community control, less discrimination, more accessible government, and others the more attractive the community organizing effort will appear to community members.

Come to a Decision Draft a document detailing the concerns of the group. The document should include something that the members can do right away. For example, they might go with you to talk to their friends about their concerns or host another house meeting. Your goal is to encourage group members to continue the process and perhaps become part of the organizing committee. At the end of the meeting or meetings, help the group come to some sort of decision, with each person saying his or her piece.

Form an Organizing Committee

Invite people to join an organizing committee and hold more house meetings. After talking with nearly everyone in the community, you and the organizing committee will have collected a great deal of information

about the community, its people, and its problems. Your committee identifies issues and organizes a founding meeting.

Identify Issues The issues that initially concerned the organizing committee may no longer be the dominant ones. Hold a series of meeting to help your organizing committee identify the issues community members have described as most important and pressing. Members of your organizing committee should lead these meetings, and they should decide what issues to attack. The issues should galvanize people and be ones that they can win if they organize and work together. Your role is to help generate discussion, keep the discussion on track, and help the group identify criteria for deciding on issues. "The key value in decision making within a poor people's organization is not efficiency, but participation,"⁸⁴ asserts Si Kahn:

The time required to reach a decision should not be the shortest time required for a small, select group to make the decision, but the amount of time it takes to educate all the members in the meaning of the decision and to involve them in understanding the decision-making process.⁸⁵

Organize a Founding Meeting When your organizing committee is ready, members should call a community-wide public meeting at which the organization will be born. Agree on who will lead the founding meeting and decide on the agenda. Choose a temporary name and mission statement. Get your committee members to nominate one another for the election of temporary officers. The members you have engaged should each take on a specific task such as passing out flyers, ringing doorbells, and notifying other organizations about the founding meeting.

MAKING BLOCK CLUBS WORK

Utica Neighborhood Housing Services (UNHS) has been systematically starting block groups in and around Utica since 1994. UNHS has supported low-income homeownership since 1979, but got started with block associations because its members realized they needed to address more than bricks and mortar, says Gene Allen, who began his involvement with UNHS as a block captain. "If someone doesn't feel safe, secure, they aren't going to invest in a

neighborhood, whether it's buying a house, fixing up a house, or starting a business," he says. According to UNHS's literature, the goal of block coalitions is to "help residents be proactive instead of crisis-oriented while dealing with community issues." "We're facilitators. We give them the tools, they do the work," says Allen. UNHS has organized 250 groups since 1994, of which 175 (130 in Utica, 45 elsewhere in the county) are still around.

For Richmond United Neighborhoods (RUN) in Richmond, Virginia, block clubs were more like chapters than independent organizations, says Larry Yates, a volunteer leader and then a staff member with the group from 1980 to 1988. RUN, then an affiliate of National People's Action, used a block group structure in its larger neighborhoods as a two-way communication vehicle, he says. Block captains solicited input from their blocks to make sure local issues and concerns were on the table when it came time for RUN to pick campaigns. Once an issue was chosen, the block captains mobilized their blocks. Campaigns sometimes addressed local issues, such as getting junk cars towed, but they were always carried out by the whole organization. "Leadership came from those directly affected, but all the blocks would participate in solidarity," says Yates. "They knew it could happen to them."⁸⁶

Make this founding meeting as important an event in the neighborhood as you can. Spend a lot of time carefully planning the meeting with the organizing committee. Four important things should occur at this meeting: (1) Members explain the purpose of the community organization, (2) the community decides on the most important of the several issues that the organizing committee has identified, (3) the new organization is officially established, and (4) community members join the organization and become involved in the process.

Make sure that people remember the community meeting day and time. You may have to arrange transportation and continue to encourage people to come. At the meeting, "concentrate on moving those attending into decision and action." Ensure that everyone who attends gets a chance to speak. People have come to have their say; make a list of their comments. Have community members rank the two or three issues the committee has decided on and add others that they think are relevant.

Hold an election for temporary officers to provide an ongoing structure for the organization. Have people at the meeting officially join the organization by filling

out a membership application and becoming dues-paying members (\$1 a month). Dues are significant not only because they provide some funding but, more important, because people relate differently to an organization that they own. Give out membership cards.

Have a committee member explain the next community-wide action steps, which were tentatively planned by the organizing committee beforehand. Appoint groups to work on the problems of greatest concern to the organization. Make sure everyone knows when and where the next actions will take place. Get everyone committed to doing something about the issue, such as inviting a decision maker to come to the next meeting, writing someone about the issue, passing out flyers, or attending a city council meeting or a training session.

Just before the meeting is over, your leaders should recap the decisions that have been made so everyone understands what the next steps will be as well as the date, time, and place of the next meeting.

PROTECT THE ORGANIZATION OR FIGHT FOR PEOPLE'S RIGHTS?

In a case involving the killing of a Mexican American youth by a policeman, Fred Ross reported on a discussion called to consider what the CSO should do. A stenographer member argued against diverting attention away from "building the organization" to fighting the case because the result would be that "the better element" would not come in. A grocer and a civil service employee supported this position. But another spokesman stated the principle, "We don't have to worry about protecting the organization; our job is to fight for the rights of the people. If we do what's right for them, they'll stick with us. And that's the best protection any organization can get. If we don't, before long we won't have any organization to protect."⁸⁷

Develop the Organization's Structure

The organization itself should have a strong structure, an ongoing means of funding, and a cadre of leaders who can manage the administration, finances, publicity, training, and the ongoing organizing campaigns that the community organization will carry out.

IAF TEACHES THE ORGANIZER TO TEACH HIMSELF

In the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), training is done on the job. Organizers are expected to make mistakes. But at the end of the day they are required to complete a detailed diary of their contacts and activities, not only as a record but as a basis for reflection on what they have done. A dialogue is then set up in which the individual organizer's experience is compared with the cumulative experience of the IAF.

The discussion of the day's experience in relation to analogous situations elsewhere encourages the organizer to look at his or her activities from other points of view: "We can make suggestions; we can point out aspects of things she or he has overlooked; we can broaden his horizons; but in the last analysis the citizen organizer must teach oneself."⁸⁸

The method is Socratic. It is effective when staff members feel free to speak with complete candor, not only about their own individual experiences but those of other staff members as well.

Guide Your Members Through the Action Process

You mobilize your organization to gather information about the issues members want to address. You identify targets, both perpetrators and decision makers. You analyze the power structure, devise strategies and tactics, and engage in action. You help members pace your action campaigns, debriefing after each tactic to evaluate what occurred and adjust your strategy.

Gather Information You cannot fix a problem until you know what it is. Research becomes a very important part of your organizing drive. Members become experts in topics related to the issue, empowering their sense of what is right. Information becomes evidence, a tool, and a means of credibility.

Evidence Empirical data gives community members evidence that confirms what their experience, feelings, and intuition may have already told them, becoming weapons against injustice that protestations of innocence cannot hide.

Tool Information is a necessary and powerful tool in the organizing process. Members use information to

discover connections, anticipate arguments, discuss issues, put substance behind their positions, and shape their concerns into tangible actions. Information helps your members understand "not only what can or cannot be done but more importantly, what needs to be done,"⁸⁹ says Williams. Your members discover who to hold accountable, and when and how much to compromise without undermining their original position.

Credibility Facts bolster your organization's credibility. The media are more likely to pay attention, legislators are more inclined to listen, and allies are more eager to invest their resources when your effort is backed up with solid, compelling information relying on official, public records whenever possible.

How to Gather Information About the Problem Situation As members investigate issues they gather general data, ask about visible problems, and obtain information to engage in specific actions.

Gather General Data. Gather general data about the issue by asking yourselves, How many people does the issue affect? Who? Where? In what way? How often? Are there related problems you should pay attention to? Who benefits from the current situation? How long has the issue been a problem? Has the issue been addressed before and, if so, how? Why did that effort fail to succeed? Make sure your members verify their facts by finding at least two independent, unrelated sources.

Your members can get facts from newspapers, published reports, scientific studies, and government documents. Your members can also locate information quickly from libraries, the Internet, and directly from public or private agencies such as tax records at city hall, census data from the federal government, or an annual report of a corporation. Cultivate relationships with people in government and business who may become valuable resources of information. You may also want to reach out to experts or researchers who may be willing to help you achieve your goals.

Ask about Visible Problems. Intentionally focus on one or more problem situations that are highly visible, asking, "What are you trying to prove? What evidence do you need? Do you have it? If not, where do you get it?" says Fred Ross.⁹⁰

Obtain Information to Develop Specific Actions. If your group wants to go after a slum lord, your members should examine the title of an abandoned building

you believe he owns, or the tax records of a vacant piece of land to discover who owns it and any liens on the property. Find out under whose authority in the government the particular problem falls, and check out the law to be sure of the legal responsibilities of the city official or corporation.⁹¹

Choose Targets There are two kinds of primary targets that your organization must identify: perpetrators and decision makers. Perpetrators are “the strategically defined embodiment of the causes of a neighborhood problem” that your organization wants to resolve,⁹² says John McKnight. Decision makers are people who possess the resources and authority to correct it.

Sometimes perpetrators and decision makers are the same people. For example, if you are targeting a bank to stop its predatory lending practices, the members of a bank’s board of directors are the perpetrators as well as decision-making agents that you will need to convince to change their practices.

Sometimes perpetrators and decision makers are different. You may target board members of a real estate agency to expose the perpetrators of redlining a neighborhood, preventing neighbors from getting loans, for example, while also targeting legislators who you want to pass an ordinance to prohibit such practices. Think about secondary targets that can influence your primary target to take the actions you seek. Members of the media are often important secondary targets, especially when your primary target is an elected official.

Analyze the Power Structure The first rule of warfare is “Know your enemy.” “Power is a tool used by a few to maintain wealth, position, and control over many, but it can also be a force shaped by the many that brings liberation and equitably-shared resources to all,”⁹³ asserts Robert Linthecum. If your organization is to be effective in bringing about community change, its members must learn how to analyze the power of their foes. You want to develop your strategy with a clear sense of who the players are, especially who is likely to be on your side and who is likely to mount opposition. Knowing how key players will line up around the issue will help you assess what you can realistically accomplish and the best way of going about it.

Conduct a Power Analysis Begin by asking who in your community has official power to give your

members what they are seeking. You are trying to determine how high the issue is on decision makers’ agenda, how much influence they have over the issue, and the extent to which they will support or resist your organization’s position.

Part of your strategy will be determined by how you answer those questions. For example, if the issue is low on a decision maker’s agenda, your strategy will be aimed at raising its importance. Find out who in the power structure could influence him or her, and consider information campaigns, lobbying, and letter writing, for example.

In addition to formal decision makers, many individuals and institutions have informal influence in local communities. Understanding the informal power structure lets you know the underlying reality of how things actually get done. Your members should uncover who these informal power brokers are, those who oppose your organization’s position as well as those who are in favor or are supportive of your organization.

Find out how important the issue is on their agendas, the amount of influence they hold to affect the outcome of decisions, and how effectively organized they are. Finally, try to discover who stands to gain or lose politically or financially from the outcome of the issue. Continually reevaluate and update your power analysis and adapt your strategies and tactics as the power structure in your community changes.

Strategies and Tactics Strategies are broad arenas of action your members use to bring targeted oppressors to the table or convince decision-makers to place your issue on their agenda for action.

Tactics are shorter-term actions designed to carry out a strategy.

Developing Strategies Your members may have identified an important issue and are motivated to resolve it, but if their strategies have not been well defined, they may lose the battle. It is important, therefore, that your members and constituents have a well-thought-out strategy appropriate to the particular situation.

Your organization develops its strategic plan based on your organization’s strengths and its analysis of your target’s most vulnerable areas. Your strategy may take advantage of its capacity to organize large numbers of people, the information it has collected, the moral rightness of its cause, and the anger of

people. At the same time, your organization confronts your target's weaknesses, including their credibility, need for votes, sales of products, or their vulnerability to threat of exposure of unlawful practices.

Always develop alternative or back-up strategies. Shel Trapp asks, "What are you going to do if the enemy says 'Yes' to demands one and two, but 'No' to the third demand? What are you going to do if he says 'Yes' to one and 'No' to two and three? What are you going to do if he doesn't show up? What are you going to do if he walks out of the meeting?"⁹⁴ Alternative strategies are key to an organizing effort, so that even if circumstances change, your leaders are prepared with a variety of plans to meet the new situation. "It is the enemy that you want to catch off balance and keep off balance, not your leaders," says Trapp.⁹⁵

How to Use Tactics You need to know how to combine tactics in your overall strategy to achieve your goals. Choose a range of tactics so that everyone can participate in the effort and feel that his or her contribution is worthwhile. Some people may be willing to picket or organize a rally; others may prefer attending a town hall meeting or writing a letter.

When deciding on particular tactics, ask yourselves if the tactic will dramatize the issue and help build your cause, or if it will create sympathy for your targets and backfire. Will a tactic help persuade your targets to discuss the issue and lead your members to the bargaining table? Will your members enjoy the tactic, and will it help them feel you are accomplishing something?

Your organization may need to use different tactics in each campaign for social justice, depending on the unique situation your group is confronting. One way is to begin your campaign "with a confrontation to attract media attention," say Rubin and Rubin, "then proceed to political pressure tactics to make long-term changes. Or, you may begin with mild pressure tactics, and if success is not forthcoming, gradually apply more power, first using legal, and finally, confrontation tactics."⁹⁶

Use education programs that inform citizens, followed by community forums on the issue. "A frequent side effect is that when confronted by knowledgeable opponents, the opposition shows itself to be ignorant of technical details, which makes them look foolish and denies them legitimacy."⁹⁷

Rather than relying on only one technique, encourage your members to blend political pressure,

legal tactics, and confrontation along with e-advocacy approaches. If the organization's goal is to increase the city's commitment to open housing, representatives of your organization might generate general community interest and provide information by e-advocacy. They can lobby to get a strong open-housing ordinance on the books (a political pressure tactic), simultaneously seeking a court injunction to halt the city's receipt of state development funds until its housing profile improves (a legal tactic), while conducting demonstrations in the plaza in front of city hall to publicize the difficulties facing the poor in finding housing (a confrontation tactic).

Kinds of Strategies and Tactics A number of strategies and tactics are available to your group depending on the situation in which they are engaged. Among these strategies is exposure of perpetrators, active noncooperation with oppression, public relations, information campaigns, and the Internet. Your organization can also file a petition for a redress of grievances with administrative agencies, engage in legal action, and if necessary force your targets to face the consequences of their actions by engaging in direct confrontation.

Exposure of Perpetrators Make every effort to expose perpetrators to their victims and their acts of oppression to public scrutiny by personalizing an organizational system and targeting specific individuals.

Personalize an Organizational System. Community organizations often put impersonal, distant, and sanitized oppression where it belongs—at the personal level. Victims gain power as they see their oppressors as real people, not shadowy processes, procedures, rules, or policies. They learn that behind the seemingly impenetrable maze of rules and norms are individuals. This places victims, often for the first time, on an equal footing with those who have taken advantage of them.

Target Specific Individuals. Your campaign members target specific individuals rather than organizations or institutions. Organizations do not make decisions—their owners or managers do. "Who can attack the telephone company or the government? It is far easier and more appropriate to attack the callousness of the president of the company, Mr. Smith, who won't let shut-in elderly people have wheelchair accessibility in their apartments, while he has a personal elevator to his office,"⁹⁸ says Saul Alinsky.

You challenge oppressors by making demands, issuing ultimatums, and delivering messages to them personally. They may be shielded by layers of bureaucracy, networks of interlocking relationships with others in power, the right of protection from self-incrimination, and skillful use of evasion, but you demand to have your members meet those in charge face to face.

Active Non-Cooperation with Oppression One of the key strategies in breaking cycles of victimization is to resist participating in self-defeating oppression, not cooperating with required behaviors, and refusing to accept laws, policies, and procedures that are demeaning. For African Americans in the South, this meant sitting in whites-only sections of public transportation, using whites-only restrooms in defiance of existing practices, and using sit-ins at restaurants that would not serve them. Non-cooperation with oppression may also include refusing to be seen as a victim, developing inner social presence, and using satyagraha.

Refusal to Be a Victim. A victim may act in stereotyped ways that reinforce the perception of oppressors that the victim is inferior. Retraining oppressed individuals to develop new skills, habits, dress, appearance, and language helps overcome demeaning, stigmatizing behavior. To the extent that oppressed and stigmatized persons no longer act the role of victim, oppressors will have difficulty relating to them as victims.

During the civil rights movement, African Americans mounted campaigns emphasizing “black pride” and education in African American studies. Many blacks adopted African names, African dress, and “natural” hairstyles that elicited respect, power, self-determination, and self-efficacy.

Inner Social Presence. While non-cooperation means changes in outward appearance, it means, more importantly, acquiring cognitive skills as well as the inner social presence and self-presentation skills that stimulate others to treat the oppressed with dignity.

Satyagraha. Mahatma Gandhi remains one of the foremost movement activists of our time. A diminutive man, he challenged the weight of the entire British Empire and almost single-handedly mobilized colonial India into a massive effort to gain independence. In doing so, he pioneered one of the most compelling principles of social action. This is the principle of *satyagraha*.

Marilyn Ferguson says that satyagraha has been misunderstood in the West as “passive resistance” or “non-violent resistance.” Gandhi disavowed these terms because they suggest weakness, inaction, or passivity in the face of violence and oppression. Timothy Flinders asserts that “to call satyagraha passive resistance is like calling light non-darkness: it does not describe the positive energy of the principle.”⁹⁹ A better term would be to call it “soul force” or “truth force.” Satyagraha is a combination of two opposite forces: fierce autonomy and total compassion congruent with the action-social model of macro social work. It asserts the following:

I will not coerce you. But, neither will I allow you to coerce me. While I will not allow you to behave unjustly toward me, I will not oppose you by violence (physical force), but by the force of the truth and the right—by the integrity of my beliefs and by my commitment to what is just and good.

My integrity shines forth because I will not compromise my commitment by acting unjustly or falsely or try to overturn violence with violence, humiliation, injury, or subjugation. Instead I will show my integrity by my willingness to suffer, to pour myself out for my community, to place myself in danger, go to prison, and die if necessary.

But I will not condone, cooperate, or allow by inaction injustice, oppression, or violence to continue. Ultimately the moral force of my restraint, seeing my intention, sensing my compassion and openness, and because I treat myself with intense respect and dignity, you must also treat me with respect and dignity. Because of my unrelenting commitment to justice, you too must also begin to respect justice.

Satyagraha opens the heart of your adversary and stirs the conscience of the indifferent. Satyagraha removes social action from the arena of confrontation or threat, bargaining or negotiation, deal making, game playing, or pleading. Satyagraha requires heroic restraint and courage to forgive. Martin Luther King Jr. used oppression of African Americans as a moral force with which to confront oppressors. He resisted being oppressed, and he even submitted to imprisonment and death. To his Atlanta congregation he said,

I choose to give my life for those who have been left out of the sunlight of opportunity. I choose to live for and with those who find themselves seeing life as a long and desolate corridor with no exit sign. This is the way I’m going.

If it means suffering a little bit, I’m going that way. If it means sacrificing, I’m going that way. If it

means dying for them, I'm going that way because I heard a voice saying, "Do something for others."¹⁰⁰

King demonstrated that oppressors could imprison his body but could not imprison his spirit. He challenged injustice with just demands, demonstrating justice in every action, and he did not let himself be treated unjustly. He demonstrated to the oppressor that injustice would not be accepted, and he challenged America to live up to the values it espoused, to become a just nation in its actions as well as its words. That is satyagraha.

Public Relations If a community organization is to create social change, its members must understand how their agenda of legitimate issues can be placed onto the formal agenda of issues being given serious consideration by decision makers. Publicity campaigns and gaining media attention help members get their agenda on the table. One of the most powerful tactics of the civil rights demonstrators, for example, was the television exposure of the brutality, anger, and hate aimed at nonviolent resisters as they sought the equal rights and access guaranteed in the Constitution. The media captured national attention by showing that civil rights was a compelling moral cause that could not be denied.

When your members use public relations strategies they develop a media plan. They engage in specific tactics including educating reporters, obtaining exposure through mass media, making speeches, developing publications, and issuing press releases.

Develop a Media Plan. Identify the audiences your organization needs to reach, the best ways to inform them, and representatives of the media to contact. Designate members who will speak for your organization, train them, and have them begin to develop relationships with media. Prepare key messages such as information about your organization and its intentions as well as talking points to use when meeting with media representatives.

Engage in Specific Tactics. Make sure reporters understand the goals of your organization and the issues you are confronting. Let them know why your organization is involved and its importance to the community. Help them understand your strategies and tactics and try to win them to your cause.

Most people get their information from television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet. These are the

media where you will most likely communicate your message. They are also the key to reaching a large number of community members. Your members can use public relations by giving speeches, making personal appearances, and writing articles, pamphlets, books, newsletters, and flyers.¹⁰¹

Issue press releases or hold news conferences to inform reporters about newsworthy events, including any important actions your organization plans to take, such as marches, prayer vigils, or town hall meetings. When your group wins a victory, make sure the public hears about it. Publicize unfair tactics of your opponents or their failure to follow up on promises. Rally support by announcing public hearings that you want community members to attend.

Information Campaigns Information campaigns engage your members in educating the public so they clearly understand the problem, its importance, its costs, and its consequences. They also inform citizens about what has been done and not done to correct the problem, possible solutions, and the position taken by your organization and by others.

Most importantly, however, you help your members anticipate that their opponents will often use deception and distortions of the truth. You assist your members to use information campaign strategies to counter those efforts, challenging their false claims with data from reliable sources, and appealing to people's common sense.

Deceptions and Distorted Information. You warn your members to avoid being so naïve as to believe that oppressors will play fairly. You challenge them to expect that forces of oppression will "make a mockery of the democratic ... process by misrepresenting cases, improperly invoking authority, making false promises, or distracting attention from key issues," says John Forester.¹⁰²

Some oppressors, in addition, will very selectively inform and misinform citizens. Forester warns that they may call attention to particular needs and obscure others. They may appear to welcome legitimate, open discussion while simultaneously ignoring the need for affected populations to join in those discussions. They may omit a careful analysis of legitimate alternatives and thus misrepresent actual options. Sometimes officials of a government agency or corporate managers will give in during a demonstration but renege on their agreements after everyone has gone home.¹⁰³

Anticipate Attempts to Misrepresent Issues. Forester cautions your members to “anticipate the attempts of established interests to shape the perceived needs of citizens ... and work against such needs-shaping rhetoric.”¹⁰⁴ He recommends that you assist your members to strengthen themselves by countering those who shape information to keep people in subservient positions. You help your members confront stereotyping of the poor by gathering facts and presenting them in newspapers, magazines, and on television. You urge members to demand that reports and information about victims of oppression be intelligible to the public, that they are actively explored at public hearings, and not simply noted and passed over. “You teach your members to challenge misrepresentations of the costs, risks, and alternatives to social problems made by those in power. You assist members to temper exaggerated claims, and demystify bureaucratic or corporate processes.”¹⁰⁵

Internet Advocacy One of the easiest, least expensive, and most versatile strategies in your campaign efforts is to use the Internet. If you are trying to organize high school and college students to speak out about human rights issues, you can use Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter. If your organization wants to arrange a meeting, online meeting applications such as MeetUp.com are available. Your members can attract attention and generate responses to your efforts by blogging and YouTube.

Whether your members are trying to get facts about a problem, communicate with supporters and allies, mobilize members for action, get out your message, create a forum for discussion, raise funds, or educate the public, you can often accomplish them with two basic Internet tools: e-mail and a website. There are some limitations of using the Internet, however.

E-Mail. E-mail is a fast and inexpensive way to reach a large number of people at one time, and those people can forward your message to others in an instant. Your members can use e-mail to announce new publications, communicate with advocates in other cities, and conduct online conversations with coalition members.

E-mail helps your organization recruit volunteers and encourage people to take immediate action, distribute news releases, or submit op-ed articles and letters to the editor of newspapers. You can use e-mail for last-minute reminders to attend an important hearing or organize a community-wide response to a crisis, as

well as many other tasks that would be difficult to accomplish by telephone or regular mail. When using e-mail as an organizing tool, begin to collect e-mail addresses at every opportunity and create a field in your database for storing e-mail addresses. Add an e-mail space and a request for e-mail addresses to every page of your website.

Using Your Website. Your organization’s website is one of your most important public relations tools; it inexpensively provides a presence throughout the globe. A website gives your constituents and the public important information about your organization. It can explain your organization’s purpose, history, and accomplishments. It can help people get in touch with your members, and provide a way for the public to ask questions and get information about issues. You can use your website to recruit volunteers, solicit contributions, take action on important concerns, connect and convene people in cyberspace, and more.

Establish your organization’s website as soon as your organization becomes established. Acquire domain names and connect them closely to your organization’s mission or key phrases associated with your purpose. Visit websites of organizations similar to yours to get ideas about their structure, content, ease of access, and features that you might want to incorporate into your own website.

Limitations of the Internet. Keep in mind that the Internet is a supplement to, not a substitute for, traditional organizing activities such as meeting with decision makers in person, or calling a reporter on the phone. The Internet can make organizing more effective by assisting your members to coordinate and follow up on many activities, but it does not replace the important face-to-face interactions that organizing is all about.

Administrative Petitioning The U.S. Constitution gives anyone the right to petition a government official, agency, board, department, or other part of government to change its policies and practices, prohibit actions that are harming people in your community, or require actions that will improve conditions and that you believe are necessary and important. You have the right to a timely response to your petition and a written explanation if the agency denies it. Petitioning has several advantages and can be a useful learning tool. You may need to assist members in composing a petition.

Advantages of Petitions. An administrative petition places your organization's issue in an official context that requires a public agency to examine the problem and consider taking action. Petitioning is often quicker than litigation, less complicated than the legislative process, and since it does not require a lawyer or lobbyist, it is also less expensive. When your organization files a petition, your members strengthen their position with public decision makers by showing that they attempted to work through the agency itself. By presenting solutions and demonstrating that there is public support for change, they ease the process of acceptance.

Administrative agencies often become mired in political traditions and procedures that hamper their tasks, often working against the public interest. When your organization files an administrative petition, your members can give ammunition to an agency head who recognizes that problems exist but needs public pressure to help adopt reforms that otherwise would be too controversial within the agency itself.

Learning Tool. Going through the process of filing a petition with an agency is a useful tool that can help your members understand how government works and clearly think through the issues that are challenging them. For example, when your members examine an issue and define a problem, they will be forced to learn interviewing and data collection skills. Your members will often need to investigate who is being hurt by agency practices and how. They will often need to learn whether the problem is getting better or worse, documenting what they discover with personal stories, informal surveys, and official reports.

Your members will need to identify actions that the agency should take to fix the problem or at least improve the situation, forcing them to understand problems from the agency's perspective and work with them to develop realistic alternatives. Finally, petitioning can expand your members' understanding beyond your local community when they explore what other localities have done about the problem and whether those actions have been effective.

Help Members Write Petitions. Because a petition needs to be submitted in a formal style, including an introduction, a statement of facts about the problem, brief descriptions of the people submitting the petition, the legal authority of the agency to act, the specific actions you want the agency to take, and a conclusion, you may need to assist your members to learn how to

compose these documents, and in the process sharpen their thinking and writing skills. Your members will also need to learn the specific petition format, kinds of exhibits included, and where and to whom the petition should be sent.

Legal Action Legal action strategies force solutions by using the court system and existing laws to command those in power to live up to their own rules and agreements. By using the legal process, community organizations can ask judges to clarify the responsibility of government agencies in cases where vaguely written legislation makes implementation difficult. You can force government officials to faithfully and responsibly carry out laws in situations where they have been pressured by particular interest groups to dilute or not comply with existing laws. For example, courts can order slum landlords to stop evicting people from their homes, order school districts to provide equal educational opportunities, or mandate compensation for damages caused by toxic waste. Tactics of legal action include injunctions, discovery, and lawsuits.

Injunctions. An injunction can help your organization stop practices that are damaging. Injunctions are court orders to stop possibly harmful action until additional facts are gathered. The instant papers have been served, the recipient must cease actions or risk being held in contempt of court. Such tactics place the full weight of the government behind your organization, giving your members time to rally their forces, gather information, and plan their next moves.

If your organization gets an injunction against a builder, construction is delayed, costing the builder money on the loans incurred. To avoid these expenses, as well as the cost of a potential court battle that could drag on for months or even years, a developer might be willing to negotiate, giving in to your organization's demands.

Discovery. Discovery is a legal tactic that allows lawyers to examine an opponent's documents. Through discovery, for example, movement organizations found internal reports of the Department of Interior showing that public water was being sold far below market value to large-scale commercial farmers.

Lawsuits. A lawsuit is another major legal tactic that community organizers can use against perpetrators of oppression. Lawsuits can decide whether an action is

legal or not under existing law. A lawsuit can be filed to “right a wrong, claim compensation for harm done, or make a party perform as agreed,”¹⁰⁶ say Rubin and Rubin. Because legal tactics can be expensive, the mere threat of a lawsuit often leads oppressors to the bargaining table. Builders, for example, can only make a profit when houses are sold and loans paid off. Several kinds of lawsuits exist:

1. *Performance and class action lawsuits:* Performance lawsuits force individuals or corporations to live up to a contract. Class action suits are helpful when overall societal damage is large but the damages suffered by any single person are relatively small, making individual suits prohibitively expensive. Consumer activists have filed class action suits on behalf of citizens who have been overcharged by utility or insurance companies or who have purchased defective products.
2. *Procedural lawsuits:* If regulatory agencies do not follow their own procedures, your organization can file a procedural suit. Your members greatly improve their bargaining power if they can show that government agencies do not follow rules or fail to adjudicate claims fairly. During the Reagan administration, for example, many people were wrongly denied Social Security benefits because policies were interpreted too narrowly. Many of these people sued to obtain aid.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Lawsuits. Using the legal process enhances your organization’s legitimacy. Legal action places your organization on an equal footing with business or governmental organizations, forcing them to recognize the rights of migrant workers for redress, the legitimate grievances of the homeless poor, and the just cause of victims of discrimination.

On the other hand, litigation often takes the struggle out of the community and puts it in the hands of lawyers and judges. It forces community members to translate their experience into the narrow confines of the law, which is often not sufficient for the purposes of organizing. Court processes are slow and expensive, and suits filed in one state are often not valid in other states. Lawsuits may stimulate opponents to file a countersuit against your organization. Even when the courts give your organization a victory, this may only be temporary because laws may be repealed or past legal actions revoked.

Direct Confrontation “Direct action campaigns must not be undertaken lightly,” assert Rubin and Rubin; “they require people’s time, moral commitment, and sometimes they involve risk. Only try direct action after conventional approaches have failed, such as when decision makers refuse to meet or become intransigent, and then do so cautiously by engaging in testing actions.”¹⁰⁷

Confrontation must be “planned with an awareness of how far members of the action organization are willing to go in a campaign.”¹⁰⁸ Take into consideration the abilities of the participants, their commitment to the issues, and the effectiveness of the tactic you are using.

Gaining power for people who are oppressed cannot be resolved without negative consequences for those who must give up power and they will not surrender their power without a struggle. Directly confronting targets of oppression, therefore, almost always involves conflict.

Conflict is a limited and specific strategy, not an end in itself. It demonstrates the determination of community members, their willingness to endure difficulty, take risks, and struggle to achieve success. Conflict shows adversaries that people with low incomes will not be frightened, discouraged, intimidated, or seduced into surrendering their solidarity or be appeased by the powerful. Once those in power understand that your members will not concede defeat, they will have lost the oppressor’s strongest weapons. Conflict has served its purpose. Further conflict will only be self-defeating and foster more antagonism.

Confrontation tactics must be rehearsed and participants trained in their use, especially in direct nonviolent tactics. “Few people can be beaten and arrested without wanting to defend themselves,” says Branch.¹⁰⁹ “People who by temperament are not nonviolent must be kept out of the action. During the Montgomery Bus Boycott, there were training schools in nonviolence, and only people trained and experienced in nonviolence were allowed to become Freedom Riders.”¹¹⁰ Training is also crucial for picketing and marching. Picketers, for example, “must be trained not to respond to taunts or unpleasant distractions. Giving in to taunts, the picketers look disorderly and thereby lose legitimacy.”¹¹¹ Direct confrontation tactics include rallies, moral demonstrations, picketing, marches, sit-ins, boycotts, and symbolic demonstrations.

Rallies. Rallies mobilize numbers of people for a cause and provide supporters with information and a sense of unity. They also attract media attention and make a statement about the issues your members are raising. One of the most impressive rallies in the history of protest was the 1963 rally called the March on Washington for Civil Rights. The rally was seen on national television, with a crowd of between 200,000 and 500,000 participants as Martin Luther King Jr. gave his memorable “I have a dream” speech. The rally marked a turning point in the struggle for the civil rights in the 1960s.

Moral Demonstrations. Moral demonstrations include voluntary jailing, fasts, and prayer vigils. In these kinds of demonstrations, individuals often become the focus of attention. For example, Gandhi placed himself at the center of attention by going on hunger strikes in his efforts to free India from British rule. Cesar Chavez’s fast during the grape boycott in California gained national attention. This demonstration solidified the strikers and brought Senator Robert Kennedy onto the side of the farm workers. Prayer vigils, in which demonstrators silently light candles, demonstrate both moral and spiritual nonviolence. Some anti-abortion protesters use peaceful prayer walks rather than militant tactics.

Picketing. Picketing focuses attention on the targeted oppressor and is intended to achieve an immediate political solution. Protesters have picketed corporations, nuclear reactors, government offices, governors, and presidents, among other real or symbolic targets. If you use picketing, your group needs to know if your city has laws about the materials with which picketers’ signs can be made to prevent them from being used as weapons. Picketers should be located where they get attention, but if they obstruct traffic or violate private property, you may anger the public and risk arrest. Your members need to work out a plan to get picketers out of jail.

Marches. Marches demonstrate the power of an activist organization, provide an arena of media attention, and bring together other organizations in a show of solidarity.

On Sunday, March 7, 1965, about 600 people began a historic 54-mile march from Selma, Alabama, to the state capitol in Montgomery. They were demonstrating for African American voting rights and to

commemorate the death of Jimmie Lee Jackson, shot three weeks earlier by a state trooper while trying to protect his mother at a civil rights demonstration. On the outskirts of Selma, after they crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the marchers, in plain sight of photographers and journalists, were brutally assaulted by heavily armed state troopers and deputies.¹¹² Another famous march was the 340-mile march from Delano to Sacramento in 1966, led by Cesar Chavez. The farm workers and supporters carried banners with the black eagle with HUELGA (strike) and VIVA LA CAUSA (Long live our cause).

A great deal of planning is required for a successful march. For example, when Martin Luther King Jr. led marches in Chicago in 1966, “months of negotiation were required to determine which groups would participate and to ensure that King’s overall philosophy of nonviolence would be observed. The choice of which streets to march down were argued over for weeks because some streets showed the deterioration of housing but other streets better illustrated the effects of discrimination.”¹¹³

Sit-Ins. Sit-ins inconvenience the opponent, bring media attention, and avoid violence by taking over offices, highways, lunch counters, stairways, lobbies, or other public places. A sit-in puts protesters on the opponent’s turf and often leads to arrest because those involved are trespassing. Sometimes sit-ins seek immediate gains, such as when welfare rights activists demand services to which they are legally entitled. Others aim at broader issues, such as the Native American “capture” of Alcatraz that publicized the abrogation of Indian treaty rights.

Boycotts. Boycott is an economic pressure tactic designed to force an immediate solution to a problem by advocating that people refuse to purchase a particular product, or all products from a particular company. For example, Cesar Chavez initiated a national boycott of table grapes to force commercial farmers to yield to union demands. Environmentalists organized a boycott of tuna fish caught with nets that endanger dolphins. Another kind of boycott is a rent strike, in which people refuse to pay rent until landlords take responsibility for repairs or provide services such as adequate heat.

Sometimes boycotts are illegal, however. In some states it is illegal to withhold rent no matter what the landlord does. In other states, tenants can place funds in an escrow account until the problem is settled.

Symbolic Demonstrations. Symbolic demonstrations are powerful ways of demonstrating goals and values. For example, students protesting apartheid in South Africa constructed shantytowns on the lawns of universities to show the living conditions of black South Africans. When Greenpeace protesters surround nuclear naval vessels with small dinghies, or place themselves between a whaling ship and whales to protest their destruction, they engage in a symbolic action of David taking on Goliath. Demonstrators advocating awareness for AIDS research developed a huge quilt, each section of which has the name of a person who died from AIDS sewn into it by a friend or relative. The quilt was unrolled at demonstrations and rallies, symbolizing in graphic detail the number of people who had died as their names were read into a microphone.

Other Direct Action Tactics. Other tactics include leafleting, disrupting services, slowing traffic, and creating congestion. For example, the National Training and Information Center (NTIC) created congestion on the streets of a major city as groups of persons with disabilities in wheelchairs tried to use mass transportation, cross streets while trying to negotiate curbs, maneuver around barriers or enter stores whose doorways were too small, and move through narrow aisles or obtain products beyond their reach. These tactics demonstrated the difficulties persons with disabilities encounter in having access to public services.

Retaliation Anticipate retaliation and strategize for it in advance. Retaliation can range from mild to brutal. In its mildest form, the response of targets may only be an attempt to deny the legitimacy of protests. They may charge that the protest is un-American or mount their own campaign against social change. In the early 1970s, for example, Phyllis Schlafly established a national movement called STOP ERA to prevent adding the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, and Jerry Falwell of the religious right established the Moral Majority in 1979 to counteract abortion rights and gay rights activists.

Sometimes the opposition will turn one group against another, exploiting tensions between groups. They may use slander and personal defamation. “Opponents may accuse the group’s leader of being a communist, homosexual or lesbian, an embezzler, or a philanderer,”¹¹⁴ Rubin and Rubin warn. Retaliation against African American and Native American

activists included eavesdropping, propaganda, disinformation, harassment, infiltration, and manufacturing evidence that some activists were police informers.

RETALIATION AGAINST ACORN

Relying mainly on young middle-class staff working for subsistence wages and using a door-to-door canvass model to recruit members and raise money, Wade Rathke and Gary Delgado formed the Association of Community Organization for Reform Now (ACORN) in 1970 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

By 2009 ACORN was the nation’s largest issue-based community organization of low- and moderate-income people in the United States, with over 500,000 dues-paying member families, organized into more than 1,200 neighborhood affiliates in 110 cities and 40 states across the country. ACORN members won increases in the minimum wage and living wage legislation. They obtained the compliance of national mortgage lenders, payday lenders, and tax preparation companies to eliminate predatory financial practices. ACORN affiliates achieved commitments from governments for the development of affordable housing and improving the quality of and funding for urban public schools. ACORN secured the passage of state and federal legislation including paid sick leave for all full-time workers.

In 2009, selectively edited videos were released by two conservative activists using a hidden camera to elicit damaging responses from low-level ACORN employees, who appeared to be giving advice on how to hide prostitution activities and avoid taxes. This created a nationwide controversy resulting in a loss of funding from government and private donors. On December 11, 2009, a federal judge in New York, Nina Gershon, ruled that Congress had violated the Constitution when it passed a resolution barring ACORN from receiving federal funds. On August 13, 2010, a federal appeals court reversed that decision, citing a study finding that ACORN received only 10% of its funding from federal sources, and thus the resolution did not constitute punishment.¹¹⁵

In spite of these findings, the damage had already been done. By March 2010, 15 of ACORN’s 30 state chapters had closed and at least two others had severed ties with ACORN. On March 22, 2010, ACORN announced it was closing its remaining affiliated state chapters and disbanding due to falling revenue. On November 2, 2010, ACORN filed for Chapter 7 liquidation, effectively closing the organization.¹¹⁶

Sometimes, however, counterstrikes are brutal and may decimate the membership. Your members can be threatened with intimidation, insults, arrests, physical attacks, or even death. The Ku Klux Klan attempted to intimidate civil rights activists by their own counter-demonstrations. During the civil rights movement of the 1960s, police officials raided the homes of African American militants and killed them, allegedly in self-defense. Union organizers have also been fired, threatened, beaten, and murdered.

Advantages of Being Retaliated Against. Sometimes there are tactical advantages to being retaliated against. “Overt repression,” assert Rubin and Rubin “denies the enemy legitimacy and often grants it to protesters.... Evoking a response (even a high negative response as with the use of excessive force) from the opposition is a sure indication that a direct action organization has reached and scored its target.”¹¹⁷

Anticipate Retaliation. Always expect and try to anticipate counterattacks. Rubin and Rubin alert organizations to expect that “opponents will try to seize the organization’s books, records, and mailing lists. They will search for financial irregularities ... and try to taint the organization with scandal.”¹¹⁸

Make sure your organization’s books are squeaky clean, be aware of skeletons in the closet of organizational leaders, keep books and mailing lists in a secure place, and watch what is put in writing that might give the appearance of wrongdoing. Your organization must be “very cautious to avoid the appearance of impropriety,” because it is trying to take the high moral ground.¹¹⁹

Plan Your Response. Plan what you will do in the face of massive assaults such as imprisonment of your organization’s leaders, attempts to demoralize your membership, and threats or bribes. The more aware and prepared your organization is, the better it will resist counterattacks. Try not to play in a game you don’t think you can win, and never take on more than your organization can handle.

Coping with Burnout Because of the stress of confrontation, the long-term nature of the issues, and the strength of the opposition, your members may burn out and demoralization may set in.

How do you cope with burnout? Keep in mind that capacity building, rectification of social injustice,

strengthening community, and empowerment are long-term issues. There will always be ups and downs, victories and defeats. Prepare for the long haul. Be careful not to take on too much too soon.

Pace yourselves so that neither you nor your organization members become overwhelmed. Take on issues that will motivate and energize your organization. When you or your organization begins to weary of the struggle, it may be time to take a break. Saul Alinsky says, “A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag. A good tactic is one your people enjoy.”¹²⁰

Give yourselves time to step away from the conflict and assess how far you have come. Share your feelings of accomplishment and affirm one another’s importance. Celebrate with speeches, impromptu parties, telling stories, giving recognition for each person’s contribution, rewarding your heroes, and allowing yourselves to feel renewed in one another’s presence.

Debriefing After your members engage in an action, hold a debriefing session to review what happened. This gives you an opportunity to analyze each event until your members understand why they won or lost, reinforce the good things that were done, raise questions about weak points, and consider what steps might be taken next.¹²¹

Review members’ accomplishments to ensure they will never forget that their actions are making a difference in their own and others’ lives. If your strategies were not as successful as members would have liked, spend time figuring out what happened and why. Should tactics have been changed? Should the campaign have been conducted at a different time? Would better information have made a difference? Could efforts have been more coordinated, or could better or different members’ skills have helped?

Keep in mind that as long as useful lessons are learned, no effort is ever wasted, even those that may have seemed to miss the mark. The goals of community organizing are to build the organization, increase member competency, and improve organizing skill, as well as to win concrete victories. While it is important to avoid mistakes, no action will ever be perfect. If the organization loses a battle, it can always regroup to win the war.

Negotiating and Securing Your Demands

With “targeted institutions holding power, the goal for most organizations is to drive decision makers to the bargaining table around issues determined by and important to the organizations,” says the Neighborhood Funders Group.¹²² Community organizing then shifts to negotiation, while keeping up the pressure by continuing its media, information, e-advocacy, and other strategies.

Negotiation is a skilled process of compromise and give and take that often occurs in a concentrated fashion. Because members’ organizing effort will often depend on the success with which they can hammer out an agreement, make sure you prepare your members adequately for this phase of the process.

Help your members develop a plan for how they will negotiate with the opposition, deciding exactly what they want, their order of priorities, and where they wish to draw the bottom line. Assign a chief negotiator and supporting roles. Rehearse with members taking opposite sides and practicing various scenarios.

Always negotiate from an ongoing position of power. Refuse to be rushed or pressured into a concession, and caucus with your coalition members often if necessary. Never be afraid to walk away if you have not been offered anything meaningful. Negotiate the specifics. Make sure your members are connected to the views and needs of their constituency. Ensure they make all discussions and decisions as transparent as possible, and that they get confirmation of agreements in writing.

Public Accountability Community members always make agreements with the implied if not explicit understanding that they will not let government or corporate managers escape their responsibility or commitments. Robert Linthicum asserts that one of the most important tasks “is for people to hold the government, business, educational and social institutions accountable to do what the law and their agreements requires them to do.”¹²³

While public officials will often be willing to sit down with community members as equals and negotiate on a fair and level field, let wealthy interest groups understand that unless concessions are made with integrity and in good faith, community members will

continue to withhold consent and will do so consistently. Your members hold decision makers to their commitments, monitor the outcomes, and if necessary pressure the decision makers to reopen the issue and return to the negotiations to reinforce the gains your organization has made and move to desired outcomes.¹²⁴ This may be a time to negotiate community benefits agreements (CBAs), corporate social licenses, or community consent agreements.

Move On to Consolidate Your Victories

The organization’s leaders should celebrate their organization’s victories, giving recognition to all the members who participated. Have your members issue news releases announcing the importance of the progress they achieved. Analyze their efforts so that they can build on their achievements and integrate lessons learned into future efforts. Ask members about who in the community joined their effort and who did not. Among those who failed to join, how can your members obtain their participation next time? Did your members choose the best targets? Did their targets do something your members did not expect? How could your members have challenged the opposition’s strategies and tactics more effectively?

On the other hand, ask your members what strategies and tactics went well. Which ones did not? Did your members obtain the media coverage they wanted, counter false information, or make effective use of e-advocacy? What will your organization do differently next time?

The process of community organizing does not end with a first victory. A community organization must become an independent, permanent organization that will go on representing the interests of the people no matter how the issues might change. Even as members are celebrating their victory, therefore, you are already working to get them to take on the next issues.¹²⁵

End Your Involvement

“You can insult the community with your presence only for so long,”¹²⁶ says Robert Linthicum. Just as you must spend time getting to know the community and its people and developing relationships, you must likewise spend a lot of time disengaging and helping the organization assess itself. The description of how a community developer disengages from a community is essentially the same as the way in which a community organizer

exits from a community organization. When this is completed, the organizer's job is finished.

HOW TO BECOME A PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

Community organizations across the country are looking for young people who are ready to work hard and take on new challenges and responsibilities, who have a passion for social justice, and who want to learn solid skills in the field of organizing. While organizers are often paid relatively low wages, sometimes work long hours, and “the process of change is sometimes a slow one and not without its frustrations,” says Terry Mizrahi, ultimately your “investment of time, energy, and resources will have an impact on the community with which you work and also in society at large.”¹²⁷

One way to test whether community organizing is for you is to choose one of the many community organizing networks and attend a training program. There you will meet professional organizers and find out about the nuts and bolts of organizing and opportunities in the field. All national issue-based and social network-community organizations, including NTIC, DART, IAF, PICO, TICO, the Gamaliel Foundation, Center for Third World Organizing (CTWO), and others, offer training opportunities, and some provide internships, job placement, or a guaranteed job at the end of training. The National Organizers Alliance and Midwest Academy provide job listings in community organizing. Contact the websites of those organizations listed at the end of this chapter to get more information. Terry Mizrahi assures you that anyone “interested in organizing can find their *niche* according to their political and social beliefs.”¹²⁸

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you learned that community organizing offers people a chance to make their dreams of a better community real in tangible policies and programs. Community organizing enables people to actively take control of their lives, claim their own futures, and assert their own values, while at the same time concretely demonstrating their commitment to a democratic way of life. When poor and middle-class people work together, their communities can become directly engaged in making positive political change.

You learned a definition of community organizing, and why it is important. You explored how community organizations provide new programs, work for more responsible government, overcome corporate deviance, and assist citizens to become involved in the political process.

You reviewed a brief history of community organizing, including how the major models of community organizing developed. You learned how to practice community organizing, beginning with helping neighbors articulate their concerns about issues and come together to form an empowered community of citizens working to redress common grievances and seeking justice.

You examined how to help members choose issues of concern to them and how to guide members through the action process, including gathering information, choosing targets, conducting a power analysis, and carrying out a number of strategies and tactics to accomplish your organization's goals. You considered how to assist your organization move on to consolidate their victories and, when it is time, how to terminate your engagement with the community. Finally, you explored how to become a professional community organizer.

This chapter has reinforced the idea that America's social problems will only be solved in the social commons by the collective effort of local people in cooperation with government and business. You discovered how local community organizations, along with their national social networks and issue-based coalitions, are important and necessary means of accomplishing those tasks. Social work as a profession needs to reclaim community organizing as one of its major tools of practice. Only then will social work be capable of making a lasting contribution to a better social world for ourselves and for our children.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Should community organizing as described in this text be a major activity of social workers? Why or why not?
2. Some critics claim that while community organizing makes some changes at the local level, it ignores problems caused by fundamental defects in capitalist economics and in American constitutional democracy. What is your perspective on this claim? Is community organizing going in the right direction or should it attempt to change

the basic framework on which our society is founded?

3. Community organizing not only works for tangible outcomes but, this text asserts, just as importantly it helps people become more involved in the process of social change. Is this a fair statement? Is citizen involvement and participation just as important as the tangible outcomes organization provides? Why or why not?
4. Some believe that organizing ought to be more conciliatory and consensually oriented, working jointly with government and business rather than using confrontational tactics to accomplish its goals. What is your perspective on this issue? What are the advantages and disadvantages of a consensually oriented and a confrontational approach to organizing?
5. What do you see as the future of community organizing in the 21st century? Do you see yourself playing a role in community organization in your professional endeavors?
6. This text has asserted that empowerment is only useful to the extent that it is used in the service of justice. “The final purpose of community organization is not simply to enable the weak and vulnerable to confront the issues which are destroying them,” says Linthecum. “Nor is it to enable a community to act powerfully by acting corporately.”¹²⁹ The goal of community organizing is to establish a society free from economic, social, and political oppression so that the oppressed, to paraphrase Paulo Freire, liberate themselves from their self-oppression and liberate oppressors from their compulsion to oppress others. What is your perspective on this statement? What is missing? What needs to be included?

EXERCISE 9.2

Social Work and Community Organization

Read the following overview of the relationship between social work and community organization by Howard Hallman.

By the 1950s community organization was considered a process used by professional workers engaged in health and welfare planning. It was

viewed as a field of activity occupied by agencies whose primary function is social planning, coordination, interpretation, or the financing of direct service agencies.

Very few social workers engaged in grassroots neighborhood organizing. The main exceptions were settlement houses and neighborhood centers. They, too, had become professional organizations and their boards were composed mostly of nonresidents. Their programs had a heavy emphasis on group work through building-centered activities, and they also provided casework services to individual and multi-problem families. But they also studied neighborhood problems, helped organize block associations, neighborhood organizations, and tenant councils, and got involved in social action.¹³⁰

1. Comment on the term “community organization” as it was used by social work in the 1950s.
2. How has community organization changed since the 1950s?
3. Is community organization a viable specialty within social work today?
4. What role do you believe the profession of social work should take in working with communities?
5. Should community organizing be a major focus of social work? Why or why not?
6. What should the field of social work do to engage, promote, and develop community organization as a field of practice?

EXERCISE 9.3

Leadership and Saul Alinsky

Saul Alinsky called for a practical or applied social science. He advocated using the social sciences as a tool to generate social change rather than just as a way to study social conditions. Alinsky raised the promise and potential of social science activists using their skills and training to foster grassroots citizen democracy and community-initiated social change.

Alinsky presents community organization as a way of carrying on the tradition and believed that community organization enables people actively to take control of their lives and fate, while at the same time concretely demonstrating their commitment to a democratic way of life. He stressed active participation in local community organizations as a

way of attacking a sense of alienation and powerlessness, and preventing injustices by neglect.¹³¹

1. What are Alinsky's leadership characteristics?
2. What kind of characteristics do you think make the best combination for a community organizer?

EXERCISE 9.4

Social Surplus

Michael Williams asserts that

An environment that supports neighborhood organizations extends well beyond that neighborhood. There are enough dollars to revitalize neighborhoods; the social surplus of the United States is staggering. Cultural values, however, have supported gross inequities in its distribution. If we invest money in our cities, then we will reap rewards of social capital, of good citizens and good will and less crime and leadership, productive lives instead of wasted lives, college graduates instead of ex convicts.¹³²

1. What are the implications of the preceding statement for macro social work?
2. What should the field of social work do if this statement is true?
3. If this statement is true, is it not rational to fund expanding the social commons including education, health care, and social group work programs? Why has the American governance system consistently allowed many of our social problems to continue while many of our towns and cities deteriorate?

EXERCISE 9.5

Shel Trapp: Models Just Don't Work

Read the following excerpt from an essay by Shel Trapp. In class, your instructor will lead a discussion based on the questions that follow.

The model is not the important thing. The important thing is that an organization is being built and the people are winning. [There is] an emerging organization in a small city.... [In] their eight months of existence, this organization has gotten the city manager to resign; the police department restructured; a toxic dump removed; improvements made at the local park; eight bad houses fixed up; three houses of prostitution and a porn

shop closed; several stop signs put in; and a variety of city services improved. They are quickly moving toward their founding convention. This has not been accomplished by holding hands and passing out bouquets. It has happened because of hard organizing.

Every local organization that we have assisted in getting started has developed in a different manner and ends up looking a little different. Like human beings, all community organizations resemble one another in certain respects, but each organization is a little different and the steps used to bring it into being were a little different. Yet in each case, the organizations have gained local victories and developed local leadership. That is the important thing, not what model was used.

I remember Saul Alinsky once saying, "there is only one rule in organizing, and that is that there are no rules." He would find all the discussion about models pretty amusing, perhaps pathetic, given all the human need waiting to be organized.¹³³

On the other hand, Sandra M. O'Donnell and Sokoni Karanja assert that

models can increase our consciousness about what we are doing and why. Models are simplified articulations of the purposes and processes of intervening in and with communities to effect desired change. Models give us the maps necessary to navigate complex community practice environments.¹³⁴

1. Is Trapp correct when he says, "It is not the model, but the organizing which has brought about the victories"? Are O'Donnell and Karanja correct in their assertion that "models [are] necessary to navigate complex community practice environments"? Why or why not?
2. What is the purpose of learning about such models?
3. Can you begin organizing without a model?
4. To what use can you put a model or framework for organizing?
5. What would you do if you began to use a model and found that it wasn't working the way you thought it should?

Community Organization Networks

Direct Action and Research Training Center, Inc.
(DART)
305-576-8020
314 NE 26th Terrace
PO Box 370791

Miami, FL 33137-0791
DARTCENTER@aol.com

Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)
312-245-9211; fax: 312-245-9744
220 W. Kinsey
Chicago, IL 60610
iaf@iafil.org;
www.industrialareasfoundation.org/

Gamaliel Foundation
888-812-5831 (toll free); fax: 312-357-6735
203 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 808
Chicago, IL 60601
info@gamaliel.org

National Training and Information Center (NTIC)
National People's Action
Gordon Mayer
312-243-3035
810 N. Milwaukee Avenue
Chicago, IL 60622
www.ntic-us.org

PICO National Network
Rev. Michael-Ray Mathews, Director of Outreach &
Recruitment
866-550-7426; fax: 510 655 4816
171 Santa Rosa Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610
jobs@piconetwork.org;
www.piconetwork.org

USAction
202-263-4520; fax: 202-263-4530
1825 K Street NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20006
usaction@usaction.org

Local and Regional Organizing Networks

Center for Community Change (CCC)
Dave Beckwith
202-342-0519
1000 Wisconsin Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20007
www.communitychange.org

Center for Third World Organizing (CTWO)
Training Department
510-533-7583; fax: 510-533-0923
1218 E. 21st Street

Oakland, CA 94606
www.ctwo.org

Grassroots Leadership
704-332-3090; fax: 704-332-0445
PO Box 36006
Charlotte, NC 28236-6006
www.grassrootsleadership.org/

Neighborhood Leadership Institute (NLI)
The Citizen's Committee of New York City, Inc.
212-989-0909
305 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001
www.neighborhoodleadership.org/

Organize Training Center (OTC)
Mike Miller
415-821-6180
442A Vicksburg Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
MikeOTC@aol.com

Training Institute for Careers in Organizing (TICO)
c/o Northwest Bronx Community/Clergy Coalition
Ilitch Peters
718-584-0515; fax: 718-733-6922
www.tico@igc.org

Urban Homesteading Assistance Board (UHAB)
212-479-3300; fax: 212-344-6457
120 Wall Street, 20th Floor
New York, NY 10005

Organizing Training Centers

The American Institute for Social Justice (AISJ)
Carolyn Carr, Director
202-546-3499; fax: 202-546-2483
739 8th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
www.direct@aisj.org

Midwest Academy
312-645-6010
225 West Ohio Street, #250
Chicago, IL 60610
www.info@midwestacademy.com;
www.Interns@midwestacademy.com

Highlander Research and Education Center
423-933-3443

1959 Highlander Way
New Market, TN 37820
www.highlandercenter.org/about.asp

Support Organizations

Association for Community Organization and Administration (ACOSA)
708-757-4187; fax: 708-757-4234
20560 Bensley Avenue
Lynwood, Illinois 60411
office@acosa.org

National Organizers Alliance (NOA)
301-270-0640; fax: 301-270-0642
P. O. Box 60708
Washington, DC 20039
www.noacentral.org

ADDITIONAL READING

Modern Classics in Neighborhood and Community Organizing

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PART THREE

The Practice of Social Work with Organizations

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is *the* means of transforming social action into rationally organized action.¹

Max Weber

Organizational Society

We live in a society that is an organizational society.²

Robert Presthus

Part Three, dealing with organizational social work, is dedicated to a process of building, administering, and improving social organizations as tools for social betterment. Every macro social worker needs to understand how organizational systems work, design systems that are better, infuse those which are unethical with integrity, and fix them when they become dysfunctional. As North America enters the second decade of the 21st century, you have a great challenge and opportunity to help rebuild the social framework of our organizational society and create space for an authentically *social* environment.

Chapter 10: Social Organizations

For over 100 years ordinary people, sometimes in partnership with social workers, have been developing new nonprofit organizations in the United States, more accurately called “social organizations” in this book. These concerned citizens are working to construct an entirely new “social” sector of society.

In Chapter 10 you will first learn that the phenomenon of modern complex organizations, one of the most powerful and wealthiest social systems tool ever devised, is gradually transforming personal social relationships into largely impersonal functional relations. Second, you will discover, in contrast, that social organizations along with communities are reclaiming those relations, building a renewed social commons. You will find that the rise of the social sector is an indication of a vast social revolution that is accumulating strength and power in our society, ushering in the postmodern era of the 21st century.

You will learn the dynamics of three kinds of social nonprofits and discover the content of a new form of social enterprise organization that is only now emerging. You will explore how social workers use these organizations as means to provide services, advocate for social policies, and generate a better society.

Chapter 11: Creating New Social Organizations

In Chapter 11 you will learn how to help individuals and community groups develop non-profit social service/social advocacy organizations and social enterprise organizations. You will explore how to assess the need for the organization, develop a constitution and by-laws, organize a board of directors, hire staff, create a budget, and develop funding. You will learn that the world of being a social entrepreneur and developing a social enterprise organization is a new and exciting adventure in the world of macro social work.

Chapter 12: Social Administration

In Chapter 12 you will learn how to translate your social leadership skills into operating an organization as a supervisor, departmental head, or chief administrator. You will learn how to share the process of taking responsibility for the social organization with social work staff and with the community in which it resides. You will explore how to make administrative decisions and engage in personnel administration, budgeting, and agency planning. You will also discover how to help employees take ownership of the organization change process and make the social organization a more responsive system for serving its clients and the community. You will learn how to evaluate the social organization.

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10

Social Organizations

Bureaucracy

When fully developed, bureaucracy also stands, in a specific sense, under the principle of *sine ira ac studio* [without sympathy or compassion]. Its nature, which is welcomed by capitalism, develops the more perfectly the more the bureaucracy is “dehumanized,” the more perfectly it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy and it is appraised as its special virtue.¹

Max Weber

To ascribe such artificial entities (corporations) as “intellect” or “mind” ... is to confuse metaphor with reality.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist, Pacific Gas and Electric Co. v. Public Utilities Commission

Organization and Democracy

While we are members of a society that protects freedom of speech, choice, and the rights of the individual, we work in places that ... view the values underlying democracy with deep skepticism, if not contempt.... We are still convinced that for large groups of people to get work done and succeed in the marketplace control, consistency and predictability, engineered from the top are absolute requirements.²

Peter Block

Ideas in This Chapter

THE SUCCESS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

WHAT ARE MODERN COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS?

Artificial

Intentionally Contrived

Functional Tools

Accomplish Goals

Directed by Their Owners

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MODERN COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS

Generation and Expansion of Complex Organizations (1650–1850)

Post-Civil War Expansion (1865–1910)

Frederick Taylor and Scientific Management (1910–1920)

The Human Relations School (1927–1945)

Herbert Simon and the Decision-Making School (1945–1960)

The Contingency School (1960–1980)

Global Organizational Society Today Implications for Macro Social Work

WHAT ARE NONPROFIT SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS?

Diverse and Fast Growing
 Nonprofit Distribution Constraints
 Benevolent Social Purpose
 Action-Social Orientation
 Necessary Force in American Society
 Citizen-Based Voluntary Action
 Autonomous
 Democratic
 Multiple Sources of Funding

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

1800s
 Civil War and Reconstruction (1860–1885)
 Progressive Era (1885–1910)
 New Deal and World War II (1930–1945)

Growth from 1950 to 2000
 Social Organizations Today
KINDS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS
 Traditional Service-Providing Organizations
 Social Advocacy Organizations
 Intermediaries
 Social Enterprise Organizations
 Kinds of Social Enterprises
 The Future of Social Enterprise
MACRO SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS
CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS
CONCLUSION
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
ADDITIONAL READING

THE SUCCESS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Despite a decline of almost one-fifth the number of girls of high school age between 1978 and 1988, the Girl Scouts of the USA, the world's largest women's organization, managed to maintain a membership of 3.5 million, significantly increasing its market penetration. In the state of Florida, thousands of criminal offenders sentenced to jail for the first time are paroled into the custody of the Salvation Army. These convicts are poor risks, many of them poor blacks or Hispanics, and three out of every four would become habitual criminals if actually sent to jail. The Salvation Army rehabilitates three out of four of these parolees.

Church membership and attendance have been going down quite sharply in all denominations, but membership and attendance is growing fast in those pastoral churches, Protestant and Catholic, mainstream and evangelical, that concentrate on serving the needs, problems, and families of their parishioners. Around 1970 there were no more than 5,000 pastoral churches with a membership of 2,000 parishioners or more. By the late 1980s their numbers had grown fourfold to 20,000, and they employ more than a million volunteers as unpaid staff.

Peter Drucker says that these successes are based on greatly increased productivity.³ Social organizations, or at least a large number of them, get more results

from their resources. The Girl Scouts saw their opportunity in demographic change. They adapted their programs and activities to married women with children who are now in the labor force. Recognizing that the career aspirations of girls are changing fast in the United States, they converted those changes into opportunities. They began to recruit aggressively among minorities, offering children and their mothers an opportunity to participate in what had up to then been considered a white, middle-class organization.

By 1987 the proportion of African American girls of elementary school age enrolled in the Girl Scouts matched that of white girls. "In the war on drug abuse, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America have taken the lead. In their work with elementary school children—and one out of every four elementary school children in the United States is a scout—the two organizations try hard, with considerable success, to inculcate resistance to drugs well before the children are actually exposed to the menace," notes Peter Drucker.⁴

The Salvation Army used an organizational tool they called "organized abandonment." They assessed their efforts in crime prevention in the slums and realized that they were ineffective. The return on their investment of time and energy was close to zero. Once they examined the problem, it became clear why they were not effective. Before being caught and convicted, endangered young people in the slums are

not receptive to the Salvation Army's message. Each of them thinks he or she will beat the odds. Being arrested but released on probation only confirms this belief. After young people have served even a short term in jail, however, it is too late. They are not only traumatized by their experience, but corrupted by it.

The Salvation Army staff realized, however, that for a very short period of time there is a window of opportunity in which pre-convicts (those who have been caught and sentenced to jail but have not yet been sent to prison) are susceptible to change. They are sufficiently frightened but not yet corrupted by the prison system. Now the Salvation Army contracts with government to keep these young people out of further trouble, and they are doing it with considerable success.

Social sector organizations work at making their governing boards effective. Many have work programs against which they regularly evaluate their boards. In the well-run social sector organizations, there are no more "volunteers"; there is only unpaid staff. Increasingly these people are taking over the professional and executive work in nonprofit organizations. The 1,800 local chapters of the American Heart Association, for instance, are managed and run by volunteers. A growing number of volunteers are professional men and women; 20 or 30 years ago they tended to be housewives. For a senior business executive, board membership in a nonprofit organization has almost become a "must." The number of active volunteers working for nonprofits has grown fast these past 10 years. A lot of older people, retired or semiretired, have found volunteer work to be satisfying and a way to put a lifetime's experience to work. But there is even more demand for participation on the part of affluent baby boomers.

Social sector organizations have gone heavily into training. In the Girl Scouts or the Salvation Army, staff members, whether paid or unpaid, are expected to define clearly the performances and contributions for which they are to be held accountable. They are then regularly appraised against these performance objectives. A large pastoral church runs a dozen ministries, both for its 13,000 members and in its community. Yet it has a paid staff of only 160. New members of the congregation are asked after a few months to become unpaid staff. They are thoroughly trained and given a specific assignment with performance goals. Their performance is regularly reviewed, and if it does not come

up to high expectations, the volunteer is either shifted to another, less demanding assignment or asked to resign.

The Salvation Army keeps a tight rein on its 25,000 parolees in Florida. About 160 paid staffers supervise and train volunteers and take care of crises, while 250 to 300 unpaid people do the work itself. What enabled the Girl Scouts to maintain enrollment in a shrinking market was a substantial increase in the number of volunteers—from 600,000 to 730,000. Many of the new volunteers are young professional women without children of their own but with a need to be a woman in a feminine environment a few evenings a week and on weekends, and to be with children. They are attracted precisely because the job is professional; they are required to spend several hours a week being trained or working as trainers for newcomers.

One Midwestern diocese doubled its community service even though it had barely half the number of priests it had 20 years before. Its 140 priests preach, say mass, hear confession, baptize, confirm, marry, and bury people. Everything else is done by 2,000 laypeople, each of whom is expected to work at least three hours a week and to spend an additional two or three hours in training sessions. Each layperson's performance is appraised twice a year. "It's worse than Marine boot camp," one of these unpaid staffers said. Yet there is a long waiting list of potential volunteers. American and Canadian social-sector organizations are rapidly becoming the creators of new bonds of community. They create a sphere of effective citizenship and involvement.⁵

Retired working-class people and young professionals work side by side in the Salvation Army's efforts with young convicts, designing programs and training leaders in a local chapter of the YMCA, and helping disaster victims with the Red Cross. What the Girl Scouts contribute to inner-city women may be more important than what they contribute to children. These women are becoming leaders in their communities, learning skills, setting examples, and gaining recognition and status. There are now more African Americans in leadership positions in the two U.S. scouting organizations than anywhere else except in black churches, says Drucker.⁶ In the Scouts they are leaders in racially integrated organizations. Social organizations are creating a sphere of meaningful citizenship for their volunteers.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

This chapter will examine two broad categories of organizations. First, you will learn about large modern complex⁷ business corporations and public bureaucracies that comprise the economic and governmental sectors of society. You will examine the components and a brief history of these systems tools. You will consider the implications of modern complex organizations for macro social work.

Second, you will explore voluntary social benefit organizations. You will discover that while many people use the term “nonprofit” to refer to benevolent organizations in general, this name is somewhat misleading. While social benefit organizations are almost without exception tax exempt, not all nonprofit tax exempt organizations exist to provide for common social good. Therefore, whenever social benefit organizations are referred to in this book, the term “social,” “social benefit,” or “nonprofit social organization” will be used. You will find that social organizations are the milieu in which social workers carry out their profession comprising much of what is called “civil society” or the social commons.

You will learn about the foundational characteristics of nonprofit social organizations and their functions. You will look at a brief history of social organizations. You will investigate four kinds of social organizations in existence today: traditional nonprofit charitable organizations, advocacy organizations, intermediary organizations, and social enterprise organizations. You will explore their size, scope, and structures and the importance of social organizations for macro social work practice. You will consider the challenges that social organizations face, and the future of social organizations in the coming postmodern era.

EXERCISE 10.1

Social Organizations and Modern Complex Organizations

Before you read further, think about modern complex organizational systems and nonprofit social organizations. What are their similarities and differences? Which is natural and which is artificial? How do they deal with values such as compassion or altruism? Consider their goals.

What kind of goals provide direction for social organizations, for business corporations? How is their governance patterned? Who owns large corporations? Who owns non-profit social organizations? Why do we say that social organizations engage in leadership while modern business organizations engage in management? How are social organizations structured? What is the structure of complex business organizations? In small groups, compare your answers and do the same in the class as a whole. What conclusions do you reach?

WHAT ARE MODERN COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS?

For the past 100 years, Western society has been dominated by modern, complex, public bureaucratic and private corporate organizations. These social systems are the representatives of modernity, and its greatest invention. Instrumental formal organizations have been universally adopted as *the* structure by which people are engaged in productive activities today. *Modern complex organizations, whether in the public or private sectors, are artificial, intentionally contrived systems tools for accomplishing the goals of their owners.*

Artificial

Modern complex organizations are artificial systems.⁸ They are both the product and the producer of technology. Because technology can create a machine-oriented world that is efficient and productive, humans invented these organizations to produce more and better kinds of technology.⁹ Jacques Ellul asserts that these artificial machinelike systems tend to destroy the natural world of the social commons of which social organizations are a part.¹⁰ Where the social has not been destroyed it has been diminished. “Modern organization does not allow the natural world to restore itself or even to enter into a symbiotic relation with it,”¹¹ says Ralph Hummel. These two worlds obey different imperatives, different directives, and different laws that have nothing in common.

In the natural social world, for example, relationships are intimate, personal, and often compassionate and caring. All relationships in the artificial world of organizational systems are impersonal and abstract. Complex organizations eliminate altruistic treatment of individuals. According to Victor Thompson, in

modern organizations, “compassion as exceptional, special, non-legitimate treatment is irrational in relation to the owner’s goal, and it is also illegitimate—a form of theft or personal appropriation of administrative resources.”¹²

Clients become “cases,” not persons. Employees must conform their behavior, as well as that of clients, to the expectations required by the organization, often in rigidly programmed ways. Workers are constrained from expressing or acting on altruistic feelings in making decisions for clients if those decisions contradict prescribed agency mandates. “In fact,” asserts Thompson, “a caring relationship between the incumbent in a role in a modern organization and a client is regarded as *unethical*.”¹³

Administrators who even attempt to “humanize” relationships within their organization’s hierarchy will be seen as subverting the basic structure of the organization. They are questioning its value system and engage in “corruption” in the true sense of the word by propagating relationships “that threaten death to rationalistically legitimated ones.”¹⁴

Intentionally Contrived

Modern complex organizations are “consciously designed control machines”¹⁵ that exact “conforming behavior in every area of organizational life.”¹⁶ Such organizations have only one vision—that of the owner—and everyone is trained to see the organizational environment through that perspective. Once the owner embeds the organization with its ends and provides it with premises and goals, decisions become inevitable and predictable. Organized and rationalized individuals will, as closely as possible, always think alike, behave in the same way, communicate with the same technical language, and in theory reach the same decisions.

The result is standardization, routinization, and uniformity over all the organization’s components, including clients, workers, and administrators alike. Unidimensional rational thinking is necessary for the organization, so that all of its components behave in programmed ways. This is true not only in complex organizations themselves but also in the political and economic sectors of society as well. Nearly every facet of societal life is dominated by organized systems.¹⁷ According to Peter Block, “We have implemented and perpetuated work structures, financial control systems,

information systems, performance appraisal and reward systems, and other management practices that reinforce the class system and reenact in a thousand ways the primacy of consistency, control and predictability.”¹⁸

Functional Tools

Modern organizations are unitary, unipurpose functional tools devised to shape the world as its owner wishes. Organizations provide the means for imposing the owner’s definition of proper affairs on others, giving owners power that others do not have. Peter Block says, for example, that we have given organizations and their owners responsibility for shaping and coordinating goals and the direction of our society.¹⁹

Modern complex organizations become a means of dominance “based on sovereignty and a form of intimate colonialism.”²⁰ Organizational megastructures decide what is in our best interest and remove the locus of decisions far from those affected by them. Complex organizations intentionally keep us captured by dependency, chained to helplessness, and disempowered by their command and control systems.

Accomplish Goals

A tool does not have a goal; it is a means to achieve a goal. Organizational tools are neutral instruments that accomplish the purposes of their owners. The owners of the organization establish its goals, and the organization carries them out. Their function is to survive by competition in a social environment composed of all other organizations. “Private organizations engage in the primary task of maximizing their control and position,”²¹ says Allen Jedlicka. Product or service quality is necessary only to the extent that quality helps achieve the end of organizational survival. If quality can be sacrificed without affecting power or profit, it is only rational that an organization will do so.

Directed by Their Owners

Most modern organizations are structured in a more or less hierarchical, pyramidal structure. At the top is the owner, who has power and control and makes the major decisions for the organization. At the bottom are line employees, who carry out the work of the organization, do what they are told, and rarely, if ever,

become involved in making decisions about how the organization operates.

One-Way Chain of Command Bureaucracies operate by a “chain of command” in which orders are passed down the hierarchy by means of one-way communication. Communication filters upward through this chain of command and may be stopped at any level. Hierarchical bureaucracies are tightly controlled systems created for efficiency, effectiveness, and speed. However, in reality, because of their large size, many bureaucracies generate rigid procedures that slow their operations and create inefficiencies and lapses in communication.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MODERN COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS

Our society was not always dominated by complex organizations. They arrived at a particular period in history when systems structures were discovered to be a means by which modern society could be ordered. Once transplanted to the New World, complex organizations proliferated in the United States. By the turn of the 20th century, theorists began to inquire about these systems, developing various schools of thought, including the scientific management, human relations decision making, and contingency schools. Today, we live in a global market-based society dominated by organizational systems. This reality has many implications for macro social work.

Generation and Expansion of Complex Organizations (1650–1850)

Modern complex organizational systems were invented during the Enlightenment period in Britain (1650–1850) as joint stock companies. These companies were chiefly responsible for the expansion of Britain’s colonial empire throughout the globe and the rise of the Industrial Revolution. Joint stock companies colonized much of America and the rest of the world. They developed the factory system and are responsible for the growth of modern manufacturing and its attendant technology.

Around 1830, modern organizations began to proliferate on American soil, and by 1860 complex organizations were deeply embedded in the culture of the United States. Organizations and the technology they created were responsible for much of American economic development. Organizations were given a boost

during the Civil War, during which speedy, efficient, and effective manufacture of goods helped win the war for the North. During and after the Civil War, according to Nevins and Commager,

the great manufacturing companies and business corporations made possible large scale combination, centralized control and administration, the elimination of less efficient units, the pooling of patents, and, by virtue of their capital resources, power to expand, to compete with foreign business enterprises, to bargain with labor, to exact favorable terms ... and to exercise immense influence with politics, state and national.²²

Post-Civil War Expansion (1865–1910)

After the war, businesses worked to cement their gains. They created legal precedents giving organizations the rights and protections of the Constitution and formed monopolies, but also created immense poverty.

Organization as a Person In 1886 a landmark decision, *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*, a U.S. court defined the corporation as a “natural person” under law, giving corporations many of the same rights and protections that the Constitution guarantees to its citizens. For example, the court specifically extended the Fourteenth Amendment to commercial corporations. The original intent of the amendment was to provide civil rights and liberties to former slaves. The rule that “no state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property” without due process of law was adapted to defend corporations and limit regulations on them.²³

Monopolies With these new entitlements and protections, corporations expanded even more and combined into large monopolies that threatened to usurp the political process, undermine the nation’s economic health for their own interests, and institutionalize injustice and oppression in nearly every arena of public life. By 1906, for example, four groups of investors controlled two-thirds of the nation’s railroads. One company, U.S. Steel, controlled 62% of steel production, and Standard Oil controlled 90% of oil.²⁴

Creation of Poverty The power and wealth of these and other conglomerates was attended by the abject poverty of millions of laborers. In the last quarter of

the 19th century, 1% of the population owned 47% of the nation's assets. In that same period, for a family of four to survive, everyone had to work, including the children. Those in control of the economic machinery of society esteemed child labor as beneficial. Asa Chandler, one of the founders of the Coca-Cola Company, asserted that “the most beautiful sight that we see is the child at labor; [and] as early as he may get at labor, the more beautiful and the most useful does his life get to be.”²⁵

Frederick Taylor and Scientific Management (1910–1920)

In the early 1900s efficiency expert Frederick Winslow Taylor investigated the influence of financial incentives, tool design, and work layout on job performance. Based on his empirical studies, Taylor applied his ideas to management and to organizational design as well. In his book, *Principles of Scientific Management*, published in 1911, Taylor asserted that scientific management could reduce “every single act of every workman to a science,”²⁶ and develop a cooperative spirit between worker and manager while increasing productivity and control in a benign, rational, “scientific” manner. This new approach was intended to increase efficiency and worker productivity while inducing the worker to accept the demands of management in a docile fashion.²⁷

Taylor's ideas set the tone for thinking about organizations for the next two decades and beyond. Rational scientific management could be applied not only to worker productivity but to the task of organizing the corporation as well. Scientific principles of organization were assumed to exist, waiting to be discovered by diligent scientific observation and analysis.

To develop a machinelike organization, managers must also create a kind of individual who will fit into it, work well with it, and be able carry out narrowly defined specific tasks, often in repetitive, uniform ways. “Machinelike organizations need machinelike people,”²⁸ says Ralph Hummel. The organizational components—the workers—must do what they are told to carry out the requirements of the system. Any functionary with the needed technical skills can be placed in almost any organizational role. People are viewed as interchangeable parts, easily replaceable, making it easy to fill all the functions that managers need.²⁹

The Human Relations School (1927–1945)

In 1927 Elton Mayo and Fritz Roethlisberger conducted a series of experiments called the Hawthorne studies at the Western Electric Company,³⁰ marking the introduction of “social science into the study of organizations,”³¹ and giving birth to the human relations school of organization theory. According to human relations theorists, organizations are not only ruled by an artificial, impersonal, machinelike system, but they simultaneously contain a natural social system as well. Using social science techniques, managers began to understand how to motivate people to maximum productivity, manipulate dynamics of work groups, and utilize organizational change, to their advantage.

Herbert Simon and the Decision-Making School (1945–1960)

In 1945 Nobel Prize winner Herbert A. Simon developed ideas in his book, *Administrative Behavior*, that were to change the way we looked at organizations. At about the same time, Max Weber's classic work “Bureaucracy” was translated for the first time into English. The mechanism of bureaucracy now had two theorists who could adequately explain and expand on its principles. Simon rejected the machine tool and human relations models and intuitively grasped the embryonic field of computer technology as a more accurate and realistic metaphor for organizational systems.

Organization tends to assume more and more qualities of the human character and, according to Simon, even characteristics that transcend those of humanity. Organization is not a tool serving human ends; it is an end in itself, and humans are the means by which organization functions. The aim of the organization is the total integration and inclusion of individuals into its premises by means of unobtrusive control. Rationality, for example, is not a category of the human condition. For Simon, humans are only “intendedly rational” beings. Only organization “permits the individual to approach reasonably near to objective rationality,” Simon asserts.³² To be fully rational individuals must be integrated into and take their premises from the organizational context of which they are a part. “The rational individual is and

must be an organized and institutionalized individual.”³³ Organization supplants individuals, and to the extent that an organization forms a total social milieu, individuals must conform to it for their own good. Organization becomes human culture.

The Contingency School (1960–1980)

By the 1960s the United States had entered an era of expansion, growth, and development. “Space-age” and computer technology progressed rapidly. At the center of this progress were complex organizations. Many of the newer organizations, oriented to research and development, needed to be open to change and capable of fitting new market niches. Relationships between government and the economy were closer and more integrated. Organization theorists devised a contingency approach to systems design, recommending how to construct modern organizations.

It All Depends According to contingency theory, organizations vary or are *contingent* on a number of factors. The answer to the question “What is the best structure, size, and leadership style for an organization?” is “It all depends.”

All organizations have similarities, but no two organizations are exactly alike, just as no two humans are exactly alike. Using social ecological metaphors, contingency-oriented organization theorists developed concepts that help us understand the “anatomy” and “physiology” of organizational design. Emery and Trist, for example, discovered at least four subtypes of organizational environments: placid-random, placid-clustered, disturbed-reactive, and turbulent field.³⁴ James D. Thompson developed a taxonomy of propositions, or what he calls “a conceptual inventory,” from which one could construct an organizational organization.³⁵ Stephen Robbins identified 11 kinds of organizational structures, each of which has a different combination of complexity, formalization, and centralization.³⁶ Rensis Likert, in his “science-based theory,” lists “forty-two aspects of organizations and for each one arranged them under each of four system [designs].”³⁷

Despite initial optimism and some promising early findings, Levine and colleagues assert that contingency theorists have yet to explain why some successful organizations’ structures resemble those of less successful ones that confront similar environments, or why two

organizations with very different structures perform effectively in the same environment.³⁸ As a consequence, contingency theorists have been unable to predict what structure or strategy will work best on any but a very general basis.

Global Organizational Society Today

By the 1990s many corporations had become transnational in character. Transnational corporations (TNCs) own other companies and subsidiaries that cross national borders and operate in an international systemic web throughout the world. This new global organizational society, asserts Gary Teeple, is driven by an “economy characterized by enormous conglomerates, oligopolies, and cartels, with intense competition between them, new modes of highly capital-intensive production, and vast capital funds in constant search of profitable investment opportunities.”³⁹ International governmental organizations (IGOs) such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, often preempt national laws and allocate additional power to TNCs, which respond in turn by usurping the functions of nation-states and operate with little civil or criminal regulation.

CITIZENS UNITED v. FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

In 2010, in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, a landmark case, the Supreme Court reinforced and extended the precedent established in *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific* by holding that corporations are legal persons and have rights of free speech, allowing them to donate unrestricted amounts of money to campaign contributions. President Barack Obama stated that the decision “gives the special interests and their lobbyists even more power in Washington—while undermining the influence of average Americans who make small contributions to support their preferred candidates.”⁴⁰ Fearful of the increasing power of corporations to influence the political process, among other issues, many people took to the streets in what has become known as the “Occupy” movement to protest this decision.

Implications for Macro Social Work

Because we endow organizational systems with attributes more compelling and powerful than the ordinary human beings who compose them, Alberto Ramos asserts that “organizations in today’s market society

are necessarily deceitful.” They “deceive both their members and their clients, inducing them to believe not only that what they produce is desirable, but also that their existence is vital to the interests of society at large.”⁴¹ We rarely question them because they appear as massive systems over which we have little control and because we have been socialized to depend on them. Organizational systems tools are non-socially oriented and are often a cause of social problems. Social workers often must struggle against the power and control that these systems employ.

Non-Socially Oriented In spite of our acceptance, it is important for us to realize that it is nearly impossible to use modern complex organizations for most social purposes. These systems cannot be used for infusing people with meaning, or providing personal or compassionate treatment. Modern organizations are not created to provide those qualities. They are intended to create private, not social goods. To expect a market-centered organization to solve social problems, improve the social infrastructure of community, or become invested in the greater social good of the nation is to ask it to do something for which it was not designed and which it is unable to do.

Create Social Problems In spite of their productivity, complex organization creates problems not only for our clients but for people in general. It may be confusing for clients who expect to be treated personally, with caring and compassion, and instead are presented with impersonal rules, procedures, and policies. It may be threatening or intimidating for clients to be confronted with persons in authority who have the power to give or withhold needed services, and to be expected to fill out forms, understand organizational jargon, and conform to unclear bureaucratic processes.

In a broader sense, however, modern organizational systems are power systems of the first order for those who control them, says Max Weber.⁴² They create prosperity for many who are part of their management, but alienation, conformity, and even poverty for many others, especially for those living in deprived communities and third-world nations.

Social workers use a number of methods, including community planning, community development, community organization, and social advocacy, as strategies to overcome the dehumanization and powerlessness

that modern organizations impose on society. Among the most important means by which social workers bring about the mediating effects of the social commons are countervailing social organizations.

WHAT ARE NONPROFIT SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS?

Today, macro social workers are engaged in a revolution in thinking, in government, and in the way we understand the social. “At the center of this revolution is the rise of a new institutional and social form,” says Peter Dobkin Hall.⁴³ These new revolutionary forms are nonprofit social benefit or “social organizations.”

Four kinds of social organizations exist in the United States. First are nonprofit faith-based, research, cultural, educational, and human service organizations, commonly known as IRS code, 501(c)(3) charitable organizations. Second, are IRS code 501(c)(4) advocacy, social justice, human rights, and social policy organizations. Third are 501(c)(3) social and financial intermediary organizations. Fourth are social enterprises the newest form of social organization, that have no official IRS designation.

Nonprofit social organizations are amazingly diverse and fast growing. They operate under nonprofit distribution constraints, are dedicated to a benevolent social purpose, and have an action-social orientation. Social organizations are a necessary force in American life. They are created and operated by citizen-based voluntary action, and they are autonomous, independent of corporate or governmental control. They are democratically and participatively self-governed, and utilize multiple funding sources.

Diverse and Fast Growing

Today, social organizations offer a vast array of differing forms and structures. They are the fastest growing set of organizations in the nation.

Diverse Because of their near-universal identification with the local neighborhoods from which they spring, social organizations are the most diversified social structures in North America and Europe.⁴⁴ The world of social organizations is a “vast embracing set of complexities and variations so numerous that they would appear to defeat all efforts to generalize,”⁴⁵ say Smith and Lipsky. Nonprofit social organizations can

be found in every village, town, and city in the United States. They come in all shapes and sizes, ranging from small, locally based community and neighborhood associations with no assets and no employees, to powerful, multibillion-dollar national foundations with many staff members.⁴⁶

Unlike corporate and bureaucratic organizations that tend to grow larger, distant, and complex, most social organizations are very small and firmly anchored in the communities where they were founded. Social organizations exclusively aim themselves at the social interstices of the smallest units of society, engaging in social and public benefit wherever they are located. In spite of their diversity, however, they exist for a common purpose—to enable human beings express in their actions that nobility of spirit that provides hope and possibility for the future in spite of the hegemony of power and domination of the global economic market.

Fast Growing Today, social organizations are the fastest growing set of organizations in the nation, not only in number, but also in terms of the number of differing forms and structures, which is developing more rapidly today than at any other period in history,⁴⁷ says Peter Dobkin Hall. Of all tax-exempt social organizations, 501(c)(3) charitable organizations are the fastest growing and most numerous. In 2006, 1.4 million tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations were registered in the United States.⁴⁸ By 2011 that number had climbed to 1,574,674,⁴⁹ not including hundreds of thousands that did not show up in official statistics.

Nonprofit Distribution Constraints

Social organizations that become incorporated are legal entities chartered under state laws. This corporate status makes the organization a legal person able to enter contracts, largely freeing the officers of personal financial responsibility for the organization's commitments,⁵⁰ and placing social organizations on an equal legal footing with both business and government corporations. They reinvest their surplus income and are exempt from taxation.

Reinvest Surplus Income Social organizations are owned equally by the all members of the community who formed them, joined them, or who are served by them. Because they are part of the social commons, the social goods they produce are freely available to all.

Any surplus monetary income that such an organization generates cannot be distributed to shareholders, because there are no shareholders. “Making money,” says J. Stephen Ott, “is not the central purpose for [social] organizations. In the [social commons], making money is necessary but not primary. Achieving other ends come first. Revenues are resources, not the end purpose.”⁵¹

Instead, any surplus funds generated by the organization must be reinvested into the organization. By reinvesting surplus income back into the social organization, the communities that established them ensure that their resources cannot be exploited or appropriated for personal gain.

Moreover, this limitation aligns social organizations with the social commons rather than as components of mechanistic economic systems, and symbolizes their rejection of the profit motive. This redistribution principle is called a “non-profit distribution” constraint, hence the origin of the term “nonprofit.”

Tax Exemption In recognition of this voluntary constraint on profit making, the federal government permits any organization that redistributes its net surplus back into the organization to be exempt from paying taxes on that income. Government recognizes many organizations that are organized as nonprofit by designating them 501(c) tax-exempt organizations.

Benevolent Social Purpose

Only those tax exempt organizations that have a benevolent social purpose as their mission can be considered nonprofit *social* organizations. Of the 30 categories of 501(c) tax-exempt organizations that exist, only 2 are formed for purely for public or social benefit. These two social benefit categories are 501(c)(3) charitable and 501(c)(4) social advocacy organizations. With the possible exception of membership-oriented sororal and fraternal societies [501(c)(10)], veterans organizations [501(c)(23)], and cooperatives (co-ops) that do have public social benefit as one of their purposes, the remaining 25 nonprofit 501c organizations are exclusively dedicated to serving the interests of their members rather than benefit society as a whole. They are called mutual benefit membership organizations. These mutual benefit membership organizations include private country clubs, private athletic and swim clubs, mutual

insurance companies, cemetery associations and others. Any excess income that these 25 categories of private membership organizations accrue is returned to the organization to benefit the members themselves. Because they have no larger social or public purpose, these nonprofit membership organizations cannot be considered social or social benefit organizations. While all social benefit organizations are nonprofit, therefore, not all nonprofit organizations are formed for public social benefit. For this reason the term "nonprofit" must always be qualified and not used to imply that all 501c nonprofits are uniformly dedicated to serving the public interest.

Action-Social Orientation

Peter Dobkin Hall asserts that social organizations are a new, hybrid institutional combination of communal and functional components.⁵² It is because of this unique combination of social/community and action/organization that they are called "social organizations." They are uniquely suited to promoting components of social life that large bureaucratic organizations are unable to provide, and in a number of cases social workers are at the center of bringing these new forms into being.

Social/Communal Social organizations are grounded in the social. They are the direct outgrowth of local associations that provide the foundation of the organization and guide its direction. Smith and Lipsky assert that such social organizations "are communities made manifest,"⁵³ and "in many ways represent a new or renewed expression of civil society,"⁵⁴ says Jacques Defourney.

Social organizations provide a means by which the people are personally engaged to develop emotionally and in their values in interaction with each other. They are often *the* means by which people unite voluntarily to implement compassion and caring in an often impersonal world. Social organizations embody some of the highest values of altruism which humans are capable, encourage learning, innovation, and understanding, and generate social goods that provide the substance and foundation of the human spirit.

Every social organization arises spontaneously out of the needs, interests, and desires of communal groups, local associations, or wider non-local communities of people who voluntarily work to establish the organization. Community members are the "owners" of

the social organization, comprising its social component, giving it purpose and direction.

Social organizations are as "close to understanding the needs and character of the members of their communities as can be found,"⁵⁵ says Lester Salamon. While both economic and governmental bureaucracies follow policies and mandates that often arise far from the settings where people live, social organizations often blend seamlessly with the localities where they originate.

Action/Organization The action component is the organization itself, the social tool that members use to accomplish their purposes. This is why we often use the word "agency" to describe them. The social organization is the practical "agent" that represents and carries out the work of the communal association that owns it. Because unpaid staff or volunteers who often operate the social organization are also members of the community, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the community and the organization. The life of the organization and of the community tend to be indivisible, particularly in faith-based and community organizations.

Action Tools Social organizations are action tools that local communities of people establish to embody their ideals and further their ends. The organizational tools are instruments of communities by which a variety of services and programs are provided, political advocacy is carried out, and larger societal change is generated.

Nonprofit social agencies are *the* means by which social workers deliver social services, meet needs, and alleviate suffering or help other people realize their potential when it is otherwise thwarted by social conditions. According to Peter Drucker, more social functions are discharged in and by the local community and, in the great majority of cases, by autonomous, self-governing, social organizations in North America than anywhere else in the world.⁵⁶ The social benefits that these social organizations provide include helping individuals and groups solve social problems and make social change.

Helping Individuals and Groups Social organizations "all have in common, and this is a recent realization, that their purpose is to change human beings,"⁵⁷

says Peter Drucker. The product of a church is a changed life. The product of the American Heart Association is middle-aged people who look after their own health and practice preventive cardiac maintenance in the way they live. The product of the Salvation Army, one social organization that reaches the poorest of the poor regardless of race or religion, is that the derelict becomes a citizen. The product of the Girl Scouts is a mature young woman who has values, skills, and respect for herself. The purpose of the Red Cross in peacetime is to enable a community hit by natural disaster to regain its capacity to look after itself, to create human competence.⁵⁸

Solve Social Problems Far more extensively than governments, local social benefit organizations are the major sources by which people in modern North American society attempt to resolve social problems. Social organizations “encourage the benevolent donation of money, property, time and effort to eliminate or prevent the causes of social problems and to otherwise improve the quality of life around us,” according to J. Steven Ott.⁵⁹ This is true whether the organization exists primarily to promote the arts and humanities, help terminally ill persons die with dignity, advocate for environmental protection or gay rights, or advance a set of religious beliefs.⁶⁰

Make Social Change Social organizations and the communities they support are among the most powerful and active forces for social and cultural change, not only in North America but even more importantly and more prominently, across the globe. Nearly all social and political advocacy in North America and internationally is conducted by social organizations, playing increasingly important roles challenging activities of the economic and governmental sectors as well as mediating between them.

Necessary Force in American Society

Social organizations are revolutionary not only because of their diversity, social purposes, or even because they constitute a completely new social form. They are revolutionary because they are unobtrusively bringing about a major shift in the way the economy and government are conducted, constituting a new and unprecedented era in American history. “Their emergence as a central feature in society represents a new

configuration of public and private power⁶¹ and a necessary force in American society, says Peter Dobkin Hall. Social organizations are showing themselves to be essential to civil society, creating services that neither the market nor the public sectors are willing or able to provide.

Essential to Civil Society Whereas economic and public organizations often produce impersonal and dehumanizing conditions, social organizations create social goods on which the economy and government depend but which these two sectors cannot themselves produce. Francis Fukuyama asserts, for example, that the economy is dependent on and could not exist without the capacity of people to trust and be honest and thrifty. The economy depends on people’s dedication to a task, willingness to contribute, and cooperate in producing goods and services, qualities which are products of the social commons and social organizations.⁶²

In the same way, government depends on the willingness of people to apply democratic ideals such as fairness and justice in their duties as citizens. Coats and Santorum explain, for example, that “When civil society is strong, it trains its people to be good citizens and transmits values between generations. When it is weak, no amount of police or politics can provide a substitute.”⁶³ A democratic society could not exist without people who express public spirit and live out their ideals for the public interest. Neither the private sector of the economy nor the public sector of government could survive without a healthy civil society, of which social organizations are its key components, say Salamon and Anheier.⁶⁴

Overcome Market Failure Social organizations help overcome the existing deficiencies of market-centered organizations and public-centered bureaucracies of modern society. They provide a vast array of charitable, social, humanitarian, and other services that markets and government fail to provide, bringing about stability in the private and public sectors of society.

Citizen-Based Voluntary Action

While many social organizations will hire professional administrative staff, any number of social organizations rely on community citizens as their base. Usually, this takes the form of a voluntary board of directors and extensive use of volunteer staff as well.

Volunteer action is undertaken freely by individuals. They are not compelled by social convention, mandated or coerced by government, or directed principally by financial or economic gain. The community of civic-minded and engaged associations of citizens is the inspiration and source by which such organizations are formed.

Autonomous

Social organizations are uniquely autonomous structures displaying independence, self-government, freedom, and even emerging interdependence.

Independence Communities that establish social organizations continually assert their prerogative to choose the social purposes they believe are important and define social problems as they perceive them rather than yielding to the perceptions of social experts, professionals, scientists, government officials, or anyone else.

Self-Government These communities of citizens select their own boards of directors from among local volunteers. They devise their own internal procedures of governance; control their own activities, finances and budget; and make their own rules. In addition, they establish the policies and procedures by which their social organizations operate. They make their own decisions, chart their own course, and choose their own futures.

Freedom The independence of communities and the social organizations they develop not only results in resistance to external control, but allows these social structures to operate with remarkable, but necessary, freedom to carry out some of their most vital roles in society. “This organizational fluidity,” says Lester Salamon, “is one of the prized features of [social organizations], enabling groups of people to meet together to pursue common purposes without having to seek official approval or even to account for their presence to the government or the public in general.”⁶⁵

Nongovernmental Social organizations are neither part of the government apparatus or dominated by board members who are government officials.⁶⁶ A communally based social organization, say Smith and

Lipsky, is “prior to government provision of service, coexists with public service provision, and plays a social role that cannot fully be taken over by government.”⁶⁷

In order to receive tax concessions, American law does not, in fact, even require most social organizations to incorporate or seek formal recognition by tax authorities.⁶⁸ As a result, while most communities that establish social organizations may agree to become formally incorporated and register with the IRS, others assert their right of refusal to either officially incorporate or register. Some also refuse to apply for or accept governmental funding, grants, contracts, or other “public efforts to subsidize them that may result in loss of their vitality and character,”⁶⁹ says Salamon.

Non-Market Dominated Social organizations traditionally distinguish themselves by their independence from external control by business corporations. Many resist any identification with the free market. None are driven exclusively by market imperatives, nor are they dominated by corporate businesses or beholden to corporate interests or funding.

Interdependence In today’s more complex society, many social organizations are shedding some of their resistance to participation with the economic and governmental sectors, however. Many, including faith-based organizations, are taking over some of the service functions of government, competing directly with commercial firms in the business sector, and collaborating and partnering with corporations and even forming business/social benefit combinations called social enterprises that are on the cutting edge of development among today’s social organizations. Rather than independence, many social organizations are engaging in interdependence as part of a larger movement toward an inclusive social commons.

Democratic

If it were not for social organizations in the social commons, few citizens would experience direct, participative democratic processes, have a forum to express their values where it matters, or help make decisions that improve their communities. Community-based social groups and social group work agencies that promote them are among the few areas where children and youth experience character building and the democratic process in intimate settings. Nearly every social

organization exhibits more substantive democracy in their operating philosophy, governance structures, decision-making processes, and membership than the majority of the nation's governmental agencies and particularly its corporate economic organizations. Social organizations are the among most egalitarian and participative decision structures in this country.

Egalitarian Decision making in social organizations is not based on capital ownership or often on bureaucratic hierarchical rule. For some social organizations this means that the CEO operates in a collaborative fashion with stakeholders, employees, and the board, while in others, such as social enterprise co-operatives (co-ops), this generally means the principle of “one member, one vote,” or at least a voting power not based on capital shares.

Participatory Not only do social organizations exhibit grassroots democracy in their internal operations, they engage the active participation of all their members, not only in policymaking and governance, but in carrying out the programs toward which the organization is directed. They exemplify the spirit of justice and equality in their celebration of diversity, inclusion, and service to clients, employees, and the community as a whole.

Multiple Sources of Funding

The sources of revenue for social organizations follow no clear pattern. Nonprofit funding sources vary dramatically among themselves—as much as or more than they differ from their for-profit competitors,⁷⁰ says Sanger. Although many have a preferred manner of raising funds, most social organizations draw their resources from multiple sources of funding. They diversify to capture market niches as funding sources open or move in new directions. Among the sources of funding are fees for service, government grants, contracts, loans, and tax subsidies; and private contributions, including federated funding, foundation giving, corporate support and professional fundraising.

Fees for Service Many people believe that large charitable foundations provide most of the income of America's nonprofit sector.⁷¹ Others assume that charitable contributions as a whole, including individual

donations, corporate gifts, and foundation grants, account for the bulk of nonprofit service-organization income.⁷² In reality, however, while some organizational categories are heavily funded by these sources, most of the income of the social sector comes from fees, service charges, and other commercial income, with government funding a close second,⁷³ according to Lester Salamon. More than seven out of ten nonprofit agencies depend on this kind of revenue, with government accounting for the remaining 29%.⁷⁴

The health and education portions of the nonprofit sector, which are by far the largest, receive the overwhelming preponderance of their income from fees and charges.⁷⁵ This source accounts for 54% and 65%, respectively, of the income of these two types of nonprofit organizations.⁷⁶ In the case of health, however, government is also a significant source of support, providing 41% of total revenue, whereas in the education field private giving plays a somewhat larger role.⁷⁷

Fees also turn out to be the major source of income in the fields of arts and recreation (45%), with private giving a close second. Fees are also the most important source of income for social services (43%), while government support is second.⁷⁸ In only one field—community development and civic organizations—are fees and service charges not the major source of nonprofit income; here government support performs this role, with fees and private giving in second and third place, respectively.⁷⁹

Market-Oriented Activities Many traditional, old-line social organizations have engaged in various kinds of direct commercial activities from the very beginning of their existence. They represent the first efforts of social organizations to diversify their funding, move into independent entrepreneurial efforts, and compete with for-profit firms. Goodwill, the Salvation Army, and veterans organizations deal with recycling and resale of used merchandise, which today has acquired the prestige of being environmentally correct. Following their lead, “nonprofit organizations in many subsectors have ventured out aggressively into a wide assortment of commercial social enterprise markets,”⁸⁰ says Lester Salamon.

Governmental Support Over the past several decades, as the nonprofit sector emerged as the preferred deliverer of public services, government has become the

primary source of revenue for many nonprofits. Social organizations receive more of their total income from government than from any other single source, and this is increasing.

The percent of total income that nonprofits receive from government varies by organizational purpose and program function, from a high of 42% in social and legal services and 36% in health services, to a low of 17% in education and 11% in the arts.⁸¹

Government-Funded Social Service Income In 1982, 56% of all social services and 48% of all employment and training services financed by government were delivered by 501(c)(3) human and social service agencies.⁸² Between 1992 and 1998, public support for employment and training nonprofits increased by 44%,⁸³ and in 1997 the portion of revenue that nonprofit social-service organizations received from government sources was in excess of 52%.⁸⁴ Today, the government-funded portion of social services' income continues to remain high.⁸⁵

Kinds of Government Support Many social organizations receive government grants-in-aid, some obtain service contracts; others receive government loans or loan guarantees and all receive tax subsidies. Government grants, contracts, and reimbursements account for 36% of nonprofit service-organization income.⁸⁶ This reflects "a widespread pattern of partnership between government and the nonprofit sector in carrying out public purposes, from the delivery of health care to the provision of education,"⁸⁷ asserts Lester Salamon.

Government Grants. Many social organizations base their economics on grants or one-way economic transfers rather than the two-way exchange common in free-market economics. Grants are gifts offered freely, with no expectation that the recipient of the gift will provide anything in return for it.

From its meager beginnings in the 19th century, Lester Salamon says, the federal grant-in-aid program has mushroomed into a massive system of interorganizational action. Today more than 500 grant-in-aid programs exist, making federal resources available to state and local governments for everything from emergency medical services to the construction of the interstate highway system. Since 1955, grant-in-aid funding has grown three times faster than the budget as a whole, and by 1979 accounted for more than 40% of all

domestic federal budget outlays and about 17% of the total federal budget.⁸⁸

Government Contracts. The contracting process is becoming directed toward providing needed services through nonprofits. Social organizations are increasingly taking over roles and functions that were formerly the responsibility of public social service organizations. The goal of the contracting relationship is service provision *and* community building.

Loans or loan guarantees. Many non-profit social organizations are eligible to apply for loans and loan guarantees through special government sponsored and supported non-profit community investment institutions (CIIs) including community development finance institutions (CDFIs). CIIs accept investor capital and are dedicated to providing financial services to the community it serves including CDC's and other community-based organizations that often do not qualify for commercial loans. In addition, aided by the Community Development Financial Institution Act, funding intermediaries such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) utilize capital derived from the Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC) to help fund social nonprofits.

Tax Subsidies. An even more important method of funding social organizations is by means of tax subsidies. By exempting individual and corporate charitable contributions from taxation, the federal government delivers an implicit subsidy to the social sector. This subsidy was estimated to be worth \$13.4 billion in 1985 and is considerably more today. About 78% of this subsidy flows to human service organizations, including faith-based organizations.⁸⁹

Implications of Government Support Eligibility for contracts and contract awards is conditioned on the willingness of nonprofits to adopt government-like practices. Many of these policies and procedures are intended to protect the rights of employees, clients, unserved individuals, records, and fiscal resources.⁹⁰ At the same time, nonprofits are told that if they want to successfully compete for government contracts they must be more businesslike. They must be more entrepreneurial in pursuing alternative sources of revenue, and they need to manage their resources and programs more efficiently. To make this happen, pressure is put on nonprofits to have more business representatives on their boards and more professionalism in their management staff.⁹¹

As a result, the longer a nonprofit relies extensively on government contracts, the more it tends to look and behave like a government agency. This may sometimes cause a conflict with locally based social organizations that prize their communal social orientation and rejection of impersonal rational/legal bureaucratic structures.

Private Contributions Private giving, which includes individual contributions, grants from foundations and corporations, federated funders, and professional fundraising comprises a much smaller share of the income of the nonprofit sector than is commonly recognized,⁹² says Salamon. At the turn of the 21st century, private contributions accounted for only 12.3% of social organization income.⁹³ In none of the major fields of nonprofit activity is private giving the major source of income.⁹⁴

This does not mean, however, that particular agencies may not get the preponderance of their income from private giving. Congregations and other religious organizations, for example, received nearly one-third of all private charitable contributions in 2006—more than double the amount received by any other type of organization,⁹⁵ and education organizations received the second largest amount of contributions, at 13.9%.⁹⁶

But for the sector as a whole, and for the major classes of organizations, such giving now lags behind fees and government support as a source of nonprofit income.⁹⁷ Private charitable giving is nevertheless quite important because of the role it plays in helping to ensure the sector's independence and autonomous character.⁹⁸

Individual Charitable Support One of the most remarkable aspects of giving in the United States is that nearly three-quarters of all households report charitable contributions. This percentage has remained stable for nearly a decade.⁹⁹ In 1998, according to an Independent Sector survey, more than 70% of U.S. households contributed \$135 billion to social organizations,¹⁰⁰ and in 2002, nearly seven out of ten households gave to charitable causes.¹⁰¹ Even during recessions and periods of increased unemployment, Americans contribute to a variety of causes. Rather than eliminating contributions, households just give less.¹⁰²

Federated Funders Federated funders are organizations that collect private donations on behalf of a number of service organizations, including the United Way, United Jewish Appeal, the Lutheran Social Services network, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, federated arts appeals, and many others.¹⁰³

Perhaps the best known of these federated fundraising organizations is the United Way. United Way is a network of some 1,900 local “community chests” that raise funds from individuals and corporations on behalf of a number of local social service agencies. What is distinctive about the United Way system is its use of a particular mode of fundraising, namely, “workplace solicitation.” This essentially involves a direct charitable appeal to workers in their workplace, coupled with a system allowing employers to deduct the pledged contributions made by their employees automatically from the employees’ paychecks each pay period.¹⁰⁴

In order to ensure employer support, United Way has typically involved the corporate community actively in the organization of each year’s United Way “campaign,” and has historically restricted the distribution of the proceeds of the campaign to a set of approved United Way “member agencies.” This latter feature has come under increasing attack in recent years, however, with the result that many local United Ways have established “donor option” plans, which permit donors to designate which agencies will receive their contributions.¹⁰⁵

Foundations A foundation is a nonprofit organization established to make grants to other nonprofit organizations, typically out of the earnings from an endowment¹⁰⁶ particularly to non-profit social organizations or to social projects aimed at remediating specific social problems. Over 76,000 foundations exist today including general purpose foundations, family foundations, corporate foundations, community foundations and others. Obtaining a grant is highly competitive and requires the applicant to write a grant proposal including a budget that itemizes the program and its benefits to the community. Foundations do not provide ongoing support, but fund innovative projects that have potential to contribute new ideas and solutions to emerging issues.

Corporate Support One of newer sources of income has been the increasingly cooperative and helpful social investment by major corporations. Many companies work closely with social organizations that serve persons with disabilities by providing training and employment opportunities. Ben and Jerry's ice cream and other companies invest time and funding in the communities in which they operate. Even more traditional corporate organizations invest heavily in social organizations in their communities by active participation in United Way campaigns and by making direct contributions, lending staff to these organizations, providing consultation, and giving time to such efforts as "Days of Caring."

Professional Fund Raisers Because of an increase in public sponsorship, there seems to be a decline in public willingness to contribute money to private, local self-help efforts. The funding environment, in addition, has become complex both for those seeking money and for those giving it away.¹⁰⁷ As a result, the availability of categorical grant programs at the state and federal levels has increasingly required that small organizations employ professional fund raisers to survive,¹⁰⁸ comments Carl Milofsky.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Social organizations in Canada and the United States actively provided the bulk of social, health, religious, cultural, and educational services at the turn of the 19th century. They found new roles after the Civil War and increased cooperation with government in the New Deal and after World War II. Social organizations experienced unprecedented growth in the second half of the 20th century.

1800s

"Before the advent of the modern welfare state," says Peter Berger, "almost all organizations in the social services were under the aegis of voluntary associations, usually religious in character."¹⁰⁹ Many of these voluntary associations launched during the 1800s have survived and continue to flourish into the 21st century. More than four-fifths of associations, for example, that enrolled more than 1% or more of American adults at any point between 1790 and the present still exist today, says Theda Skocpol.¹¹⁰

Gerald Gamm and Robert Putnam report that between 1840 and 1940 about a third of voluntary associations were fraternal or sororal groups, which were central to North American civic society.¹¹¹ In addition, during this period, North Americans developed churches, women's clubs, union halls, and service and professional organizations, many of which were linked together into regional or even national networks of voluntary associations. Many of these associations benefited from and reciprocally assisted in the development of national initiatives in civil society sponsored by the government.

Civil War and Reconstruction (1860–1885)

Civil War veterans' benefits stimulated the growth of the Grand Army of the Republic, which in turn promoted and helped to administer federal, state, and local support for veterans and their families. Many other private institutional settings and social service agencies were born in the period after the Civil War, including institutions for orphaned, neglected, and troubled children. This period also saw the birth of societies dedicated to the elimination of poverty, those working to assist emancipated slaves, as well as hospitals, schools, and colleges. Social movement organizations dedicated to establishing local, state, and national policies to assist mothers and children were championed by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WTCU), the National Congress of Mothers (later the PTA), and the General Federation of Women's Clubs. These groups themselves expanded in part because of encouragement from the government.

Progressive Era (1885–1910)

The Progressive Era in America saw the rise of any number of social institutions and service organizations. Social group work agencies grew in the 1880s, including "settlement houses, the recreation movement, labor unions, adult education, and brotherhoods."¹¹² Jewish community centers, the YMCA, Boy Scouts and later Girl Scouts, and Boys and Girls Clubs encouraged self-reliance and responsibility through camping and as a way for children to escape the long hours and seven-day workweek spent in relatively dark, poorly ventilated, and otherwise unhealthy factory settings.¹¹³

New Deal and World War II (1930–1945)

Even when U.S. politics became more nationally focused during major wars and the Depression voluntary organizations did not wither away. On the contrary, many established associations added new local and state units, recruited more members, and branched into new activities, and many of them benefited from governmental support. In the first half of the 20th century, for example, state and federal efforts to support farmers and farm families were championed and administered by associations such as the Grange and the American Farm Bureau Federation. The Farm Bureau Federation later grew into a nationwide organization in conjunction with New Deal farm programs. New Deal social security legislation was originally encouraged by the Fraternal Order of Eagles and the Townsend movement, which in turn stimulated the emergence of more recent local, state, and national associations for the elderly.¹¹⁴

Social and Governmental Synergy Many of these organizations benefited from the synergy of the social sector and government working together. The GI Bill of 1944, for example, would not have had the inclusiveness it did, opening up American higher education to hundreds of thousands of less privileged men, had not the American Legion taken the lead in writing generous legislation and encouraging public and congressional support for it. In turn, the GI Bill aided the postwar expansion of the American Legion.

Growth from 1950 to 2000

Both 501(c)(3) social charity organizations and 501(c)(4) public interest advocacy groups grew in the last half of the 20th century.

501(c)(3) Organizations Numbering only 12,500 in 1940, 501(c)(3) organizations rose to 27,000 in 1946 and 32,000 in 1950, climbing to nearly 600,000 by 1996 and nearly 1 million ten years later. More than 90% of social organizations currently in existence today were established after World War II, says Skocpol.¹¹⁵

Between 1978 and 1990, 501(c)(3) charitable organizations grew by 67%; 501(c)(4) social advocacy organizations grew by 14%. In comparison, the number of

labor and agricultural organizations in the private sector decreased by 18% during that same time period. From 1995 to 2005, the number of 501(c)(3) organizations registering with the IRS grew by 53%.¹¹⁶

In 1990, nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organizations comprised 48% of all tax-exempt organizations, followed by 501(c)(4) social advocacy organizations (14%), fraternal organizations (10%), labor and agricultural organizations (7%), business associations (6%), and social clubs (6%).¹¹⁷

In 1996, 535,930 501(c)(3) organizations existed, according to the Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics, a total of 49.4% of all nonprofits. Ten years later, that number had increased by 68.7%, to 904,313 charitable organizations, totaling 61.2% of all registered nonprofit organizations,¹¹⁸ representing an 80-fold increase since 1940.¹¹⁹ In contrast, the number of business corporations during the same period exhibited a mere sevenfold increase.¹²⁰

501(c)(4) Public Interest Advocacy Organizations Public interest groups that shape public opinion and influence legislation on behalf of causes such as environmental protection (the Sierra Club and the Environmental Defense Fund), the well-being of poor children (the Children's Defense Fund), getting big money out of politics (Common Cause), and cutting public entitlements (the Concord Coalition) proliferated in the 1970s.¹²¹

In 1996, 127,567 501(c)(4) social advocacy organizations were registered in the United States, comprising 11.8% of all nonprofit organizations. The number of these organizations registered with the IRS decreased by 13% from 125,504 in 1998 to 109,091 in 2008, but in 2009 that number had increased to nearly 111,000.¹²²

Social Organizations Today

By the turn of the 21st century, social organizations "finally achieved the centrality they had always claimed, and as the nation's fastest growing organizational domain, they touched the lives of almost all Americans as donors, board members, employees, clients, consumers, and citizens,"¹²³ says Peter Dobkin Hall. Today there are hundreds of thousands more in developing countries, with a collective membership of hundreds of millions of people.¹²⁴

KINDS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Four general kinds of social organizations exist today: (1) traditional service-providing organizations, (2) social advocacy organizations, (3) social and funding intermediaries, and (4) new social enterprise organizations.

Traditional Service-Providing Organizations

All traditional nonprofit service-providing social organizations in existence today were originally created and remain controlled and operated by ordinary citizens working together for the common good. They include research, educational, health, and cultural organizations. Of importance for social work are social service and faith-based organizations.

Social Service Organizations “In most states, nonprofit social organizations have become the leading providers of direct community-based services in the US, working in the seams and crevices between government agencies and for profit business enterprises,”¹²⁵ says Lester Salamon. Human and social service organizations provide a vast range of services, from homeless shelters serving a single neighborhood to multinational relief organizations such as the Red Cross, Oxfam, and CARE.¹²⁶

“Far from focusing exclusively on the poor or needy, social organizations serve a broad cross section of the population that reflect the diversity of human interests and the full scope of community life,”¹²⁷ comments Lester Salamon. According to the organization Independent Sector, “whether caring for victims of natural disasters, stimulating creativity in the arts and sciences, protecting free speech, or supporting the vulnerable, nonprofit organizations are critically important to our nation’s wellbeing.”¹²⁸

Social organizations provide the majority of health, education, cultural, religious, philanthropic, environmental, and social and human service programs in this country and in Canada, outstripping those provided by the entire economic and governmental sectors combined,¹²⁹ observes Salamon. The concept that “all the services concerned with health and welfare need, generally, to be based locally is centered in the belief that the community at large is the main provider of

welfare and that it is the duty of the services to fit in with it,”¹³⁰ asserts Michale Bayley.

Their services include programs serving youth, assistance for offenders, and small and large residential care facilities. They provide mental health counseling and drug rehabilitation programs, and services for people with developmental and physical disabilities. Others offer job training and vocational rehabilitation services, day care centers, and shelters for battered women, among many others.

Faith-Based Organizations In a faith-based social organization such as a synagogue, church, temple, or mosque, member-owners who join together to form the religious community also make the decisions and establish the policies that guide the social organization. The paid staff may consist of a single rabbi, priest, or mullah hired by the congregation, serving at the pleasure of the members, taking direction from them, and representing the congregation to the wider community. The member-owners of the organization are also its unpaid staff who perform the majority of the congregation’s teaching, maintenance, and secretarial services. Member-owners administer the organization, lead youth groups, organize retreats, provide social and community services, and assist in worship.

Faith-Based Social Services Religious congregations are already an “essential part of the social welfare net, providing services such as food and clothing pantries, limited financial aid, job referrals, tutoring, child care, language classes and self-help programs,”¹³¹ say Pipes and Ebaugh. Some denominations have their own social services divisions such as Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Social Services, Jewish Social Services, and others that provide counseling, adoption, residential services, and treatment, among others.

The Salvation Army is both a church and a faith-based social service organization. It has been active for over 100 years, providing a variety of programs for the homeless, those who are addicted to alcohol and drugs, youth offenders, and many others. Of the several kinds of faith-based social service organizations, however, among the most important are coalitions.

Faith-Based Coalitions Interfaith agencies and ecumenical coalitions involving nonreligious organizations, local congregations, and denominations join

together for “purposes of community solidarity, social action and/or providing large scale services that are beyond the scope of a single congregation,”¹³² say Pipes and Ebaugh. The Interfaith Community Ministries Network (ICMN) identified over 1,400 faith-based coalitions across the United States.¹³³

These organizations may use labels such as coalitions, community ministries, clusters, associations, or neighborhood ministries. They control the resources and deliver the services supported by congregations. Faith-based coalitions remain a major way in which congregations funnel their social outreach programs. They bring together various congregations of a local community into a single organization and provide social ministries ranging from emergency financial assistance to ongoing programs such as child care and services for the elderly.¹³⁴

Though some religious congregations have accepted limited government aid, the major support for their programs comes from financial contributions, in-kind donations, and volunteer assistance from congregants. In his 1999 survey of U.S. congregations, for example, Chaves found that only 3% receive government funds for social service projects, though 57% are engaged in social service delivery,¹³⁵ many of which operate solely as emergency assistance providers, offering services such as food, clothing, and limited financial assistance for rent and utilities.

Faith-based coalition building is likely to increase as government agencies and the nonprofit sector emphasize collaborative solutions to the demands created by welfare reform.¹³⁶ This thrust is exemplified by the George W. Bush administration’s Faith-Based and Community Initiative, also known as Amended Executive Order 13199.

AMENDED EXECUTIVE ORDER 13199

Amended Executive Order 13199 established the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, eliminating unnecessary legislative, regulatory, and other bureaucratic barriers that impede effective faith-based and other community efforts to solve social problems. The initiative develops and implements strategic initiatives under the president’s agenda to strengthen the institutions of civil society and America’s families and communities; the office aims to help community groups become an integral part of the nation’s economic recovery.

Intermediary Support Faith-based organizations also have their own intermediary support organization, the Interfaith Community Ministries Network, a national organization founded in 1988 to promote the development and support of faith-based coalitions.

Social Advocacy Organizations

Social welfare/policy advocacy organizations covered under IRS code 501(c)(4) are the second largest category of social organizations in existence, consisting of a collection of organizations which may have little resemblance to one another, including health maintenance organizations (HMOs), local associations of employees, and many neighborhood civic associations and service clubs dedicated to social improvement such as Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, and the League of Women Voters.¹³⁷

Most important for social work, however, are the majority of the nation’s political and policy advocacy organizations, activist community organizations, and historic civil and human rights organizations, which comprise the majority of 501(c)(4) social organizations. Macro social workers often use these organizations to make social change and seek social justice at the community, state, and national levels.

Even before 501(c)(4) organizations came into existence, nearly every piece of progressive social legislation in this country—the defeat of slavery, acceptance of universal suffrage, and the rights of laborers to bargain collectively—have been won by efforts of such social action and political advocacy organizations. Today that heritage is continued by many social justice and social research organizations in both the United States and Canada, including human rights, environmental, civil rights, activist social movements, and social policy organizations. Civil rights organizations, for example, include the NAACP and social justice organizations such as American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Progressive social policy advocacy organizations and partisan political action committees (PACs) such as NASW’s PACE organization work to improve our social environment by investigating social policy issues, educating policymakers and the public, and promoting better policies from the local to national levels.

Activist local and national community organizations such as the Gamaliel Foundation and Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) challenge exploitative corporate activities such as unfair labor practices, discriminatory

lending, and the abuse of consumer rights. Watchdog organizations such as OMB Watch, Arms Sales Monitoring Project, Human Rights Watch, and Corporate Watch, among many others, monitor the activities of governments, corporations, and industry, holding them accountable to the public interest for their decisions and actions by alerting citizens when they violate the common good.¹³⁸

Social advocacy organizations provide a means for and encouragement for groups and communities to pool their resources to support common causes they mutually desire. They take speedy action and come to agreements based on the locally perceived needs and values around common issues that are of concern to many other social organizations, and they do it without the permission, agreement, or support of the political process or of groups that may either oppose or be indifferent to them. They neatly bypass formal political processes that are unwieldy and time consuming, but spend their energy, time, and resources to directly generate public awareness and support of policies they consider to be the common or public good. They work to convince government officials to act in the best interests of everyday citizens, especially those who do not have powerful lobbys or corporate sponsors.

Partisan Political Activity Advocacy-based 501(c)(4) organizations may conduct an unlimited amount of lobbying for particular social causes. They may also engage in partisan political campaigns so long as those campaigns are consistent with the organization's purpose and are not the organization's primary activity. Donors, however, are not permitted to deduct that portion of their contributions from their income taxes that is used for partisan political purposes. Because of this, many 501(c)(3) organizations, which are restricted from engaging "substantially" in lobbying activities, also organize 501(c)(4) political action affiliates to handle their lobbying activities for them without jeopardizing the tax-deductible status for the rest of the organization's operations.¹³⁹

Growth of Advocacy Organizations Since the middle of the 20th century, Americans have been experiencing an "advocacy explosion," according to political scientist Jeffrey Berry.¹⁴⁰ The civil rights struggles of the mid-1950s and 1960s enfranchised southern blacks, creating new organizations devoted to breaking

political, economic, and social barriers imposed on African Americans. This movement inspired activism on many fronts, including feminists, gays, racial and ethnic minorities, environmentalists, peace advocacy during the Vietnam War, and others. According to sociologist Debra Minkoff, groups acting on behalf of women and racial or ethnic minorities burgeoned six-fold between 1955 and 1985, from fewer than 100 to nearly 700.¹⁴¹

The number of 501(c)(4) organizations that reported at least \$25,000 in gross receipts to the IRS increased 27%, from 31,586 in 1998 to 39,994 in 2008. Total revenues for reporting organizations increased by 105%, from \$35.1 billion in 1998 to \$71.9 billion in 2008. Total assets for reporting organizations increased by 49%, from \$55.9 billion in 1998 to \$83.0 billion 2000, though most of these increases were due to the handful of HMOs.¹⁴²

Intermediaries

Intermediaries are 501(c) organizations that exist to support the social commons, particularly social organizations. Intermediaries are the least known type of social organization, but they are essential for sustaining and supporting the infrastructure of social organizations, the communities for which they are their social instruments, and the commons in which communities and social organizations exist. Two kinds of intermediaries exist: social intermediaries and financial intermediaries.

Social Intermediaries Some social support organizations are regional and national, linking private and public funding programs with community organizations and community development corporations. National organizations exist to support local community arts centers, gang delinquency counseling efforts, self-help groups for persons who are disabled, and housing rehabilitation organizations.¹⁴³ Community justice organizations are supported by the National Organizers Alliance (NOA) and the American Institute for Social Justice (AISJ), among others.

In addition, individual local community organizations are often part of social intermediaries that provide training, technical support, assistance with fundraising, and other supportive activities, including the Direct Action and Research Training Center, Inc. (DART), Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), Gamaliel

Foundation, National Training and Information Center (NTIC), and others. Even faith-based organizations and new social enterprise organizations have increasing number of affiliated social and funding intermediaries.

Funding Intermediaries Funding intermediaries are social organizations whose sole function is to channel financial support to other nonprofit organizations.¹⁴⁴ Funding intermediaries help generate private funding, manage it once it is accumulated, and make it available for use by the other organizations. Three kinds of funding intermediaries exist: foundations, government intermediaries, and federated funders already described in the section on funding above.

Social Enterprise Organizations

As government and foundation funding diminishes in the United States, nonprofits are increasingly looking for ways to generate revenue. Having developed products and services that transform lives and communities but do not reach everyone in need, many nonprofits are beginning to realize they have a moral obligation to create the wealth that will enable them to do so.¹⁴⁵ The result is the spontaneous emergence of a great number and variety of social enterprise organizations in the first decade of the new century.¹⁴⁶ “In almost all industrialized countries, we are witnessing today a remarkable growth in socio-economic initiatives which belong neither to the traditional private for-profit sector nor to the public sector,” asserts Jacques Defourny.¹⁴⁷ These social organizations are among the least noticed but newest and fastest growing areas of the social and small business sectors today, says Bill Shore.¹⁴⁸

Social enterprise organizations have not as yet been given formal legal recognition or definition in the United States, and their full development is not yet clear. In spite of this, however, social enterprises set out a process, a new social enterprising spirit which takes up and refashions older experiences. In this sense they “reflect a trend, a groundswell involving the whole of the social commons,”¹⁴⁹ says Jacques Defourny.

According to Fiona Salkie, “A social enterprise produces goods and services for the market, just as does a for profit organization, but manages its operations for social benefit as does a nonprofit social organization.”¹⁵⁰ Coen Gilbert defines social enterprise organizations as “private enterprise for a public purpose.”¹⁵¹

Borzaga and Defourney observe that social enterprises are neither outside of the market, as are most public and traditional nonprofit organizations, nor outside of the public system of resource allocation, as are for-profit enterprises.¹⁵² Rather, they use the logic and the rules of both the market and the state, though not identifying themselves with either of them.¹⁵³

Social enterprises have a double and even triple bottom line, are growing in number, offer benefits, and share the basic foundational principles of all social organizations.

Double and Triple Bottom Line Social enterprises are breakthrough social organizations that use a *blended value business model*. This model combines the market efficiency of private business with the social purpose and environmental justice value base of many nonprofits. A social enterprise has two goals: to achieve social or environmental outcomes and to earn revenue. This aim of accomplishing goals that are both social and economic is often referred to as having a double bottom line. When environmentally sustainable or spiritual goals and values, such as those developed by faith-based organizations, are added to the mix, social enterprises work to accomplish a triple bottom line.

Social enterprises must meet rigorous financial criteria, and they must dovetail with an organization’s social mission; otherwise, the energy and time spent on launching them is a costly distraction,¹⁵⁴ comments Cheryl Dahle. “You have an added layer of complexity with a social enterprise,” says Cynthia Gair, REDF’s portfolio director. “You have to work harder to not let the social concerns blunt your imagination and entrepreneurial edge. At the same time, you can’t let the possibilities of the difference you could make push you to be financially imprudent. It’s a hard line to walk.”¹⁵⁵

Growth The social economy of Britain and many other European countries has already developed a strong and viable sector comprised of many social enterprises that create a non-privatized, non-market economy that works for the benefit of all of its citizens. While the United States lags far behind, some observers are already claiming that social enterprise organizations have the potential of becoming a fourth sector and at the least will in many ways revolutionize the relationship between the social, governmental, and economic sectors.¹⁵⁶

From child care providers and homeless shelters to charter schools and youth development organizations, innovative nonprofits are running businesses that create jobs and revenues, or they are engaging in corporate partnerships that generate new funding.¹⁵⁷ Ted Howard reports, for example, that as of 2007, “there are more than 11,000 employee-owned firms (ESOPs), which employ more people than all the workers in America’s private sector labor unions.”¹⁵⁸ In addition, cooperatively owned businesses involve more than 100 million members nationwide.¹⁵⁹

Nonprofit housing land trusts are expanding throughout the country, creating permanent affordable housing as a community-held asset. In 2006, the city of Irvine, California, made a commitment to develop 10,000 units of housing within its community-owned land trust.¹⁶⁰ In one of the fastest-growing and most interesting innovations, “a host of local community owned municipal enterprises—ranging from telecommunications infrastructure and municipal power companies to city-owned methane recovery businesses, transportation systems, and hotels—are winning the enthusiastic backing of both Republican and Democratic mayors,”¹⁶¹ says Ted Howard.

Benefits Returns of social enterprises are measured not just in terms of dollars, but also on societal impact. This includes the number of jobs created, number of people no longer relying on the social safety net, increase in number of contributing taxpayers, or reduction in the carbon footprint of citizens. The social component of the social enterprise often complements its commercial aspects, so that both are self-reinforcing and strengthen one another.¹⁶²

Principles of Social Enterprises Social enterprises highlight several of the foundational principles of all social organizations, including independence, inclusiveness, diversity, and community centeredness. In addition, however, they often go beyond those principles, providing innovation, creating additional social services, reducing costs, creating new jobs, and improving working conditions.

Independent Instead of following funders’ mandates, social enterprises often become more self-reliant and more self-sustainable organizations, creating social as well as economic value.¹⁶³ Social enterprise

organizations contribute to efficient competition in the markets, offering the potential for job creation and new forms of entrepreneurship and employment, according to the Centre for Social Enterprise.¹⁶⁴

Inclusive and Diverse The social enterprise movement is inclusive and extremely diverse. It operates across an incredibly wide range of industries, from health and social care to renewable energy, transportation, recycling, and fair trade.¹⁶⁵ Many social enterprise organizations such as co-ops and others meet new needs, favoring citizen participation and voluntary work. They enhance solidarity and cohesion and contribute to the integration of the economy.¹⁶⁶

Community Centered The goals, mission, and vision of a social enterprise embrace social values that have a direct positive impact on the community.¹⁶⁷ Rather than extracting resources from a community to enrich the company and its stockholders as do many large corporate enterprises, social enterprises that are locally based understand that giving back to the community is not only good for business, but the only viable way to exist.

When the social enterprise participates in improving the community, the result is often employee attraction to the area, a broader customer base, and the infusion of its revenues back into the community.¹⁶⁸ Social enterprises are committed to meeting the needs of their community, enabling citizens to get involved actively in local capacity building.

Innovation Social enterprises are invariably innovative, creating new ways to solve social problems, developing new management forms, often addressing new needs, and engaging new services in new ways. “They can make completely new services available, but they can also use new ways of producing traditional services, mainly through innovative forms of involvement of consumers as co-producers, of local community members as volunteers and of workers themselves,”¹⁶⁹ comment Borzaga and Defourney.

Create Additional Social Services Social enterprises are often created to serve groups of people with needs not recognized by existing public policies. In countries where the supply of services organized through public policies is insufficient to satisfy demand, social enterprises contribute to the creation

of an additional supply, often through a mix of public, market, and voluntary resources.

This phenomenon can be seen in the experience of work-integration social enterprises and services such as kindergartens in Sweden, for which users are willing and able to contribute. Because of their specific nature, social enterprises can contribute to the establishment of a competitive environment and to contractual relations based on trust, and are, therefore, less likely to be opportunistically exploited.

Reduce Costs Social enterprises contribute to the reduction of production costs since they do not strive for profits. They can mediate between the interests of public authorities, consumers, and workers, singling out the right mix of customer satisfaction and worker guarantees. Moreover, “social enterprises represent a concrete and successful example of how civil society and private organizations can directly and autonomously deal with some of the problems shared by the community, without necessarily relying upon public funds,”¹⁷⁰ say Borzaga and Defourney.

Job Creation Social enterprises contribute to the creation of additional jobs. This is true for social enterprises such as social firms that normally employ workers who often have minimal opportunities of finding a job in traditional enterprises. However, social enterprises that provide social and community care services can also create new employment.

Improve Working Conditions Social enterprises also contribute to improving living conditions and the well-being of communities by helping integrate disadvantaged people into the labor market. They often provide higher wages than those paid by sheltered employment workshops and even for-profit companies, and they improve working conditions, especially for people who are handicapped.¹⁷¹

Kinds of Social Enterprises

Today two major kinds of social enterprises exist in the United States: commercial social enterprise organizations and community wealth organizations.

Commercial Social Enterprise Organizations

Commercial social enterprise organizations include commercial social service organizations, donative

commercial enterprises, and social organizations combined with a commercial activity.

Commercial Social Service Organizations

Commercial social service organizations operate to make a profit by providing, marketing, and selling a social product or service to customers. The profits accrue to their owners, investors, managers, or board members rather than to the community at large, although many do funnel surpluses back into the company.

Many small family care homes, group homes, nursing homes, residential facilities operate as private for-profit businesses. For-profit community development banks are another form of corporation in the social purpose business. A number of counseling clinics, private drug rehabilitation, treatment programs for autistic children, mental health facilities, and hospitals are also privately owned and operated businesses.

Although they do add to the store of social capital, because they are economic organizations motivated by profit, many social workers tend to see them more as commercial vendors that offer services for sale to the public at large, rather than social enterprise organizations that are primarily committed to community social concerns.

Donative Commercial Enterprises Donative commercial enterprises donate a substantial part of their profits to social purposes. Sometimes a nonprofit social benefit firm is specifically funded by the donative’s commercial enterprise, while in other cases, many different projects are selected. Pura Vida Coffee is an enterprise that donates its net profits for social welfare projects in five countries, for example.¹⁷² Paul Newman’s “Newman’s Own” food products donates 100% of its surplus to support a variety of charitable activities.¹⁷³

Social Organizations with a Commercial Activity

Social organizations with a commercial activity use the social enterprise organization to provide income to help support the social organization’s core mission. Three kinds of such organizations exist. These are nested or subsidiary commercial enterprises, blended social enterprises, and social firms.

Nested Commercial Enterprises. Nested commercial enterprises are for-profit subsidiaries of nonprofit social organizations that members establish specifically

to generate income for the nonprofit.¹⁷⁴ Many nonprofit hospitals and clinics, for example, create and own nested for-profit condominiums, physicians' offices, subsidiaries that provide corporate wellness programs, private health clubs that provide funds to help operate the parent clinic or hospital. In addition, mental health agencies and other nonprofits that serve mostly low-income populations regularly buy, manage, and sell companies that operate apartment houses, pet stores, laundries, and many other historically low-wage service businesses that provide income to the social organization.¹⁷⁵

At times the nested enterprise is begun after the nonprofit organization is operating. Northwestern University's Institute for Learning Sciences initiated a nested commercial enterprise to market a customized computer program that allows users to hold conversations with experts in a specialized field. Income from the nested enterprise supports education, research, and funding for the Institute's projects.¹⁷⁶

Blended Social Enterprises. Blended social enterprises are organizations whose commercial business activities are blended into the therapeutic, educational, and social benefits that clients receive as well as generate income for the nonprofit. The Girl Scouts sell cookies to support their character-building social group work programs for girls and young women. Goodwill, Salvation Army, and veterans organizations operate commercial thrift shops that provide job training and employment for clients as well as income for the agency's drug rehabilitation and counseling programs. Sheltered workshop programs for persons with handicaps often establish commercial retail stores to sell handicrafts, baked goods, or other items produced by client/employees.

Social Firms. In Britain and Europe the idea of blended social enterprises for persons with disabilities has been taken to an even higher level. These social enterprises are called social firms. Commercial and production activities of social firms are undertaken in the context of a social mission, with profits going back into the company to further its goals. Social firms, however, completely discard labels of "client" and "therapy," implying that employees are sick or in need of "treatment."

Social firms are supportive workplaces where the working environment is one that provides all employees with support, opportunity, and meaningful work. Because, by law, at least 25% of employees in social

firms are people disadvantaged in the labor market, the firm is committed to procedures and policies that provide accommodation for individual disabilities and differences, ensuring equal opportunity, health, and safety. Except for those accommodations, no distinctions are made between handicapped and non-handicapped employees.

All employees have the opportunity to progress either within the social firm or into alternative employment as their interests, capacities, and skills allow. Each employee, whether handicapped or not, has an employee contract with the same opportunities for advancement, employee rights and obligations, standards, and responsibilities as anyone else. Each employee is paid a standardized wage at or above national minimum wage according to his or her job classification, and each receives the same benefits packages.

Community Wealth Corporations (CWCs) Many people in the United States lack structurally created bases of collective and individual power. In fact, the private market economy tends to concentrate power at the top of the corporation, where it resides in the hands of managers and the corporate boardroom, leaving ordinary employees dependent and vulnerable to the decisions and actions of others. In contrast, collectively organized social enterprises, called community wealth-building organizations, often provide structures to help people realize some degree of ownership over the main and essential aspects of their lives, says James Defilippis¹⁷⁷

What Is Community Wealth? Community wealth is revenue that improves the ability of communities and individuals to increase asset ownership, anchor jobs locally, expand the provision of public services, and ensure local economic stability, rather than just boost corporate profits and shareholder fortunes.¹⁷⁸ Across the country, democratic, community wealth-building institutions have begun to multiply dramatically in recent years,¹⁷⁹ says Ted Howard. Although many ventures are small in size, a number have already become a major presence in their communities, with implications for longer-term community change.

Collective Ownership "A common thread runs through community wealth corporations, the idea that real wealth equality can only be built by communal

involvement in the means by which that wealth is produced,”¹⁸⁰ says Marjorie Kelly. According to Kelly, “Such approaches provide ownership for millions of Americans—in many cases, through a tangible asset that can appreciate and be passed on to subsequent generations.”¹⁸¹ Others create community wealth by enabling businesses and jobs to stay in the United States. “But more than that, these ownership strategies give people a real stake in their community, strengthening the bonds of citizenship and the connections between people, institutions, and places. These are not incidental by-products of a progressive ownership society; they lie at its core.”¹⁸²

Kinds of Community Wealth Corporations

Among the kinds of community wealth corporations are community development corporations (CDCs), community housing land trusts, (CLTs), and community development financial institutions (CDFIs) that assist social enterprise organizations obtain loans, enable community members engage in economic, social and political development projects and various hybrid community oriented economic efforts.¹⁸³

Others include employee-owned firms and co-operatives that assist people to assume collective ownership of money, work, and necessities of living including water, power, housing, food, and other commodities.

Employee-Owned Firms Collective ownership of work refers to workers owning their place of employment. Generally, collective ownership of work takes one of three forms: employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs), worker cooperatives, and business and employment cooperatives (BECs).

Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). ESOP companies are for-profit entities in which employees own part or all of the companies for which they work,¹⁸⁴ says Ted Howard. ESOPs are created through a pension plan with two very unusual features: (1) Most of the employee pension money is invested in the company where the workers are employed, and (2) employees may borrow against future corporate earnings to purchase company stock.¹⁸⁵ The money or stock that the company contributes to fund the plan—either directly or to repay a loan—is tax deductible. The ESOP allows the company to acquire the stock of investors who wish to sell, by having the company make tax-deductible contributions to a qualified

retirement plan (the ESOP) to effect the buyout, while sharing equity among the employee/participants who make the socially responsible company a success. The tax benefits that an employee/owner generates by selling shares in an ESOP sale to employees creates a win/win situation for both parties.

ESOPs provide a number of benefits to workers, communities, and even former owners. For workers, an ESOP provides a way to accumulate assets, invest in the businesses where they work, and become partial or full owners, enabling them to enjoy the equity gains their labor helps create. ESOPs provide workers a vital stake in the company as well as in the community where it is located. ESOPs also provide a significant source of retirement savings. A 2000 Rutgers study found that ESOP companies grow 2.3% to 2.4% faster after setting up their ESOP than would have been expected without it, according to the National Center for Employee Ownership (NCEO).¹⁸⁶

Employee-owned and -operated companies often have stronger cultures and maintain the values that underlie the company’s pride in its products and service. Because employees are no longer mere functionaries but share a commitment to one another and to the company, ESOPs have the potential to create a true community of employee/owners adding to the common good of all.

Rather than responding to the economic whip of increased demands for profit, such companies may grow at their own pace, with employees making joint decisions that are in the interests of a sustainable, ecologically sound future without pressure from external institutional shareholders.

For communities, ESOP companies can play a critical role in building the tax and wealth base of their local towns or neighborhoods, since wealth in the form of capital is cycled inside the community rather than being siphoned off to outside owners. ESOPs provide stability for both workers and the community. Since ownership is rooted in the workers who reside in the community, these companies are less likely to lay off workers during downturns or to relocate the plant outside the neighborhood. ESOPs provide a way for local owners to cash out when they retire, while helping ensure that local businesses remain in the communities in which they had prospered after the original owners retire.

The NCEO estimates that as of 2012, almost 11,000 employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs) were

in existence covering over 10 million employees in the United States. Most of the estimated 4,000 majority employee-owned companies have ESOPs.¹⁸⁷

Worker Cooperatives. A worker or producer cooperative is a corporation that is owned and democratically controlled by the people who work in the company. A successful worker cooperative is built on each participant's strong sense of responsibility and interest in participating in company decision making.

Beginning in the 1980s, the formation of worker cooperatives gained attention as a mechanism for retaining high-paying manufacturing jobs in declining Rust Belt regions faced with threatened plant shut-downs and failing small businesses. First codified in the United States by the 1982 Massachusetts Employee Cooperative Corporations Law, the cooperative severs decision-making power from capital ownership, ensures open access to cooperative membership, and rewards worker participation over stock accumulation,¹⁸⁸ according to Scott Cummings.

Cooperative development in the United States has emerged as an important component of industrial retention strategies and grassroots immigrant worker organizing. The potential of cooperatives to act as a catalyst for community action is a function of their unique structure, which dissolves the labor-capital division characteristic of traditional business forms.¹⁸⁹

Business and Employment Cooperatives (BECs). Business and employment cooperatives (BECs) are a type of worker cooperative that represents a new approach to providing support for the creation of new businesses.¹⁹⁰ The cooperative consists of many micro-enterprises that combine to form one multi-activity enterprise whose members provide a mutually supportive environment for each other. BECs enable novice entrepreneurs to begin a micro-enterprise, experimenting with their business idea while benefiting from a secure income. Once the business is established the entrepreneur can stay and become a full member of the cooperative.

BECs provide budding businesspeople an avenue to self-employment in a collective framework. They open up new horizons for people who have ambition but lack the skills or confidence needed to set off entirely on their own or who simply want to carry on an independent economic activity but within a supportive group context.

Community Control of Life Necessities: Commodity Cooperatives A number of commodity cooperatives exist not only in the United States, but more commonly in Japan and in Europe, where they constitute the major social economic sector of European society. Among these cooperative social enterprises are those in which consumers jointly own and control consumer production and consumption of commodities such as power, housing, retail goods, food, and commodities distribution, among others.

Cooperative Activism Recently community activists have begun to focus on cooperative development as a strategy to organize low-wage, predominantly immigrant workers in marginalized economic sectors. In particular, advocates have helped to structure cooperatives comprised of domestic workers and day laborers in order to institutionalize some of the benefits of traditional unionization—job security, higher wages, and skill development—among workforce populations deemed otherwise “unorganizable,”¹⁹¹ says Mark Cummings

Although still small in number, immigrant worker cooperatives are receiving heightened attention among advocates in large urban centers in California, which have significant Latino immigrant populations. In Los Angeles, for instance, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) and the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) have promoted the use of cooperatives in the context of domestic work and other immigrant-saturated industries, such as gardening and landscaping.¹⁹²

Eradicate Exploitation. By helping workers create formal cooperative structures that consolidate bargaining power, these and other community organizations have taken initial steps to curb the most egregious forms of worker exploitation. Moreover, their efforts highlight how the innovative use of cooperatives can respond to the changing demographics of the urban low-wage workforce, strengthening the economic position of immigrant workers while planting the seeds of grassroots activism.¹⁹³

Vehicle for Grassroots Organizing. Incorporating the principles of democratic control, open membership, and equitable economic participation, worker cooperatives provide a vehicle for social workers to promote grassroots organizing and community-based leadership development. While offering a method for creating jobs in poor communities, cooperative development also

establishes sites of collective action that can grow into critical loci of community change.

Fosters Political Consciousness. Cooperative formation fosters political consciousness among participants by challenging the dominant conception of worker status and capital ownership. Thus, the “incipient organizing structure and politicized nature of cooperatives provide the foundations for mobilizing low-income constituencies and connecting grassroots efforts to the larger economic justice movement,”¹⁹⁴ says Scott Cummings.

The Future of Social Enterprise

While still small in comparison to traditional social service and social advocacy agencies, social enterprise and social entrepreneurship is the wave of the future for social and community service organization. Many have not fully appreciated the potential of social enterprises, however,¹⁹⁵ say Borzaga and Defourny. In order for social enterprises to develop in the United States on the same scale as in Europe, several policies must be developed.

Borzaga and Defourny make the following recommendations: The first policy that would facilitate the development of social enterprises is their full legal recognition and regulation. Second would be a relaxing of today’s fiscal policy–based nonprofit distribution constraint that allows tax relief for any organization that engages in social benefit. A third policy would consist of better-defined contracting-out and quasi-market strategies. Finally, the development of social enterprises could be helped by encouraging entrepreneurial behavior, enhancing managerial skills, and increasing their natural propensity to create new and autonomous organizations,¹⁹⁶ say Borzaga and Defourny.

MACRO SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Social organizations are the milieu and base from which social workers carry out their practice. Macro social workers assist community members to respond to their interests and values by helping create social organizations. Social workers can be proud of the rich tradition of traditional service organizations, social advocacy, intermediary, and now social enterprise organizations that local communities and their allies have developed over the past 100 years.

Social organizations are the fastest growing, most diverse, most innovative set of organizations in America. They exemplify more than any other social structure the spirit of American democracy, egalitarianism, freedom, compassion, caring, and service of the American people. They are committed to social justice, equality, and nondiscrimination in their operations, philosophy, and culture. These organizations, which emerge out of local community effort and concern, exemplify the value of giving in America as does no other. Social organizations are the builders and preservers of the social commons, without which our society would deteriorate into a mass of possessive individualists.

Social workers are dedicated to helping social organizations maintain their independence, voluntary nature, and nonprofit distribution constraints. We assist social organizations to preserve their value orientation, democratic ideals, and practices. We work to encourage their commitment to local community and dedication to providing for the civic and social good. One of the more important roles of macro social workers is to help support and extend the variety and depth of commitment of these organizations to the common social purposes which they serve.

CHALLENGES FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Today, the United States has nearly 2 million nonprofit organizations, and they account for over 5% of GDP. Annual contributions have grown faster than the economy for years, and experts predict an avalanche of cash ahead. By 2052, an estimated \$6 trillion will flow directly to social organizations. Concurrently, a new generation of business leaders, philanthropists, and social entrepreneurs, among them macro social workers, are experimenting with new hybrid forms of social enterprises.

In spite of this optimism, nonprofit social organizations face an enormous obstacle: They lack government’s power to tax, and so when they are confronted by increased demands, they may not have the resources to meet those demands.¹⁹⁷ When government support withers, nonprofit social organizations often face the choice of reducing their activities at the very time that social need is growing or finding ways to increase revenues from nongovernmental sources,¹⁹⁸ says Burton Weisbrod. If they choose the latter, which most are doing, they can pursue two avenues—try to

increase private donations or find ways to generate more income through the sale of goods or services—that is, commercial activity.¹⁹⁹

As a result, many social organizations today are engaging in new commercial activity, combining social purpose with business enterprise by means of social enterprise ventures, a process that has taken hold in Europe and comprises their entire social economy sector.

While utilitarian survival is a major motivation for traditional social service and social advocacy organizations to expand their vision and engage in more commercial development, a more profound reason has to do with changing human culture in North American society. Social enterprise organizations are showing that when people begin to trust one another, see beyond mere economic advantage, and merge economic and social concerns, good things can happen. Social enterprise organizations, because of their reliance on social trust and an action-social approach, can slowly begin to shift modern culture to one in which people become socially active, engaged, interdependent, and trusting.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you learned about two different kinds of organizations: modern complex organizations and social organizations. You learned what modern organizations are and explored their history. You discovered that the large public bureaucracies and transnational market enterprises that comprise our modern organizational society seem to be the most important structures that exist. You discovered, however, that for all of their power in our society, these organizations often create as many social “bads” as they do private “goods.”

You learned that this is not the case with social organizations, which in fact war against the individualism, value neutrality, and impersonal relationships that modern economic and governmental organizations create. What is most important, however, is that social organizations and the social goods they produce are essential to modern society. You learned that several scholars have declared that without such goods neither the economy nor the polity could exist.

You discovered that social organizations are hybrid structures comprised of the community and

are an organizational tool whose function is to produce social goods and capital and to improve people’s social welfare, health, education, and other aspects of life. You explored a history of social organizations and learned about their functions and purpose in American society, as well as their size, scope, and activities and funding.

You learned that there are four kinds of social organizations: traditional social service programs, social advocacy organizations, social and financial intermediary organizations, and new social enterprise organizations. You learned that social work engages all of these social organizations and works to innovate and develop more as niches of opportunity arise. As you extend your skills and interests to include organizational social work, you will have the opportunity to participate in using new social organizations to develop social programs, provide leadership in social administration, and help create a better society.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the role of macro social work in the promotion and development of social organizations, if any?
2. If it is true that the new social sector is growing, to what extent do you believe that this will also increase the extent of personalistic relationships?
3. To what extent do you think we control modern complex organizational systems in the private economic and public governmental sectors? To what extent do they control us?
4. Modern bureaucratic organizational systems have enabled our society to become massive and complex. To what extent will artificial, contrived social relationships become important in human life in the future? Is this an occurrence you would welcome, or would it concern you? Why?
5. You explored the role of new social enterprise organizations. To what extent do you believe that, if fully expanded and utilized, they may provide a new wave of democracy, innovation, egalitarianism, and sense of personal empowerment for people? Or do you believe these creations need to be resisted in favor of the dominant global free enterprise market economy?
6. Robert Presthus claims we live in an “organizational society.” What is your understanding of that term? What are the implications of

organizational society for social work as a whole and macro social work in particular?

7. John Forester says that we can “generally expect that [modern artificial systems-based] organizational actors will deter cooperative, well-organized community-based organizations that might press to meet social needs to the detriment of concentrations of private capital. They distract public attention from social needs and instead focus on the promotion of individual consumption.”²⁰⁰ What does this statement mean? Do you agree or disagree with its assessment? What are its implications for macro social work practice?
8. Guided by its action-social model, macro social work is a field that prizes altruism, compassion, authentic personal relationships, and two-way communication. Modern complex organizations, on the other hand, tend to eliminate altruism and compassion, require impersonal relationships, and use one-way communication. What dilemmas occur as social workers insert personal feelings and values into an impersonal organizational system? How would you cope with these dilemmas?

EXERCISE 10.2

The Airline Dilemma

George Williams, a pilot for a major airline, will turn 60 this month. He has been a senior pilot for the past 12 years and is in excellent physical health. Remarkably, his eyesight is still sharp and he feels at the height of his ability. Several times he has averted disaster that a younger, less experienced pilot might not have. He loves to fly and wants to continue to do the job that he is best at doing and one which he does well.

Yet Williams is being forced to end his career as a pilot. He has appealed the ruling, but rules are rules. He must retire, even though he has many good years left, has logged thousands of flying hours, and has an impeccable record, better than the younger pilot who will replace him.

Williams must retire because on October 31, 1990, a three-judge federal appeals court upheld a 30-year-old Federal Aviation Administration rule that forces commercial airline pilots to retire at

age 60, in spite of the federal government’s stance against age discrimination.

The agency contends that older pilots face “skill deterioration” and greater risk of “physical incapacitation.” Consequently they are more likely to be involved in accidents, even though this may not be true in individual cases.

Many older pilots, and an increasing number of medical experts, on the other hand, maintain that aging pilots in their sixties often are in better physical and mental condition than some in their thirties, forties, or fifties.

However, the rules must be applied uniformly and impersonally across the board. Captain Williams will retire, not because he has become incompetent, but because the rules say so. While the FCC allows for exceptions, the agency has never granted one.

1. Is it appropriate to bar airline pilots from flying a large commercial airplane just because they have reached the age of 60?
2. What is more important, the even application of rules that apply to all, or taking individual differences into account?
3. Is the real issue passenger safety, or can you think of other reasons for requiring airline pilots to retire at 60?

EXERCISE 10.3

Alternative Solutions

The following four theorists propose solutions to the problem of organization in our modern mass society. Examine each of these positions and answer the questions that follow.

Charles Perrow

Charles Perrow gives us a choice between changing an economic system in whose service complex organizations operate or dealing with the issue of who controls the organization.

Critics, then, of our organizational society, whether they are radicals of the Left emphasizing spontaneity and freedom, the new radical Right demanding their own form of radical decentralization, or the liberal in-between speaking of the inability of organizations to be responsive to community values, had best turn to the key issue of who controls the varied forms of power generated

by organizations rather than flail away at the windmills of bureaucracy. If we want our material civilization to continue as it is, and are not ready to change the economic system along the drastic ways of, say, China, we will have to have large-scale bureaucratic enterprises in the economic, social, and governmental areas.²⁰¹

Alberto Guerreiro Ramos

Alberto Ramos promotes a theory of “organizational delimitation.” Recognizing that organizations are a permanent institution on our social landscape, and that our civilization cannot do without them, his solution is to restrict them to specific roles and arenas where they are appropriate and not let them encroach on the rest of society, thereby leaving space for authentic community, social action, and ethical reason in human life. Rather than allowing this one overarching social system to dominate every aspect of our existence, he recommends that we develop several different forms of human associated life. “We must learn to develop many kinds of micro-social systems within the overall social fabric. We must limit the role of conventional organization in our lives so as to leave room for authentic interpersonal transactions.”²⁰²

Donald Shoen

Donald Shoen takes a systems approach to the problem of organizations. He assumes that every system is composed of various parts. When one component part is changed, the rest of the system will, of necessity, also change. The most important components of any system are its underlying premises, or its theory base. If one changes the theory base of the system, then one can change the system itself. Based on Shoen’s recommendation, social workers would need to develop an alternative theory of social systems design more congruent with the realities and needs of the human condition. Shoen says:

The theory is a core dimension. When the theory is changed, the organization may be critically disrupted in four ways. The change may affect (1) its self-interpretation, (2) its goals, (3) the nature and scope of its operations, and (4) its transactions with its environment.²⁰³

Victor A. Thompson

Victor A. Thompson asserts that organization is a necessary human tool that we cannot do without.

In fact, modern civilization is based on and is better off with organizations and the premises on which they are founded. In Thompson’s view, we should not attempt to disrupt or change organizations. Rather, the solution to the problem of impersonality and dehumanization is for people to give up their fantasy of “personal relations” and instead adopt the new, modern organizational system and all the benefits it offers.

Thompson asserts:

The individual needs to be socialized to adopt the collective orientation in all his dealings with economic and governmental organizations.... Modern man needs to learn to be comfortable with impersonality. All this amounts to is giving a high value to instrumentalism, to the achievement of established goals.... I expect abstract systems (impersonal systems of rules, artificial systems) to become more acceptable. They will be the source of more reinforcements, comparatively, than the favors of families and other natural systems.... Man and his institutions will fit one another better. A perfect fit we can never expect short of genetic or behavioral engineering. Such engineering is a long way off. We have not yet decided how to select either the engineers or the designs.²⁰⁴

1. With which of these positions do you agree?
2. With which do you disagree?
3. What are the underlying premises of each alternative solution?
4. Where do you think each solution will lead us in the future?
5. What alternative solution can you think of that is better than those presented here?
6. Might a combination of these or other ideas provide a solution?

ADDITIONAL READING

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11

Creating New Social Organizations

Beyond Human Services

Human services should be organized not simply to provide immediate assistance to families in need, but also to develop community resources and linkages that might eliminate the need for extensive use of formalized social services.¹

John O’Looney

The business of modern society is service. Social service in modern society is business.²

John McKnight

Ideas in This Chapter

FRANK GUECHO DEVELOPS A FACILITY

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

WHAT IS SOCIAL ORGANIZATION BUILDING?

Who Are Social Entrepreneurs?

BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION/ ENTERPRISE BUILDING

Colonial Period and American Independence (1609–1800)

Period of Institutional Programs (1800–1860)

Civil War and Reconstruction (1860–1885)

Progressive Era (1885–1910)

1910 to the Present

Organization Building Today

HOW TO DEVELOP A SOCIAL ORGANIZATION/ ENTERPRISE

Choose Your Role

Form an Action Group

Verify the Need and Define the Population

MOVING THE PROCESS TO COMPLETION

Incorporation

Compose the Board of Directors

Establish the Organization’s Culture

Establishing the Organization’s Structure

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DEVELOPING SOCIAL ENTERPRISES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

CONCLUSION

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

ADDITIONAL READING

FRANK GUECHO DEVELOPS A FACILITY

Frank Guecho had just been evicted from an alcohol-abuse recovery home and he knew he had two choices: change his life or lose it. “I had spent twenty-two years as an alcoholic and drug user,” he said. “I needed to get away from my old circle of friends. I had to have a clean, sober environment, but there was nothing like that for someone who had come out of an initial recovery house.”

So with \$15,000 of his own money, the 41-year-old Hanford, California, resident started his own sober environment. He calls it Sobriety House. “It’s a home for homeless people,” Guecho said. “People who come out of the initial recovery homes after detox need a place to learn how to be responsible and live in society. We teach them job skills.” Two years later Guecho moved his program to larger quarters on Mary Street. “Sobriety House allows them to stay as long as they need to, until they feel they’ve grown strong enough to make it in society.” He developed a board that oversees the program and monitors the staff. When he had more than 20 people receiving help, with the support of his board, friends, residents, and the community, he expanded, adding two more dwellings.

Guecho has a lot of volunteer help, including Fared Mohammed, assistant director, and Stacy Roberts, director of women’s activities. They teach home repair, painting, and housekeeping. “Nobody sits around,” says Frank. “Everybody is busy all day long. About eighty merchants around Hanford have chipped in with supplies and materials to help. I don’t know where all the help is coming from. All I know is that I’ll keep trying with all my strength to make this work. I believe this is something God has sent me to do. I’ve gone 118 days without drugs or alcohol. I’ll keep trying to make it work one day at a time.”³

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

One of the important roles for macro social workers is helping create programs in existing social organizations or assisting groups of community citizens develop new agencies or enterprises whose mandate is to provide services where there is an existing need. In this chapter you will learn how you can engage people in building a traditional nonprofit or a newer social enterprise organization.

You will discover what new social organization/enterprise building consists of and explore a brief history of agency development. You will learn how to form an organization action group, assess social needs, and set up a formal corporation. You will discover how to establish a board, recruit and hire staff, obtain funding recruit clients for the social organization/enterprise. You will explore the future of social enterprise building in the 21st century.

EXERCISE 11.1

Macro Social Worker as Entrepreneur

One of the newer and more exciting roles of a macro social worker is as a social entrepreneur, a person who facilitates the development of new social service organization. Social entrepreneurs often create new services as a member of a community group, or develop an idea on their own and begin a social enterprise. Have you considered becoming a social entrepreneur?

In small groups think about the possibilities that exist as social workers engage themselves in beginning new innovative programs and services, as do businesspersons. What kinds of ideas do you have to begin a new social organization? As you read this chapter consider becoming a social entrepreneur. You will learn ways to carry out this role for yourself.

WHAT IS SOCIAL ORGANIZATION BUILDING?

Nearly every traditional social agency, including programs for persons with developmental disabilities, homeless shelters, facilities for victims of domestic violence, community centers, and many others, have been developed by a group of people who had a vision of helping their neighbors in a new way. These neighbors saw an unmet need and worked to meet it. In addition, new social enterprise organizations have often been conceived by agency administrators or staff to expand their services and diversify their funding base. Some have even been conceived and developed by individual social work entrepreneurs.

Who Are Social Entrepreneurs?

Social entrepreneurs are people who, through the practical exploitation of new ideas, establish new ventures to deliver goods and services not currently supplied by existing markets.⁴ The field of social entrepreneurship is a newly emerging one, for which macro social workers are uniquely suited. Ashoka defines social entrepreneurs as:

individuals with innovative solutions to society's most pressing social problems. They are ambitious and persistent, tackling major social issues and offering new ideas for wide-scale change. Rather than leaving societal needs to the government or business sectors, social entrepreneurs find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to take new leaps.⁵

The Skoll Foundation puts it this way:

Social entrepreneurs share a commitment to pioneering innovations that reshape society and benefit humanity. Whether they are working on a local or international scale, they are solution-minded pragmatists who are not afraid to tackle—and successfully resolve—some of the world's biggest problems.⁶

BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION/ENTERPRISE BUILDING

This brief history explores the origins of developing social organizations early in the colonial period and its expansion in the first half of the 19th century, through the Civil War and the Progressive Era.

Colonial Period and American Independence (1609–1800)

During the colonial period, citizens from a variety of national and religious groups developed America's first charitable and social organizations. One of the most prominent program developers in colonial America was Benjamin Franklin.

America's First Social Programs The first social welfare program in the United States had its origin with the Dutch Reformed Church of New Amsterdam, a Dutch colony settled in 1609. Like early Christian groups, the colony established a voluntary collection

for the poor and distributed it to the needy.⁷ The first almshouse in the American colonies was established at Rensselaerswyck, in what is now New York, in 1657.⁸ In that same year, the Scots Charitable Society, the first and in many ways most important of many private associations that sprang up in colonial America to aid the unfortunate, was founded by 27 Scotsmen living in Boston. The society aided the poor, cared for the sick, and buried its dead. This society, still functioning today, became the model for countless others that sprang up over the next 200 years.

Many ethnic groups, fraternal societies, and social organizations established such “friendly societies” to aid their neighbors. One of these was a program of relief designed by the Quakers even before the Revolutionary War broke out to “deal with the hardships likely to arise from the impending struggle.”⁹ Though they were persecuted by the colonists for their pacifism, the Quakers raised several thousand pounds, which they distributed without respect to religious or political ideals to those in need during the war.

A number of early societies committed themselves to establishing institutional care for those in need. The Ursuline Sisters in New Orleans, for example, founded a private institution for girls in 1729, the first institution for children in the United States, and in 1790 the Charleston Orphan House opened its doors in Charleston, South Carolina, the first publicly supported children's institution.¹⁰

Benjamin Franklin Benjamin Franklin was one of the most important early social organization developers in colonial America. “Believing in the importance of preventing poverty rather than relieving it, he worked to increase the opportunities of people for self-help.”¹¹ Among Franklin's efforts was a club for the mutual improvement of its members that later resulted in the establishment of a library. He founded a volunteer fire company and formulated a scheme for paving, cleaning, and lighting the streets of Philadelphia. Later Franklin developed a plan for policing Philadelphia and led the effort to establish the Philadelphia Hospital. He founded an academy that later became the University of Pennsylvania. More than any other American before him, Franklin established the principle of improving social conditions and opportunities for the poor through voluntary associations, and he worked to apply the principle of self-help to the community as well as to individuals.

Period of Institutional Programs (1800–1860)

In the first half of the 19th century, the main thrust of social welfare by local governments lay in constructing institutional settings. Private groups also established social service programs.

Government Institutions In the first half of the 19th century, the thrust of government intervention was the development of institutions including almshouses, workhouses, poorhouses, prisons, and specialized institutions for children and for persons with intellectual and emotional disabilities.

Children’s Institutions In 1811 state governments began to help private institutions through financial subsidies, the first of which was the Orphan Asylum of New York. The House of Refuge for Juvenile Delinquents in New York City was founded in 1824 with state funds, followed two years later by one in Boston. In 1847 the House of Refuge for Delinquent Boys was begun in Massachusetts and operated by the state. By 1851 there were 77 children’s institutions in the United States, and an additional 47 were built prior to 1860.

Institutions for Persons with Developmental and Emotional Disabilities The first institution for persons with developmental disabilities was opened in 1848, operated by Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe. The next decade saw institutions for people with developmental disabilities opened in Albany, Columbus, and Lakeville, Connecticut.¹²

Perhaps the most prominent person involved in developing social programs in U.S. history was Dorothea Dix, who almost single-handedly paved the way for reform and the establishment of facilities for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled. Beginning as a Sunday school teacher for women inmates in a Cambridge, Massachusetts, asylum she was horrified by the treatment the women were subjected to, particularly those who had emotional disabilities. Although a number of private hospitals for persons with emotional disabilities had been established, public facilities were few in number. Working as an advocate for these persons, Dix successfully pressed the state legislature to expand its facilities. Then she carried her crusade to more than a dozen other states.

Dix began each campaign with patient, careful research and successfully established several institutions.

Next, using the statistics she had gathered and direct political tactics, Dix was instrumental in the introduction of a bill in Congress in 1848 asking that the government appropriate 10 million acres of federal land to the states to help pay for the construction and maintenance of hospitals for persons with emotional disabilities. When the bill was ignored, she got it reintroduced. Most members of Congress, however, were more interested in using land remaining in the public domain for their own interests or for those of land speculators.

For the next five years, Dix lobbied representatives and senators in and out of congressional corridors until finally in 1854 her bill passed both houses of Congress. President Franklin Pierce vetoed it, however. In his opinion, the bill was unconstitutional because no precedent had been established for the federal government to provide social services to citizens.

Private Social Services Citizens groups established associations to overcome poverty, to provide group work services, and for child welfare and protection services.

Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) Private benevolent associations dealing with problems of poverty began to spring up. These societies aimed “at uplifting [the poor] through improving their character rather than merely provide material aid to the needy.”¹³ When a financial panic and depression occurred in 1837, causing hardship and straining existing relief agencies beyond their capacities, concerned citizens began to develop groups to coordinate the various efforts to reduce poverty on a more rational basis. In New York City, for example, a group that came together to examine the city’s charities found a disjointed system of relief with overlapping and poorly coordinated services, which led them to establish the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) in 1843. Less than 90 years later, the New York AICP employed a young social worker, Harry Hopkins, providing him with experience in working with poverty that would lead him to become a leader in the Roosevelt administration, implementing relief during the Great Depression of the 1930s.¹⁴

Group Work Services In the 1840s social group work saw its beginnings in the Jewish Center movement. Groups of young Jewish people began to

establish literary societies, and today Jewish community centers continue to be an active focal point for Jewish culture in many cities. In 1851, following in the footsteps of George Williams (1821–1905), who founded the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in England, a retired sea captain established the first American YMCA in Boston.¹⁵ Like Jewish community centers, the YMCA has continued its efforts into the 21st century. In 1860 a women’s church group established the first Boy’s Club in Hartford, Connecticut.

Child Welfare and Child Protection In the mid-1850s, community-based approaches to the care of children began to be developed. In 1853, for example, the Reverend Charles Loring Brace, a 27-year-old missionary in New York’s notorious Five Points district, founded the Children’s Aid Society of New York, originating the idea of foster home placement for abandoned, orphaned, and runaway children. The children’s aid movement quickly caught on with the development of the Church Home Society in Boston in 1855, the Henry Watson Children’s Aid Society in Baltimore in 1860, and the Home for Little Wanderers in New York in 1861.

Civil War and Reconstruction (1860–1885)

After the Civil War there was a great increase in the development of social programs. In March 1865 the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, known as the Freedmen’s Bureau, the nation’s first federal welfare agency, was instituted in large part because of the heroic and persistent efforts of Senator Thaddeus Stevens. The agency was established to assist African Americans and others displaced by the Civil War. The program was soon abandoned due to political pressure from the South, but the spirit of program development continued on many fronts.

So rapidly did private agencies continue to multiply that before long America’s larger cities had what to many people was an embarrassing number of them. Charity directories took as many as one hundred pages to list and describe the numerous voluntary agencies that sought to alleviate misery, and combat every imaginable emergency. In Philadelphia alone, in 1878, there were some eight hundred such groups of one kind or another in existence.¹⁶

In 1868 the first YWCA was founded, and in 1880 the Salvation Army, founded in England in 1865 by William Booth (1829–1912), was transplanted to the United States. The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children established the first child protective service agency in 1875. The Reverend M. Van Arsdale founded the American Aid Association in 1883. The association’s name was later changed to the Children’s Home Society, the parent agency for the National Children’s Home Society, a federation of children’s home societies in 28 states that is still active today.¹⁷

Progressive Era (1885–1910)

Among the social agencies that saw their beginnings during the Progressive Era was the first social settlement, the Neighborhood Guild of New York City. Established in 1886 by Stanton Coit and based on the principles of residence, research, and reform, the three R’s of the movement, the Neighborhood Guild was modeled after Toynbee Hall, founded in England in 1884 by Canon Samuel Barnett. Although only four settlements were founded before 1890, their numbers increased rapidly. By 1900 there were about 100 in existence, and by 1910 roughly 400 were in operation.¹⁸ The first Charity Organization Society was established in Buffalo, New York, by the Reverend Stephen Humphries Gurteen in December 1877.

Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850–1917), the first U.S. citizen to be made a saint by the Roman Catholic Church, became involved with immigrants, primarily Italians. Through her efforts, more than 60 orphanages, schools, free clinics, hospitals, and other programs were instituted. Among these were Columbus Hospital in New York City in 1892 and Columbus Hospital in Chicago in 1905.¹⁹

The son of William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, established the Volunteers of America in 1896. In 1902 Goodwill Industries was formed. The Boy Scouts of America, founded in England by Lord Robert Baden-Powell (1857–1941), was established in America in 1910. That year also saw the origin of Catholic Charities, and in 1911 the Family Service Association of America opened its doors.²⁰

1910 to the Present

Since the Progressive Era, social agencies of an astounding variety and number have been developed in almost every area of human need, climbing to over

1.5 million today.²¹ In the early 1930s, for example, parents of children with developmental disabilities began to group together in local associations to improve the welfare of their children,²² says Woodhull Hay. These groups spontaneously proliferated throughout the nation. Parents were concerned because many children with lower IQs were excluded from school, lacked community services, and because the only resource for most persons with developmental disabilities were large state institutions, many of which not only provided poor services but had long waiting lists as well.

By 1950 about 125 such parent groups existed throughout the United States and Canada with more than 13,000 active members.²³ In that same year, these groups banded together to form the National Association of Parents and Friends of Mentally Retarded Children, later renamed the National Association for Retarded Citizens.²⁴ By 1955, membership reached 29,000 in 412 local parent associations, 296 of which sponsored 1,015 projects including school classes, counseling, recreation, day programs, sheltered workshops, summer day camps, home training programs, advocacy, research, and others.²⁵

Following this pattern, organizations serving dependent and delinquent children and persons with emotional and physical disabilities have also grown since the 1960s. In addition, human and civil rights groups as well as community development corporations, community organizing agencies, and advocacy and policy organizations were established as a result of the civil unrest of the 1960s and 1970s. The Vietnam War inspired Lutheran, Episcopal, and other faith-based organizations to develop refugee agencies and programs to help resettle Vietnamese, Hmong, Laotians, and others into the United States. More recently, women's shelters have been established as the experience of domestic violence and rape has moved citizens groups to help women escape from brutal situations.

Some of these fields continued to grow. The field of mental retardation, for example, expanded into developmental disabilities, including programs and organizations for persons with epilepsy, cerebral palsy, and other neurological conditions. Later, services for persons with autism and Asperger's syndrome were developed, all spearheaded by parents and parent groups concerned about their children.

Organization Building Today

Today new social enterprise organizations are taking their place alongside traditional social service organizations. "Across the nation, many entrepreneurial nonprofits are creating successful business ventures to generate revenue streams that reduce their dependence on philanthropy,"²⁶ says Roger Hahn. In fact, even though the social enterprise movement is still young, it is already having a large effect.

"The past decade of dynamic growth in the non-profit sector and its increasing acceptance and validation of the for-profit business culture have spurred a new student generation that enthusiastically embraces the cause of widespread social change through organizational innovation."²⁷ Among them are social work and business students, practical idealists, who begin their own social enterprises or assist existing nonprofit providers to develop viable social enterprises.²⁸

At the same time, several foundations such as the W. W. Kellogg foundation, the Schwab Foundation, the Skoll Foundation, and others are partnering with social organizations such as Ashoka, Grameen Bank, and OneWorld Health to spearhead the development of social entrepreneurship and social enterprise organization building, not only in North America but across the globe.

As the social environment changes, more and different social programs will undoubtedly be needed. Social workers and concerned U.S. and Canadian citizens can be proud of the rich outpouring of compassion that has resulted in the establishment of so many social programs and agencies, a phenomenon that continues with vigor today.

HOW TO DEVELOP A SOCIAL ORGANIZATION/ENTERPRISE

You decide on your role as a volunteer with a group of community stakeholders, as program developer in a social agency, or as an independent social entrepreneur. You help form or staff a development action group, verify the need, and define the population for the new service. You assist your group to incorporate as a formal organization and form a board of directors. You help develop the culture and structure of the organization, recruit staff, and obtain initial funding. As a traditional nonprofit, after your initial start up,

you recruit clients and sponsor an open house.²⁹ If you begin a social enterprise, you implement your business plan and open your doors for business. Finally, you avoid pitfalls in building social organizations. While most of these steps in building a traditional nonprofit or social enterprise organization are similar, important variations exist that will be described.

Choose Your Role

Generally, three ways of building social organizations exist. Each requires slightly different roles of a social worker. The first and most common way is to establish a traditional community-based nonprofit organization by working with a group of stakeholders, usually potential consumers of a service, who apply for a foundation or government grant in addition to raising funds by private donations, fees, and other means.

A second way is to work as an internal program developer. Internal developers are staff members of existing social agencies who examine needs and help expand existing services to a specific population within an agency or help construct new organizations in the surrounding community. The new organizations they help create may be traditional nonprofits or, in some cases, social enterprise organizations. Social enterprise organizations are often chosen if agency administrators want to diversify their funding sources, expand their services in new ways, and see a social enterprise as fitting in with that expanded mission.

Third, independent entrepreneurs develop an idea and create an innovative social enterprise from scratch, much as a businessperson begins a small business.

Form an Action Group

The process of forming an action group with local community stakeholders interested in developing a traditional nonprofit, establishing nonprofit or social enterprise organizations as outgrowths of existing agencies, or for single entrepreneurs beginning a social enterprise are all a little different.

Community-Based Nonprofit Organization Model Initially, your group should consist of seven or more key community stakeholders who will help assess needs and, if necessary, put the organization and its programs together. Try to involve members who are heterogeneous in terms of skills, personality,

and personal history. They should be homogenous in their desire to see the program succeed, and in having the time and commitment to offer to the organization building process.

Find people who represent a particular locality or the relational community that the program will serve. Having organizational skills is a plus for your members.

Locality-Based Suppose, for example, your community is interested in establishing a day program for the elderly. These programs primarily serve people in a specific geographic location. Community members whose elderly parents or grandparents will use the services are often the best choices for the nonprofit development group. They know the needs of their relatives as well as the culture and resources in the community. They are most committed to ensuring that the program is a success.

Relational Community Some social programs serve people in a wider area. Specialized residential care treatment centers for youth who are disabled emotionally or behaviorally, for example, may serve the needs of parents and their children from different areas of a region. Although these families live in dispersed areas, their common problems and needs bring them together as a relational community. They may provide support to one another while at their same time considering ways of providing safe, well-managed facilities for the welfare of their children. Together they can form a group committed to developing a nonprofit organization that will meet not only their own needs but also the needs of many others in the region.

Organization Skills If possible, locate people who know something about building organizations. For example, members who have served on boards of nonprofit organizations, who have worked as staff members for social agencies, or who have familiarity with budgeting or fundraising, recruiting, or selecting staff would be useful members.

Working with Members When using the community-based model, you are interested not only in the ultimate goal of forming the organization, but in helping members participate with others in a process of developing themselves, adding social meaning to

their lives, engaging in decision making, and learning the skills to make the program a strong and lasting one. You use the group process to assist members learn skills in group interaction, communication, and leadership. You assist them in learning how to conduct action research. Your role is to support and assist the group leader, help with the group process, develop leadership skills, and give administrative support. You assist the leader to explore group members' perceptions and personal experiences around the need for this particular program.

Existing Organization Model If the board of an existing social organization intends to expand its services, possibly developing a new agency or social enterprise, members will form a planning/development committee that will carry out this project, reporting to the full board at each step of the process. The planning committee will often consist of several experienced board members of the organization and a staff member of the sponsoring agency who has planning, entrepreneurial, and program development skills.

As a staff member of the agency, assigned to this project, you and the board members consider the kind of agency services it wishes to establish. Together you decide on the number and qualities of people who can assist with making this venture a success. The committee may invite community leaders, potential clients, local government officials, businesspeople who may have ties to financial resources and professional experts in the field of service that the agency is exploring. These members will be the people who will steer the project and on whom you and the board will rely for advice, information, resources and support. It is ideal if these members are enthusiastic and committed to the project, willing to donate a certain amount of their time and expertise, and have a stake in seeing the project through to its completion.

You attend the committee meetings, solicit advice, and work closely with committee members carrying out the day-to-day tasks of developing the new organization/enterprise. You report frequently to the agency administrator on the progress of the project. While establishing a traditional non-profit social organization as an outgrowth of the existing agency is relatively straightforward, if an existing social agency is considering entering the arena of developing a social enterprise, several pitfalls need to be considered from the very outset of the project, however.

Pitfalls in Beginning a Social Enterprise Organization Agency executives who wish to move into social entrepreneurship may experience considerable resistance to a new market orientation. Pitfalls can also come from the incapacity of the nonprofit, or from choosing the wrong reason for engaging in entrepreneurship. However, help is available in making sure that the right reasons are chosen for beginning social enterprises.

Resistance to the Market While social enterprises are on the forefront of social sector activities, many traditional nonprofit cultures are not open to business principles. Social enterprises, for example, often require management structures that differ markedly from those of nonprofit organizations. Many have been structured specifically to *not* use the market to generate revenues or develop surplus for reinvestment.³⁰ Others may resist the idea of charging for services. Some nonprofit leaders, moreover, don't have the appetite to create business ventures, and many are reluctant to embrace the idea of marketing and competition.

While resistance may come from administrators, staff members, or constituencies, Carol Brzozowski says, board resistance is often the toughest nut to crack.³¹ Such resistance often ranges from lack of interest to suspicion and downright disdain. One of the most frequently asked questions, for example, is, "Are we at risk of selling out our values and losing our soul if we begin to engage in commerce?"³²

Agency Incapacity Often, nonprofit organizations find the execution of a successful small business to be more challenging than initially thought. While nonprofits may have strong ideas, enthusiasm, and compelling assets that can drive a successful business, some lack the systems, industry knowledge, and specific talent to hit the ground running,³³ says Benjamin Litalien. Existing "nonprofits may not inherently have the internal entrepreneurial talent required to be successful at social enterprise development, and not all nonprofit leaders are entrepreneurs," says Karen Beavor, president of the Georgia Center for Nonprofits.³⁴

Choosing the Wrong Reason Nonprofits often make the mistake of launching a social enterprise not based on their mission but as a means to help themselves out of an immediate financial crisis. It is important to understand from the outset that developing

a social enterprise is not a quick fix. Members need to understand that a successful venture will need up-front investment and will probably incur losses over the initial couple of years.³⁵

Obtaining Assistance Many emerging nonprofit social enterprises that “are still very much in the conceptual stage,” says Carol Brzozowski, “wrestle with funding and board support issues.”³⁶ However, there exist today increasing support systems and intermediaries to help new entrepreneurs become assured of success.

Entrepreneurs often look to management support organizations (MSOs) for assistance to assess if they can weather the internal and external changes that may occur as a result of their decisions,³⁷ and whether they have the internal competencies to launch an enterprise. MSOs are intermediary organizations that “provide assistance to social entrepreneurs who want to begin a social enterprise by offering legal help, strategic planning, and entrepreneurial planning. They assist with board development, capacity building, and business planning.”³⁸ MSOs often begin their work with clients by creating an organizational culture that supports enterprise.

“MSOs can help nonprofits realistically understand risks as well as rewards and assess their readiness. They conduct detailed market research and test nonprofits’ assumptions about who will buy a product or service. They help Board gauge staff capacity,” says Brzozowski,³⁹ especially when the board or staff may not have the skills or the capital to launch wealth-generating ventures on their own.⁴⁰ It is challenging to convince a nonprofit that pursuing earned income is very different than anything they’ve done before. You will find a profile of some MSOs at the end of this chapter.

Independent Entrepreneur Model If you are a single independent social entrepreneur with a marketing idea, your first step is to form a group that will help you put the idea into practice. Members need to be stakeholders in the community as well as people familiar with business practice. Many of them will help form the board of the new social enterprise organization. Choose members you believe will give you good advice, mentoring, and possibly financial assistance in beginning the enterprise. You meet frequently with your group, taking advice and direction from them and using them as a sounding board to put the new enterprise together.

Verify the Need and Define the Population

Verifying the need is a crucial step for developing both a traditional social service organization and a social enterprise. Your action group will often perform assessments similar to those described in Chapter 7, “The Practice of Community Research and Planning.” While many assessments are similar, the kinds of needs that each identifies and the processes may be different.

Assessing Needs with Traditional Nonprofit Organizations When developing a traditional social service organization, your group develops a statement of the needs, problems, and the composition of the target population.

Defining Needs As a result of their research, your group members may discover that the social needs or problems they intend to address are on target, or they may find them not to be what they originally thought. If your group is unable to verify the need, help your members explore their initial impressions and look again at what prompted them to want to develop a particular service. Help your group review the problems it wants to address, and select one or two issues that the program realistically can work on in its first years.

In 1972, members West Oakland, California, for example, became concerned about a number of issues in their community that needed attention. They targeted vacant housing, zoning, prostitution, and junkyards. They asked themselves, “Over what situations can we have a significant impact?” They realized that some of these issues, including prostitution and existing junkyards, had aspects over which they had no control or influence. Because the organization could make no difference on certain social problems, or would have little significant impact, members realized it was not worthwhile to choose those issues. After lengthy examination, however, it was the specific problem of 1,100 vacant houses that brought leaders from the neighborhoods together and planted the seeds of the Oakland Community Organization (OCO).

Deciding on the Target Population Be specific in defining the target population for which the program can make a significant impact. OCO, for example, targeted the neighborhood of West Oakland for its

efforts, where most of the vacant housing existed. In the next five years, OCO targeted four more Oakland neighborhoods where other important problems were found. One by one, they developed other community organizations to address those issues: SAFO, 50th to 80th, and Elmhurst.

Today, nearly 30 years later, by targeting a specific community and clearly identifying important issues in that community, OCO has developed into a federation of more than 32 church and community organizations directly involving more than 32,000 families in East, West, and North Oakland, affecting the lives of 300,000 persons.⁴¹ The better your group is at defining the target audience, the more likely it is that your program will be effective in meeting the needs of your members.

Compose a Needs, Problem, and Population Statement Have your group develop a statement of the needs, the problem, and the defined client population. Such a statement might look like this:

Client Population: 60,000 residents including more than 1,500 homeless citizens live in West Oakland.

Needs: The needs of homeless men, women, and children in West Oakland are not being met. More than 1,100 rundown, vacant houses exist in West Oakland that need to be renovated to make them habitable.

Problem: How can the needs of individuals and families who are homeless be met while at the same time utilizing the 1,100 vacant houses that exist?

Assessing Needs with Social Enterprise Organizations The social enterprise development group, whether it is a committee of a nonprofit board or group members beginning an independent enterprise, must define a clear need for the service, decide on a marketable idea, perform a feasibility analysis, and develop a business plan.

Define a Clear Need It is vitally important to determine a clear need in the marketplace for any social enterprise project. When building a social enterprise from within an existing nonprofit organization, McDonough says that “you must also match that need against your organization’s ability to deliver the service, and build on its core competency.”⁴² After your

social enterprise development group establishes a clear need, therefore, Warren Tranquada suggests that the members establish why the existing social organization is pursuing the venture. In addition, he suggests that you establish how social entrepreneurship fits into the sponsoring organization’s mission, and evaluate your agency’s readiness to engage in social entrepreneurship.⁴³

Decide on a Marketable Idea When beginning a new social enterprise, your group must decide which idea to pursue and conduct a feasibility analysis. Larson and Horsnell assert that “most nonprofits exploring earned income find they have many venture ideas, but only enough time to pursue one at a time. As a result, that idea really needs to be a good one.”⁴⁴ A big mistake is to grab onto the first idea that occurs to administrators or board members. It is better to first calculate which ideas are worth pursuing and then decide whether it makes sense to engage in a venture.

Perform a Feasibility Analysis One way to explore various ideas for a social enterprise is to conduct a feasibility analysis. According to Larson and Horsnell, “A feasibility analysis involves evaluating the relative strength of numerous venture ideas, and then assessing whether your organization will be successful pursuing a specific one.”⁴⁵ You scan your venture ideas and screen for feasibility.

Scan Your Ideas. Quickly scan each of your venture ideas far enough according to the following criteria to determine if your organization should proceed with the project. Compare your lists and remove ventures that are obviously not worth exploring.

- A. Is the venture aligned with your organization’s mission and core values?
- B. How thoroughly does it fit with your capabilities, strengths, and assets?
- C. Is there evidence that your potential customers will choose your service over other alternatives?
- D. Do you have any credible indications that your annual revenues will at least cover costs?

Screen for Feasibility. Rate the surviving ventures using the following nine questions, which probe deeper into the four criteria just listed. Normally, this leads to the identification of two or three promising ideas.

- A. Strategic alignment with your mission and core values.
 - 1. Will this venture create a social impact that is related to your organization’s mission?
 - 2. Is there a staff person or persons who are passionate about seeing it succeed?
- B. Operational fit with capabilities, strengths, and assets.
 - 1. Can you clearly describe the proposed service?
 - 2. Will you be able to produce and deliver it?
- C. Evidence that customers will choose your service over their alternatives.
 - 1. Can you clearly describe your target customers?
 - 2. Is there evidence these customers are willing to pay for this product or service?
 - 3. Is there evidence they will prefer it over their alternatives?
- D. Credible indications that annual revenues will at least cover costs.
 - 1. Is this venture likely meet or exceed your financial goals?
 - 2. Can you estimate the start-up costs and where the funding will come from?⁴⁶

Develop a Business Plan “There’s nothing magical about business planning,” says Andy Horsnell.⁴⁷ It involves thinking through and documenting your target customers. Business planning includes how your proposed venture will profitably address needs better than your competition, how you will communicate with your customers, and how your venture will obtain resources to pay for startup costs.⁴⁸

- 6. What factors will determine whether customers will purchase this kind of product or service from your organization?
 - 7. From your buyer’s perspective, who are the top competitors to your venture?
 - 8. Describe your competitor’s product/service and pricing product/service: Pricing: _____ per _____. What are your competition’s strengths? What are their weaknesses?
 - 9. Why will customers choose your product or service rather than your competitors? What is your “unique selling proposition”?
 - 10. What is your typical pricing for this product or service? How does it compare to your costs? Your competitors’ pricing?
 - 11. What is your primary promotional message? Is it consistent with your unique selling proposition in number 9 above?
 - 12. How will you communicate your promotional message? Is it consistent with how and when your buyers prefer to get their information about this kind of service?
 - 13. How will the product/service be created and delivered to the customer?
 - 14. What will be the start-up costs for this venture, and how will you pay for them?
- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Costs | |
| Sources of Funding | |
| Amount | |
| Total | |
- 15. What level of sales will be required to break even in the first year of operation? \$_____
 - 16. What are the annual budget projections for this venture?
 - 17. How will this venture contribute directly to your mission?

BUSINESS PLAN OUTLINE

Venture Name: _____ Champion: _____

- 1. What products and services will this venture include?
- 2. Which customers will this venture target? If there’s more than one customer group, answer each question for each group.
- 3. What is the service area? How many of these clients are in the service area? Numbers served last year _____ target for this year _____
- 4. What customer needs will the program address? What evidence is there that a need exists?
- 5. If different from the consumer, who will actually buy the services the venture will provide?

Implementing the Business Plan for Social Enterprises

After you launch your social enterprise project, Larson and Horsnell recommend that your organization stay focused on your customers. “Learn as much as possible about why they buy from you (and why others do not), who else they are buying from and why, and what improvements they’d like to see. Constantly look for better ways to deliver what they want.”⁴⁹

Get Outside Entrepreneurial Help

In order to succeed and become sustainable, social entrepreneurs require support structures tailored to their needs. As soon as you can, begin building a network of business

specialists and people who understand your objectives. Find a champion and develop enterprise committees.

Find an Entrepreneur Champion. It's impossible to have entrepreneurship without an entrepreneur—someone who will take personal responsibility to make sure that the plan is implemented effectively and adjusted when the unforeseen happens.

Develop Enterprise Committees. “Many ventures create informal enterprise committees, made up of staff, board members, and local entrepreneurs who can cut through the rhetoric and jargon and get to the real issues,”⁵⁰ say Larson and Horsnell.

MOVING THE PROCESS TO COMPLETION

After your development group has verified the need and decided on the population or your social enterprise group has conducted a feasibility analysis and devised a business plan, the remaining steps are the same. These steps include incorporating the new organization, and obtaining tax exemption if your organization will become a nonprofit. It continues as you help compose the new board of directors. You work with the board to establish the organization's culture and structure, staff the organization, and finance the project.

Incorporation

If your group decides to form a nonprofit organization, it must be incorporated at the state level and apply for not-for-profit status with the federal government. It may also need to meet local or state licensing requirements, particularly if your service offers direct care to clients, including day programs, residential facilities, food service programs, and health or medical treatment programs. A group that attempts to provide such services without incorporation and acquiring formal licensing approval will be operating illegally.

Incorporation means that your group chooses a board of directors who have legal responsibility and ownership over the organization. The board defines the purposes of the agency, sets policy, owns the assets of the program, and has ultimate authority to make decisions about services, structure, personnel, and the budget.

The process for becoming incorporated is straightforward. Apply to the federal Internal Revenue Service

to obtain a tax exemption for your new organization and complete your organization's articles of incorporation. Compose your organization's constitution and by-laws.

Obtain Tax Exemption You can obtain forms for applying for tax-exempt status on line at www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=96109,00.html or from your nearest IRS office. If your organization is considered a “charitable organization,” apply as a Section 501(c)(3) organization. If your organization is performing social advocacy, apply as Section 501(c)(4) organization, or choose the most appropriate other sections of the 1986 Internal Revenue Code depending on the purpose of your organization. The form is easy to fill out, but your members can ask for help if your group needs assistance. While your group's application is being processed by the IRS, you should complete the remainder of your documents.

Articles of Incorporation You may be tempted to hire a lawyer to draft the articles of incorporation. This is not necessary and it is expensive. You can obtain forms online from the secretary of state in the state where you wish to incorporate or by writing to the secretary of state. The forms can be filled out by anyone familiar with your organization. Articles of incorporation usually include the name of the corporation, date of incorporation, names of officers of the board of directors, and a statement of purpose. Your group may adopt stock (boilerplate) paragraphs, provided by the secretary of state, that apply to any corporation. See Figure 11.1 for a sample of Articles of Incorporation from the state of California.

Constitution and By-Laws Standard language also exists for the constitution and by-laws by which your organization's board of directors will operate. The constitution usually contains the name and address of the organization, its purpose, and its originating officers. By-laws are the general rules that govern the organization, the board's composition, and structure. They outline how your board of directors will operate, and its size. They include the number and kinds of officers, their roles, the manner in which officers and committee members are selected, and the selection and tenure of board members. By-laws often conclude with the place and times of board meetings, financial and legal procedures, the mechanisms by which meetings

<p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <p>The name of this corporation is _____ _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">II</p> <p>A. This corporation is a nonprofit PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION and is not organized under the private gain of any person. It is organized under the Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law for:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">() public purposes. or () charitable purposes. or () public and charitable purposes.</p> <p>B. The specific purpose of this corporation is to _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">III</p> <p>The address in the State of California of this corporation is:</p> <p>Name _____ STREET address _____ City _____ State CALIFORNIA Zip _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IV</p> <p>A. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of selection 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.</p>	<p>B. No substantial activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign (including the publishing or distribution of statements) on behalf of any candidate for public office.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <p>The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to charitable purposes and no part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private person. Upon the dissolution or winding up of the corporation, its assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all its debts and liabilities of this corporation shall be distributed to a non-profit fund, foundation or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ (Signature of Incorporator) (date)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">_____ (Typed Name of Incorporator)</p>
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FIGURE 11.1 Articles of Incorporation, California

are to be conducted, and rules for making decisions. By-laws should be tailored to meet the needs of your organization. Because these rules may not always be current, however, you should also outline the steps by which the by-laws can be revised when it becomes necessary.

It may be helpful to obtain a sample copy of the constitution and by-laws of an organization similar to the one your group wants to establish to use as a guide. Although writing a constitution and by-laws may seem formidable, it can be a very useful process that helps your group think through the structure of your new organization. Your organization may use the following format to write your constitution and by-laws, unless your state requires a different one.

- I. *Purpose of the organization:* Indicate that the organization exists exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes and that it operates under section 501(c)(3) of Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or one of the other 30 sections depending on the purpose of your organization. Provide a

description of the specific purposes of the organization.

- II. *Location of the organization:* Provide the permanent, registered office address of the organization.
- III. *Members:* There is often a distinction between members of an organization and members of a board of directors. If your organization will not have members, the by-laws should simply state that there are no members. If the founders of your organization conclude that there is value in having members, you should explain the classes of members, dues, qualifications, and length of membership.

You should also describe the powers of members, number of meetings they must attend, what constitutes a quorum (the smallest number who can make decisions), and rules by which meetings are to be conducted. For example, members of many organizations generally meet only once a year at the organization’s annual meeting. Some nonprofits provide that the

members elect the board of directors, adopt or revise by-laws, and approve mergers, dissolution, and the sale of assets. In other nonprofits, members are simply people who make annual contributions.

- IV. *Structure of the board of directors:* Describe the size of the board, who is eligible for membership, length of tenure, and the number of terms board members may serve. Include the process by which board members who resign during their terms are replaced, and whether members will be compensated.
- V. *Structure of board meetings:* State the minimum number of times a year the board must meet, who may call a special meeting of the board, and notification requirements for meetings. Describe the size of a quorum, the number of votes required to pass a motion, and what rules or procedures will be used to conduct meetings.
- VI. *Duties of officers:* List the kinds of officers the board will utilize, and their powers and duties.
- VII. *Committee structure:* Committees only have authority that is specifically given to them by the by-laws or the board. If your board is small, it may prefer to deal as a whole with the business of the corporation, with no need for committee work. If your board has a dozen or more members, it may choose to divide its major responsibilities among standing (ongoing) committees that report to the board as a whole.

Board members with interest and expertise in specific areas are often appointed to serve on standing committees by the board's chair. In some states, all committee members must be members of the board. In other states, the board is permitted to appoint other people with special expertise to committees. The common types of committees that social organizations establish include an executive committee, composed of the board's officers and chairs of the key board committees, as well as a finance committee, nominating committee, personnel committee, program committee, and ad hoc committees that work on special projects.
- VIII. *Special rules of the corporation:* Explain whether the corporation will indemnify its board members from the financial consequences of liability lawsuits, the time period that constitutes the fiscal year of the corporation, and other special rules.

- IX. *Amendment of the by-laws:* Explain the procedure by which by-laws can be changed or added.

Compose the Board of Directors

After the corporation is legally formed, your role will change from working with a team that creates the social organization or enterprise to working with the new board of directors. Members of your group who decide to continue on the new board should help recruit additional board members. You train and orient the members to their roles.

Recruit Board Members Make a full complement of board members by recruiting people who have skills necessary to translate ideas into functioning services. Consider how many members your organization needs, the personal qualities of potential members, and their capabilities. Ask what contributions each potential member can make. After a potential board member is identified, explain what will be required, what roles he or she will play, and offer an invitation.

Number and Personal Qualities Most boards probably function best with a dozen or so members, but new organizations might function better with only a half dozen board members. The board should be composed of members of the community, the target population of the program, and other stakeholders who live or work in the community. Ideally, members of the board should include people with varied areas of expertise and perspectives and reflect the gender, age, and ethnic diversity of your community. These member volunteers must have the time, interest, and willingness to be of service to the new organization, share a commitment to its goals, and be able to work cooperatively and tactfully with one another.

Specific Capabilities Board members should be capable of making sound governance decisions to keep the organization's mission and strategic decisions consistent with its charitable purpose. If possible, they should have special competencies in fundraising, budgeting, law, public relations, personnel, business, or social work skills. An ideal board member will have access to resources, or possess affiliations with groups or organizations of importance to the new social organization or enterprise.

Ask What They Can Contribute Ask potential board members what they feel they can contribute to the organization and how their participation can be best utilized. Have members of your development group explain the rewards members may receive by being on the board—for example, the satisfaction of serving the community, social contacts, and experience in policymaking, fundraising, and other aspects of the agency.

Explain What Will Be Required Ask your development group members to clearly explain to potential board members why they were selected, in what capacity they will serve, what skills they will be expected to contribute, and the committee work they may be expected to perform. Potential members need to know how much time they will need to give to meetings and other activities, the length of their term on the board, possible costs to them such as lunches, travel, time away from work, and any expectations of personal financial contributions. Your group members should discuss with potential board members whether there are any conflicts of interest, such as business or other relationships that could affect their ability to serve the program's interests.⁵¹

Offer an Invitation Once your original team members have explored these issues with potential board members, encourage them to think about their invitation. New board members who are well informed about the organization, its problems and opportunities, and their expected role are more likely to be effective board members.⁵²

Train and Orient the Board You help train and orient board members in the history and purpose of the new organization, the role and function of a board, and how to use parliamentary procedure. This may require from a half to a full day of training. Use this opportunity not only to instruct members but also to form a strong, cohesive group of members who can work well together.

Establish the Organization's Culture

Once the board has organized itself, it is ready to get down to the business for which it was formed, establishing the new organization/enterprise's culture including its boundaries, mission, vision, values, and goals.

Organization's Boundaries Your social organization/enterprise should make every effort to become effectively community focused as well as centered in the social mission for which it has been devised. However, “no agency can be all things to all people,” asserts John Pardeck. “Its boundaries need to be maintained according to the agency mission and program goals.”⁵³ The organization's boundaries help set the criteria for determining eligibility for service or need for referrals to other appropriate services. They help assure that the agency serves the community and attains its goals.⁵⁴ Usually boundaries are defined in terms of kinds of clientele, geographic area served, and services. For example, a statement like “The High Street Senior Center serves all elderly persons in North Springfield, aged 50 and above, who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or equivalent disabilities and who are in need of daily activities to maintain social and emotional health” sets out boundaries for this organization.

Mission Statement The mission statement of the social organization/enterprise describes the purpose of the organization—the reason it exists. Joan Hummel recommends that the mission statement should be short enough that staff, board, and volunteers can recite it from memory.⁵⁵ For example, the mission statement of the Pacific Institute for Community Organizations (PICO) is “to assist families to build community organizations.”⁵⁶ The mission of the National Training and Information Center (NTIC) is to “build grassroots leadership and strengthen neighborhoods through issue-based community organizing.”⁵⁷

Vision Statement Hummel says that the vision statement sets forth what is expected over the long term, the expected future of the social organization.⁵⁸ Keep the vision statement as short as possible. The vision statement of PICO is, “Through effective community organization, to empower poor and moderate income families to participate effectively in our democratic system and enable them to address the issues affecting their lives.”⁵⁹ The vision statement of Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) is “A stronger West. A stronger Canada.”⁶⁰

Values Statement The program's values or guiding principles spell out the ethical framework of how things get done. They tell your stakeholders what kind of organization you are. For example, the Pacific Institute

for Community Organization states, “Over the years the following beliefs have guided and shaped all our decisions and actions. PICO believes (1) people are precious. (2) Because they are precious, they deserve to live in a world that is just. (3) Justice is a product of the interaction of the spiritual and social dimensions of our lives. (4) Organizing is a tool to integrate these two pieces: the spiritual and social, and create a world of dignity and justice for all the families of our community.”⁶¹

Goal Statement Goals describe the intended outcomes for which the community established the organization. Goals are usually long-term aims driven by the organization’s mission and vision. A goal statement does not describe the year-to-year objectives or program activities but sets forth what will result from them. Be sure your goal statements describe measurable outcomes. These outcome statements should refer specifically to those who will be affected, describe what these people are expected to do, under what conditions, and how well or to what extent. They should also include a time factor.

Establishing the Organization’s Structure

A number of structural models exist from which board members can choose. For beginning organizations, the most common are the whole group, collaborative, and team models.

Whole Group Model The board may decide that the organization should be a loosely structured group in which all staff have equal roles. This model is particularly useful for small organizations. The entire organization may operate as a single unit or it may consist of several subgroups. There may be no traditional supervisor, leader, or coordinator. Instead, roles may be rotated among some or all members of the group.

Collaborative Model The collaborative model is a version of the whole group model. An ad hoc or temporary administrator facilitates carrying out tasks by the staff. The administrator makes sure that everything necessary is available so that the group can get its business done. The administrator assumes a facilitative role, schedules meetings, makes sure everyone has a

chance to contribute, and between meetings makes sure tasks are accomplished. Instead of commanding or controlling, the leader assists and pitches in to fill in gaps to support the group and its goals.

Team Model In a social organization/enterprise structured according to the team model, the staff may be broken into subgroups by program or by major organizational functions. Senior staff members form a consensual administrative team and coordinate the various work groups, making sure communication between them is effective, relationships are smooth, resources are available, and problems between group members or at the interface between groups are resolved.

Staff the Social Organization/Enterprise

Community members often identify the quality of a program by the quality of organization’s paid employees and volunteers. The community looks at the staff and sees your social organization. It is important, therefore, for you to help the board take the time and energy to carefully consider its staffing needs. It is more useful to work from the tasks to be performed and find the kind of people needed than to arbitrarily name a position and then assign responsibilities to people. Among the most important staffing responsibilities of the board is hiring the chief administrator, instituting fair employment practices, developing job descriptions and salary ranges, and recruiting, selecting and orienting new staff.

The Administrator Usually the first person the board hires is the executive director, the chief administrative officer of the organization. The administrator serves as long as the board has confidence that he or she is accomplishing the purposes for which he or she was hired. The executive implements board policy and guides the staff in formulating strategies designed to achieve organizational objectives.

The executive draws on the energy, expertise, and resources of the board members by involving them and keeping them informed. Sheldon Gelman says that staff who report to the chief administrator generally should be hired and evaluated by the administrator, who should also determine their individual compensation within the overall compensation policy approved by the board.⁶²

Fair Employment Practices Fair employment practices are not only simple common sense; they are a responsibility that every organization owes to society as a whole. There are certain restrictions on the freedom of the board to hire, pay, promote, and fire people under federal law. The board and administration, for example, should understand requirements of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1987, and Affirmative Action, described in Chapter 12. They should also be aware of prohibited information established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The agency should use statements of nondiscrimination and an applicant register when hiring staff.

Prohibited Information The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) prohibits asking for certain information on applications, in résumé reviews, or in interviews because this may result in illegal discrimination. Prohibited information includes birthplace, age, height, and weight. Neither may you gather information about race, gender, or marital status. Other prohibited questions are number and ages of children, child care arrangements, weekend working capacity (unless weekends are part of the regular work week), and credit records. Your organization may not inquire about public assistance status, medical history, worker's compensation history, or arrest and conviction records. You may not ask about military service records, disability, or foreign language proficiency if not required by the job.

Agencies of your state and city responsible for human rights will provide your board with guidelines about their legal responsibilities. Use caution to protect the rights of applicants during all phases of hiring. Be careful not to place unjust or unsupported demands on applicants.⁶³ On the other hand, your board should ask for information about knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences they are confident are necessary for effective job performance.

Statement of Nondiscrimination Many businesses, educational institutions, government agencies, and social organizations have adopted statements similar to the following:

We will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, or national origin. We will not

take into consideration a person's ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, or marital status. We affirm the value of human diversity and manage all aspects of our agency to provide every individual with the opportunity to achieve his or her fullest potential.

Use an Applicant Register For equal employment opportunity or affirmative action purposes, use an applicant register to document all aspects of your recruitment and hiring practices as a safeguard against allegations of discrimination. You can get a sample applicant register from your Equal Employment Opportunity office. Hummel recommends that, in addition, the dates and texts of ads and the publications in which the ads were placed should be recorded. Your hiring procedures should be outlined in writing.⁶⁴

Job Descriptions and Salary Range M. Sue Sturgeon believes everything the organization does depends on the quality of its employees. Recruiting and selecting people, she says, is the organization's most important function.⁶⁵ Recruitment provides the agency with an adequate number of job applicants. The board should use the social organization's goals statement to develop job descriptions and determine salary ranges.

Develop Job Descriptions Job descriptions define staff positions and outline their tasks. They describe the experience, education, and personality characteristics of the people needed to perform them. Job descriptions should be developed for each staff position, including volunteer and intern positions. Developing job descriptions forces your board to explain each position in objective, measurable terms. They help potential applicants decide whether to apply, and they are a means for recruiting, screening, and selecting staff. Job descriptions provide guidelines for job performance and employee evaluation (see Figure 11.2).

You can be of assistance to the board as you help members accomplish the following:

1. Develop a statement of one to three sentences that answers the question: What is the primary reason this position exists?
2. Decide the primary responsibilities or major tasks that are *essential* to the job. Give each major responsibility a distinct one-sentence statement. Task functions or responsibilities should be clustered by skill areas such as administration, clerical

Agency: Prairie Community Organization Network (PCON)
Job Title: Community Developer
Reports to: Executive Director
Supervises: Community Development Intern

Primary Responsibilities

1. Provides community development services to the Lawndale Community.
2. Assists citizens in development of a Lawndale community-based grassroots organization including: forming community development task force, conduct needs assessments, develop nonprofit corporation, recruit and train board of directors.
3. Assists board to develop organizational structure.
4. Assists board to recruit and hire director and staff.
5. Assists board to obtain initial funding.
6. Engages new organization in business, political, educational, and religious community in Lawndale.
7. Orients agency director and staff to the board and Lawndale community.

Other Activities

1. Serves as member of PCON staff development team.
2. Assists in coordination and overall planning for PCON.
3. Meets with PCON staff and reports on work in Lawndale community.
4. Fills out financial reports and helps prepare PCON budget.
5. Gives input to other staff about Lawndale community projects.
6. Provides consultation to other staff.
7. Provides supervision to community development interns.

Skills and Knowledge

Ability to conduct needs assessments and train nonprofit corporation board of directors. Skill in writing grant applications, contracts with government, and fundraising. Ability to write job descriptions, recruit, and hire staff. Skill in providing consultation to staff and community members. Ability to relate to various segments of Lawndale community.

Education

BSW or BA degree in generalist social work required. MSW preferred with specialization in community organization or community development.

Experience

At least 2 years experience in community organization, community development, and/or community planning (up to 1 year of which can be in community practice internship).

Other

Ethnic sensitivity and compatibility with Lawndale community.

Desired but not required: Ability to speak Spanish. Ethnic identification with Hispanic or Filipino culture. Knowledge of Lawndale community. Ethnic, women, handicapped, are welcome to apply.

The Prairie County Community Organization Network does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance. We affirm the value of human diversity and work to provide all staff with the opportunity to achieve his or her fullest potential.

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FIGURE 11.2 Sample Job Description

- support, counseling, education, lobbying, community relations, and fundraising. If there are other, secondary activities, list these also.
3. Decide the education and experience requirements for each position. What must a person know? What skills and abilities must he or she have in

- order to do the tasks? If an applicant doesn't have this particular knowledge or skill, will they still be able to do the job while they are acquiring the knowledge and skill?
4. Determine the length of time required for completing each task. How often must this activity be

carried out? How much time will it require? Based on these skills, task, and time estimates, the board develops a list of the staff positions necessary to carry out the organization's program.

5. Develop task assignments for each position.
6. Think about various ways to obtain people to perform the tasks. There may be many possible options besides having full-time paid staff. Alternatives include part-time paid positions, temporary paid staff, paid consultants, unpaid staff (volunteers) including senior citizens, social work interns, and college and high school students.
7. Consider various staffing patterns to determine which is most workable for the organization.

The result should be a list of staff positions and task assignments that indicates the type of employees you need: full or part-time, regular or temporary, paid or unpaid, professional or intern.

Determine the Salary Range Determine the salary ranges for each paid position. Contact other nonprofit agencies with similar staff positions to find out their salaries. Develop salary ranges (e.g., \$45,000–\$50,000) rather than a specific salary (\$47,500). This allows you to use some discretion when hiring staff so that you can pay each individual according to his or her relevant education and experience.

Recruit, Select, and Orient New Staff In start-up organizations, your board members, often the personnel committee, decide where to recruit, review applications, selects candidates, choose the best candidates, decides on the top candidate and orients new staff. Board members should understand the skills of recruitment.

Where to Recruit Candidates You help the board discover the various means available to reach your target audience, such as ads in the local papers (daily, weekly, business, minority, suburban), notices in university placement centers, and ads at state unemployment offices. Include in your thinking one-stop career centers, public and private retraining centers, job clubs (where job seekers meet in support groups), and business and personal acquaintances via networking.

Your board can also use employment agencies. If you or your board members know the agency or know people who have had continued success with them, you may be able to save time and effort. But check out an agency's reputation carefully. Do as much as you can to

acquaint the employment agency representative with your organization and the job requirements. Sturgeon says, "We give a reputable employment agency an exclusive for a limited period of time (two to three weeks) to see if they are able to produce a match. If they do, fine; if not we do our own recruiting by means of ads and other postings."⁶⁶

Review Applications Whether your board members do the recruiting themselves or work with employment agency professionals, the next steps are pretty much the same: Read the applicants' résumés or employment applications, select the most likely persons for initial interviews, interview these applicants, and narrow your field to fewer than five final candidates for a second interview. It reflects well on your organization if, as your board members weed out applicants, the board chairperson sends them a turndown letter. It's tough for a candidate to receive a rejection letter, but even tougher to never hear back at all.

Select Candidates In the personnel world, people are applicants until they have gone through the first screening; those who pass become candidates. Candidates are different from applicants because any one of them could be hired. This is a "courtship" stage during which sloppy communication, neglecting to communicate with candidates for weeks at a time, giving misinformation, or not responding to their questions can lead to losing the person your organization needs.

Each serious candidate should receive a packet of information about your organization that includes a summary of benefits, vacation policy, relocation policy, and other relevant information. Add informative literature such as a copy of your organization's newsletter, the annual report, and any marketing material that describes your organization.

Ensure that whoever is in contact with job candidates treats them with courtesy. Candidates are forming an impression of your organization at this time, and communication and interaction are important.

Choose the Best Candidates Gather everyone who interviewed the candidates to select the top candidates. After they have ranked the candidates by preference, it is time to check references. Try to speak to people who have supervised, been peers of, or worked for the person. Describe the key elements of the job. Ask open-ended questions about the candidate's ability to perform the skills you require. Be sure to cover any

important areas about which you have doubts, insufficient, or ambiguous information.

Decides on the Top Candidate Your board is now ready to select the top person for the position. It is time to focus on your information and your instincts about each of the candidates. In some cases the top choice will be clear, but quite often it is not. Even if your board knows which candidate they want, remember that it's never over till it's over.

Do not turn loose an acceptable runner-up candidate until you've received a firm acceptance from your first choice. Hiring an employee is a little like getting married. If you suddenly feel that what you are getting is not what you think, it is better to back off than to jump in and live for a long time with the consequences. Follow up quickly on a successful offer. Be sure a sign-up and benefits orientation session is scheduled with the personnel staff. Inform the unsuccessful final candidates.⁶⁷

Orienting Staff When you hire someone, it is important to take time to introduce the employee to other staff members, explain his or her particular role, and review important policies and procedures, including state and federal regulations and agency by-laws. Have copies of the organizational charts available, and introduce the new worker to the organization as a whole. Most often you will accomplish the basic components of such an orientation over several working days and follow it up by additional on-the-job orientations. In a case management agency, for example, you provide policy for recording and documentation of files and how to perform social case histories or other work-related procedures. If you are orienting social work students for internships, go through the same process as with any other professional social worker to replicate what they will experience when they get their first job.

Important Skills of Recruitment Finding the right person for a position requires objectivity, clarity of thought, application of energy, and steady nerves. A well-written and objective job description that sets forth the basic requirements for the job is essential for legal, ethical, and practical management reasons. Narrowing the field, selecting final interviewees, discussing salary expectations, handling competing offers, checking references, and handling various employment arrangements are important as your board moves toward offering the position to the right person.

Finance the Social Organization/Enterprise

Four components of financing the social organization are crucial to its success: funding sources, the budgeting process, the bookkeeping system, and fundraising.

Funding Sources Funding sources include earned income for which a service has been performed, such as ticket sales or fees for services. It also includes contributions from individuals, income from special events, earnings on endowment investments, government or foundation grants, and equipment or other goods and services that have been donated. It is important to consider every possible source of funding and to diversify sources rather than rely on only one source.

The Budgeting Process After your board has determined the agency's goals, outlined its programs, planned the staffing pattern, and considered funding sources, they are ready to develop the budget. In new agencies the board will establish the first year's budget. Afterward, the executive director will take on this responsibility with help of staff and board members. For established agencies, administrators should begin developing the budget three to six months before the onset of the new fiscal year, and get it approved by the beginning of the year.

All budgets should clearly establish what should happen in terms of expenditures and revenues as a result of the agency's service programs. The board or the executive director first develops an expense budget and then an income budget.

Develop an Expense Budget Because fledgling organizations in the first year of operation will find it more difficult to project future expenses without financial records and past experience, it may be helpful to talk to other administrators and review the budgets of programs similar to yours.

Expenditures include all of the costs of purchasing services, space, and supplies necessary to operate the social agency. Include in your expense budget salaries for each regular, paid staff person, as well as health and life insurance, retirement plans, and staff development costs. Add rent, utilities, telephone, janitorial services, purchased equipment, and leased equipment. Include insurance (fire, automobile, theft, workers compensation, disability, bonding, general liability, and directors

and officers liability), and loan repayment. Supplies, postage, subscriptions, services (consultants, bookkeeper, secretarial), printing, conferences, travel, advertising, licensing, membership fees, and petty cash should not be forgotten. An expense budget includes fixed and variable costs.

Fixed Costs. Fixed costs include items such as most salaries, insurance, and rent that occur regardless of the level of activity or service. Fixed costs are easier to determine than variable ones, although your board should try to anticipate changes such as rent increases and salary increases.

Variable Costs. Variable costs such as utilities, postage, and printing change directly with the level of use or activity. Telephone expenses are both fixed and variable. Monthly phone service charges are fixed, but the cost of long-distance calling varies depending on the number of calls your staff make. Estimate variable costs as best you can. Include seasonal as well as average monthly costs. For instance, postage estimates should include the cost of postage used each month as well as the annual bulk mail permit fee and the cost of the several bulk mailings that may be planned for the coming year.

Determine the Income Budget Nonprofit organizations rarely have total commitment for funding for an upcoming year at the time it begins budgeting, so it is necessary to estimate as accurately as possible the income your board members can expect from those sources upon which your agency depends for funds including fees, contributions, special events, grants, contracts and loans.

Fees. Many nonprofits obtain a significant percentage of revenues from fees for service or product sales. If your board intends to collect fees, you may be able to help them determine the kind of fees and an appropriate fee structure. Determine direct costs necessary to provide the service or product, such as staff and overhead costs, including rent, supplies, phones, and other costs. Will the agency have a sliding fee schedule based on income? What do other providers charge? Estimate how many participants the agency will serve in each of its programs and calculate the anticipated fee income.

Contributions. Your board members may have pledged contributions or they may have obtained pledges from other individuals, groups, organizations, or businesses. Include in the income budget only

amounts for which your organization has a firm pledge.

Special Events, Grants, Contracts and Loans. Estimate the income your organization expects to generate from special events and benefits. Add any foundation or government grant sources you anticipate receiving once they confirm their interest in the program. Include income from government contracts or loans.

Next Steps Calculate the differences between the agency's anticipated income and its expenses. The amount left over is the figure your board members still need to raise. If this figure is a large portion of the budget, your board may have set unrealistically high income goals. You should help them consider trimming back expenses or rethinking what they will receive from undetermined sources of income. These sources may be individuals, groups, foundations, or corporations your board members have not yet approached or about which they are not yet sure. Calling on potential funders to share the agency's vision and financial needs before the board makes a formal request could help board members estimate more objectively the likelihood of obtaining grants.

Contingency Planning. Engage staff and board in contingency planning. Help them think through what they will do if revenues do not develop month to month as they have planned or if some unusual expense occurs. Be prepared to outline prioritized spending decreases or increases from initial budget plans, depending on the progress the board makes with their funding sources. Your board can be of significant help to the administrator and staff as they reflect on the budget, assisting with fundraising ideas and with persons to contact, committing themselves to fundraising programs, or making contacts to meet your anticipated budget goals.

Accounting All organizations need workable accounting systems for recording what they do with their money, keeping track of where it originates and where it goes. A good accounting system provides the means for documenting and recording as well as summarizing and reporting the financial transactions of your organization. It will show where agency revenues came from and where they have been spent, and it will

assist your board and administration with budgeting and calculating fundraising needs. Accounting will also help prevent misuse of funds, save money by identifying wasteful spending, and provide information to construct financial statements. Funders, government bodies, clients, and consumer groups will ask for this information, and the organization's board or administrator must have the means of providing it.

When the board sets up its organization, help members do everything possible to commandeer the services of a willing and able accountant to set up the organization's bookkeeping system. Have the accountant teach board members and the administrator how to use it, and advise them about the most appropriate type of financial reporting for their organization.

After the board has the books set up, they will need a bookkeeper. The agency may be able to depend on the treasurer, who is usually a member of the board, to fulfill this role on an unpaid basis. Medium-size staffed organizations often rely on paid, specially trained secretaries to do the bookkeeping. Larger agencies sometimes hire part-time or full-time accountants. The future of the program may depend on the quality of the financial information generated by your organization.

How to Raise Funds for Nonprofits Most people consider obtaining funding to be one of the more difficult aspects of beginning a new program. Joan Flanagan, a skilled fundraiser, asserts that obtaining funding needn't be difficult. She says people can "learn to raise money by doing it; they don't need any particular educational background, economic status, or writing skills. The only thing necessary to be a good fund raiser is the desire or will to raise money."⁶⁸

The board of a nonprofit organization can obtain funding in several ways. It may apply for a grant. Grants are available from private foundations and from the government. They may solicit contributions from interested people or businesses, called independent solicitation or use cooperative solicitation. They may assess membership dues. Members may hold fundraising benefits or other events. Nonprofits may charge fees for service, contract for services with local, state, or federal government, or take out a loan through a community investment institution.

Private Foundation Grants A private foundation operates as a not-for-profit charitable trust administered by its own board of trustees, who provide grants

to individuals and to religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational organizations. A grant is a one-way transfer of money from the donor to a recipient with no expectation that the donor will receive benefit from the recipient. It is a free gift with no strings attached.

Several thousand foundations exist in a wide variety of forms and with differing funding commitments.

THE FIRST FOUNDATION

Credit for starting the first modern foundation goes to Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage, who established the Russell Sage Foundation in 1907.⁶⁹ The Sage Foundation was of particular importance to the growth and development of the social work profession. In 1917 it published the pioneering textbook on social casework, *Social Diagnosis*, by Mary Richmond, head of the Charity Organization Department of New York. Sage also published the first ten volumes of the *Social Work Yearbook* and many other important books in social work. The Russell Sage Foundation continues its commitment to social work and social welfare in the 21st century.

Kinds of Foundations A number of kinds of foundations exist including general purpose, family, community, corporate, special purpose, social justice, and operating foundations.

General-purpose foundations have broad areas of interest and are often national in scope. For the most part, they have been established by wealthy individuals, many of whom are now deceased. They usually carry the name of the founder, such as the Carnegie Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Ford Foundation, R. W. Johnson Foundation, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

General-purpose foundations are managed by boards that make funding decisions and employ their own staffs who administer the foundation funds. According to Ione Vargus, general-purpose foundations are usually large and heavily funded, and there is a great deal of competition for funds from these foundations.⁷⁰

Family foundations are controlled by the family members of those who established the foundation. Because the family members make funding decisions, people who have a personal contact or relationship with a member of the family have the best entree to these funds.

Corporate foundations usually fund organizations that provide some benefit to the company's interests,

such as community projects where the corporation does business, special interests of its employees, or areas of corporate concern. The Crown Zellerbach Foundation in San Francisco, for example, provides funding for many local San Francisco social service organizations. Company foundations also may offer support by donating equipment and supplies, loaning executives, providing conference and meeting facilities, and extending in-kind services such as printing and management consulting.

Community foundations are sometimes called a community trust, charitable trust, or community fund. Community foundations are public charities supported by the contributions of a large number of individuals who pool their resources for the common good in a given geographic area. Community foundations can be found in most major cities and are often named for its locality, such as the San Francisco Foundation.

Community foundations may receive large as well as small gifts from people who are charitably inclined but do not have enough money to form their own foundation. Donors can designate the organization they wish to fund, request a type of service or geographic area, or leave an unrestricted gift.

An unrestricted gift gives a community foundation much more leeway in responding to emerging community issues. A community foundation must by law and by spirit continually attract new donors to maintain its public charity status. Thus it is not unusual to see community foundations advertise for donors.

Social workers can assist communities by approaching wealthy and not so wealthy people to develop a community foundation that can enrich and enliven the community, equalize resources, improve neighborhoods, develop scholarship endowments for youth, assist minority businesses, and develop group services or community development corporations.

Special-purpose foundations assist programs within a single field or only a few fields of interest. Over the past decade the percentage of special-purpose grant dollars has increased steadily. Vargus says that children and youth continue to be the single largest special beneficiaries of special purpose foundation dollars.⁷¹ A number of special-purpose foundations have evolved within the last decade to serve women, the homeless, and people with AIDS.

Social justice foundations concentrate on social justice and advocacy. They have significantly enhanced social reform. The overwhelming majority of social

justice foundations are family and special interest foundations concerned with systems of change. The Arca Foundation, for example, supports a wide variety of organizations struggling for social and economic justice. The Compton Foundation has social justice as one of its program priorities, including the provision of adequate social services at the local level, with a particular interest in programs directed at youth. The Emil Schwartzhaupt Foundation was one of the most active and consistent sponsors of community organization projects, particularly the work of Saul Alinski and others, from the 1940s through the 1960s.

Operating foundations are dedicated to only one project, organization, or program. An organization may set up its own private foundation, for example, which then solicits money for that organization or program. Many universities and hospitals use operating foundations. Fresno Pacific Foundation, for example, solicits funds and disburses them for scholarships, capital improvements, and other needs of Fresno Pacific University. The Bulldog Foundation supports the football team of California State University, Fresno.

Foundations Today In 1990 foundations awarded more than 12,000 grants to social welfare organizations, representing more than 21% of the giving, and constituting the second largest group of recipients following education. Foundation giving reached \$36.4 billion in 2005, a 197% increase from ten years earlier (a 142% increase after adjusting for inflation).⁷²

By 2008, 75,595 foundations existed in the United States, including 4,762 community foundations. These foundations distributed \$46.78 billion, an increase of 20% over 2007. Of this amount, 72% came from independent foundations, 10% came from community foundations, another 10% came from corporate foundations, and the remaining 8% came from operating foundations. Foundations held \$564.95 billion in assets in 2008. In that year grants to social welfare organizations had climbed to 43,393, distributing a total of \$3.15 billion, representing more than 26% of giving, and constituting the largest group of grant recipients.⁷³

Funding Collaborations. A recent trend in foundation giving is funding collaborations, partnerships between various foundations. For example, community-based organizations, businesses, universities, and public schools may establish a collaborative foundation to help low-income students gain access to college. The Pew

Charitable Trusts, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation joined to establish the Energy Foundation. Today funders often work together to donate to a particular agency project, with each funder giving a specific amount to meet budgetary needs.⁷⁴

Government Grants Government departments or agencies often have funds available for pilot projects, start-up grants, research grants, or ongoing funding grants. Sometimes government agencies want to experiment with new and innovative approaches and will ask for proposals for such projects.

Government agencies fund many social organizations by contracting or by means of grants. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) provides funding for pilot projects in the field of mental health. The Area Agency on Aging receives federal money to distribute to local agencies for provision of services to the elderly. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), through its HOME program and empowerment zones, provides grants to community development corporations, as does the Department of Agriculture.

Approaches to Grant Seeking Your chief administrator or board must decide what approach to take and select a funding source. If the board decides to seek a private foundation grant, it must submit an idea statement. If your organization is seeking a government grant, the board must respond to a request for proposal (RFP). The administrator must then write a grant proposal and carry out the project.

Decide on an Approach and Select a Funding Source. Two different approaches to obtaining grant money are the reactive approach and proactive approach. If you wait until grant announcements come to you and then apply, you are using a reactive approach. This approach is most common with government grants. Using the proactive approach means actively searching for potential funding sources. Many boards use both reactive and proactive approaches when seeking grants.

Find a foundation or governmental grant that supports the mission of your organization's program. A number of sources of information can help you choose the right foundation. Two key sources are the Foundation Center and the *Federal Register*.

1. *The Foundation Center* is a national organization established by foundations to provide a single authoritative source of information on foundation and corporate giving. It provides annually updated directories and guides and other publications covering grants and nonprofit funding. A bibliography of foundation resources is found in the Additional Readings section at the end of this chapter.
2. *The Federal Register* is a daily publication that provides information on federal government legislation and guidelines for new and revised grants. If you are interested in a particular kind of government funding, you may ask the agency's CEO to become a member of the government agency's mailing list or review the *Federal Register* at your public library. You may also obtain the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*, which provides basic information on federal resources, including a profile of each program, including eligibility, deadlines, funding levels, and telephone numbers of places to contact.

Write an Idea Statement. When the board or staff apply for funding to a private foundation, they must write an idea statement. An idea statement gets the organization in the door of the foundation. An idea statement is two to four pages long and tells the foundation what the agency's board and staffs want to do, how they intend to do it, and how much it will cost.

An idea statement usually has the following components: a *summary* or abstract of the entire proposal, an *introduction* to the idea statement, a *need or problem statement*, the *goals* of the project, and *project objectives* (if they are different from goals). Additional information includes the method by which the agency will accomplish its goals, how the CEO will evaluate the program, and a budget summary.

Make sure that the idea statement is neatly typed and is in the best writing style the organization's staff can muster. Send it with a cover letter to the foundation your board has chosen. If the foundation is interested, they will request a meeting, ask for further information, or ask for a full grant proposal.

Request for Proposals (RFP). Government agencies have a standardized application process called *request for proposals*. An RFP is an invitation for organizations to provide a proposal on a specific project. RFPs are

usually distributed to social organizations, professional organizations, and state or county agencies responsible for administering grants at the local level. RFPs are routinely announced in the *Federal Register* and sometimes in newspapers or newsletters.

The Association of Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA), the major macro social work professional association, often forwards RFPs to its members. If your organization is interested in applying for a government grant, it should respond to the RFP announcement and obtain the application forms and other information.

There may be a meeting for all applicants at which grant administrators provide specific information, distribute forms, and answer questions. Often, only applicants who attend the information session are permitted to apply for the grant.

Writing a Grant Proposal. If the idea statement is appealing to a foundation, its staff will invite your board to submit a formal proposal. Usually foundations supply an outline of the kinds of information they require, which you can use as a guide. One of the most important components of a proposal is the budget, which provides the foundation with an indication of the board's planning and management skills. The funds the program requires must be projected clearly so that the organization's needs can be understood and accepted by potential funders.

Government agencies often choose the proposal that offers the best program ideas at the least cost. Several sources on the techniques of writing grant proposals are listed in the Additional Readings section at the end of this chapter.

Carrying Out the Project. Once your agency receives a grant, the staff must keep records and statistics on services, clientele, staff service hours, and other information. As the staff monitors the program's effectiveness, the board will be able to pinpoint areas it needs to improve, where it needs to grow, and areas where it is functioning well. This information is invaluable in convincing funding agencies, foundations, constituents, members, and others who support your organization that their money has been well spent and that the program deserves continued funding.

Agencies unable to show they are effective in carrying out their goals and cannot account for meeting needs or making an impact in the arena of their service

provision cannot expect to receive ongoing support. At the end of the project period, the board will need to evaluate the overall project and report the results to the foundation or the government agency that has funded it.

A Caveat. It is sometimes difficult to secure a foundation or government grant. There are always more applicants than grant awards. For instance, according to the *Annual Register of Grant Support*, in 1993 the Ford Foundation received 30,000 proposals but funded only about 2,000 of them. The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy typically receives 600 to 700 applications annually but funds only 10 to 20 projects each year.⁷⁵ Researching and writing grant applications takes skill and sometimes a great deal of work. However, if you are persistent and choose your source carefully, you can be successful.

Individual and Cooperative Solicitation One of the important roles of a chief administrator of a non-profit social organizations is to approach wealthy individuals or corporations for funds often called individual solicitation.

So many charitable organizations exist today, however, that people often become overwhelmed with requests for money. As a result, social agencies make fundraising more efficient by means of organized, cooperative solicitation agencies such as United Way. Non-profit organizations participating in United Way are released from the burden of spending their own staff time on fundraising and can devote their energy to providing services. More money is raised collectively than if agencies competed with one another.

However, because United Way usually does not fund pilot projects or untested programs, they tend to include only a limited number of new programs each year, generally those with an established track record. In addition, most United Way organizations have commitments to certain priorities or needs. If your agency does not meet these priorities, you may have difficulty obtaining this funding. Many United Way organizations do not guarantee funding from year to year, nor do they guarantee a given amount of funding. If a program cannot demonstrate its effectiveness, funding may be reduced or eliminated entirely.

Membership Dues If the board has decided to include members as part of the organization, the dues they provide may become an important source

of funding. Many faith-based organizations, the YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, AARP, Association for Retarded Citizens, Camp Fire Boys and Girls, and neighborhood associations depend primarily on membership dues and member contributions to support their efforts. While dues or contributions are a means of funding, they also help develop community commitment, are a gauge of community support, exert political influence, and are a source of volunteers.

Community Commitment. When community members join and pay membership dues, they have a stake in its outcome and can assist the community in developing greater commitment to the agency. As the board and staff engage in a membership drive, for example, the members can educate, develop community awareness, and build support for the agency's programs. The board can build community spirit, cooperation, and cohesion by sponsoring regular meetings and social activities with members and unpaid staff.

Indicator of Community Support. The administration and board of the organization can use membership as an indicator of community support. A demographic assessment of membership lists can tell the staff and board where their primary support and involvement is coming from, where it is weakest or nonexistent, and where they need to improve community relationships.

Political Influence. Members can provide the social organization with a strong source of social and political influence. At the local level, members often join together to press for services and other concerns. Large membership organizations such as AARP and the Association for Retarded Citizens provide advocacy for and with their members. They work to influence public policy and legislation.

Source of Volunteers. Just as important, members can be a source of unpaid staff for the agency, assist by serving as members of board committees, and provide a pool of potential board members. They offer a network of goodwill and strength, embedding the goals and purposes of the social organization in the culture of the community.

Fundraising Benefits Members of a social organization can aid fundraising efforts by organizing benefits. Dinners, entertainment, dances, fairs, cookouts, raffles, auctions, theater productions, walk-a-thons,

telethons, car washes, and yard sales are all ways social organizations make money for worthy projects.

The Mennonite Central Committee raises most of its budget through an annual auction. The American Cancer Society and the Heart Association sponsor walk-a-thons. Lutheran Social Services sponsors boutiques and dinner dances. The Jerry Lewis Annual Telethon for Muscular Dystrophy is a national event, and the Girl Scouts are known for their annual cookie sales. There are both positive and negative aspects of fundraisers.

Positive Aspects of Fundraisers. A number of side benefits attend fundraisers. The social organization obtains publicity. Staff and members may engage in community education about their programs, and the wider community may even become mobilized and involved in the project. The benefit is an opportunity for the project staff, membership, and board to provide a service for the community. People who hate meetings will often show up at a benefit where they can meet one another, engage in social activities, and develop relationships.

Negative Aspects. Benefits are time consuming and involve a lot of hard, detailed work. They require skill in organization and often divert staff time to the benefit. There are people, however, who are skilled in these kinds of projects and who enjoy organizing them. If the social organization is lucky enough to have some of these people on its board or as members, they can make a real contribution to the organization.

Fees for Service Encourage your board to consider charging a fee for the services you provide. Fees are not only an important source of funding; they are useful for psychological reasons as well.

Sources of Fees. Counseling, family services, and adoption agencies typically charge a fee to help support the cost of the service. Group work agencies charge fees, as do day care services, alcohol and drug treatment centers, and recovery programs. Often fees are charged on a sliding scale according to a person's ability to pay.

Psychological Benefits. People who pay fees are more likely to respect the service and take it seriously. If a person is paying a reasonable fee, he or she will tend not to miss sessions and will be more engaged in treatment than if the service is free. If your agency's

clients pay a fee, they will expect quality service from your organization and will hold the staff accountable. Staff may also feel obligated to offer high-level services because their clients are customers who are paying a portion of their salaries.

Contracting Rather than operate their own programs, federal, state and local government agencies often contract with nonprofit organizations to provide services. State and county departments of social services, for example, often contract with independent foster homes, small group homes, institutions, and counseling and other treatment agencies, as do probation departments for juvenile offenders and departments of mental health for people with emotional disabilities.

In California, regional centers for persons with developmental disabilities contract with a wide variety of service providers, called *vendors*. Regional centers contract with infant stimulation programs, speech therapists, and day programs for adults. They use respite care programs, recreational programs, treatment centers, small family homes, group homes, intermediate care facilities, and others. A program that provides a service for a county or state agency must meet county or state licensing requirements, fulfill the specific requirements of the funding agency, and accept the fees that are part of the contract.

How to Raise Funds for Social Enterprise Organizations Social enterprises, including community development corporations, cooperatives, social firms such as Goodwill and Salvation Army thrift stores, and nested subsidiaries generate their own revenue as do small businesses. At the same time, many of these social enterprise organizations become incorporated as nonprofits and use funding sources similar to other nonprofits.

If a social enterprise becomes a for-profit organization, on the other hand, its fiscal needs and funding may vary with its developmental stage. It will more than likely explore obtaining loans or other commercial funding sources such as social franchising.

Consider the Developmental Stage When financing a social enterprise, consider the organization's developmental stage. Because social enterprises are a new organizational form, traditional bankers

and funding institutions may find them difficult to analyze and may sometimes be unwilling to risk their capital. In the early developmental stages, therefore, when the odds of business failure are highest, many social enterprise organizations often seek grant money, donations, or internally generated funds that have no expectation of repayment.

As an enterprise generates greater revenues, capital needs grow and eventually will outstrip the availability of philanthropic or internal sources of funding. As earned income increases, however, it can often be reinvested in the social enterprise. This is a time when many enterprises consider long-term, low-interest loans for expansion. Many begin investigating traditional finance providers, including commercial banks, nonprofit community investment institutions, and community development finance institutions (CDFIs).

Once a business approaches the breakeven point and achieves profitability, its capital needs also tend to grow. Its access to financing resources also expands, however, as its cash flow and ability to repay debt grow stronger. At this stage it may be time to consider beginning new projects and taking risks with shorter-term capital loans.

Loans Financing a social enterprise organization will often mean borrowing capital. Your social enterprise board members must always have a good plan to use any borrowed funds, as well as for repayment, based on reasonable assumptions for future revenue.

The wrong time to consider debt is when an organization has been running consistent deficits. "Adding debt on top of accumulating losses is a step toward bankruptcy," says Kate Barr of the Minnesota Nonprofit Assistance Fund (MNAF). "If you don't have a realistic idea of when and how the loan can be repaid, it's time to step back and consider other options."⁷⁶

Short-Term Loans. The flexibility of a short-term (less than one year) line of credit may be appropriate to finance working capital in order to even out cash flows, such as bridging receivables from committed contracts and grants that your organization will obtain in the near future.

Long-Term Loans. A long-term loan at a fixed rate of interest is useful for purchase of major capital assets that are expensive and will be used over a number of years, such as a building, real estate, large-scale

equipment, or other infrastructure. Loans or private investments are useful to start or expand a program if your organization can locate and secure realistic repayment sources.⁷⁷

Finding a Lender. Community development finance institutions (CDFIs) are nongovernment entities established by the Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994. CDFIs are financial organizations with a community development mission backed by the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, a wholly owned corporation of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. This fund is dedicated to providing a variety of loans as well as credit, technical assistance, and financing services to low-income individuals, community development corporations, and other community-based social enterprises.

According to community-wealth.org, in 2006, there were approximately 1,250 CDFIs serving economically distressed communities, including more than 500 community development loan funds, more than 350 community development banks, 290 community development credit unions, and more than 80 community development venture capital funds. Today, CDFIs are found in every state in the nation.⁷⁸

CDFIs have loaned and invested billions in America's most distressed communities. Their loans and investments have leveraged billions more dollars from the private sector for development activities in low-wealth communities across the nation. Government-backed funding also includes the Adventure Capital Fund (ACF), which helps ambitious social enterprises become financially sustainable through a mixture of loans and grants and the provision of expert mentoring and support services.

Social Franchising Franchising is a business model in which an individual or organization purchases the rights to operate a unit of an already established business, leveraging the owner's brand, systems, and philosophy,⁷⁹ says Doug Sudell. Franchising is common in food retail, education, and technology as well as manufacturing, automotive maintenance, and health care.

Today, social franchising is one option that social entrepreneurs can use to begin a social enterprise. While the potential for valuable partnerships between the franchise industry and the nonprofit community is

good, it remains largely untapped. There are fewer than 100 nonprofit organizations operating social franchises in the U.S. today. Ben & Jerry's was a pioneer in the social franchise field, creating a unique PartnerShop program for nonprofit organizations in the late 1980s.⁸⁰

No matter what the industry, the strength of the franchise lies in its independent ownership and individual operation. Any given franchise can benefit from dozens, sometimes hundreds of different entrepreneurs and their ability to grow the business. In return, each franchisee benefits from the proven business model, established brand, and strong support of the franchisor.

Sudell cautions, however, that while franchises are highly regulated, developing a social franchise requires careful consideration.⁸¹ Franchising, like any type of social enterprise, is not right for every organization. "Social franchising is a long-term investment, not a 'quick fix' out of a financial crisis,"⁸² warns Coleen Curry. A typical franchise agreement lasts 5 to 20 years, with premature terminations of most contracts carrying serious consequences for franchisees.

However, if a social enterprise meets the right criteria, franchises can offer the sustainability necessary to ensure they can fulfill their purpose; and, for franchisors, a disciplined approach to participating in social change comes with the added benefit of differentiation in the ever-crowding marketplace,⁸³ says Benjamin Litalien.

EXERCISE 11.2

FRW and Bulk Mail Franchise

Consider the following experience of the Fontana Rehabilitation Workshop. Would you consider its history, experience, and motivation ones that would make a franchise successful? Why or why not?

The Fontana Rehabilitation Workshop, Inc. (FRW) was founded in 1964 and currently serves more than 100 individuals with developmental disabilities, training them to do subcontracted work in Fontana, California. FRW contracts with the federal government to assemble and package military badges, sporting goods, pet products, and other consumer goods. Clients are also trained in grounds and janitorial maintenance, and work on

both residential and commercial accounts. In addition, FRW serves state and county agencies such as CalTrans.

FRW's decision to enter the social franchise arena was driven by two factors: to better fulfill its social mission and its funding situation. In the late 1990s, California government reined in spending to concentrate funds in other budget areas. The loss of state funding created the need to diversify revenue streams. FRW, however, found it difficult to convince community employers to increase the number of FRW's clients they were willing to hire.

FRW wanted to run a business close to its corporate headquarters with a relatively low start-up cost. Because it had experience in volume packaging, the directors explored options in the related fields of mailing and printing. FRW decided to enter into a franchise agreement with AIM Mail Centers.

AIM Mail Centers are complete business service centers, offering a wide array of products and services for large and small businesses as well as general consumers. This includes shipping services with UPS, FedEx, and the U.S. Postal Service. AIM provides packaging, stamps, fax, notary public services, mailbox rentals, photocopies, office supplies, and more. There are more than 115 AIM Mail Centers nationwide.

The AIM Corporation offered a money-back guarantee if the franchise did not work, and an existing AIM mail store was for sale. FRW was able to purchase the store for a relatively low cost and hire a manager with previous experience operating a Mail Boxes Etc. location. While AIM had never worked with a nonprofit organization, it felt that the FRW could make a good franchisee because it had experience in a related field.⁸⁴

After the Organization/Enterprise Is Established

After the organization is established, both traditional nonprofits and social enterprise organizations will engage in promotion of their new agency, recruiting clients and often holding an open house.

Recruiting Clients for Traditional Nonprofits

You seek referrals from other agencies, network with organizations, sponsor an open house, and obtain media coverage.

Obtain Referrals The best source of clients for your social organization or its programs is by referral from other agencies in your area. Most social agencies welcome having additional resources and will be interested in knowing more about your agency's services.

Networking Assist the staff and board in getting the word out about the new program by networking. There is nothing like face-to-face contact to spread the word about a new social program. Have the agency join the local council of social agencies or other social services networks in your area. Encourage social work staff to attend NASW meetings, go to workshops and training programs where other professionals will be present, and visit agencies that will be the most likely referral sources.

When your board members or staff network or visit, make sure they carry flyers or brochures and hand them out to people as they explain the new program. The agency's brochures should be clear and specific about the services or products it offers, the kinds of clients it accepts, fees, geographic boundaries, or other service parameters.

Media Coverage Nonprofits have opportunities in obtaining media coverage. They can take advantage of an FCC ruling that requires radio and television stations to allot a certain portion of their time for public service announcements (PSAs) about events and services your organization provides. These spots usually run from 15 to 60 seconds and are played several times during the day over a period of one or more days. Because radio and TV stations can get inundated by other requests for PSAs, it's important to make your message short (60 seconds or less), engaging, topical, and targeted to the same audience at which the station aims, says Sylvia Paull.⁸⁵

Sponsor an Open House Sponsor an open house to announce the opening of the program or social enterprise to community leaders, community agencies, and referral sources. This can be a gala affair with refreshments, a short presentation, and introductions of board members and others who have been instrumental in getting the program established. Make sure the staff and board members maintain positive relationships with all the members of the community and that everyone understands the services they are providing.

DEVELOPING SOCIAL ENTERPRISES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

“Business has seen a shifting focus toward social entrepreneurship,”⁸⁶ says Rachel Finkel. Since 1993, more than 500 books and case studies have been published by Harvard professors on social enterprise. “Interest in social entrepreneurship has exploded in recent years,” says Kim Corfman, vice dean for MBA programs at New York University’s Stern School of Business.⁸⁷ “We are seeing it in applications, in memberships in these clubs, and in volunteer service.”⁸⁸ In the past decade, there has been a ‘pretty dramatic change.’ Every year, there are more students interested in social impact,” said Leonard Lodish, vice dean of the Wharton Program for Social Impact.⁸⁹

“Building a company with a social conscience or linked with a social cause is becoming increasingly attractive to would-be business founders,”⁹⁰ says Diana Middleton, and with an increased interest in socially responsible money making, business schools have been pushed to create a whole host of courses and study tracks to help MBA students sort out the best way to pull it off.⁹¹ Schools like the University of Oxford, Cornell University, and Dartmouth College have all seen increased demand for instruction in social entrepreneurship,⁹² and many “are racing to meet the demand for such social entrepreneurship programs,”⁹³ says Roland Jones.

A growing number of schools including Stanford, Yale, Harvard, UC Berkeley, University of Michigan, for example, “offer stand-alone social enterprise programs, or as part of a business school degree program.”⁹⁴ A few have developed collaborations such as the Pittsburgh-based Olszak Management Consulting, which has paired with the Pittsburgh Social Enterprise Committee and Duquesne University to create an expanded curriculum dedicated to social enterprise training.⁹⁵

Some, such as the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School, have developed their entire curriculum around social entrepreneurship. Launched in 2012, Wharton has made a conscious effort to promote social entrepreneurship at Penn. Its new curriculum “gives Wharton the opportunity to integrate social enterprise into all major classes,” not only those specifically about social impact, Vice Dean Lodish said.⁹⁶

Social enterprise is an international phenomenon. The successful School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) in the UK has been operating for ten years, and launched a new SSE Australia in Sydney in 2009. These schools provide social entrepreneurs with invaluable learning and skills development opportunities, as well as linking them into a global community of inspirational social entrepreneurs.

In addition to business, the field of social work is beginning to engage in education for social enterprise. In April 2003 the Alliance for Building Capacity (ABC) at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis, for example, partnered with the St. Louis-based Alliance for Social Entrepreneurship to promote entrepreneurship education and nonprofit capacity building.⁹⁷ The Brown School is home to the first social entrepreneurship program based in a social work setting.⁹⁸ Through teaching social work students learn about social entrepreneurship. ABC works to design projects that serve the community and helps to implement those projects in concert with local nonprofits.⁹⁹

Schools of social work could follow the lead of the Brown School in developing entrepreneurship education and nonprofit capacity building. Innovative schools of social work may also consider developing a new academic major in social enterprise leadership to provide research and training in the field, and to provide social work expertise to this innovative field of social change.

In addition, social workers can help improve the capacity, status, and effectiveness of social organizations in general and of social enterprises in particular by encouraging NASW and other social justice and environmental organizations to devise a new social enterprise legal entity that provides the strengths of business models with those of nonprofits, as has occurred in Britain and other European nations.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you discovered what social organization building consists of and explored a brief history of social organization building. You learned that macro social workers help community members develop traditional social service organizations, assist existing social organizations expand their services by creating new programs or agencies as well as new social enterprises. You learned how social workers help

community members develop traditional social service agencies by forming an agency development group, engaging them in performing a needs assessment, assisting them in establishing the corporation, recruiting and training the board, and then working with the board to develop the organization.

You also discovered that social entrepreneurs conceive of a new service idea either as an outgrowth of a traditional social service agency or on their own. They help develop a feasibility study and a business plan.

With either a traditional social organization or a social enterprise, you learned how to help the board develop a statement of the organization's mission, vision, values, and goals. You also discovered how to assist with deciding on an organizational structure and recruiting the staff of the organization. You explored how to help board members set up budget and accounting procedures, obtain funding, and find clients for the services of the organization. You examined some recommendations for the field of social work to help prepare social entrepreneurs for the future. You and your organizational development group and the board of directors may feel proud that the lengthy process that began with a needs assessment has resulted in the development of a new social organization to help the members of your community.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. You are thinking of setting up a small group home for persons with emotional disabilities. Discuss the benefits and disadvantages of being a profit-making organization versus a not-for-profit organization and make a decision about which is best for your program.
2. Social agencies, businesses, as well as your college or university more than likely have articles of incorporation, constitutions, by-laws, and mission statements. Collect as many of these as you can. Compare the mission statements. What are their common characteristics? What do they tell you about an organization? Do they leave out anything you think is important? How could you improve them?
3. Compare the articles of incorporation, by-laws, and constitutions that you have collected. What are the similarities and differences?
4. Obtain an organizational chart from your college or university. Examine the staffing patterns. Is the organization hierarchically structured? How many organizational layers are there? Does it have a flat structure in which decision making is dispersed, or is it a thin vertical structure in which decision making is concentrated at the top? Would you characterize the organization as simple or complex? Would you recommend any of these structures for a social organization?
5. Consider a role for yourself as a social entrepreneur. What skills do you believe you would need to become a social entrepreneur? What would be the benefits and weaknesses of such a career path? What kind of training would you require? In your exploration contact some social enterprises in your community and/or look into one of the MSOs listed below.

MSOs Profiled

The Alliance for Building Capacity at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, is a campus-based program that includes a social entrepreneurship component collaboratively implemented by the university's social work and business schools. ABC provides MSO services to local nonprofits, and links them the School of Social Work's resources.

The Center on Nonprofit Effectiveness (C-ONE) in Miami/Dade County, Florida, runs a walk-in resource center for nonprofits, provides free and low-cost workshops, partners with other groups to offer management training, and contracts with government organizations and foundations to provide customized capacity building. The organization relies heavily on its cadre of 30 consultants in organizational development, who help clients work on organizational cultural change issues related to enterprise work.

The Georgia Center for Nonprofits acts as both a nonprofit association and an MSO. The center offers consulting and training and is moving toward a corporate university model that will offer certification in social enterprise areas such as marketing.

The Institute for Nonprofit Development at Mount Wachusett Community College, Gardner, Massachusetts, works to build the capacity of organizations that operate in North Central Massachusetts.

EXERCISE 11.3

Developing a Mission Statement

You are a social worker with an inner-city task force on community development. The task force is particularly concerned about a number of problems that center on inner-city youth. These problems include dropouts, gangs, drug abuse, and crime.

The lives of many inner-city youth are being wasted; they have few resources and opportunities. Recently, a young boy named Roy, one of the youth in your neighborhood, was killed in a gang fight. The task force has named a community project after Roy, calling it Reclaiming Our Youth (ROY). This innovative pilot program will include drug rehabilitation, counseling, group work, and job training.

Form subgroups of six or seven persons. Decide on a chairperson and a recorder. Develop a mission statement for the ROY program. After your task group has finished, share your statement with the other groups.

1. How did the mission statements differ?
2. How were they the same?
3. How could they be improved?

EXERCISE 11.4

Developing an Idea Statement

Your program development task force has decided that the ROY program will apply for a funding grant. In your community, there are about 300 school dropouts, at least 50 of whom are runaway youth. In addition to its initial ideas, the task force is also considering providing medical services, job search, shelter, and reunification services. Reunification helps families reunite after children have been removed and placed in foster homes. You are also interested in working with law enforcement to prevent sexual exploitation of youth.

Your program would provide youth with financial assistance, alternative education to prevent dropping out of high school, and legal services by which youth can become emancipated from their families of origin and live independently or in group settings.

Form groups of six or seven persons. These should be different groups than those in Exercise 11.3. Choose one of the program ideas mentioned above and develop an idea statement that could be used for a grant proposal. The idea statement should be no longer than four pages and follow the outline presented in this chapter.

Form into several groups, each one having an equal representation of members from the groups that wrote idea statements. Each group plays the role of a Community Foundation Allocation Committee. Your task is to review the idea statements and rank them. First decide on the criteria that your allocation committee will use. Criteria may include soundness of the idea, cost effectiveness, potential community impact, capability of implementation, long-range benefits, or other considerations. Review each of the idea statements and rank them in order according to your funding criteria.

After your allocation committee has ranked the idea statements, share your ranking with the class. Discuss the rankings and the criteria committees used.

1. Why did you decide on one idea statement rather than another?
2. Spend time discussing what you learned about the process. What constitutes a successful idea statement?
3. What did you discover about writing a good idea statement?

EXERCISE 11.5

Constituting the Board of the ROY Program

The Community Foundation Allocation Committee has accepted the idea statement submitted by the program development task force and has asked for a full proposal. If the proposal is accepted for funding, the task force must become incorporated as a nonprofit organization and form a board of directors that can accept funds and operate the program.

The new board would consist of 11 people. Five new members need to be selected. Existing task force members have approached several people. Each has exhibited initial interest. You will form yourselves into the Nominating Committee of

the ROY board. The Nominating Committee, in addition to the program development consultant, consists of the following:

1. Joe Smith is a 43-year-old community resident who is unemployed because of a work-related injury. He has been a resident of the neighborhood for over 20 years and considers working in the community one of his most important priorities.
2. Sarah Rosenberg, 24, a social work graduate student in macro social work, has been assigned to do her second-year field internship with the ROY program.
3. Versie Fillmore, 55, is a minister of the local AME church. Rev. Fillmore, a charismatic leader, is very outspoken about the need for more programs for youth. She has attempted on her own to develop youth programs at the church and sees the ROY program as an important component to help young people lift themselves from poverty and get a new start in life.
4. Harry Whitmore, 67, the owner and operator of the Western Appliance Shop, is more conservative than some of the other board members and his interests come from his concern that the youth need to be kept busy and off the streets. He reflects the interests of the business community.
5. John Dokes, 35, is an insurance salesperson. As part of the United Way drive, he has been assigned by his boss, Leonard Moss, to assist on the board of the ROY program. John lives in a middle-class suburb about five miles from the ROY neighborhood. He is relatively new to the area and unfamiliar with social programs or with the youth culture and the neighborhood. He sees his role as bringing some business expertise to the program.
6. Ruth Dumore, 45, is the president of the St. James Neighborhood Association and represents the homeowners in the community. She is concerned about property values and the general deterioration of the neighborhood. But she also seems to have genuine concern for developing a program for youth.
7. Bill Hosokawa, 35, is the macro social work program developer who has worked with the task force. He acts in the role of consultant only and does not participate in the actual decision making. He offers advice, observes the process, and helps the members arrive at a decision, but he does not influence the actual outcome. This

will be his last role in helping the task force, since he is being assigned to another project.

Potential new members include:

1. Harriet Garcia is a 33-year-old math teacher at the local middle school.
2. Cheryl Lau is a 45-year-old social worker from the local mental health clinic.
3. Joe Sullivan, 40, is co-owner with his wife Jane of a neighborhood “mom and pop” convenience store, a favorite hangout of local youth. The Sullivans live in a residential neighborhood about three miles from the community.
4. Jane Sullivan, 38, is co-owner with her husband Joe of the convenience store. In addition to her work at the store, Jane is the primary caregiver for their 5-year-old daughter.
5. Hector Mendez is a 22-year-old youth leader in the local Catholic church and a former gang member.
6. Saul Adelman is a 47-year-old college professor at the State University School of Social Work.
7. Isaiah Washington, 67, is a retired maintenance worker from the local high school. A member of the board of the local AME church, he is a neighborhood resident of 30 years. He has three grown children, one of whom continues to live in the neighborhood.
8. June Southerland, 45, is a neighborhood resident and member of the St. James Neighborhood Association.
9. Ruben Kinsley, a 35-year-old bus driver, grew up in Watts and understands the problems of teenagers. He has expressed interest in working with a group of youths.
10. George Allison, 38, is a city planner with ties to the mayor’s office.
11. Harold Bennett, 47, owns an apartment complex in the neighborhood. He is president of the local business association and a neighborhood resident.

The instructor divides the class into groups of six or seven members each. Each group will role-play the ROY Nomination Committee. The instructor will assign each member a role and will give specific individual instructions to each member about the role he or she is to play.

Task force members will decide how to organize themselves, develop criteria for selecting the members to be invited, and make their selection. The student assigned the role of Bill Hosokawa is to assist the task force in reaching a consensus.

The instructor may ask the task force to continue to meet outside of class if there is not enough time to process the exercise during class. However, each task force should at least begin in class, and the instructor should circulate among the groups to ensure that they are on track and carrying out the assignment.

After the task force groups have made their selections, the class reassembles. Each task force lists its selections on newsprint or a board so that all can observe. The instructor leads a discussion of the exercise by asking the following questions.

1. How did the group organize itself?
2. What criteria did the task forces use to decide?
3. How did each task force arrive at a decision: consensus, majority vote, or other decision rules?
4. What conflicts emerged?
5. How were the conflicts resolved?
6. Was each group satisfied with the outcome?
7. How successful do you think that the board configuration will be in helping the ROY program succeed?

ADVANCED EXERCISE 11.6

Board Committee Practice

The class will constitute itself as the board of the ROY program. The instructor is the board chair. The board divides itself into committees of about five students each. One committee will develop a fiscal plan for the ROY program. The second will compose job descriptions. The third will develop a plan for staff recruitment, and the fourth will compose an application form. Additional committees can duplicate these assignments. Each committee reports its findings to the board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Developing a Fiscal Plan

The board of the ROY program obtained a start-up foundation grant of \$150,000 for the first year of operation. This will cover the salaries of an executive director at \$60,000, a social worker at \$40,000, and a secretary/receptionist at \$25,000, plus \$15,000 for part-time maintenance services. The board has been able to obtain an old house owned by a church as the matching share donated by the board. However, repairs need to be made to the roof and plumbing, totaling \$10,000.

Office furnishings need to be obtained. In addition, utilities and supplies will need to be paid for, as well as additional staff positions to operate the halfway house. The estimated extra total expenses to get through the first year of operation will exceed \$50,000.

You have been selected as a member of the fiscal committee of the board. The board chairperson has charged your committee to come up with a plan for raising the additional \$50,000 needed for the first year of operation and to devise a plan for the second-year budget, which is estimated to be \$250,000.

You know that there are a number of sources of funding available to you. For example, you may charge a fee for service, develop a campaign for direct solicitation, charge membership dues, put on benefits, or become a vendor for the Department of Social Services or Probation by contracting with these departments to provide services for them. You may also consider other avenues, such as getting donations. You have thought of applying for government grants, but that is not possible this year.

The board chairperson has asked the fiscal committee to contact at least one or more government agencies that might contract with your social organization for your group to be one of its service providers.

The goal is to find out what is involved in becoming a vendor or a contract agency, the amount of money contracts generate, and the process for qualifying to be a contract agency or vendor.

The chair has also asked you to contact at least two agencies who use fees, solicitation, membership dues, benefits, or donations in order to obtain information about the feasibility and practicality of these methods. You are to explore what is involved in these fundraising ventures and the amount of money these sources can develop.

Once information is obtained, develop a list of the most feasible funding sources, prioritize the list based on interviews with the various social agencies, and recommend a plan for fundraising. The board is expecting the report of the fiscal committee at its next full meeting.

Writing a Job Description

The board of the ROY program wants to develop a generic job application form that can be used for all staff positions. The board is aware that there are legally permissible questions that can be asked and

questions that are not legally permissible. One of the board members has mentioned, for example, that it is not legally permissible to ask a person's race or to ask for a photo.

The board as a whole, therefore, wants to develop a form that gives the personnel committee enough information so that job applicants can be screened appropriately, but that also falls within legal boundaries.

The board has asked you to be a member of the job application committee. The board chair has asked your committee to:

1. Brainstorm about the various tasks and duties required to develop the job application and organize yourselves for your task.
2. Obtain legal information from your state Fair Employment and Housing Agency or the public library about what is or is not permissible to ask on job applications: Obtain job applications from at least six social agencies for ideas. Develop a job application that is legally acceptable and that provides enough information to help the board in making employee selections.

Report the committee's findings to the board at its next meeting, and submit the proposed job application for approval, along with the six sample job applications that your committee has collected.

Writing a Position Description

The first staff person the ROY board of directors needs to hire is an executive director. The board knows that the executive must have experience in operating a small social service agency. They would also like someone who has experience in youth work, drug rehabilitation, and operating a halfway house. They would prefer a social worker, but are not sure whether other occupational categories should be considered.

In addition, budgeting, program development, and program evaluation will be key operations if the ROY program is to continue past its first year. You have been selected as a member of the personnel selection committee. The task of the committee is to write a job description for the position of executive director, including the duties and tasks that the executive director would perform in operating the ROY program, and the education, experience, specific job skills, and personal qualities the executive director must have in order to perform those duties and tasks. The committee's first task is

to decide how to organize itself and how to go about writing a job description.

The chair suggests that you:

1. Brainstorm about the various tasks and duties required to develop the job description.
2. Collect six job descriptions of executive director positions from other small social agencies to explore what kinds of education, experience, and job skills they normally look for, and the amount of money they pay. You might also find it helpful to interview an administrator about the kinds of tasks the position entails and the education, skills, and experience that are necessary.
3. Using the example in the textbook, write the job description for the position of executive director.

Present your job description at the next board meeting, along with examples from the agencies you contacted.

Recruiting Staff

The board will be faced with hiring several staff members in the next month. A plan for recruiting staff and a process for staff selection must be developed. You are a member of the recruitment and selection committee.

You know that there are a number of ways of recruiting staff. Among these are job postings, obtaining referrals, college recruiting programs, holding job fairs, holding open houses, advertising in newspapers and professional journals, listing the job opening with the County Employment Office, or using private employment agencies.

Because the board does not want to waste time, the chair has asked your committee to visit at least three social agencies. Find out the methods they have used to recruit staff, discuss the cost of recruitment, and ask their recommendations as to the most effective way to recruit BA-level social workers, MSW-level social workers, supervisors, an executive director, and office personnel. In addition, the board has asked that you contact the County Employment Office and private employment agencies for information about their services and costs.

After gathering this information, you are to write up your findings and provide a prioritized listing of recruiting methods, evaluating the pros and cons of each method. Report your findings to the board at its next meeting.

ADVANCED EXERCISE 11.7

Assessing a Program Development Process

This exercise will help you assess a program development process. Read the following newspaper article and then answer the questions that follow.

Project Aims to Turn Homeless into Producers

In 2008, John Williams, executive director of the Plains County Economic Opportunity Commission, decided to help break the cycle of criminal recidivism so prevalent in his community. Aware that about 80% of prison parolees are Hispanics or African Americans needing job training, education, and a residence to give them a start in a tight job market, Williams applied to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for an 18-month pilot project to set up a Center for Homeless Parolees.

According to Williams, “Parolees aren’t able to cope with the outside. Sometimes they fly off the handle and lose their jobs if an employer says something negative. The next thing you know, they are back in the joint. Or they receive a few checks and get dirty and go back on drugs.”

EOC came up with \$40,000 in their own funds and \$510,485 in bank financing to buy and rehabilitate a 25-bed residence on N. Wayne Street. Based on this funding, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded the EOC \$290,000, the first time it has funded this kind of program. The State Department of Corrections also approved \$292,000 in funds for the residential program that will be operated by the Sobriety House, a substance abuse treatment center.

The residence center will offer crisis intervention, shelter, food, health care, counseling, career development, legal aid, recreation, and transportation and referral services.

Williams said the EOC expects to find permanent jobs each year for 100 people, surpassing the 65 people required by the contract.

Form into groups of five or six members. Using only the information in this article, apply the principles of program development you have learned in this chapter. Critique the process by which this program was developed.

1. What are its strengths? What are its weaknesses?
2. How closely did Williams follow the process recommended in this chapter? What components were followed? What components were left out?
3. Assess the sequence of the development process. What was done first, second, third? What sequence would you recommend?
4. Assuming the funding period is three years, would you expect this program to be successful during the initial funding period?
5. What do you think will happen once the program funding ends?
6. On what basis do you think Williams will decide whether the program has been successful? How would you assess the program’s effectiveness?

Report back to the whole class and, with the help of your instructor, draw some conclusions about the program development process.

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Foundation Fundamentals: A Guide for Grant Seekers.

An exceptionally useful book for people who are new to grant seeking.

Foundation Grants Index Annual. An index of grant subject areas within which grant descriptions are listed geographically by state and alphabetically by foundation.

Foundation News, Council on Foundations. Can be helpful to grant seekers who might have an interest in the latest concerns in the foundation world.

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12

The Practice of Social Administration

Managers manage.... Leaders initiate change.

John Kotter, Harvard Business School

Management and Workers

We have grown up with the belief that control, consistency, and predictability are essential. We have separated managing the work from doing the work. We have created a class system inside our institutions.

There is a management class and an employee or worker class. The management class enjoys privileges and prerogatives and is taught management skills. The worker class has fewer privileges and prerogatives and is taught operational or basic skills. The fundamental beliefs we have about how to run organizations and organize work aren't working.¹

Peter Block

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JEAN CARLYLE TAKES A STAND

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ADMINISTRATIVE MODELS

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Modified Partnership Model

Dispersed Team Model

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

Equal Pay Act of 1963

Civil Rights Act of 1964

Age Discrimination Act of 1975

O'Conner v. Ortega, 1987: Employee Privacy

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998

HOW TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS

Individual Decision Making

Group Decision Making

DEVELOPING NEW AGENCY PROGRAMS

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Why Engage in Agency Program Planning?

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FUNDRAISING

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Joyce and Showers Model of Staff Development Cross-Training

SUPERVISION

Action-Social Principles of Supervision

Individual Supervision

Assisting the Work Group

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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

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Developing a Contract

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ADMINISTERING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

First-Order Organizational Change

Second-Order Organizational Change

HOW TO ADMINISTER SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

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Aim at Foundational Principles

Invest in Quality

Nurture Autonomy

Hold to Your Mission

Leadership from the Board

EVALUATING THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION/ ENTERPRISE

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ADDITIONAL READING

JEAN CARLYLE TAKES A STAND

For the past ten years, Wells County has experienced a high level of growth. While welcome, growth has also produced traffic congestion, increased gang activity, drug use, and crime, and as a result, a rise in the caseloads of the Wells County Probation Department.

Several years ago, probation officers were generalists, each officer handling all the people in a geographical area. As some areas grew more rapidly than others, however, continual shifting of boundaries became necessary. East Side, which contained many immigrant and low-income populations, experienced a large amount of growth and a greater degree of crime as well. Not only were caseloads in the East Side unit growing more rapidly, but also the crimes were of a different nature, necessitating more work. A vicious cycle developed. The more work, the less time to monitor cases and the more likely the charges would repeat offenses. Not only was the officers' work more difficult and caseloads greater, but their success rates were far lower than other units, whose workloads were lighter and whose charges were far less difficult.

The East Side unit had younger, more inexperienced workers and some who were older and more burned out. It also had acquired some of the less competent workers. Many more assertive and capable workers, having obtained valuable experience, transferred to other units or were promoted to specialist

positions. As a result, the unit's officers began to think of themselves as the Siberia of the probation department, victims of an unjust system.

In an effort to balance caseloads, Jean Carlyle, supervisor of the East Side unit, had to change worker assignments often. With each change, workloads became even more backed up. While Jean did everything possible to develop equity, many members of the unit did not feel they could adequately supervise their wards.

The six supervisors in other geographical areas where there was less growth, however, resisted shifting boundaries because they did not want to absorb more work for themselves and their workers, cause confusion in their units, or risk their success rates. Supervisory meetings often ended in heated arguments in which supervisors of units with smaller caseloads defended their territory against Jean, who staged what she considered a one-person battle and often felt discriminated against. Jean, however, did not give up. She wanted to make the East Side unit into one of the best units in the agency and she had a commitment to serving Spanish-speaking and African American populations on the East Side.

Located physically away from the central office, however, the East Side staff had some privilege, resulting in greater cohesion. Officers had greater freedom and autonomy. They also had private offices, unlike

workers at Central, who were all located in one large pool with workers separated only by five-foot-high partitions. However, being isolated from Central, the East Side unit was out of the loop of information and power.

Because of agency growth, the entire agency moved into new headquarters, and the East Side unit was merged into the new building with all the other units. The members of the East Side office lost what little special status they had, and what was worse, in the new arrangement they were deprived of their individual offices. Arthur Thompson, a new probation chief, began putting pressure on all units to meet demands from the state for accountability. His style was simply to apply pressure and weed out workers who were perceived as incompetent.

Farthest behind and with poorer success rates, Jean was under the gun to crank out more work from staff who were already overwhelmed with more difficult loads and more change, and now had to travel farther to visit clients. The members of the unit blamed Jean for what they believed was her inability to adequately represent the needs of the unit in agency meetings, and for the increased workload. They were angry about losing their private offices. Now they were stressed because of the increased pressure, from which Jean had sheltered her workers in the past.

Stress levels in the unit rose even higher. Conversations previously held in private were now heard by everyone. Members had little opportunity to blow off steam with one another. As a result, East Side unit members began to take longer lunches, sometimes leaving on prolonged visits to clients' homes and not returning until the next day. Meeting behind closed doors, members of Jean's unit became openly hostile to her. "Wimp" could be heard whispered in corridors when she came by. Morale in the unit plummeted.

Distrust, miscommunication, and conflicts were developing. One day, in the middle of a conversation, one of her workers started shouting at her. Jean was stunned, as were the rest of the probation officers, as the worker's screaming voice echoed through the agency. Jean went to Arthur Thompson, who only berated her for being ineffective. In spite of what she considered to be heroic measures to advocate for her workers, even they had turned on her. Jean felt helpless, alone, and stressed.

The county had recently hired Kathy Herbert, a social work organization developer, who had visited

the probation department and explained her services. With no one else to turn to, Jean called Kathy. Meeting over coffee, Jean for the first time poured out her frustrations built up over years of being a buffer between her unit and the rest of the agency. Her feelings were deep and painful, and it was embarrassing for her to express her grief. She felt that her battles to help her unit, her concern for their good, and her compassion were being thrown back at her in the form of resentment and anger. She felt blamed for the very situations she had fought against.

Kathy provided a listening ear and over the course of several weeks helped Jean work through her anger, loss, and hurt. Together they began to problem-solve, working on different approaches to the unit. Kathy met with Jean and her unit together, engaging in mutual problem solving. Gradually, the unit began to see that they were in a self-defeating cycle, and while they were under stress and blaming Jean, their own attitudes and work habits were contributing to their low morale and lack of self-esteem. Jean also realized that she needed to be much more directive and began to make some changes in how she related to her unit. Her self-confidence began to return and she began to feel in control once again, developing a proposal for redistributing workloads on a more equitable basis.

As the East Side members began to take responsibility for themselves, not blaming the supervisor for issues beyond her control, Jean and her unit began to work together as a team once again. Jointly, they began to strategize for solutions. While the external pressures of work did not ease up, Jean and her unit were communicating on a regular basis and reworking their relationships.

EXERCISE 12.1

Being an Administrator

Sometimes large public social service organizations take the form of modern complex bureaucratic systems. When this occurs, a number of discrepancies often develop that create difficulties for clients and social workers alike. As you read this narrative some of those endemic problems probably occurred to you. List some of these inherent problems that you observed.

In class, gather in small groups and compare your lists. Discuss what happens in organizations where social services are provided by large bureaucratically structured agencies. As an administrator, what changes would you make in the Wells County Probation Department? Would you leave things alone? Would you be able to apply the Hersey and Blanchard model of situational leadership described in Chapter 3 to this situation? If so, what recommendations would you make about Jean Carlyle's leadership style? In class compare your recommendations and come to some conclusion.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

Nearly all social workers are employed by and carry out their practice in traditional nonprofit social service, advocacy, social enterprise, or public social agencies. Social workers need to develop the ability to work effectively in those organizations. You need to understand how to use social agencies as tools for practice, and develop skills in relating to the organization's culture. You will also need to understand the importance of administration in carrying out social work.

In this chapter you will learn about an action-social orientation to administration. You will discover the difference between social leadership and operations management. You will explore a brief history of some of the more important laws that apply to equal employment, discrimination, sexual harassment, disability, and other areas of concern. You will explore administrative decision making.

You will also learn how administrators engage in planning programs, developing new services, and fundraising. You will learn that administration includes training staff and arranging for employee development. You will explore the role of supervisors at both the individual and group levels and the process of collective bargaining.

You will discover how to engage in organizational change, a process called organization development. You will learn some rules of thumb about how to engage in social enterprise administration and how to evaluate the social agency. You will explore challenges to administration in the 21st century.

WHAT IS ACTION-SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION?

Whether they are chief executive officers, chief operations officers, mid-level administrators, or supervisors, all social work administrators are important and necessary people who hold positions of responsibility and trust within social organizations. Utilizing an action-social orientation, social work administrators are responsible for creating a positive organization. They employ both leadership and operations management models.

Role Models

All administrators are role models for paid and voluntary staff, clients, and community members. In their stance and vision they represent the qualities that the agency is dedicated to generating. They exemplify in their interaction and approach the values to which the social organization aspires. Administrators, moreover, present the organization itself as a model work environment that is humane, transparent, just, helpful, and compassionate.

Create a Positive Organization

Administrators who align themselves with the action-social model are dedicated to creating a positive organization whose benefits are of high quality. At their core administrators are dedicated to strengthening and empowering not only clients but social workers and the entire social agency. They use the agency's assets and resources in a responsible way. They infuse the organization with social work values, especially social justice. They see to it that core workers are provided with meaningful work opportunities in helping others, that the organization's finances are used with integrity, and that the organizational culture is strong. Administrators ensure that the agency is a good neighbor in the wider community, maintaining positive relationships with other organizations in the agency's social environment, and with society as a whole.

Provide Social Benefit

The ultimate purpose of action-social administration is its dedication to a social purpose that transcends the organization itself. Administrators are united in their goals of strengthening and empowering not only the clients they serve, but the core social work staff who

are employed by the organization. Administrators ensure that the more than 1.5 million social organizations in the United States are united in their dedication to improving the social welfare of our society, providing a foundation for the vast array of programs and services that assist people to live happier, healthier lives.

Assist the Core Workers

Administrators view social workers as agents who engage with others in meaningful and fulfilling activity. Administrators apply their understanding, values, and skills to the task of making the agency a wholesome, healthy social environment. Action-social administrators are committed to helping obtain social tools by which staff can accomplish their tasks, make consensual decisions, and work cooperatively with others in joint projects for the common social good. They provide support to core social workers who engage in the necessary and creative work of the agency, helping people in a process of growth and development with difficult aspects of their lives. As part of their commitment to positive practice as described in the NASW Code of Ethics, social administrators engage all social workers in helping improve the agencies' policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of their services.²

Utilize Agency's Finances

Social work administrators are careful, fiscally responsible agents of the organization's capital resources. Consistent with the social work Code of Ethics, administrators advocate within and outside their agencies for adequate resources to meet clients' needs and allocate those resources in ways that are open and fair.³ Administrators are committed to using resources in ways that promote the agency's cause, maintain its character, and extend its services. When not all clients' needs can be met, administrators, in coordination with both the core social workers and clients, develop allocation procedures that are nondiscriminatory and based on principles that are as just and consistent as possible.⁴

Shape the Organization's Culture

Administrators using the action-social perspective monitor and strengthen the organization's culture to ensure that its programs are congruent with its

vision. The internal environment of the organization must always be one of openness, responsibility, and service in line with the values of the social work profession.⁵

Core social workers and staff are expected to show respect, integrity, and trust not only to their clients, but to other employees as well. Social agencies are to be places where open communication is the norm, active listening and responding is practiced as a matter of course, and where compassion, caring, and concern radiate throughout the agency. Social agencies are places where fellowship is fostered and positive relationships developed and prized. Where hurts occur, members restore broken relationships, healing bruised emotions. Conflicts are not hidden, but dealt with quickly and openly.

The organizational culture promotes mutual understanding, in which social justice, empowerment, and fair treatment are honored. Each individual is respected and treated as an end and not merely a means.

Social administrators are aware of the importance of modifying the culture of the organization to accommodate its changing social environment and emerging human needs.⁶ Administration can never be fixed in one mode, but must be dynamic, forward looking, and adventurous as well. The action-social administrator must often take both a short- and a long-term perspective, "with one eye on the challenges that lie just over the horizon and the other on the growth potential of the organization."⁷

Community Inclusion

Administrators integrate the social organization into and align its services with the larger community in which it located. They foster cooperative, collaborative efforts with other organizations in its environment to increase the store of social capital, goodwill, and social benefit available in the social commons. The social agency intentionally becomes an integral part of the neighborhood which it serves by including clients and staff in as many aspects of the agency's functioning as possible. Clients and community members volunteer as members of agency boards of directors, and are "enlisted as external allies in the pursuit of its cause," say Wallis and Dollery.⁸ Administrators help the social agency become a good neighbor, using its resources to contribute to the community.

Improve the Welfare of Society

Administrators are also committed to improving society as a whole. They see their role and the role of the agency as part of a larger network of helping that weaves a social fabric of support, assistance, and goodwill throughout the nation. Social administrators align themselves and their social organizations in solidarity with disempowered people everywhere, including, where possible, those in underdeveloped nations as well.

ROLES OF ADMINISTRATION

Action-social administrators carry out two complementary and interrelated roles: social leadership and managing the operations that help the organization function effectively and efficiently.

Leadership

The chief executive officer (CEO) often takes major responsibility for the decisions and direction of the organization as a whole, making sure that its culture is strong and reflects the community values and mission for which the organization was created. The CEO sees leadership as a social good, represents the organization to the wider community, articulates the organization's values and vision, and sets clear priorities.

Leadership as a Social Good The CEO engages in full-time leadership, but this does not mean she or he is the only or exclusive leader in a social organization. Action-social administrators see their leadership role not as a private source of power to be jealously hoarded and protected, as do many managers of business organizations. Instead, social workers understand that leadership is a good that must, by its very nature, be extended to all—volunteer and paid staff, clients and customers, constituents and stakeholders alike.

Action-social administrators make leaders of others. They expect that members will express their leadership talents to the greatest extent they are able, and make contributions based on their ideas and perceptions, values, and emotions. They seek liberation, not control; affirm authenticity, not dehumanization; prize personal encounters rather than impersonal human relations; and help construct the social agency as a place where people make their own choices and exert their inner compassion for the common good.

Represent the Social Organization While the CEO is the official representative, chief advocate, and primary spokesperson for the organization and the cause it advances,⁹ all members, employees, and board members are also representatives of its values, purposes, and activities and need to be committed to and supportive of them.

Administrators ensure that social agencies are a source of goods by which people's lives are enhanced, communities are strengthened, and people are empowered in resolving the concerns that matter to them. Mission statements are written or rewritten to affirm that the agency is a tool for the enhancement of the lives of its clientele, and a source of meaning for employees and ownership by the wider community.

Develop and Articulate the Vision "Leaders let vision, strategies, goals, and values be the guidepost for action and behavior rather than attempting to control others,"¹⁰ says Daniel Predpall. They build trust in the activities of the organization and encourage others to participate in its vision. From that perspective, "the leader is a meaning building catalyst for an organization," says Paul Wellesford.¹¹

Along with members of the board, staff, and the community, administrators help develop a credible and compelling vision of what the organization is to accomplish. The CEO refines this vision, and, with both paid and voluntary staff, formulates strategy and develops an organizational culture that will frame the decisions and actions to carry out that strategy.

The leader secures the commitment of stakeholders to realize this shared vision, and articulates the vision to others. This vision often includes positioning the organization by "introducing a new program or creating strategic alliances with public or private sector partners" and may sometimes involve "restructuring the organization or reconfiguring some aspect of service delivery."¹²

Articulate Key Values Social administrators, as described in the NASW Code of Ethics, work toward social justice and ending oppression, discrimination, inequity, and violence wherever they are found.¹³ Social leadership is and must be congruent with social work values of member empowerment and self-determination.¹⁴

In addition, administrators, strive for the advancement of people's social welfare, community betterment, and the rights of everyone to seek their full potential. Each employee is treated with mutuality, respect, and honesty. Administration assists both paid and unpaid staff to become self-disciplined, skilled, and self-directed rather than simply organizational functionaries.¹⁵

Administrators use the organization as a means for development of leadership, autonomy, and independence, and celebration of diversity as an ideal. All people, including people of differing color, disability, sexual orientation, gender, and ethnicity, are an integral part of participation, inclusion, and service to clients, employees, and the community as a whole.¹⁶

Set Clear Priorities Action-social CEOs focus on setting clear priorities with the leadership team and staff. Clear priorities are the “north star” against which an organization can align its people and processes, and build its culture. When an organization's leader has established clear priorities, he or she has essentially defined what “success” will look like. “Against that goal, it becomes easier to determine which programs or initiatives are essential, and which are not, and to allocate resources accordingly. It also becomes easier to measure gains in effectiveness—positive outcomes for beneficiaries—over time,”¹⁷ says Kirk Kramer.

Operations Management

Operations is a key organizational function ensuring that the internal aspects of the social agency have operational integrity, its processes are effective and efficient, and its services are of high quality. The chief operating officer (COO), in addition, provides oversight of the technical functions of the organization, providing services to staff, ensuring that the agency is responsive to and maintains positive relationships with clients and community members.

Technical Functions Operations services assist with information technology, maintaining agency records, overseeing technical matters of human resource management, including benefits administration, contract negotiation, growth projection, and planning the details of new programs. In addition, every social organization must have skilled and efficient

management of its finances, making certain that it is fiscally secure, has ample capital resources to support its current operation, and allowing for future growth.

Services to Staff More specifically, the COO ensures that staff has the resources and tools to accomplish their jobs. Operations see that information and communication are clear, interdepartmental tasks are coordinated, policies facilitate the organization's mission, and ongoing training and support are in place.¹⁸

Effective and Efficient Programs Operations management provides staff, clients, and community members with a facility that is comfortable and pleasant, with programs that meet the needs for which they were designed, and that programs are carried out effectively and efficiently. Operations applies the best standards of customer service. In particular, operations management upholds standards by which both paid and volunteer staff relate to each other, their clients, and members of the community in a friendly, cordial, and harmonious manner, and that the agency as a whole maintains wholesome and strengthening interpersonal relationships.

ADMINISTRATIVE MODELS

Sometimes leadership and operations are carried by one person, the CEO. At other times social organizations divide the tasks of leadership and operations management using a partnership model, a modified partnership model, or a dispersed team model.

Partnership Model

One person, the CEO, is identified as the leader who carries the responsibility of providing inspiration, vision, expressing the mission of the organization, and relating to its external environment. Another person, the operations manager or COO, oversees the finance, information technology (IT), human resources (HR), and business support functions of the agency.

At Teach For America (TFA), for example, CEO Wendy Kopp brought in a chief operating officer to whom she turned over much of the operational responsibility for TFA. She observed that “the new COO is better [at operations roles]. Beyond his natural abilities, he also brings an experience base that I simply don't

have. At this point in our development—given our size and complexity—that has made a huge difference.”¹⁹

Modified Partnership Model

While operations and leadership are oriented toward different aspects of the organization, often there is overlap. Internal operations and external leadership complement one another and must occur simultaneously. Shortly after founding the Partnership for Public Service, Max Stier developed a slightly different model when he created a COO-like position. Stier and his colleague do not make a clean “Mr. Outside/Mr. Inside” split, however. “It’s a bad idea to have a full distinction,” Stier believes. While Stier focuses on the board, the press, funders, and other external stakeholders, the COO oversees several operations programs but also stays in touch with some of the key external issues of the organization.²⁰

Dispersed Team Model

Another administrative model disperses leadership and operations even further, engaging teams to carry out leadership and operations functions. Many new social organizations, for example, are initially built around a visionary and entrepreneurial leader and, say Zdenek and Steinbach, in its early stages this type of leadership model is often the best.²¹ This is often the case with social enterprise organizations, such as CDCs, whose founders may have grown up or worked in the community, and often possess the high drive and energy needed to catalyze change. Using a “command and control” leadership style, they help complete projects to build a track record of success.²²

However, as the social organization matures, staff gain expertise, and widen their community responsibilities, “it may be necessary to disperse leadership” placing “a premium on working collaboratively, forging alliances, and sharing information widely among many people who make decisions for the organization,”²³ say Zdenek and Steinbach.

While the agency executive maintains overall control, he or she may create “a guiding coalition composed of staff, board, volunteers and other stakeholders all of whom take personal responsibility” for the organization’s results.²⁴ Staff teams handle most projects and activities, since they are the most knowledgeable and are ultimately accountable to the particular constituency or project for getting the job done.

“Actively managing the change process—reinforcing not only why change is necessary, but also how it will strengthen the organization’s ability to sustain its impact and live into its mission over time—is an ongoing leadership challenge,”²⁵ say Stid and Bradach.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

It is important for social administrators to understand the various administrative laws and rules which have been instituted by the federal government and that guide and regulate all modern organizations. Except where constitutional rules prevent the intrusion of government into the operation of religiously based organizations, the following laws apply to all social agencies and should guide their internal policies and procedures. Every social worker should become familiar with the Equal Pay Act of 1963, portions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, sexual harassment laws, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the employee privacy issues in *O’Conner v. Ortega* (1987), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1989, and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA).

Equal Pay Act of 1963

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 ensured the principle of “equal pay for equal work.” Men and women working in the same establishment under similar conditions must receive the same pay if their jobs require equal or similar skills.²⁶

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination in the United States in nearly every area of life. For administrators, the act outlaws discrimination in employment as an intentional, calculated act to exclude some people from work, prohibits preferential treatment by means of quotas or other means, and defines sexual harassment as a form of discrimination.²⁷

Discrimination in Employment There are two different components of the law: equal opportunity and affirmative action regulations.

Equal Opportunity The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, section 703(a) provides for equal employment

opportunity and asserts that it shall be an unlawful for an employer to

1. Refuse to hire, discharge or otherwise discriminate against any individual.
2. Limit, segregate, or classify employees or applicants for employment in any way to deprive any individual of employment opportunities because of race, color, gender, or national origin.²⁸

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) implements this section of the law by establishing guidelines preventing an agency from selecting candidates in such a way as to have an adverse impact on any social, ethnic, or gender group unless the procedure is validated through job analysis or employee selection research. According to Peter Pecora, “Adverse impact means an employee selection rate for any race, gender or ethnic group that is less than 80% of the rate of the groups with the highest rate of selection.”²⁹ Proscriptions against discrimination in employment mandate that employment decisions based on standard criteria such as education and experience must have a specific relationship to the job.

Affirmative Action At his historic commencement address at Howard University in June 1965, President Johnson extended the meaning of equal opportunity.

Freedom is not enough. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, “You are free to compete with all the others” and still justly believe that you have been completely fair. It is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.

This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equality but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result.

The outgrowth of that promise became “affirmative action” regulations. Affirmative action plans (AAPs) require employers to demonstrate good faith in their efforts to increase opportunities for deprived groups. The U.S. Department of Labor interprets affirmative action as permitting employers to offer preferential treatment to formerly excluded disadvantaged or minority group members such as ethnic groups and

women in training, selective certification, and aggressive recruitment.³⁰

What the Courts Have Said In *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.*, *United Steelworkers of America v. Weber*, and *Johnson v. Transportation Agency, Santa Clara County*, the Supreme Court has clarified how administrators are to interpret equal employment and affirmative action.

Griggs v. Duke Power Co. In 1973 a group of African American employees challenged Duke Power’s requirement of a high school diploma and satisfactory intelligence scores for certain jobs previously given only to white employees. The court found that these job requirements were not relevant to the positions, were discriminatory, and upheld the challenge. However, to avoid incessant litigation, employers were encouraged to adopt a quota system to ensure ongoing parity.

United Steelworkers of America v. Weber Six years later an African American man was accepted into a training program that would have resulted in a better-paying job, while Brian Weber and several other men of Caucasian descent who had more seniority were not. Weber sued under the Civil Rights Act. The Supreme Court decided unequivocally that the Civil Rights Act allowed racial preferences, because the purpose of the act was to break down barriers to the employment of African Americans and other people of color, and an employer could, therefore, give preference to them.

Johnson v. Transportation Agency, Santa Clara County In 1987, in an interview for a position as road dispatcher, Diane Joyce, a woman, received a score of 73 and was hired over Paul Johnson, who scored a 75 and who had been recommended over Joyce for the position by a panel of three supervisors. Even though she had scored lower than Paul in the first round of interviews and was not recommended in the second round, Joyce was hired because the company had never employed a female road dispatcher and the agency wanted a balanced workforce. Johnson sued, claiming reverse discrimination because of his sex. The Supreme Court, however, upheld the hiring, affirming employment rights for women.

Sexual Harassment Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, sexual harassment in the workplace is a form of discrimination. Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of employment. Sexual harassment can also occur when such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance.

Harassment can be verbal, visual, or physical. Visual harassment involves leering, suggestive ogling, making offensive signs and gestures, or openly displaying pornographic or other sexually offensive materials. Verbal harassment includes telling sexually explicit jokes or making sexual suggestions, highly personal innuendoes, and explicit propositions. Physical harassment includes brushing up against the body, patting, squeezing, pinching, kissing, fondling, forced sexual assault, and rape. The Supreme Court's interpretation of the law asserts that the law is violated when the work "environment would reasonably be perceived, and is perceived, as hostile and abusive."

Age Discrimination Act of 1975

By the year 2000, the median age for employed Americans reached 39. Between 1986 and 2000, the number of people aged 48 to 53 leaped a staggering 67%. Moreover, older Americans are politically active. This data confirms trends reaching back to the early 1970s, when Congress passed the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which made illegal most discrimination in the workplace against people aged 40 to 70. Unless age considerations are essential to the performance of a job, employers may not give preference to younger workers in hiring, firing, or granting benefits. Furthermore, in 1986 Congress eliminated mandatory retirement ages in most occupations, meaning that a worker is no longer obliged to retire by age 70.

O'Connor v. Ortega, 1987: Employee Privacy

While looking into charges of sexual harassment and malfeasance at a state hospital, investigators conducted a search of Dr. Dennis M. O'Connor's office. O'Connor sued. The Court ruled in the government's favor because its investigators had applied a standard of reasonableness when they conducted the search. Lower federal courts have also upheld the use of

polygraph tests by police and prison officials for pre-employment screening.

On the issue of drug testing, the operative standard for management is one of reasonableness. Are there reasonable grounds for believing an employee was impaired on the job? Can the agency demonstrate that an employee represents a clear and present danger to other workers or to the general public? For example, the Supreme Court has held that government regulations requiring drug and alcohol testing of railroad crew members involved in serious accidents are constitutional, because such tests are a reasonable and effective way to serve the government's interest in promoting public safety.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Enacted July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) bars discrimination and extends broad civil rights protection to many Americans with disabilities in private and public employment, public accommodations, transportation, and communication services.³¹ This sweeping antidiscrimination measure affects 43 million Americans with physical, intellectual, and emotional disabilities. It also bars discrimination by private businesses against people with AIDS or its virus.

The act forbids all employers from making hiring decisions based on criteria that are either irrelevant to the job or inappropriately subjective, such as preferring an underqualified non-disabled person over a qualified person who has a disability. The ADA requires employers to make "reasonable accommodations" for disabled applicants and employees so that they can compete on more equal terms, unless that obligation places an "undue hardship" on an organization.³² For example, the measure mandates elevators in new commercial and public buildings of more than two stories and calls for employers to provide special devices and services for those with impaired hearing or vision.³³

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was passed by Congress in 1998, and became fully implemented on July 1, 2000. The WIA represented the first major reform of the nation's workforce investment system in over 15 years. It was designed to permit communities

and states to reduce welfare dependency. The act integrated many federal programs at all levels of government—local, state and federal—into a one-stop career center system, composed of faith-based and other social organizations that contract with the government to establish career centers, simplifying access to services for job seekers and employers alike. These social organizations are mandated to respect individual choices, reflect local conditions, and achieve increased employment, retention, and earnings for participants, and increase their occupational skills.³⁴

HOW TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS

Administrators make decisions on their own or as part of a group. There are advantages and disadvantages in each method.

Individual Decision Making

According to Grover Starling, an administrator will often decide to make a decision alone when faced with the following constraints:

1. When time limits preclude group process
2. When the administrator has all the information needed to decide
3. When the alternatives are clear and the constraints are easily calculated
4. When intergroup coordination and cooperation is not a factor
5. When values inherent in the decision are straightforward and are not in conflict³⁵

In 1973 Victor Vroom and Paul Yetton defined five different decision procedures and the situational factors that influence a leader's decision-making strategy. Two are autocratic (A1 and A2), two are consultative (C1 and C2), and one is group-based (G2).

- A1: Leader takes known information and then decides alone.
- A2: Leader gets information from followers, and then decides alone.
- C1: Leader shares problem with followers individually, listens to ideas, and then decides alone.
- C2: Leader shares problems with followers as a group, listens to ideas, and then decides alone.
- G2: Leader shares problems with followers as a group and then seeks and accepts consensus agreement.³⁶

Congruent with rational problem solving, after gathering information and reviewing the strengths and limits of each alternative solution, the administrator chooses the alternative that is cheapest, most efficient, or most effective in accomplishing a specific goal. Then the administrator will often involve others in implementing the decision. Individual decision making using RPS is fast, requires few organizational resources, and can be effective in implementing an administrator's values and in giving the organization direction.

Group Decision Making

Groups have advantages over individuals in deciding, but they have disadvantages as well. Criteria exist to help an administrator decide when to use group decision making.

Advantages of Group Decision Making John Beckford suggests that when “freedom by debate” fails, “people become imprisoned” in their own individualized thinking, trapped either by the limits of their own knowledge and understanding or by the structure of the society and organizations in which they exist.³⁷ They may become “captured by thought processes or a set of assumptions about the world which represent other people's interests rather than their own. As a result, a means is necessary through which those affected by a change or process can work with a group to review the assumptions and consequences of the change.”³⁸

Several scholars support the conclusion of Paul Hare, who wrote in 1976 that “When pairs or larger groups are compared in the solution of the same types of problems, groups are generally found to be more efficient than individuals.”³⁹ Hare noted that “although the group is usually better than the average individual, however, it is seldom better than the best individual.”⁴⁰

Groups tend to be superior to individuals because they can break a complex problem into pieces and each member can assess different parts of it. Group members together often have more accumulated knowledge and information than any one individual. The diversity of experience and thinking styles present in a group can lead to more innovative solutions than an “expert” could produce by working alone.

Moreover, Grover Starling asserts that when people with different styles interact in a group, “they can

often stimulate each other to try new ways of approaching the problem thereby compensating for the weaknesses in any one member's thinking style."⁴¹ Members working together can often "see a problem from different perspectives, and because members have different skills and talents, they can tackle varying components of a problem more effectively than one person alone," say Fatout and Rose.⁴² Members form a system in which the group becomes more than the sum of its parts.

In addition, people may be more willing to accept, support, and implement a decision that has been made by a group rather than an individual. "If the solution is going to affect the group and implies changes in procedures, their involvement will often ensure a willingness to accept that change,"⁴³ assert Fatout and Rose. A group decision is often "easier to implement because more people feel they had a say in it, and they understand the problem more thoroughly,"⁴⁴ says Starling.

Disadvantages of Group Decision Making

Group problem solving takes longer than an individual working alone, and as a result, it is more expensive for an agency. The dynamics of groups may lead to compromise solutions, in which members follow the ideas of the leader or the most persuasive member, overriding valuable dissenting opinions. Also, there is often no clear focus for responsibility in groups if things go wrong.

When to Use Group Decision Making According to Starling, group decision making is usually best when a problem meets the following conditions:

1. The problem requires interagency or intergroup cooperation and coordination.
2. The problem and its solution have important personal and organizational consequences for members.
3. There may be significant but not immediate deadline pressures.
4. The problem is technically complex, has different facets, and requires input from different sources.
5. The problem may be valuationally or ethically complex, requiring discussion from a variety of points of view.
6. The problem may require creative solutions, and members are expected to successfully resolve conflicts when they disagree.
7. Widespread acceptance and commitment are critical to successful implementation of the issue.⁴⁵

DEVELOPING NEW AGENCY PROGRAMS

Social programs are "coordinated interventions or services provided by organizations according to an agency's mission and goals,"⁴⁶ says Francis K. O. Yuen. While many social organizations provide one kind of service within a particular service arena, others may engage in several kinds of programs. For example, a Catholic Social Service agency may offer counseling as its primary service or it may specialize in family counseling, adoption services, alcoholism or drug treatment, or other areas. A YMCA may offer a variety of group work services to children and adolescents, but also physical fitness, camping, and classes.

From a broader perspective, public programs are the implementation of policies at the societal level, most often by the federal government. Public programs are "organized interventions that aim to improve a social situation: a social problem, a social need, or a condition that requires specific actions ... such as Medicaid, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and child welfare programs."⁴⁷

What Is an Agency Program?

In addition to the definition provided by Francis Yuen, different practitioners offer others. Mayer, for example, defines a program as "an intervention that constitutes a service or activity that can be provided to facilitate volitional change."⁴⁸ Royse, Thyer, Padgett, and Logan assert that a program is "an organized collection of activities designed to reach certain objectives ... a series of planned actions that are designed to solve some problem."⁴⁹ K. Mika, furthermore, describes a program as "a design of activities that, in theory, produce some change or outcome in its participants within a given time frame."⁵⁰ Finally, Weinbach portrays a program as a "complex system," a "self-contained package with its own goals, policies, procedures, rules, and frequently its own budget."⁵¹

Why Engage in Agency Program Planning?

Social agencies continually scan their organizational environments to improve their services or discover niches where new services can be offered in line with their overall purpose. Administrators engage in

program planning and development to improve the effectiveness of their services. This can mean expanding or shrinking a program, reorganizing existing programs, or developing a new program or service.

For example, a homeless shelter may offer hot meals and overnight shelter as its primary service to men who are homeless. But, in addition, it may discover that its primary clientele may have a variety of other needs. These needs may prompt the agency to move beyond offering shelter to offering drug abuse or alcoholism counseling, 12-step programs, medical and dental services, adult protective and guardian services, vocational training, or opportunities for volunteer or paid employment. In addition to serving males only, they may decide to offer services to women or to entire families.

Each change in existing services or programs will require an adjustment in the entire agency system and needs to be carefully planned. It will require an adaptation in the organization's budget, space utilization, personnel, and the working routine of the agency. It will also change the agency's mission and purpose as well as its culture.

How to Engage in Agency Program Planning

Program planning is both a process and a product.⁵² Yuen and Terao recommend using the common what, why, and how in making agency program plans. They present a program planning formula in which Program Planning = (Who × When × Where × What × Why) × (How and How Much) × Evaluation. As you consider each of these components you develop your program development plan.⁵³

First you ask yourself "why?" Why are you considering this particular project? Why questions ask you to consider the reason for the program including the needs that it will meet and the problems that it will solve. You think through the goals of the program and the objectives that the program will achieve.

Next, think about who will be served. What are the characteristics of your target population and the particular issues to be addressed? Who questions also include the numbers and kinds of staff, volunteers, and service providers that are needed for the program to succeed. Think about qualifications and costs of personnel.

"When" includes the target date on which the program will begin as well as hours of operation when it is

up and running. "Where" questions cover the location of the program and accessibility to main lines of transportation. "What" specifies the equipment and supplies that your program will need.

"How" is about activity implementation. What steps will you need to follow to accomplish your plan? In what order will each need to be carried out? "How much" concerns the program budget. As you consider each of these items, attach a money figure to the item. They become a beginning foundation for your budget. Your budget is crucial, telling you how much money will need to be raised to begin the project, how much income the project will generate, and its projected ongoing costs.

Finally, the "E" stands for evaluation. After your program is in operation, what criteria will you use to determine if it is effectively meeting its goals? "Evaluation findings can serve both as ongoing input for program improvement and a final product to report the strengths and weaknesses of such programs,"⁵⁴ says Yuen.

Develop a Proposal Describe each of these items in the form of a proposal for the organization's board to consider. Your proposal should present the logic that justifies the need for the service as well as the relevance of the proposed program. It will usually include a program rationale, goals, objectives, activities, evaluation, and a budget. You can also use the program proposal as a basis for writing a grant proposal to obtain funding support.

FUNDRAISING

Most agencies rely on a variety of funding strategies, as you discovered in Chapter 10, including fees for service, individual contributions, grants, and donations, among others. Most administrators will rely on one or two major sources of income, but also will diversify their funding strategies depending on the kinds of programs they offer and the economic possibilities that present themselves. As a result, administrators engage in "extensive networking, building relationships with donors and funders to leverage their resources in pursuit of the agency's vision," say Wallis and Dollery.⁵⁵ Passion, coupled with the ability to make a compelling case for a cause, drives fundraising and helps leaders attract and motivate staff and volunteers.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

According to the NASW Code of Ethics, one of the key roles of administrators and supervisors is to “provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff ... address[ing] current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics.”⁵⁶ Social administrators, therefore, understand that it is “crucial to provide employees and volunteers with technical training.”⁵⁷ say Zdenek and Steinbach.

While technical skill building is important, however, too often a person with technical capability gets promoted to a management and supervisory level without needed leadership skills. It is necessary, therefore, to also expose core staff and board members to formal leadership and administrative training on a continuing basis.

Joyce and Showers Model of Staff Development

Social work administrators need to develop an organizational culture of learning as part of the agency’s natural social environment. Staff should be immersed in a setting in which they are challenged to continually improve their skills, develop their resources, and strive for improved functioning. The Joyce and Showers process is a model of active learning. It can be adapted to providing in-service training in the organizational learning environment. The process includes five steps.

In the first step, trainers present the theory or description of a new skill or behavior useful or desirable to members, typically 30 minutes to one or two hours in length. Next, the trainer demonstrates or models the new strategy or skill. Like the first component, delivery is one-way and no audience action is required. The third component is initial practice in a simulated setting. The audience now participates, trying out the new skill. Fourth, the trainer provides structured and open-ended feedback about the learner’s performance. The final step is coaching. As learners try out the new idea or skill in the classroom or the workplace, the trainer helps them with at-home application.⁵⁸

Cross-Training

Robert O. Zdenek and Carol Steinbach explain that “cross-training” can be achieved as simply as having one day per quarter when professional staff share their expertise with one another. Community developers, for

example, can show case managers how they identify community strengths or create new services. Case managers, in turn, show community development staff how they assess client needs, compose individual program plans, decide on services, and monitor client capacities. “Cross-training,” say Zdenek and Steinbach, “helps ensure that when a senior staff member departs, all agency knowledge is not lost. It encourages a more team-centered agency environment.”⁵⁹

SUPERVISION

Supervising social workers often use principles of action-social model of social work. A supervising social worker relates individually to social workers to develop skills, assists them in working with clients, and helps members of the unit as a group. The supervising social worker engages in performance appraisal.

Action-Social Principles of Supervision

Supervising social workers are valuable people. They have special knowledge and experience, and we choose them because we believe they are the best social workers we have. We need these talented individuals who are skilled in developing caring relationships and who are capable of passing their experience on to others. Supervising social workers exist primarily to contribute to social workers who do the core work. In addition, “core social workers should have strong voices in determining what supervisors can do to help them accomplish their common purposes,” asserts Peter Block.⁶⁰

An action-social model stresses that we should allow our experienced social workers to coach, teach, and provide modeling and consultation for those who do social work with clients. A supervising social worker is at different times an information giver, problem solver, mentor, boundary setter, and evaluator. Supervision should be empowering and strengthening. The role that we call “supervision” should assist and support core staff in becoming the best social workers they can be. Supervising social work occurs individually and with the group as a whole, and includes performance appraisal.

Individual Supervision

Supervision at the individual level is often a consultative process. It involves teaching skills and providing clear direction.

Consultation In a 1974 study of social work supervision, Al Kadushin found that “being able to share responsibility with supervisors and being able to obtain support for difficult cases was the greatest source of social work satisfaction.”⁶¹ Most agency staff believe that as core workers gain experience, “the best relationship becomes one of consultant-consultee, a form of supervision preferred by many social workers.”⁶²

Teaching According to Lawrence Shulman, research shows that social workers often want supervising social workers to devote time to teaching practice skills, discussing research information, and providing feedback on performance. When a supervisor models rapport and caring as well as offering empathy, respect, mutuality, and trust, these qualities carry over in the way many social workers assist their clients. Shulman found that “supervisees learn what a supervisor really feels about helping by observing the supervisor in action. More is often ‘caught’ by social workers than is ‘taught’ by the supervisor.”⁶³

Clear Direction Sometimes, as a social worker, you will need explicit, direct answers to a policy or procedural question. Your supervising social worker should provide answers clearly and forthrightly. As you increasingly think about and make your own decisions, the trust and support of your supervisor is important. Ongoing positive reinforcement and good communication, including active listening and giving feedback, are essential in helping you become independent and self-directing.

Assisting the Work Group

In addition to working with you individually, your supervising social worker assists your entire unit in setting priorities, goals, and work assignments. He or she acts as a buffer between your unit and administration, providing you with information and training about the agency’s plans and priorities.

Conversely, the supervising social worker informs the department administrator about your unit’s needs and performance. The ultimate objective of good supervision is to help your unit become a cohesive group of highly capable social workers who deliver the greatest amount and highest quality of service to your clients.

Performance Appraisal

In most social agencies, supervising social workers monitor and evaluate performance as an ongoing process. Performance appraisal often comes out of discussions with a supervisor, may be based on your own professional objectives as well as the agency’s standards, and is often performed collaboratively with you confirming what has been occurring during the year’s period and should be done “in a manner that is fair and respectful.”⁶⁴

Sometimes conventional appraisal is used, which can devolve into bureaucratic surveillance.

Conventional Performance Appraisal Sometimes in larger, more hierarchically structured organizations, social workers are evaluated by means of conventional performance evaluation processes developed by human resource specialists. Such evaluations are designed to measure the extent to which you achieve the requirements of your position, often by means of specific, realistic, and achievable criteria in relation to standards of agency performance. These organizations evaluate staff on at least an annual basis and often use these evaluations to determine pay raises, promotions, future assignments, or the need for improvement.

Appraisal as Surveillance At times, performance appraisal in large bureaucratic organizations is used more for the purpose of organizational accountability, control, and compliance than to assist social workers in their professional development or improve their work with their clients. Such control can fail to respect a social worker as a competent professional capable of self-direction, and it misuses supervisors as well. Hugh England says that such impersonal formal procedures are “no more than a vehicle for the bureaucratic surveillance of social workers.”⁶⁵ “No one,” asserts Block, “should be able to make a living simply planning, watching, and controlling or evaluating the actions of others.”⁶⁶

Action-Social Performance Appraisal An approach that is more consistent with values of self-determination and respect for the ability of social workers will reverse this type of patriarchal management. Performance appraisal based on action-social principles is aimed at strengthening and empowering social workers. It utilizes and builds the workers assets and

competencies and models social work values of justice, compassion, caring. Instead of measurement serving the interests of control, consistency, and predictability, administrative social workers will “let measurement and control serve core workers,” asserts Peter Block. “For example, measures should come out of conversation with clients, between workers themselves as well as supervisors,”⁶⁷ and be carried out in a “fair and considerate manner on the basis of clearly stated criteria.”⁶⁸

In this way you and your social work team members maintain quality by your commitments to your jobs and to one another. These commitments become mutual agreements, not only between workers but also between workers and supervising social workers. Because contracts are between partners, expectations go both ways, with equal demands between workers and supervising social workers and between supervising social workers and departmental administrators.

The intent is to eliminate coercion as the basis for getting results. According to Block, “performance contracts would not be tied to pay or punishment but to mutual accountability, teamwork, and accomplishing your goals.”⁶⁹ They should be intimately linked to serving the community and your clients, and to increasing your skills and capacities for growth.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

One of the more important activities of administration is collective bargaining. Collective bargaining is the process by which employer and employees arrive at agreements governing compensation and working conditions. NASW’s Code of Ethics asserts that social workers *involved* “in labor/management disputes, job actions, or labor strikes should be guided by the profession’s values, ethical principles, and ethical standards ... carefully examin[ing] relevant issues and their possible impact on clients before deciding on a course of action.”⁷⁰ Three stages in collective bargaining usually occur: election, developing a contract by following principles of good collective bargaining, and administering the contract.

Election

Employees must decide what constitutes the definition or boundaries of their bargaining unit, and the kinds of employees who will join together for collective bargaining purposes. Members of the bargaining unit may

either create their own bargaining organization or select an already existing union outside the agency to represent them in labor relations activities. Existing union organizations may try to win the support of employees by holding an organizing campaign, distributing literature, soliciting membership, and holding discussion meetings. Members of the bargaining unit select a bargaining organization by means of secret ballot, monitored by a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) official.

Developing a Contract

Developing an employer–employee agreement is a process that begins with negotiation. If members cannot reach an agreement by negotiation, they may engage in the progressively more formal steps of mediation, fact-finding, and arbitration.

Negotiation Employer and the employee representatives negotiate issues to reach an agreement. The agreement should be one that both can “live with” in terms of working conditions, salary, benefits, grievance procedures, and other aspects of employment. The most desirable situation is for both administrators and social workers to bargain until they reach a satisfactory agreement using principles of collective bargaining.

Principles of Collective Bargaining To a large extent, building a tradition of harmonious employee relations depends on developing an organizational culture of fair and workable arrangements for resolving disputes. Although negotiation is adversarial at times, it is important for both parties to reach for the source of labor peace, mutual respect between employees and management based on good day-to-day working relationships and concern for the legitimate interests of both sides.

Both parties should agree to and follow the principles of good collective bargaining. To bargain in good faith means that the parties make an earnest effort and act meaningfully to help bring an agreement into being. Both employers and employees should be willing to sit down at reasonable times and exchange non-confidential information, views, and proposals on subjects that are within the scope of bargaining. Authorized spokespersons should represent both sides.

When social workers and administrators cannot reach agreement by bargaining, they should be able to justify their positions with good reasons. The parties must be ready to put their agreement into writing. Most important, they must be willing to keep an open mind, consider compromise solutions to their differences, and make an effort to find a mutually satisfactory basis for agreement.

Mediation If the parties are unable to reach an agreement by themselves, they can ask a neutral third party mediator to conciliate the dispute. A mediator will facilitate the negotiation process but does not have the power to enforce a settlement.

Fact-Finding If the social workers' union and the administrators cannot agree by means of mediation, they may ask the NLRB to conduct a fact-finding process. Fact-finding is a formal proceeding, conducted by a neutral third party individual or a panel who hear the cases presented by each side and make specific recommendations to resolve the dispute.

Arbitration An arbitrator is a neutral third party who goes beyond fact-finding to decide in favor of one side or the other. In binding arbitration, the decision of the arbitrator is final. In last-offer arbitration, the arbitrator must find in favor of one or the other last offers presented by each of the parties. Last-offer arbitration encourages each side to bargain seriously, because an unreasonable offer will result in adoption of the other side's proposal.

Seventeen states provide for arbitration of collective bargaining impasses. Compulsory and binding arbitration, however, is typically opposed by managers, who fear that these mechanisms give power to bind them to costly settlements to a third party who may be unfamiliar with local conditions.

Contract Administration

Contract administration is the heart of labor relations; it involves putting the collective bargaining agreement into practice on a day-to-day basis. No matter how hard a negotiator works to write a clear and understandable agreement, disputes inevitably arise about the true meaning of the written agreement and the intent of the parties when they agreed to particular provisions. These disagreements occur even among

reasonable and well-intentioned people. Disagreements are handled through grievance procedures, a vital part of contract administration.

ADMINISTERING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Every organization is in a continual process of change. One of the more important roles of a social administrator is managing that change. Change can be exhilarating, fun, and exciting. But it can also be frustrating, stressful, and confusing.

The goal of an administrator is to help members experience change that strengthens the organization. If the issues facing the organization are relatively minor, occurring as a part of the everyday activities of the organization, administrators may implement first-order change processes. If issues are large, threatening the survival of the agency, administrators may need to engage in second-order change by means of action-social organization development (ASOD).

First-Order Organizational Change

Administrators often seek "first order change by helping improve the present situation, while keeping the organization's general working framework,"⁷¹ says Pardo del Val and Martínez. First-order changes that an administrator makes are ongoing, incremental, and meant to cope with the routine pressures that come from the organization's environment, unintended consequences of decisions, and most important, the ordinary stresses of organizational life.

Ordinary Stresses of Organizational Life External stresses often affect the members of social organizations, especially smaller agencies that command fewer resources. Negative stress can come from a number of sources. Financial problems that leave the organization with less than optimal resources to accomplish its goals are one of the perennial causes of stress in social agencies. Misunderstanding or unclarity about goals that are either so broad that they cannot be accomplished or so narrow that they create barriers to service often create stress for staff. Erosion of the organization's community base that leaves the organization's original mission in doubt is often a negative stressor.

When negative stress occurs it is important for all those who have a stake in the social organization to be alert to problems and be willing to assist in correcting them. In cases where bureaucracy has already taken its toll, therapeutic measures can be taken to restore people. For example, if employee attitudes have hardened or people have succumbed to impersonality, the judicious use of “T” or encounter groups under competent leadership can help soften feelings, renew enthusiasm, and restore personal relationships.

Where bureaucracy demands more speed, the virtues of slowness and deliberation may be extolled. If communication has been reduced to one-way technical jargon, more personal face-to-face interaction can be encouraged. Where bureaucracy pursues efficiency at the expense of relationships, staff can introduce productivity lags to give people time to breathe and rethink whether they really need to do what they are doing.

Where clients are treated as cases or reduced to objects, they can be honored and seen as partners in the process of social renewal. If paperwork, filling out forms, and keeping records are seen as more important than client services, an examination of the purpose of forms and paperwork can be carried out and a conscious effort made to eliminate them where possible.

How to Create First-Order Change One of the tasks of administrators is to engage staff in an ongoing effort of making incremental corrections in organizational functioning. This effort should be a continual, routine process of collaboration built into the organization’s everyday work activities. The place to start is engaging members in scanning the organization’s internal and external environment, diagnosing organizational problems, pinpointing the source of stress, and developing a mutual problem-solving approach to bring the agency back to strong and effecting functioning.

Cameron and Quinn offer the following hints for making first-order change.

1. Find something easy to change first.
2. Build coalitions of supporters.
3. Set targets for incremental completion.
4. Share information/reduce rumors.
5. Define how results will be measured.
6. Reward desired behaviors.⁷²

Making first order-change should be proactive. Social workers apply their professional skills to their work relationships.

Proactive All social workers must understand that it is not enough to wait until change is moving in a negative direction or for an administrator to observe problems occurring. It is the role and responsibility of every social worker to be proactive in a responsible way. Pierson says, “This is *your* business and that of *your* organization. If not yours, whose? If not now, when?”⁷³

Apply Social Work Skills Social workers are trained to diagnose dysfunction, understand interpersonal relationships, deal with stress, assist with emotional issues, and understand how people interact. All social workers should apply the assessment, active listening, and perception checking communication skills we use in working with others to our own interactions with one another and to the working environment in which our professional practice takes place.

Second-Order Organizational Change

Sometimes an organization experiences difficulties over such a long period of time that it affects not only the morale of staff, but possibly the survival of the agency itself. An administrator may face a need for strategic, transformational, revolutionary or second-order change, in which members work to shift the agency’s essential framework, develop a regenerated culture, and increase the capabilities of the organization.

An administrator might consider engaging in a comprehensive organization development process aimed at improving organizational effectiveness, culture, and the organization’s internal work environment. One way to accomplish second-order change is by means of action-social organization development (ASOD).

What Is Action-Social Organization Development? Organization development is a process by which agencies that are experiencing difficulties are brought into full and effective functioning. Action-social organization development with agencies facing difficult second-order change is “a capacity-building process that involves the active participation of all major constituents in analyzing problems, devising solutions, carrying out and monitoring them.”⁷⁴ says Kenneth Maton. ASOD is value-infused, democratic, and aims at changing the organization’s culture.

Value-Infused ASOD is designed to help members, staff, and clients create organizations that are congruent

with the social work values of respect, self-determination, and authenticity. It is dedicated to developing an organizational culture of genuineness, freedom, and choice. It seeks out opportunities for developing strength and empowerment, growth, autonomy, and self-management.

Action-social organization development places a high priority on creating an organization culture that produces service, cooperation, and openness. It values people's welfare and the development of social opportunities. ASOD overtly rejects the management and control of people. For social agencies that have fallen into the trap of emulating structures of private corporations and their values, ASOD offers an opportunity to realign the organization to become more faithful to foundational values of the social work profession.

Democratic ASOD uses a democratic approach that “is conducive to personal and organizational empowerment.”⁷⁵ “Democratic administration” is one in which organizational members design processes to achieve their goals. Members “control or at least influence implementation of these processes and structures within the confines of internal and external opportunities and constraints,”⁷⁶ says Edward Schwerin.

Improving the Organization's Culture “Bureaucratic and professional cultures are extremely resistant to change,”⁷⁷ says John Pierson. Organizational culture offers the organization “stability, consistency, and meaning,” says Edgar Schein. “The change agent who threatens those three things will surely meet strong resistance.”⁷⁸ As a result, organizational cultural change can be slow and frustrating, but the benefits can include dramatically improved organizational performance. Edward Schwerin urges “reflective practitioners who regard themselves as transformationalists ... to study their own organizations and determine what could be done to make them more empowering organizations.”⁷⁹

How to Carry Out Action-Social Organization Development When you perform ASOD with a social organization that has long standing and deep difficulties, you begin with engagement, develop a contract, renegotiate control and responsibility, and offer an invitation to change. You create a desired future, form improvement teams, and change work practices.

You redesign the organization, offer learning opportunities, and trust the social workers. Keep in mind that you follow the lead of the people you are assisting. You do not rigidly follow a process, but you become familiar enough with the various steps so you can apply them when they are called for.

Engagement Helping people choose autonomy, partnership, and service is difficult. “When core social workers and administrators choose to create their own experiment, it is like walking into an unlit room,” says Peter Block.⁸⁰ For this reason, ASOD often begins as an act of faith in people, in social work values, and it gets built when responsibility and commitment are widely shared. A. J. Schuler says,

Making a change requires a kind of leap of faith: you decide to move in the direction of the unknown on the promise that something will be better for you. But you have no proof. Taking that leap of faith is risky, and people will only take active steps toward the unknown if they genuinely believe—and perhaps more importantly, feel—that the risks of standing still are greater than those of moving forward in a new direction.⁸¹

“Making a change,” therefore, “is all about managing risk. If you are making the case for change, be sure to set out in stark, truthful terms why you believe the risk situation favors change,”⁸² says Peter Block. The ASOD model asserts that “creating our own practice is the basis of ownership and responsibility,”⁸³ and claims that change can start from wherever a person happens to be.

As an action-social organization developer, you present challenges to administrators and to members of the organization as a means of transforming the organization into an authentic means of service and social liberation. When administrators as well as social workers accept this challenge for themselves and their social organizations, they can begin to assist clients to do the same. You must be clear at the outset that the active-social approach will improve organizational functioning, effectiveness, and service in ways that will ensure genuine congruence with social work principles and values.

Develop a Contract Try to determine how ready and able the board, administration, and members of the social agency are in following through on a project of self-determination and mutual responsibility. Your

goal is to help the organization build its community component, which can be used for transformative purposes. You want to help board members, social workers, and clients empower themselves so that they control the organization, rather than being controlled by it.

You invite the entire membership of your social organization to jointly consider your expectations for the project and formalize those expectations in a written contract specifying the timing and nature of their mutual activities. The joint contract includes the difficult issues, such as commitment to improved quality and service, and concludes with the principles for the redesign effort.

Renegotiate Control and Responsibility You renegotiate control and responsibility with core social workers, staff, and administrators. With each group you ask for “exemptions from business as usual to provide space for engaging in change,” says Block.⁸⁴

Core Social Workers. Your discussion with core social workers is about purpose, responsibility, and self-management. You speak to those who are cynical about change, to those who have been victimized by organizational threat systems, and to bystanders.

1. *Purpose and responsibility:* ASOD shifts the emphasis from top-down planning and puts responsibility and choice in the hands of core employees of the organization. They are the ones who do the organization’s work, who experience its failures and dysfunctions. All employees join in designing the kinds of units in which they will function. They exercise more choice and control, and in return they claim ownership and real responsibility for the work process and outcomes. One way to talk to workers and staff about change is through self-management.

2. *Self-management:* Everyone has doubts and fears. Though history may be on the side of the doubtful and their wounds may be real, people can choose to have faith in the face of that experience. You affirm their version of history and support them in their doubts by acknowledging the part of you that agrees with their position. You acknowledge their perceptions of reality, while you affirm your faith and commitment in the face of your own reservations and invite the same choice from others. You replace unobtrusive control, persuasion, or coercion with an invitation to choice and opportunity.

3. *Cynics:* For the cynics you can name other programs that have started and resulted in nothing of

value. But you can also own the risks of the path you are choosing. For example, say to the cynics, “I understand what you say. In some ways, I share the doubts and perhaps bitterness you express. I, however, have decided to have faith that this time we can do something here that will matter, and I hope you will make the same choice and join in this effort.” This may not be persuasive and may not change a cynic’s position, but it neutralizes the power he or she has over the organization. While cynics have a right to their stance, they do not have a right to hold others back.

4. *Victims and bystanders:* For the victims, you acknowledge their feelings of helplessness and their wish that people in power will not disappoint them. You have the same desire and the same doubt. For bystanders, support their desire for more data, more proof that this story has been written elsewhere and will have a happy ending. You, too, may have searched for reassurance and wanted more, but you continue in spite of the unknown.

What is critical in this whole process is that people make choices in spite of the doubts they have. ASOD asks: What will it take for me to claim my own freedom and create an organization of my own choosing? What is it that I uniquely have to offer and what do I wish to leave behind here? When will I finally choose adventure and accept the fact that there is no safe path? When will I decide that my underlying security comes from counting on my own actions or from some higher power rather than from the decisions of others or the supererogatory power of an organizational tool?⁸⁵

When you pose these challenges to core workers, you are asking them to say yes to questions of freedom, service, and adventure, and for them to open up the possibility of beginning their own experiment in partnership and service. It only takes one instant to decide for freedom and autonomy, one moment of decision to affirm one’s life and move in another direction. Social workers only have to choose it and have the courage to live with the consequences. Along with challenging others, you affirm the choice that you have made.

Staff. Staff members hold specialized positions in management functions. Their jobs were created to ensure consistency and control in personnel administration, financial operations, and information systems technology.

Discuss with agency staff the need for an exception. In return you agree to give them what they

require in terms of accountability, paperwork, time limits, and formal processes so that their work is not hampered. But explain that core social workers and their work units will operate internally in ways of their own choosing. Let staff know that you understand the risks of deviating from the standard ways of operating. The CEO may be willing mediate or advocate for you in getting this exception, says Block.⁸⁶

Administrators. ASOD presents a challenge to CEOs who genuinely value service, individual dignity, personal self-determination, and freedom of choice. Action-social organization development is for social workers and administrators who have a vision of transforming organizations into authentic tools of social service, not control; social change, not conformity; and making them congruent with the principles of social work.

The stakes are high, however, when people in key administrative positions are skeptical about what you want to do. They often want to maintain tight control and consistency even after your best arguments have been made. Despite the risk, you approach these people in generally the same way as you do core social workers and staff. You make the case for reform, ask to be treated as a pilot project, ask for an exemption, and promise to deliver better outcomes.

1. *Make the case for reform:* State the results you are seeking and the harsh realities you may face. Be clear about the principles toward which you want to reach and the constraints you have established. Affirm the choice you have made for responsibility, service, quality, and empowerment, and ask social work administrators to support what you are trying to do.

2. *Ask to be treated as a pilot project:* When administrators lack faith or commitment, don't argue or negotiate. All you can do is communicate understanding to them. In a sense, take their side, acknowledge the risks, and ask to be treated as an exception, a human pilot project. You have to be willing to absorb all the risk. You will deliver results to administration, and if you do not, you expect to pay a price. All you want from those in charge is tolerance or indifference. You do not require sponsorship, commitment, or even deep interest. If you get enthusiasm, take it, but don't set it up as a requirement.

3. *Ask for an exemption:* Acknowledge that you want an exemption from normal requirements for control and consistency. Let administration know that you understand the problem your request creates for them.

The discussion with administrators is about their giving up control in exchange for a promise. You ask them to yield on their wish for consistency and let you and the core workers mutually work for improvement and effectiveness.

4. *Promise better outcomes:* In return for the exemption, you are committing to delivering specific results. Along with core workers, you are promising that clients will be better served and that the organization will function better in return for the freedom to pursue a different path. You promise that core workers will honor the requirements of the organization, that you will keep the administrators fully informed, and that you will live with the consequences.

Offer an Invitation to Change Invite all members to make a choice. There is no promise in this invitation, nor is there an immediate demand for acceptance. You only ask to keep doubts and excuses in the background where they belong. Workers have a right to say no to your invitation. They may want a boss who will take care of them in return for hard work and loyalty. Their choice needs to be acknowledged, but it also has consequences. In the longer run, they will have a hard time getting what they want from the organization, and the organization may not have a place where their skills can make a contribution.

Despite this, you do not need to force the issue at this moment. People need to be given time and support to make fundamental choices about faith and responsibility. Peter Block asserts that "we do not need everyone to choose partnership and service. All you need is about 25% to commit and the way the organization operates will start to shift. Over time this 25% will pull the others along and another 20% will usually move on out of their own discomfort."⁸⁷

Create a Desired Future Focus on the future that members want to create for the organization. Partnership is created as each board member, core social worker, staff member, and administrator defines a vision for the area of his or her responsibility. Ask all members to participate in expressing a joint vision of the organization, its purpose, governance, and structure for the future.

What is the best way of including the organization as part of the community? How do you create partnership? How does the organization engage in mutual

empowerment of members and clients? How is accountability to be provided? How can clients be part of the organization and community building?

ASOD offers this affirmation: “I discover my freedom through the belief that my security lies within and is assured by acts of congruence and integrity. I can be of real service only when I take responsibility for all my actions, and when the choices I make are mine which is the only safety I have. Service out of obligation is co-dependency and a disguised form of control. Service that fully satisfies is done with no expectation of return, and is freely chosen.”⁸⁸

Form Improvement Teams Encourage each unit to begin a dialogue about what values are important to each person at this stage of life and how these can be lived out more deeply in this workplace. Dialogue using social thinking is key. “The hallmark of partnership in action,” says Block, “is to ask people to talk about what matters to them, not ask people to support what matters to you or those in authority.”⁸⁹

Have groups meet regularly to discuss improvement ideas. Several organizations have engaged core workers in developing self-determination in this way. General Electric, for example, has a process called a workout, in which departments meet to discuss and decide on how to streamline the business. It is their vehicle for creating a more entrepreneurial mindset. Quality circles were an early version of improvement teams. Many improvement teams cross functions and levels. Their focus is usually on cost cutting, quality enhancement, reducing cycle time, and satisfying customers.

Change Work Practices Teams of core social workers, board members, clerical workers, and custodial and other staff meet together to rethink questions of service provision, meeting client expectations and needs, and ways of approaching common organizational issues. They grapple with delivering services or new ways of making social change. Procedures in budgeting, funding, structuring the work, hiring, and evaluation all come under the umbrella of changing management and work practices.

You may set up steering committees and task forces that include clients, community members, and board members along with agency employees to shape this activity. Steering committees guide the whole effort, setting priorities, establishing study

groups, making final decisions on changes, and monitoring the effort. Task forces are set up to address specific changes and make recommendations.

You can share your experiences about how to implement particular improvements with which you may be familiar, such as techniques of work redesign, ecology of work, implementing high-performance work teams, total quality management (TQM), reinventing the workplace, and others. This step is where the idea of service and partnership begins to get institutionalized.

Redesign the Organization You help social work administrators and members redesign the structure or architecture of the organization. Action-social learning acknowledges that we social workers are capable of defining for ourselves the rules and yardsticks by which we live and work. If you want the middle and core social workers to treat the organization as their own, they have to steer the reform efforts with their own hands. Help people at the bottom gain more control over how the change happens. The substantive work of redesign has to be done by self-managing teams of social work and staff groups.⁹⁰

Each team of core social workers designs what is right for its own unit. Members must struggle with how much of the traditional supervising social worker’s tasks to take on themselves. How does the team reassign roles, administer discipline, schedule work, hire and train new members, monitor outcomes, and relate to other units and to the top administrative team? There is no one answer.

Offer Learning Opportunities If you want social workers in each unit to design their own experiments, they also should define their learning requirements congruent with action-social learning and thinking. ASOD puts choice in the hands of the learner. If training is needed, those who require it define it, choose it, and manage it. Let different units choose their own ways and arenas for learning.

Let the agenda and environment for learning emerge rather than be a cornerstone of the change strategy. For example, offer management training to core workers in team skills, conflict management, communication skills, quality tools, and work process improvement. Social organizations may create a menu from which teams can choose. Each team chooses its own agenda, and team members attend sessions together.

Trust the Social Workers With your assistance, core social workers, office workers, and other staff implement the plans they have devised. If you want social work staff to take ownership and responsibility, they will have to define and create the means for successfully living out those responsibilities on their own. You, the social work administrators, and the board of directors must trust that mature social workers have the skills, training, and capabilities to take control of their work, their workplaces, and their futures.

HOW TO ADMINISTER SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

The theory and practice of social enterprise administration is still in its infancy. As a result, “the values of social enterprises, their operating size, relationships with communities, customers and employees, and history all impose limits on the extent to which they can imitate traditional non-profit, for-profit and public-sector organizations leadership and management styles,”⁹¹ say Borzaga and Solari.

Social enterprise administration, therefore, tends to be limited to rules of thumb rather than time-tested or firm principles. These rules of thumb, however, are based on social work values of self-determination, justice, and empowerment. The action-social model honors using the social enterprise for personal development and growth rather than mind-numbing conformity. It emphasizes community service rather than self-service and concern for the interest of others rather than self-interest. The action-social model affirms engagement in social welfare rather than exclusive immersion in one’s own welfare, and using surplus income to achieve social ends rather than for personal profit.

When you administer social enterprises you find an appropriate organizational structure and aim at foundational principles. You adopt an appropriate leadership style, invest in quality, nurture autonomy, hold to your mission, and seek leadership from the board.

Find an Appropriate Organizational Structure

According to Borzaga and Solari, administrators need to recognize that social enterprises are different from traditional service agencies.⁹² Most social enterprise organizations are charting completely new territory. Rather than fit social enterprise organizations into the

mold of existing 501(c) structures, innovative organizational forms are needed, ones that are congruent with their unique mission and purpose.

This means that social enterprise administrators must continually test their structures and processes against standards of what works best, is most effective, and is true to the purpose for which the enterprise was founded. There is no one best way and no right or wrong answers to questions of organizational structure.

Aim at Foundational Principles

You honor your values, cultivate multiple stakeholders, embed the enterprise in the social commons, establish a volunteer base, and adopt an effective leadership style.

Honor Your Values A feature common to all social enterprises is the necessity to maintain a close relationship with the organization’s values and mission. Many times a “value-driven employee of a social enterprise wants it to manifest a consistent set of norms and organizational practices,”⁹³ assert Borzaga and Solari. Among these values are integrity, honesty, and trust. Compassion combined with the independence of income-generating service creates pride, dignity, and resourcefulness. These values and the social goods that spring from them are not only the basis of the organization’s mission but the foundation of its culture and identity, the glue that holds the enterprise together.

Cultivate Multiple Stakeholders Social enterprises are by their nature multi-stakeholder. If only one stakeholder predominates, the differences between social enterprises and for-profit organizations may tend to fade, and the function of social enterprises becomes blurred. The more stakeholders a social enterprise has within a community, the stronger its base, the more support it develops, and the more interdependence the enterprise creates. Their expectations with respect to the social enterprise should be incorporated into its goals and balanced with core social work values.

Stakeholder interdependencies provide the advantage of generating social networks that suffuse the role and presence of the enterprise throughout the community as a whole and make its presence felt. Gradually the enterprise becomes so integrated into the community that it becomes coincident with the community, and ultimately an institution with which the community identifies. The values, strengths, and identity of the

community become centered around the enterprise as a representative and bearer of its culture.

Embeddedness in the Social Commons Social enterprise organizations must see themselves as members of a community in which they are embedded, the social commons of which they are an integral part. It is from the community that social enterprises receive their sustenance and support. Likewise, it is back to the community that they must see themselves offering service.

Establish a Volunteer Base As an administrator of a social enterprise organization, you should encourage the role of unpaid staff (volunteers) and/or representatives of local communities in your operation. “A healthy incorporation of volunteer service provides the impetus towards preservation of a social role for social enterprises,”⁹⁴ say Borzaga and Solari. The social infrastructure of the community becomes automatically blended into the enterprise. The more volunteers a social enterprise can accommodate, the more firmly the social enterprise becomes a fixture in the community and the community a fixture in the enterprise.

Adopt an Effective Leadership Style The ideal social enterprise administrator has a positive attitude toward people, encourages participation and learning, is open to suggestions and criticism, and allows experimentation by his/her employees. At the same time, it is important that the leader be able to shift his or her style depending on the situation, as Hershey and Blanchard recommend.

At the beginning of the organization, when staff are generally new, learning their roles, and adjusting to one another, you give clear directions, offer firm advice, and provide support. As both employees and the organization mature and become more self-directing, back away from being directive, allowing for more leeway on the part of both paid and unpaid staff. Your goal is for staff to become an independently functioning unit, carrying out their tasks smoothly and without conflict, adjusting to differing situations with minimal intervention.

Invest in Quality

A high level of quality is a crucial requirement for social enterprises if they are to compete effectively with

public-sector, for-profit, and traditional nonprofit organizations. Investment is not limited to financial capital; most important is investment in staff and in clients. “One of the major areas of investment to ensure quality is skills and human resources,”⁹⁵ say Borzaga and Solari. Investing in quality means attending to hiring and recruitment, nurturing employee well-being. It includes compensation, intrinsic rewards, and using the giving and receiving continuum.

Compensation Although pay is often not a predominant motive for employees to want to join a social enterprise, it obviously plays an important role. Social enterprises must avoid the trap of offering relatively poor salaries and benefit packages, limited training resources, and few opportunities for professional development.⁹⁶ If tightfistedness becomes a norm, the enterprise is surely on a downward spiral, pursuing poor quality, inadequate resources, shoddy production, and a culture of inadequacy.

A strong pay scale demonstrates superiority in the capacity of the social enterprise to reward the good efforts of staff and to supply them with the necessities that can improve their lives and the resources to build their own families. In addition, a generous benefits package including vacation, sick leave, health benefits, maternity or paternity leave, and child care assistance for working parents will provide an internal sense of well-being for employees. Each of these benefits strengthens and adds to the recognition that the enterprise is not stingy about maintaining employees with support systems that add to personal life enhancement.

Intrinsic Rewards The nature of the exchange between employees and organizations in social enterprises is enriched by the intrinsic value of socially oriented work. These intrinsic rewards often play a major motivating role for employees, while extrinsic rewards such as pay, though necessary, often become less important. Several empirical studies report that social enterprise workers appear to be more satisfied with their work than public-sector and for-profit workers, even when they earn less on average,⁹⁷ report Borzaga and Solari.

Most employees prefer a mix that balances extrinsic incentives, such as flexibility in work hours or pay, with intrinsic incentives, such as autonomy, higher degree of participation, attainment of moral goals,

and “carefully designed training programs which may become part of the reward mix,”⁹⁸ say Zdenek and Steinbach.

Use the Giving and Receiving Help Continuum

The idea that everyone needs support and that no one goes it alone is key to social enterprise success and is a major difference from the getting and getting all the more individualist mentality of free enterprise business. A wise social enterprise administrator will incorporate everyone at some level of care and involvement in giving and receiving. There is strength in receiving as well as in giving. Everyone needs to be both a helper and helped, a giver and a receiver. Such cultures break down the barriers between haves and have-nots, management and line worker, paid and unpaid staff, server and served, customer and employee.

Nurture Autonomy

Among the foundational characteristics that enterprise organizations share with other social organizations is their choice to follow their own path in meeting people’s needs. Autonomy and an ability to devise new markets and new strategies are crucial for the legitimization of social enterprises.⁹⁹

Autonomy is a goal, not only for the enterprise, but for employees as well. Self-reliance builds empowerment and inner strength, a feeling of well-being and self-sufficiency. It engenders a spirit of creativity and a thrust toward achievement. Independence requires a faith that growth will multiply where a healthy spirit of trust, goodwill, and hard work is the foundation of a job well done. Autonomy is to be prized, respected, and nurtured.

Hold to Your Mission

The product of the social enterprise is not only material goods and services but the people it grows, the social goods it develops, and the extension of the social commons it celebrates. Often, however, the very idea of using business as a way to achieve social goals is considered heresy to many nonprofit and profit-making organizations alike. Nonetheless, say Borzaga and Solari, “social enterprise managers need to keep social forces and movements within their scope and reinforce their social mission.”¹⁰⁰ Administrators must constantly communicate their long-term vision as well as the

shorter-term mission of their social enterprises. You stick to your knitting and build on your strengths.

Stick to Your Knitting As a leader of a social enterprise, make sure you provide the highest level of quality products or services that you are able to offer. Your product or service is the foundation of your enterprise, on which your reputation is established. Once you establish this reputation, it becomes the source of your livelihood. Stick to your knitting. When all else fails, your one main product or service will carry you through.

Build on Your Strengths Strengths of social enterprises include innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity. They seek new niches, develop social purpose, and establish new solutions to problems. Building on strengths often means seeing things in new ways. Sometimes it means taking risks and accepting challenges. Social enterprise administrators highlight customer and social service, maintaining idealism and blending social benefit with an entrepreneurial spirit.

Leadership from the Board

While most board members provide valuable service, “the Achilles heel of many social enterprises is their boards of directors,”¹⁰¹ say Zdenek and Steinbach. Most successful social enterprises spend a great deal of time figuring out how to identify and solicit potential board members whose service could help the organization. Social enterprise boards should typically be composed of community residents, business and civic leaders, and outside professionals. “Our board members are carefully selected for their willingness to work,” says Jim Dickerson, founder of Manna, Inc. in Washington, D.C. “If a board member misses two meetings, he or she is subject to being replaced.”¹⁰²

Boards should do the strategic planning with staff input. “Lots of organizations die from making poor strategic decisions,” says George Knight, former executive director of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. “Private companies fail from taking the wrong strategic path, too. Maybe even nations. That’s why strategic decisions should be the top concern of a [social enterprise] board.”¹⁰³

“As the enterprise grows, the board needs to have the know-how to assist the executive director and bring sophistication to the policy decisions and monitoring the corporation,” says Anita Miller, former director of

the Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program in the South Bronx. “The key is to keep adjusting.”¹⁰⁴

Develop Board Member Skills Social enterprises such as CDCs use a variety of strategies to ensure a good mix of skills, tenure, and personalities on their boards. “We use a skills grid to decide who to put on our board,” says Dee Walsh of REACH in Portland, Oregon. And like many successful social enterprises, REACH makes board training a high priority. “Board members have mentors and can take training courses each quarter in financial management, development and other community development and organizational essentials,” Walsh says.¹⁰⁵

EVALUATING THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION/ENTERPRISE

According to Arnold Gurin, program evaluation “has become ubiquitous in the planning and administration of social welfare policies and programs.”¹⁰⁶ Rubin and Babbie assert that “politicians demand that programs demonstrate their cost effectiveness and be accountable to the public.”¹⁰⁷ Government agencies and foundations want to know how much impact your program has had on the problems it was established to remediate. Moreover, your clients want to be assured that they are receiving the best services that can be provided.¹⁰⁸

If you can show that your organization did what you intended, you may be able to make a case for continuing or even expanding it. If the program is successful, others may want to know about and replicate it elsewhere. Program evaluation is automatically built into the process of obtaining funding from either government or private foundations.

What Is Program Evaluation?

Carol Weiss says that “program evaluation measures the effects of a program against its goals to help make decisions about your organization’s future direction.”¹⁰⁹ According to Rossi and Freeman, the purpose of program evaluation is to assess and improve the “conceptualization, design, and planning of social organizations. It strengthens planning, administration, and implementation. And, it supports effectiveness, efficiency, and utility of social interventions, and human service programs.”¹¹⁰

Working with Program Logic Models

In government or nonprofit organizations where a program’s mission is not aimed at achieving a financial benefit, it may be difficult to monitor progress toward outcomes. A program logic model helps provide such indicators in terms of output and outcome measures of performance.

What Is a Logic Model? Logic models specify relationships among program, inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Logic models are often developed using graphics or schematics that allow the administrator or evaluator to clearly indicate the connections among program components. For example, logic models can show how program activities will lead to the accomplishment of objectives, and how accomplishing objectives will lead to the fulfillment of goals. In addition, logic models include output measures that can be used to determine if activities were carried out as planned and outcome measures that show if the program’s objectives have been met.

Logic models clarify what the program hopes to achieve and help monitor program activities. They assist programs to stay on track, plan for the future, document what a program intends to do, and what it is actually doing. One of the best-known logic models is United Way’s Program Outcome Logic Model.¹¹¹

How to Develop a Logic Model Developing a logic model requires program administrators to think systematically about what they want their program to accomplish and how it will be done. In its simplest form, program logic models are built on a continuum of inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. These represent the logical flow from:

1. inputs (resources such as money, employees, and equipment) to
2. work activities, programs, or processes to
3. immediate outputs of the work that are delivered to customers to
4. outcomes or results, the long-term consequences of delivering outputs.¹¹²

Inputs Inputs are materials and resources that the program uses in its activities or processes to serve clients, equipment, staff, volunteers, facilities, money, and so on. These are often easy to identify. Many of the inputs seem common to many organizations and programs.

Activities Activities are processes that the program undertakes to meet the clients’ needs. Activities include teaching, counseling, sheltering, feeding, and clothing, among others.

Outputs Outputs are the units of service your program uses to measure its activities. For example, programs account for their activities by adding up the number of people served, taught, counseled, sheltered, fed, clothed, and so on. An output for a smoking program, for example, would be the number of people who successfully completed the program. Outputs, however, often indicate little about the actual impacts, benefits, or changes clients experienced.

Outcomes Outcomes are the actual impacts, benefits, and changes participants experienced during or after your program. These are usually expressed in terms of knowledge learned, skills obtained, behaviors developed, values acquired, or conditions and status gained. For example, outcomes of a program to end smoking would be the extent to which your clients stopped smoking over a period of time as a result of your program. Often these outcomes are calculated as targets and indicators.

Outcome Targets. Outcome targets are the number and percentage of participants that you want to achieve the outcome. For example, your program may decide to target 5,000 teens (5% of teens in Spokane) to quit will smoking over the next year.

Outcome Indicators. Outcome indicators are specific, time limited, observable, and measurable “milestones” toward your outcome target. Indicators, for example, measure the number and percent of teen participants who quit smoking immediately after the program and at three-month intervals over a year. These indicators give you evidence about the extent to which you have met your goal. For example, knowing how many teens were able to remain free of smoking a year after completing your program will tell you how successfully your program accomplished its purpose.

The United Way Program Outcome Logic Model typically is displayed in a diagram such as this:¹¹³

Plotting this model can be very useful to organize planning and analysis when designing the organization and its programs or when designing outcomes-based evaluations of programs and for grant proposals.

CHALLENGES TO SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

While social administration is gradually expanding, it tends to be enmeshed in business management theory and research that has dominated the field for over 100 years. Business management, by and large, bases its practice on hierarchical, value-neutral systems models aimed at making profit. Social organizations, in contrast, are an outgrowth of the communities and associations which create them. Social administration is based on social work values of compassion, altruism, service, and justice.

It is imperative that new models of social administration be developed that rely on social commons, goods, and values rather than mechanistic management systems concepts. One of the great challenges for social work is to base administrative practice on a clear understanding of the unique nature of non-profit social organizations and social enterprises rather than business corporations or government bureaucracies.

Social work is in a good position to assist in this process. Schools of social work ought to invest in research and education in the burgeoning field of social administration. Schools of social work may offer a major or even a masters degree in social administration equivalent to MBA degrees offered by schools of business, and invest in research to strengthen social administration theory and practice.

This endeavor should be matched by “policies from universities and research centers aimed at developing a full body of theoretical and practical knowledge in social enterprises and social enterprise administration,”¹¹⁴ including advocating for and establishing social enterprises as a legitimate organizational

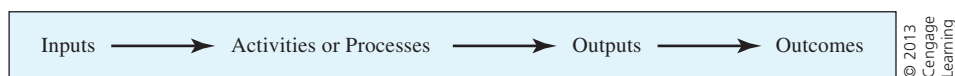


FIGURE 12.1 Program Outcome Logic Model

form.¹¹⁵ A model to follow is that of Great Britain and other nations in Europe's social economy sector that have developed unique legal structures specific to social enterprises. These legal forms recognize, support, and enhance the highly specific nature of social enterprises avoiding reliance on commercial corporate design and behavior.

These are exciting times for social administration. It is a field of macro social work practice that is at the beginning of its development and is ripe for serious investigative study and practical application.

CONCLUSION

Social work organizations are rich in resources for providing assistance and for empowering clients. Social work administration utilizes this human capacity by the operation of social organizations that are models of leadership, innovation, and compassion.

In this chapter, you learned principles of administration modeled after an action-social orientation. You explored the difference between social leadership and operations management functions of the executive, and three ways that those roles are employed in social organizations. You explored how administration can ensure compliance with the law and how to engage in both individual and group decision making. You discovered how to develop programs and engage in fundraising. You learned about employee development and supervision. You explored collective bargaining. You learned about managing organizational change and how to conduct action-social organization development.

You also learned that the emergence of a new kind of administration is paramount to the success of social enterprises and that the role of social enterprise administrators is different from that of their counterparts in traditional nonprofit, public, and for-profit organizations. You explored a number of rules of thumb that social enterprise administrators use in their enterprises. You explored the program logic model of evaluation.

You learned that social work administration is one of the most important arenas of macro social work practice. As a social work administrator, you can assist in reducing dependency on management practices and instead find ways to implement

authentic social administrative leadership in social work organizations.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Charles A. Rapp and John Poertner, in their book *Social Administration: A Client-Centered Approach*, assert that clients are “resources to be acquired” but that administrators are to “promote the idea that clients are heroes.” In what sense can clients be considered “resources”? In what sense can they be considered “heroes”? Is there an inherent contradiction in these terms, or can clients be considered both resources and heroes?
2. Recall that affirmative action is voluntary, allows for increased value for those with protected characteristics, and gives preference to members of protected groups in hiring and promotion. Equal employment opportunity, on the other hand, is a legal obligation, neutral with respect to protected characteristics, and prohibits discrimination in promotions and hiring. What are the strengths of affirmative action? What are its limitations? What are the strengths of equal employment opportunity? What are its limitations?
3. Affirmative action assumes that there are times when discrimination in employment is warranted. Equal employment opportunity assumes that discrimination in employment is rarely warranted. Which is correct? Can both be correct? Which is congruent with social work values and principles?
4. Since 1883, the U.S. Civil Service Commission has required that all nonpolitical personnel decisions be made strictly on the basis of “job relatedness,” preventing public officials from giving preferential treatment to friends or relatives. This is called the “merit principle.” Aside from ethnicity, should government ever abrogate the merit principle and offer preferential treatment to certain groups of people over others in public employment? If not, why not? If so, why and under what circumstances? Has government ever done so?
5. Social enterprises and social entrepreneurship are on the cutting edge of social administration.

What role should social workers in general and macro social workers in particular play in social entrepreneurship and/or administering social enterprises?

6. Due to its growing diversity, complexity, and numerical expansion over the past decade, should the field of macro social work concentrate more heavily on developing administrative practice as a unique subspecialty in macro social work? What do you see as the wave of the future of macro social work administrative practice?
7. Can and should social work develop a “master of social administration” degree that helps macro social workers prepare for careers in social administration in the same manner business schools offer a master of business administration program? Why or why not?

EXERCISE 12.2

Critiquing Principles of Action-Social Administration

The following principles on which action-social administration might be based are offered for your analysis. What do you think of these principles? Are any of them ones you would not choose? Are any principles left out? How would you prioritize these principles?

1. Shared leadership—everyone participates to the extent they are able and interested. Followership is as important as leadership.
2. Shared information—no secrets here.
3. Shared power—no one lords it over others. Those who have positions of power are seen as servants of others, not their masters.
4. Shared learning and growth—if members “miss” the mark, make a “mis-take,” take a “mis-step,” or become “mis-placed,” the “misses” are acknowledged, owned, and the group goes on from there.
5. Shared experiences and shared joys, shared sorrows and shared memories—everyone is on the road together. Everyone becomes a hero, and each person’s journey is a heroic one.

6. Shared meanings. Everyone celebrates and participates in the shared rewards.

EXERCISE 12.3

Leaders or Managers

Corporate managers sometimes try to appear as if they are social leaders. The conflation of business management and leadership causes confusion.

Stephen Robbins, for example, asserts that managers are charged with achieving organizational goals, and power is a means for facilitating that achievement. Managerial power “focuses on tactics for gaining compliance.”¹¹⁶ Exerting power in organizations “does not require goal compatibility, merely dependence.”¹¹⁷ In contrast, leadership, says Robbins, “requires some congruence between the goals of the leader and the led.”¹¹⁸

Warren Bennis describes the difference between leadership and management this way: “Leaders are people who do the right thing; managers are people who do things right. Both roles are crucial, but they differ profoundly.”¹¹⁹ According to Bennis, American organizations are “under led and over managed. They do not pay enough attention to doing the right thing, while they pay too much attention to doing things right.”¹²⁰

Bennis argues further that one antidote for the managerial dilemma is to train individuals to “lead,” which means doing the morally right thing, rather than training them to be managers who apply administrative power to exact people’s compliance to achieve organizational goals.¹²¹

Break into small groups and discuss the following questions. After you have come to a conclusion, return to the class as a whole and share with the others.

1. Bennis says, “Leaders are people who do the right thing; managers are people who do things right.” What does this statement mean? Do you agree with it or disagree? Can you think of leaders who have done the wrong thing? Can you think of managers who have done the right thing?
2. Are leaders and managers both crucial to the operation of society? Is it necessary for people to be led by others? Why is it important that

some people be managed? What would happen if people took responsibility for their own leadership and for their own self-management?

3. Do you agree with Bennis's distinction that the roles of a business leader and manager differ profoundly? For example, Bennis asserts that they are qualitatively different. Peter Block asserts, on the other hand, that they are only different in the extent to which they are paternalistic. Leadership, Block says, is a "soft" form of making decisions for others. Management tends to be autocratic. Who is right, and why?
4. Should social work train selected people to be leaders, or should social work assist as many people as possible to exercise leadership? Why?
5. What is the difference between what Robbins and Bennis mean by being a leader and what is described in this chapter as action-social leadership?

EXERCISE 12.4

The Ideal Administrator

Think of the various paid or unpaid jobs that you have had or organizations such as a social agency, school, church, or business with which you have been involved. Think of the very best administrator that you knew. What qualities elicited your admiration and respect? Individually make a list of the qualities you admire about that administrator. Now think of an administrator that was the worst one that you have encountered. What kinds of qualities did that person exemplify? Make a list of these qualities.

Compare the two lists. Are there commonalities? Are there differences? What does this comparison say about the kinds of qualities that you think would make an ideal administrator?

Break into threes. Each person spends a few minutes sharing qualities that he or she admires in administrators. Share stories you remember that illustrate those qualities and come to some conclusions about what makes for a good administrator.

Review lists of those qualities that you saw as negative ones. Share stories that illustrate those

qualities and come to a conclusion about them. Make up a composite listing.

Return to the class as a whole. Each group writes positive and negative qualities on the blackboard or newsprint. As you discuss your various perceptions and experiences, try to come to some consensus about what makes an ideal administrator. What have you learned about qualities that are positive in an administrator and those that are negative?

Compare your class list with the model of social work administration presented in this chapter. Have you listed qualities that are similar to those described in this chapter? Have you discovered others that are not listed? As a class, draw conclusions about what makes for a good social administrator.

EXERCISE 12.5

Deciding on a Human Resources Model

Imagine yourself in the role of a newly hired human resources manager of a large social agency. Human resources management is responsible for personnel selection, training, evaluation, and termination of employees. The CEO has told you that one of the first things you need to do is establish a perspective on hiring personnel that will become the model reflected throughout the department and the agency as a whole. Your CEO has made things easy for you by having her assistant research three current personnel models in management literature. While she has not herself reviewed these models, she has told you to select the one that will assist the organization to efficiently and effectively meet the organization's personnel needs according to the NASW Code of Ethics—"The social worker should work to improve the employing agency's policies and procedures and the efficiency and effectiveness of its services."¹²² You are to report back to her with your recommendation. She has defined the criteria as follows:

1. *Effective*: Will using this model accomplish the agency's goals?

2. *Efficient*: To what extent does the model take costs into consideration?

Because the CEO believes that the expert advice of personnel theorists should be followed as well as the principles of the NASW Code of Ethics, she asserts that you are to be *completely and strictly objective* and not insert your own opinion or personal values into this assessment.

In order to be objective, you decide to weight the models according to a scale of

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5 = very effective | 5 = very efficient |
| 4 = moderately effective | 4 = moderately efficient |
| 3 = adequately effective | 3 = adequately efficient |
| 2 = somewhat effective | 2 = somewhat efficient |
| 1 = little effective | 1 = little efficient |
| 0 = not effective | 0 = not efficient |

Model 1

People are functionaries—individuals who do what they are supposed to do in pursuit of the organization’s goal. The human version of the cog is the *functionary*—a person who performs his function effectively regardless of its purposes. The functionary does his duty, applies his skills, and performs his routines regardless of what goal or whose goal is involved. A screwdriver does not choose among goals or owners. It does what it is told.¹²³

Score:
Effective
Efficient
Total

Model 2

Human resources are equivalent to financial, material, or other resources, all of which contribute to the production of goods and services in an organization.¹²⁴ An effective organization exploits its environment to acquire scarce and valued resources. The function of the personnel department is to acquire human resources for the organization, much as a grocery store stocks goods for consumers.¹²⁵

While organizations extract resources externally from their environment and maintain stocks of human material, they also utilize an internal extraction process. Personnel administrators create conditions within the organization to maximize the extraction of resources from the staff.¹²⁶

Score:
Effective
Efficient
Total

Model 3

Accounting for human resources investment costs will make it possible to put rationality into the process of managing internal manpower movement (i.e., position turnover). Fully depreciated human resources can be given priority consideration for redevelopment investment.

The moral choice between buying new (and usually young) talent and overhauling old (long service) people can be made explicit so that it can be regulated.

Where employees with low development and acquisition account balances have valuable skills which are not being used in their present jobs, reassignment becomes “profitable.” The costs of developing and redeveloping human resources would become an explicit, rational process constrained principally by economic considerations. Depreciating human resources makes human resources accounting a meaningful and practical activity.¹²⁷

Score:
Effective
Efficient
Total

Deciding on a Model

Individually calculate scores for each model. The model with the highest total becomes your individual recommendation.

After you have computed individual scores, arrange yourselves in groups of five. Do not change your individual scoring or engage in discussion. Based only on the results of your individual scores, determine which model your group calculates as most effective and efficient by assigning a 3 to your first choice, a 2 to your second choice, and a 1 to your last choice. Add up the scores each model receives from group members. The model with the highest score becomes your group recommendation. Keep your individual and group scores. Engage in group discussion for five minutes to decide if you or your group wants to change the recommendation to the CEO.

Your instructor will give you a questionnaire with discussion questions. After you have engaged in discussion for five minutes, fill out the questionnaire. Then return to the class as a whole and reflect on the class discussion questions.

EXERCISE 12.6

Creating a Shared Vision

Read the following excerpt from Peter Block. Then read the excerpt from Burt Nanus. Compare the two versions and answer the questions that follow.

Peter Block

There is something deep in each of us that wants a common vision articulated by those in power. To suggest otherwise is almost heresy. This longing for a common vision is the wish for someone else to create the unity we seek, someone above to create community, rallying cries, and common purpose.

We have bought the notion that vision must come from the top.... Ownership of the vision resides with those who craft a vision and with them alone. A statement created for a team to endorse is not owned by the team. Even more problematical is that, in most cases, the vision is created for the rest of the organization to live out. An appropriate task for management is to define business mission and set business goals, but a vision created for others is patriarchy in action.

Top management surely needs a vision statement, but for themselves alone to live out and be accountable for. As soon as top management creates a vision statement for the rest of the organization to embrace, the parenting relationship has begun cloaked in the robe of partnership.¹²⁸

Burt Nanus

You [the manager] must be able to relate skillfully to workers inside your organization who look to you for guidance, encouragement and motivation.... The manager must be able to shape and influence all aspects of your organization. You must be able to set a course toward a destination that others will recognize as representing real progress ... a vision so compelling that everyone in the organization will want to make it happen.

The leader is responsible for catalyzing changes in the internal environment.... [Leaders] make the vision achievable in the future. They adopt challenging new visions of what is both possible and desirable, communicate their vision, and persuade others to become so committed to these new directions that they are eager to lend their resources and energies to make them happen.

These forces unleashed by the right vision can be summarized in one word that has become the theme for leadership in the 1990s: empowerment. Once people buy into the vision ... they are empowered to take actions that advance the vision.¹²⁹

1. What values are implicit in Block's view of vision? In Nanus's view of vision?
2. Which version do you think is more effective?
3. Which version do you think is the right one? Are there circumstances in which both can be right?
4. Which version do you intuitively feel most akin to? What values are implicit in your choice?
5. Nanus asserts that once people buy into the vision, they are empowered to take action to advance the vision. How do you assess Nanus's definition of empowerment? Are you empowered when you advance another person's vision? Why or why not? If not, under what circumstances do you become empowered?

EXERCISE 12.7

Equal Treatment Dilemma

Review the following excerpt from Victor A. Thompson. Think about how this statement relates to the provision of social welfare services, and answer the questions that follow. In class, discuss your opinion with your classmates and come to some conclusion.

The modern administrative norm, which made efficient administration possible, was the rule that everyone in the same problem category should be treated equally. The result of the norm was to strip away the uniqueness of individuals and to turn administration into an efficient mass processing of cases.... This resulted in an enormous lowering of unit costs plus other valuable consequences, such as predictability. Thus the

norm was a necessary prerequisite of modern, mass democratic government....

Nearly all administrative organizations ... apply the norm of equality. Even in nondemocratic governments of industrial nations, the norm is applied to everyone, but the political elite. The "rule of law" in this sense is an administrative necessity in an industrial country.¹³⁰

1. Do social workers follow the "modern administrative norm," that everyone in the same problem category should be treated equally? How does social work administration expect us to treat clients? Why does Thompson place people as members of a "problem category"?
2. Do social workers "strip away the uniqueness of individuals and turn administration into an efficient mass processing of cases"?
3. Do you agree that the "rule of law" is an administrative necessity? What would happen if we abandoned the rule of law in our organizational arrangements and instituted personalized, individualized administration instead?
4. Is there any way to reconcile providing individual personal treatment for people as well as treating everyone equally?
5. Thompson asserts that the rule of equality is a "necessary prerequisite of modern, mass democratic government." What does this statement mean? Do you believe that modern mass democratic government operates by a rule of equality? Why or why not? How do you think impoverished people in this country would answer that question?
6. Think about the presuppositions that guide Thompson's statement. To what extent is it guided by norms of systems thinking and systems world view?

time diagnosing the stage of the group (forming, norming, storming, or performing). You should be able to point to a specific indicator that tells you what stage the group is operating at.

Once you have grasped the level of the group by means of facts, apply your intuition to think about what processes may be occurring that are not immediately obvious.

Then try to think about how you can help the group move ahead in resolving the issues that confront it. For example, how would you assist members to become more ready or more willing, more self-directing, and more independently operating?

Once you have decided these issues, write down your "verbatim response" to the incident. A verbatim response is the exact words you would say to intervene in the situation.

In class, your instructor may form you into threes and ask that you first discuss your various diagnoses.

After the class regroups, the instructor may ask for volunteers to present their diagnoses. After you discuss the diagnoses and come to some consensus, the instructor may ask for responses. Individuals or groups may contribute what they consider their best response. The instructor may also add comments. Keep in mind that there are no absolutely right or wrong answers, because a response must be based on one's perception of the situation. However, some responses may be more appropriate than others.

Incident 1

Group Complaint

The task unit has been in some confusion for a while. The rules in the agency have changed often and roles have become unclear. As a result, performance is down. In the middle of an informational meeting, members begin to voice general complaints about lack of direction and confusion. It is clear that people are frustrated and that your unit is looking to you for direction. Underneath is an implied challenge. The meeting is beginning to get loud. Some members look at you helplessly.

Given what you know about the life cycle of the group, what is your diagnosis about what is occurring in this group at this moment? Based on your understanding of group leadership styles at this stage of the group, what is your verbatim response?

ADVANCED EXERCISE 12.8

Critical Incidents

The incidents described below are all real-life situations that first-line social work supervisors have faced in their jobs. These incidents will help you apply Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership model, described in Chapter 3. Before you decide on a response to each incident, spend some

Incident 2***Conflict Decision***

You have been supervising a unit for more than a year. Most members have been doing well individually, but there are conflicts among members over what you consider to be petty things, such as desk space or having a window. Overall, the unit is doing adequately, but its performance could be improved.

You are trying to figure out whether to deal with the conflicts on an individual basis, with the entire group, or whether you should let the group work the issues out on their own. What reasons could lie behind the conflicts? How would you resolve the conflicts?

Would you deal with them individually with group members or with the group as a whole, or would you let the group itself try to work them out?

Incident 3***What Are the Rules?***

You have taken over a new unit. Although it has been performing fairly well, it has never been one of the high-achieving units. You have met with each of the members individually and know there is some anxiety about your leadership style. Your first meeting went well. It is now your second meeting. You are finishing your agenda when one of the more verbal members, who is also one of the lowest achievers in the unit, looks you in the eye and in a challenging voice asks, "What are you going to do about the smoking in this building? I have allergies and the smoke is killing me." The group looks at you expectantly. Some members are nodding their heads in agreement, while others who are smokers avoid eye contact.

The entire group waits for your response. What stage do you think the group is in? What dynamics are occurring in the task group? Is there more going on than a simple request to deal with smoking? Do you respond individually to the staff member about smoke or do you address the issue with the entire group? What stage is the group at, and what is your verbatim response?

Incident 4***The Impossible Task***

The agency has been poorly managed for some time. Layoffs have occurred. As a result, your unit

has been expected to pick up some of the extra work. The entire staff is worried about more layoffs, and many are behind because of the added cases. You have seen individuals become increasingly tardy and calling in sick, creating even more of a backlog. Morale is at the lowest ebb you have ever seen. Your supervisor has been on your back for accountability. You know that many of your staff are stressed. You call a unit meeting to try to deal with performance and with stress.

Jack says, "I just can't do any more. I don't know what they expect out of us. You can't get blood out of a turnip." The other members of the unit nod their heads. There follows a long period of silence. The unit seems glum.

What is your diagnosis of the situation in the unit?

What would you do at this point?

Incident 5***Who Is Responsible?***

It is the early phase of a participative management project. The task group members are supposed to be skilled and work independently, and they are expected to develop a new and creative process in their work area. After meeting with them several times to get them started, you have generally let them alone. On one of your visits to the group, you inquire about the status of the project and are surprised to hear Janet say, "I'm getting frustrated. I thought you were supposed to tell us what to do—otherwise how can we accomplish anything? We're getting nowhere this way." The group turns to observe your reaction.

What is your diagnosis of what has happened in this group? What is your response?

Incident 6***Don't Tell Me What to Do***

Your unit is composed of highly skilled, technically proficient workers. They are used to working on their own and obtain satisfaction from making their own decisions and following them through. They see themselves as competent professionals.

While they have never enjoyed the paperwork end of the job, they have generally managed it satisfactorily. New, more stringent, and time-consuming paperwork requirements, however, have just been developed which require more work and are more complicated. Your efforts at giving information about how to meet the requirements

have met with some resistance. As you monitor the unit, you find that the new paperwork is not being done as well as it could be.

In a meeting, you propose additional training. Members look unresponsive, and Henry finally breaks the silence by saying, “We all know how to do our jobs. And we do them pretty well. I don’t want anyone telling me what to do.” Members nod their heads.

What is the stage of this group and what is your verbatim response?

ADVANCED EXERCISE 12.9

A Program Development Dilemma

Community Consultants, Inc., is a community development organization sponsored by the local United Way. It receives additional income from consulting fees, conducts some fundraising benefits, and applies for grants. Recently, Community Consultants has been working on helping revitalize the South Central section of Jefferson City. South Central is the oldest and once one of the most affluent sections of town. But as residents moved out of the central part of the city to the suburbs, many old and stately homes were left to deteriorate, and several of them have been taken over by drug abusers and turned into crack houses.

A number of residents, however, led by Josiah Warner, began to press to save South Central. Warner invited Community Consultants, Inc., to assist. Community Consultants assigned John Heiligman to the project. With John’s assistance, the South Central Community Association was formed. The result has been renewed community spirit and pride. A Neighborhood Watch program was initiated. Pressure was put on police to eliminate drug abuse in the community.

Efforts were made to renovate the old Victorian homes. Community Consultants has been instrumental in applying for and receiving community improvement funds and in having two homes listed as historic landmarks.

One of John Heiligman’s former classmates is Sam Fontaine, community resource developer at the Great Plains Regional Center. For the past six months Sam has been working with a group of parents of developmentally disabled adults who were interested in establishing a residential care

facility for their adult children. Such a facility has become even more urgently needed because the Jefferson State Hospital is planning on releasing at least 100 adult developmentally disabled persons into the community in the next year.

One of the older homes in South Central had recently come on the market, and the group of parents was very interested in becoming incorporated as a nonprofit organization, buying the home, and operating it for their own and other developmentally disabled adults. John Heiligman was enthusiastic about the idea. This would be not only a service to the community but also a source of income to the neighborhood.

At the next meeting of the South Central Residents Association, John was shocked to hear Josiah Warner report on the plan and denounce it vehemently. After a short discussion, one of the members made a motion to oppose the plan. In a moment the motion was passed, and Josiah was assigned to write a letter of protest to the mayor, the city planning board, and the city council, objecting to “mental defectives” living in the neighborhood. Josiah Warner and the South Central Residents Association have asked John’s help in drafting this letter. It is clear that they expect him and Community Consultants, Inc., to support what they consider a threat to their community and the property values they have worked hard to improve.

After the meeting, John Heiligman is in a dilemma. On the one hand, he is an advocate for the residents of South Central and is committed to helping improve the community. On the other hand, he understands the need for quality housing for developmentally disabled. The Regional Center’s clients’ rights advocate, Shirley Jenkins, has informed John that the city legally has no jurisdiction over small family care homes. The state, whose laws supersede those of the city, has determined that a home of six unrelated adults or fewer is considered a family. No one can prevent six unrelated adults from residing in a neighborhood of their choice, even if they are disabled, as long as the facility meets state licensing requirements.

From his conversation with Sam Fontaine, John also knows that this is probably the first of many attempts by groups to secure housing in the older, less expensive areas of the city like South Central. In fact, Sam mentioned to him that he is also working with several of the caregivers at Jefferson State Hospital, who will probably be laid off. They are developing a plan to use their skills in caring for the disabled by opening their own facilities. Several

of these caregivers have their eye on older homes in South Central. This is not a problem that will go away.

Sam calls a meeting of the other community development staff at Community Consultants. He asks them to help clarify the problem. As he considers the range of problems confronting him, he makes the following list:

1. What are the ethical issues involved here?
2. What does this dilemma say about the potential of a community that acts out of the self-interest of its members?
3. Whose rights should prevail—the rights of disabled to live where they choose, or the rights of residents to protect their community against a perceived threat?
4. What strategies are available to resolve this potential conflict?
5. What alternatives are available to Sam?
 - a. Should Sam help draft the letter and advocate for the community against the disabled?
 - b. Should Sam align himself with the disabled against the community?
 - c. Should Sam voice his personal views that a home for the disabled would actually be an asset to the community?
 - d. If a public hearing is held and Community Consultants are asked to voice an opinion, should Community Consultants abstain from voicing an opinion or not? What should their stance be?
 - e. Should Community Consultants be a mediator or should they bring in an outside consultant?

Sam asks the community development staff to help him resolve these questions, develop several alternative strategies, and develop a plan that will help resolve the ethical dilemma he is facing as well as help the community and the disabled resolve the potential conflict. Sam intends to present the plan to the executive committee of Community Consultants, Inc., at its next meeting.

ADDITIONAL READING

Federal Regulations Dealing with Administration

Executive Order No. 11246

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended in 1991

Age Discrimination in Employment Act, 1967, as amended in 1978 and 1986

Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990

Equal Opportunity Act, 1972

Equal Pay Act, 1963

Fair Labor Standards Act

Immigration Reform and Control Act, 1985

Rehabilitation Act, 1973, especially handicap sections (sections 503 and 504)

Vietnam Veteran Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (veteran status)

Veterans Reemployment Rights Act

1972 amendments to the 1964 Civil Rights Act

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PART FOUR

Social Work Practice at the National and International Levels

Human Society

Human society is not merely a fact or an event in the external world to be studied by an observer like natural phenomena. Although it has externality as one of its important components, it is a whole little world. [It is] a cosmos, illuminated with meaning from within by the human beings who continuously create and bear it as the mode and condition of their self realization.¹

Eric Voegelin

Difficulties in Making Change

It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, or doubtful of success, or more dangerous to handle than to initiate a new order of things. The reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in those who would profit by the new.²

Niccolo Machiavelli

Mass unrest at the accumulated oppression experienced by the impoverished members of developing nations in the second decade of the 21st century is driving the poor people of the earth not toward reform but to a rejection of the excesses of modernity and toward a new society. Many people in developed nations understand that a number of the social problems they experience are rooted in the common culture of modern European and North American society, the way we think, our values, and our heritage. Members of first-world nations are also growing in awareness that the problems faced by the majority of the world's population are their problems as well, and that we are at the dawn of a new era. This new era has been called by many names: the information age, the age of technology, the postindustrial age, and the postmodern era. As pressures build for change, a paradigm shift is required. We need to rethink what society should be like, the relationship between people, and with the natural environment.

In Part Four, you will explore how social workers can help bring about social change by means of social policy advocacy and social activism. You will learn how to assist in

making changes at the international level. You will learn how you can be a participant with the impoverished ones in forging a new society.

SOCIAL ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL ACTION

Even though fundamental social change will not generally occur by the political process, it is important and necessary to use these mechanisms to initiate what improvements are possible in our existing systems structures. You will learn in Chapter 13 that social workers can assist in this process by means of social policy advocacy.

In addition, it will become clear that, for the most part, only ordinary people outside the corridors of government can be expected to develop fundamental and progressive change. This occurs most often by social action implemented through national and international social movements. Social workers can and often do make contributions to those movement efforts.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

Social workers help develop not only a better society, but a better world. Instead of transnational corporations that dominate the global market society, social workers engage transnational nongovernmental organizations (TNGOs) that press for a global human society. Rather than exploit the world's resources, social workers at the global level advocate for sustainable development in which humans live in a cooperative relationship with the environment. International social work is among the most significant of human endeavors and can be one of the most personally rewarding occupations in which people can engage in the second decade of the 21st century.

Many social workers are drawn to developing nations, where poverty, violence, disease, famine, and oppression continue to steal the lives of men, women, and children. In Chapter 14 you will learn how social workers help communities solve social problems at the international level. You will see how you can assist members of grassroots organizations (GROs), or join nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), transnational NGOs (TNGOs), and nongovernmental support organizations (NGSOs) to help construct a more socially just global society.

13

Advocacy and Social Action: Making a Good Society

Illusions

If anyone else still has illusions about this country, it's not the poor. They know that this country will spend \$20 billion to put a man on the moon, but will not spend \$20 to put a man on his feet. They know it will spend more to keep weevils from eating the cotton than to keep rats from eating the fingers of a baby in Harlem. They know it will pay a U.S. Senator over \$100,000 a year not to plant cotton, but will not pay \$1 to the families on his plantation not to raise hookworms in the stomachs of their own children.¹

Si Kahn

Costs of Conflict

Every gun made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States of America

Economic Freedom

Advocates of capitalism are very apt to appeal to the sacred principles of liberty, which are embodied in one maxim: The fortunate must not be restrained in the exercise of tyranny over the unfortunate.

Bertrand Russell

Social Injustice

The dispossessed of this nation ... live in a cruelly unjust society. They must organize a revolution against that injustice, not against the lives of persons who are their fellow citizens, but against the structures through which society is refusing to take means which have been called for, and which are at hand to lift the load of poverty.²

Martin Luther King Jr.

Ideas in This Chapter

JOAN CLAYBROOK: SOCIAL ADVOCATE
WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER
MAKING A GOOD SOCIETY
Inside/Outside Model

SOCIAL WORK ADVOCACY
Advocacy Practice
A BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCIAL ADVOCACY
Individual Policy Activists in the 1800s

- The Progressive Era: 1885–1915
- Social Policy in the 1930s
- Social Policies in the 1940s and 1950s
- Social Policies in the 1960s
- Social Policy in the 1970s and 1980s
- Social Policies in the 1990s
- Social Policies in the First Decade of the 2000s
- Implications of the History of Social Advocacy
- HOW TO PRACTICE SOCIAL ADVOCACY
- Choose an Issue
- Discover Key Players
- Getting Information
- Developing Potential Interventions
- Examine and Rank Alternative Solutions
- Choose among Alternative Solutions
- Develop a Strategy
- Tactics
- Revise Strategy and Begin Again
- SOCIAL ACTION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
- Modern Social Action and Social Movements

- Postmodern Social Action and Social Movements
- CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTMODERN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
- New Structure
- Rejection of Individualism
- New Ways of Thinking
- New Sense of Community
- Redefined Role of Government
- Transformation of Public Life
- Culture Building
- Implications for Macro Social Work
- FUTURE OF THE GOOD SOCIETY
- Community Building
- Civic Engagement
- Participatory Democracy
- Global Citizenship
- CONCLUSION
- QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION
- ADDITIONAL READING

JOAN CLAYBROOK: SOCIAL ADVOCATE

The tall, bespectacled woman at a makeshift lectern in a Capitol Hill hearing room doesn't look particularly fierce. Her face is scrubbed, her shoes sturdy, her smile ready. In a brightly colored suit and pearls, she looks like an aging version of the Junior Leaguer she once was. But make no mistake, consumer policy advocate Joan Claybrook is no pussycat.³

As president of Public Citizen, the consumer advocacy group founded by Ralph Nader in 1971, Claybrook has a point of view on just about every issue affecting the public good, from health care to insurance, from legal rights to banking. But there are two things that really get to her: automobile safety and campaign finance. In 1992 she hammered away at how much public money former President George H. W. Bush took in during his presidential and vice presidential campaigns (“over \$420 million by the end of 1992,” she says), while he said he would veto any campaign finance reform bill that provided for public funding of congressional elections or restricted spending on them. In early May 1992, a bill doing just that landed on his desk, and Joan Claybrook was one of the people who

pushed it there. As she sees it, she represents the interests of the people, and the people deserve to win.

“It's important to approach people in the best way that you can,” says Claybrook. “We think very hard about that. What is the best way to communicate the message?” She goes about it by studying the issues and learning their history, including previous congressional votes. She also works the media by staging press conferences, writing opinion pieces, and sending letters to the editor.

Claybrook was reared to be a social policy analyst. At her parents' house, dinner conversations were about politics. Her father, a bond attorney and Baltimore City Council member, stalwart of the local civil rights movement in the 1950s, was a founder of the Maryland Americans for Democratic Action. Her mother, a homemaker, was a natural organizer who believed that their three children ought to be encouraged to do anything they wanted, even if they failed.

After her parents died, Joan's attitude changed. “I never thought about having to achieve either before or after their deaths, but I realized that I was the older generation now, and that I had a lot to give.”

One of the original Nader's Raiders, Claybrook became a consumer advocate even earlier. She came to Washington in 1965 as a fellow of the American Political

Science Association, the first time the program included women. Required to work for a member of Congress, Claybrook signed on with James MacKay, a Southern liberal Democrat who asked her to work on auto safety. She had just read an amazing book, *Unsafe at Any Speed* by Ralph Nader. When MacKay decided to introduce an auto safety bill, the first regulatory bill for the auto industry, he asked Claybrook to draft it. As Claybrook followed the bill through Congress, she was introduced to lobbying Nader-style. “I saw Ralph in operation, how he manipulated, maneuvered, pushed and pulled, how he used disclosures to shock people,” she recalls. “It was an incredibly fast education.” The following September, the bill, which established safety standards for motor vehicles, was enacted into law. At the end of her fellowship, Claybrook moved to the National Traffic Safety Bureau (NTSB), where she became assistant to the director. She stayed there until 1970, when she joined Nader.

In 1973 she founded and directed Congress Watch, a Public Citizen congressional lobbying group, and when Jimmy Carter was elected president, she was asked to head the NTSB. She pushed to require automobile makers to provide air bags or at least passive seat belts. In 1980 she was back in the trenches of the consumer movement as president of Public Citizen. “I have a love of battle,” she says. “I work on issues I care deeply about and get paid enough to live on. Who could ask for anything more?”⁴

EXERCISE 13.1

Making a Better Society

One of the roles of macro social work is to help make a better society. There is no end to the issues with which one could begin in trying to construct society in better ways. Make a list of issues that you believe need to be changed. In class compare your list with those of others. Choose one of the issues you believe is most important. How would you go about beginning to bring about changes? For example, would you start with government and try to persuade a legislator to pass a bill, or would you begin at the community level to get people involved? Would you work through NASW or its PAC, PACE? Would you become a policy advocate or join a social movement? Come up with a step by step plan in the time that you have allotted to you.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

While social workers help individuals, groups, communities, and organizations, above all else our concern is to bring about an authentically good and open society. In this chapter you will learn how to help make a better society by advocacy and social action.

You will learn two ways in which citizens impact government to help make a better society, the inside and outside approaches. You will discover that for most ordinary people, the outside approach is most effective.

You will explore how macro social workers engage in advocacy. You will learn what advocacy consists of. You will explore a brief history of social work advocacy. You will learn how to practice social work advocacy.

Second, you will explore how people help create a good society by social action and social movements. You will come to understand that social action deals with the most important issues of our time. Some of the most impressive and long-standing victories in the human struggle for justice and equality have come from social action. Many of these, such as the peace movement, protecting the environment, and ending racism and human exploitation, affect us all.

You will learn that there are two kinds of social movements operating today. First you will explore the characteristics of modern social movements that work to reform the shortcomings of modern society. Second, and most important, you will examine post-modern social movements whose goal is to usher in a new social era that transcends modernity. You will explore a brief history of postmodern social movements and their components. You will examine the role of macro social work with social movements.

You will explore the future of a good society. You will discover that many macro social workers envision a society of economic, political, and social justice in which each person has guaranteed opportunities for a full, creative, and productive life.

MAKING A GOOD SOCIETY

Social work is called to transform society and to create a more just social order. Social workers promote the general welfare of society, from the local level to the global, and assist in enhancing people’s development

with communities, organizations, and society as a whole,⁵ according to the NASW Code of Ethics. We “advocate for living conditions conducive to the fulfillment of basic human needs, promot[ing] social, economic, political, cultural values, and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.”⁶

In fact, says Gustavo Gutierrez, “to do nothing in favor of those who are oppressed is to act against them.”⁷ Social workers ought to be “building a world where every man, regardless of race, religion, or nationality can live a fully human life, free of the servitude that comes from other men and from the incompletely mastered world about him.”⁸ Such “an open society,” says David Miller, “offers not only opportunity to choose among many alternatives, but a standing invitation to reshape personal and social goals and introduce new ones for consideration.”⁹

One of the ways in which social work helps promote social justice and making a better society is by means of “social and political action that seeks to ensure that all people have equal access to the resources, employment, services, and opportunities they require.”¹⁰ Social workers “advocate for changes in policy and legislation to improve social conditions in order to meet basic human needs and promote social justice.”¹¹

Inside/Outside Model

If we see government as a hub around which social change is intended to revolve in our society, McClain and Stewart observe that agenda setting for social change occurs both inside government and outside the government.¹² On the one hand, change is initiated inside government by administrative agencies, political offices, and elite interest groups, each of which influences the fate of policy proposals. Change also occurs outside of government, with ordinary people pressuring government and the economic sector to correct defects and create a more human social environment. Today, some people are even working to make fundamental shifts that will bring about a new social order.

Inside Government Issues are brought to the attention of government officials by persons who have direct connections inside government and who then press for resolution on their own terms, expanding that access to the outside public only when necessary. From this perspective, policymaking is largely guided by officials

who move government according to values and goals as they see them.

Inside influence is the conventional means by which elite interest groups, which often form a hegemony of power, continually “mobilize their values” to ensure that policy decisions are made in their favor over the long term.¹³ Shifting between corporate and governmental leadership positions, these leaders generally determine the outcomes of key policy concerns no matter which party is in power. The theory that guides this model of governmental decision making is known as pluralism or interest group liberalism.

Outside Government Interest group liberalism presents a continual barrier in achieving access to government policymaking for the mass of ordinary middle class citizens. The pluralist conception of politics is especially aligned against relatively uninfluential groups, including those representing women, children, handicapped, ethnic minorities, LGBT, and citizens with lower incomes, who often have vital interests in common. These groups are generally excluded from the inner workings of government and from the opportunity to mobilize values on their own behalf.

As a result, according to Henry Kariel, Frank Coleman, and others, most fundamental change in the United States cannot be obtained through inside political action alone as it is presently constituted.¹⁴ Built-in lack of access constitutes one of the most critical inequalities in the American democratic political process and is the primary reason that social action and policy advocacy carried out by groups outside government is necessary.

If fundamental policy issues that are of vital concern to everyday working people are to be resolved, therefore, the initiative must generally occur outside government, precisely where the excluded exist and have the most leverage. This realization gives hope to those outside of government that their efforts can be important in bringing about a better society. For most constituents who press for recognition of policy issues, therefore, the outside mobilization model, including policy advocacy and social action through social movements, is the only model available.

SOCIAL WORK ADVOCACY

Social policy at the national level aims itself at promoting ideas or issues that make a better society and,

alternatively, engages in opposition to those forces in society that create social problems. Policies “institutionalize change in government that take on the force of law,”¹⁵ says Arnold Chandler.

Policy practice is an area of social work in which practitioners help “change policies in legislative, agency and community settings by establishing new policies, improving existing ones, or defeating the policy initiatives of others,”¹⁶ says Bruce S. Jansson. Policy change is a long-term process that must be continually engaged in, monitored, and repeated as situations change.

Social workers become most heavily involved in policy and politics in our efforts to seek justice for the oppressed, those who have been left out of the governmental decision-making process, who have been overlooked, or who have not been heard. Embedded in the NASW Code of Ethics is the expectation that social workers monitor and evaluate government policies,¹⁷ ensuring that they apply equally to all. *Influencing State Policy*, for example, is a national organization formed in 1997 by social work practitioners and educators to help other professionals learn how to influence policy formation, implementation, and evaluation. This organization publishes a newsletter entitled *Influence*, which reports on a variety of issues concerning the actions of social workers who engage in policy practice.

Social workers often engage in policy practice by means of policy advocacy in combination with social action in order to create a better society. “Advocacy refers to any endeavor that potentially attempts to change government or private sector policy”¹⁸ for the better, claims Liz Baumgarten. Advocacy involves efforts to influence the actions of institutions in ways that benefit a collective social interest. Advocacy groups ensure governments’ accountability to citizens, give a voice to under represented citizen interests, and mobilize citizens to participate in the democratic process. They support the development of a culture of democracy. In this way government becomes a transmitter of wider social and cultural change and becomes a means of social transformation.

Social advocacy also aims to influence outcomes that directly affect people’s lives, especially those who have few of the resources needed to adequately address the social issues they are confronting. Advocacy assists that “powerless, stigmatized, and oppressed populations improve their well-being,”¹⁹ say Margaret Sherraden et al.

Advocacy Practice

Most social policy advocacy occurs through traditional nonprofit organizations, professional organizations, political action committees (PACS), and 501(c)(4) social advocacy organizations.

Traditional Nonprofit Agency Advocacy Traditional nonprofit organizations are driven by a commitment to a broad community of people and their common interests. Today, with over 1.5 million nonprofit organizations in existence, there is a much greater understanding that “service alone” is not enough to assist an agency’s constituency and fulfill its social mission. Because they traditionally serve people and confront issues that have a limited voice in the policy process, nonprofits can and should make a strong advocacy presence on behalf of the clients with whom they work.

Nonprofit organizations have not only the best, but frequently the only information on the needs of people they exist to address. Moreover, government regulations and laws have a significant and powerful impact on every nonprofit organization and the people they serve. This makes it imperative for board members of social organizations to become involved with policymakers at the city, county, state, and national levels who affect their organizations and constituencies.

In addition, social agencies have a moral responsibility to lobby for positive policy and against policies harmful to people’s welfare. No social service agency can ignore the rules that affect those it serves and still be effective. Bob Smucker, founder of the Center of Lobbying in the Public Interest (CLPI) says, “Much of the social change in America has its origin in the nonprofit sector. Nonprofit lobbying is the right thing to do. It is about empowering individuals to make their collective voices heard on a wide range of human concerns.”²⁰ “Nonprofit advocacy,” adds Larry Ottinger, “is a critical strategy for solving our society’s most challenging problems.”²¹

Many nonprofit social organizations engage in advocacy but cite lack of time, resources and worry about the law as barriers to involvement. Some steps can be taken to increase nonprofit advocacy.

Extent of Nonprofit Advocacy America’s nonprofit organizations are widely involved in efforts to influence the public policies affecting them and those

they serve, according to a 2009 survey by the Johns Hopkins University.²² “Our nation’s nonprofit organizations are widely expected to play a key role in helping to promote democracy and civic action,” and, says Lester M. Salamon, “our survey results indicate that they are making strenuous efforts to fulfill this expectation.”²³ Seventy-three percent of nonprofit organizations responding to the survey said they had engaged in some type of advocacy or lobbying in the year prior to the survey, for example, with three out of five of those organizations engaging in public policy efforts at least once a month.²⁴ About half of all responding organizations reported undertaking relatively limited forms of advocacy or lobbying, such as sending correspondence to a public official, responding to requests for information on policy issues, or distributing materials on policy matters. When it comes to more involved forms of participation, however, such as testifying at hearings or organizing a public event, the proportions reporting any involvement fell to about a third.

Lack of Time and Resources While nonprofits can and do engage in lobbying, however, the nonprofit sector has generally not been effective at advocacy. The Johns Hopkins researchers found, for example, that the depth of organizational involvement is often limited to efforts of the executive director. Less than 15% of organizations that engaged in advocacy reported devoting as much as 2% of their overall budget to this function. Lack of time and lack of resources were the principal reasons cited by organizations that reported no advocacy or lobbying activity.²⁵

Worry about laws Over the last ten years the nonprofit sector has come under great scrutiny by state and federal officials. The Johns Hopkins study indicates that the fear that advocacy efforts might be illegal has stopped many from doing all that they should to carry out their missions. Among the organizations that refrained from lobbying, nearly half cited concern about violating laws as a reason.²⁶

How to Increase Nonprofit Advocacy The Johns Hopkins study recommended a number of steps to help nonprofits carry out policy advocacy. These include increasing resources available to intermediary organizations for policy advocacy work and expanding foundation support for nonprofit policy advocacy. They extend to encouraging greater board

involvement. Another step is providing training and other assistance to encourage advocacy activity by small and mid-sized organizations.²⁷

Professional Organizations By means of its professional organization, National Association of Social Workers (NASW) social workers advocate for a broad range of policy issues, from statutes that govern the licensing of social workers to programs that provide mental health and child welfare services. NASW’s ability to advance relevant issues is possible only with the help of its members. Other professional organizations often have full-time lobbyists who advocate directly with legislators as well, says Theodore Stein.²⁸

Political Action Committees (PACS) Political action committees (PAC), raise and spend limited “hard” money for the express purpose of electing or defeating candidates. Organizations that raise soft money for issue advocacy may also set up a PAC. Most PACs represent business, such as the Microsoft PAC; labor, including the Teamsters PAC; ideological interests, such as the EMILY’s List PAC, the National Rifle Association PAC; or general social benefit, such as NASW’s PACE.

An organization’s PAC will collect money from the group’s employees or members and make contributions in the name of the PAC to candidates and political parties.²⁹ A PAC can give \$5,000 to a candidate per election and up to \$15,000 annually to a national political party. PACs may receive up to \$5,000 per year from each individual, other PACs, and party committees. A PAC must register with the Federal Election Commission within ten days of its formation, providing the name and address of the PAC, its treasurer, and any affiliated organizations.³⁰

501(c)(4) Social Advocacy Organizations

Many 501(c)(4) social advocacy organizations focus on changing specific policies and practices on behalf of disadvantaged groups. Organizations such as Save the Children, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and Human Rights Watch advocate specifically for policies in favor of child welfare, women who have been physically abused, people who are homeless, or those who have suffered human rights abuses, pressuring government for policy outcomes in their favor.

Members of these advocacy organizations perform policy research, disseminate information on policy questions, develop policy proposals, and advocate for progressive social policy in areas of their particular concern. Their staff lobby legislators and write position papers. They testify before legislative bodies, speak to the general public, participate in demonstrations, and often assist other groups that work specifically with concerns similar to their own. Social workers are sometimes employed by advocacy organizations, where they often find fulfilling and engaging careers promoting change in a meaningful way.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SOCIAL ADVOCACY

During the 1800s many individual advocates pushed for action on behalf of specific populations. By the time of the Progressive Era, organized advocacy on many fronts became a compelling social force in America, often led by social workers.

A second surge of social advocacy occurred during the Depression years of the 1930s. During the 1940s and 1950s social policy concentrated on urbanism and control of the labor force, but it exploded during the 1960s as social advocates developed social legislation on many fronts. The neoconservative political climate from the early 1970s to the early 1990s, and for much of the first decade of the new century, has tended to restrict progressive social policy in the United States and, at times, in Canada as well.

Individual Policy Activists in the 1800s

The earliest social advocacy can be traced to the individual effort of many early North American pioneers of social betterment, including Horace Mann, advocate for better education; Thomas Gallaudet, advocate for the deaf; John Howard, advocate of prison reform; Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth, advocates for civil rights, along with the many abolitionists and abolitionist societies of the pre-Civil War period.

In the latter half of the 1800s, social policy advocates included Samuel Gridley Howe and Dorothea Dix, advocates on behalf of persons with emotional and developmental disabilities; Charles Loring Brace, advocate for abandoned and neglected children; Mother Jones, advocate for workers' rights; Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt, advocates for

woman's suffrage; and Clara Barton, advocate for victims of war and natural disasters.

JEANETTE RANKIN (1880–1973)

Jeannette Pickering Rankin was born June 11, 1880, and attended Montana State University at Missoula, graduating in 1902. Looking for some work to which she could commit herself, she was inspired by slum conditions to take up the new field of social work, became a resident in a San Francisco Settlement House for four months, and then entered the New York School of Philanthropy (later to become the Columbia School of Social Work). She returned to the West to become a social worker at a children's home in Spokane, Washington.

Rankin studied at the University of Washington in Seattle and became involved in the woman's suffrage movement in 1910. Visiting Montana, Rankin was the first woman to speak before the Montana legislature; she worked for the New York Women's Suffrage Party and in 1912 became the field secretary of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Rankin returned to Montana, where she helped organize the successful Montana suffrage campaign in 1914.

As war in Europe loomed, Rankin turned her attention to working for peace, and in 1916 she ran for one of the two seats in Congress from Montana as a Republican, becoming the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress and the first woman elected to a national legislature in any Western democracy.

Only four days after taking office she voted against U.S. entry into World War I. Violating protocol by speaking during the roll call before casting her vote, she announced, "I want to stand by my country, but I cannot vote for war." In 1917 she opened the congressional debate on the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, which became the Nineteenth Amendment when ratified by the states.

During her tenure in office, Congresswoman Rankin worked for political reforms including civil liberties, suffrage, birth control, equal pay, and child welfare, but her first antiwar vote sealed her political fate. When her congressional colleagues gerrymandered her out of her district, she ran for the Senate, lost the primary, launched a third-party race, and lost overwhelmingly.

After the war ended, Rankin worked for the National Consumers' League and the American Civil Liberties Union, and became Field Secretary of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). She formed the Georgia Peace Society and lobbied for the Women's Peace Union, American cooperation with the World Court, labor reforms, and an end to child labor.

By 1939 she had returned to Montana and was running for Congress again, supporting a strong but neutral America in yet another time of impending war. Elected by a small plurality, Jeannette Rankin arrived in Washington in January as one of six women in the House; there were two in the Senate. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Congress voted to declare war against Japan, but Jeannette Rankin once again voted “no” to war, and once again violated tradition and spoke before her roll call vote, this time saying: “As a woman I can’t go to war, and I refuse to send anyone else.” She alone voted against the war resolution. Denounced by the press and by her colleagues, she barely escaped an angry mob. Rather than run for Congress again (and surely be defeated), Rankin went back to Montana in 1943.

Stirred by the atrocities of the War in Vietnam, Rankin emerged from retirement at the age of 88, and in 1968, heading up the Jeannette Rankin Brigade, she led more than 5,000 women in a protest in Washington, D.C., demanding that the U.S. withdraw from Vietnam. Rankin continued to be active in the antiwar movement and was often invited to speak or was honored by young antiwar activists and feminists until her death in California in 1973 at the age of 93.

Social worker Jeannette Rankin, the first woman to serve in the U.S. Congress, the only representative who voted against the nation’s entry into World Wars I and II, a lifelong pacifist, and one of the country’s earliest women suffragists, was inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame in 1993.³¹

The Progressive Era: 1885–1915

During the Progressive Era, the United States was a country in crisis, and not a few feared outright revolution. Many people joined together to advocate for favorable legislation on many fronts. Among the largest and most influential of these groups were social workers, who pressed for better social policies and an enlarged role of government in protecting our most vulnerable citizens.

Social Work and Advocacy Edward A. Ross, a leading sociologist, and key progressive ideologue wrote in 1907,

Social defense is coming to be a matter for the expert. The rearing of dikes against faithlessness and fraud calls for intelligent social engineering. If in this strait the public does not speedily become

far shrewder, ... there is nothing for it but to turn over the defense of society to professionals.³²

The professionals to whom Ross was referring were social workers. “Social workers began to see a way to rationalize and reform societal, economic, and political processes,”³³ says John Ehrenreich, helping to engineer the social machinery of the emerging modern American society. One of the tools that social workers used was social advocacy. “Modern American social policy advocacy and the social work profession emerged as more or less conscious efforts to deal with the economic, political and social crises facing American society,”³⁴ he asserts.

Social workers went about their work with reformist zeal to enlarge the role of government, provide for a renewed democratic process, and regulate a growing market economy that threatened to crush the common person in its path toward power.

Enlarged Role of Government Settlement house social workers in the late 19th century envisioned an enlarged role for the federal government, advocating that the government use its power to support the welfare of society through policies, programs, and regulatory efforts.

Settlement social workers developed policies to assist some of our most vulnerable citizens: those who lived in poverty, women, children, and immigrant laborers. They lobbied for fair labor laws, better wages, shorter hours, and healthier working conditions for men and women. They advocated for the regulation of sweatshops and laws upholding child labor rights by means of a strengthened Interstate Commerce Commission. Progressive policy advocates pressed for federal and state consumer protection, for enforcement of pure food and drugs laws, and for regulatory agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration.

At the state level, settlement workers successfully developed proposals for a new juvenile criminal justice system, obtaining a separate court for juvenile offenders with laws to protect children from overly punitive sentencing and prison conditions, and helped establish a Children’s Bureau at the federal level. More importantly, social workers assisted in expanding and renewing a democratic process that had become corrupted by powerful business and pressing government to play a stronger role in regulating corporations.

Renewed Democracy Progressive social workers advocated for renewed commitment to America's democratic principles and succeeded in initiating a new form of city government called the city manager system. They were successful in changing some state constitutions to provide direct citizen legislation by means of initiative, referendum, and recalling politicians who failed to carry out the will of the people. At the federal level, social work advocates called for reformed political institutions, including direct election of U.S. senators, the direct primary, and extending the political franchise to include women.

Reformers based their ideas on the principle that governance could be improved by instituting professional nonpartisan administration and policymaking. They helped initiate the Pendleton Act of 1883, which established the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Government would apply its policies equally, fairly, neutrally, and without favor or "compassion" according to universal rules that applied equally to all rather than on the basis of nepotism (in favor of relatives) or amicism (in favor of friends). Civil servants themselves, who were to carry out government policies, were chosen according to the principle of hiring the most qualified candidate who best fit the requirements of the job.

Government employees were to be protected from pressure exerted by politicians who attempted to bend the rules in favor of special interests or those with influential connections. "The public's interest as a whole, rather than those of the powerful individuals or groups was to be served and protected,"³⁵ assert Levine et al.

Progressives intended for government to accept at least a minimum role in regulating and keeping business honest, and that government was obligated to control itself as well. Above all, it was in the public's best interest that social and economic life should be at least partially constrained by some ideal of the public good.

Regulate Corporate Interests Many social workers saw the problems of the time as originating with the size and power that large corporations had assumed. They pressed for policies that would break conglomerates into smaller units to prevent them from usurping the public interest, restoring a more level and competitive playing field for business. Social workers lobbied for government to begin to modify its laissez-faire (hands off) policy toward a market economy dominated by giant transportation, mining, power, manufacturing, and financial monopolies. They lobbied

government to forge legislation preventing conglomerates from fixing prices, destroying competition, and controlling the political process, and they advocated for a Federal Trade Commission to enforce those laws.

IDA B. WELLS-BARNETT (1862–1931)

Ida Bell Wells-Barnett was born July 16, 1862, in Holly Springs, Mississippi. Both of her parents were slaves. Education was important to Wells's parents. In her teens she was educated at Shaw University, a school for freedmen, where the religious training she had received at home was reinforced.

In 1878, when she was 16, both parents died of yellow fever. Rather than allow her five younger siblings to be split up, she took responsibility of raising them herself. In 1881, after three of her siblings were old enough to live on their own, Wells and her two younger sisters moved to Memphis, Tennessee. While in Memphis, Wells became editor and co-owner of a local African American newspaper called the *Free Speech and Headlight*, writing editorials under the pen name "Lola."

Wells's crusade for justice began when she was removed from her seat on a railroad coach after she refused to give it up and sit in the "colored only" car. She challenged Jim Crow laws in Tennessee and brought a successful lawsuit against the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad in the circuit court. However, the Tennessee Supreme Court overruled the lower court in 1887. Wells completed her studies in 1888 at Rust College, passed an examination, and obtained a job teaching at a country school.

Wells continued her pursuit of justice. In 1891, continuing to use the pen name Lola, Wells wrote newspaper articles criticizing the lack of educational resources for African American children. When her teaching contract was not renewed, Wells continued her writing career, working as a journalist for the *Memphis Free Speech*, eventually acquiring an ownership interest in it.

After three of her friends were lynched by a mob in 1892, Wells began an anti-lynching crusade. While Wells was attending an editors' convention in New York, her newspaper office was destroyed. Her friends advised her not to return because her life was in danger. She took her crusade to England, returned to Chicago, and formed the Women's Era Club, the first civil rights organization for African American women, later renamed the Ida B. Wells Club in her honor.

In 1895 Wells published *A Red Record*, a history of lynching in America, and in that same year she married Ferdinand Barnett, a prominent Chicago attorney, devoting herself to raising two sons and two daughters.

Wells was asked to become a member of the “Committee of 40,” which laid the groundwork for the NAACP, the oldest civil rights organization in the country. Ida B. Wells-Barnett, daughter of slaves, publicist, writer, educator, and social activist, continued her crusade for equal rights for African Americans until her death on March 25, 1931.³⁶

Social Policy in the 1930s

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, Franklin Roosevelt initially shared former President Herbert Hoover’s belief that the economic system of the United States was fundamentally sound, proposing initiatives that were intended to be temporary efforts to lift the nation out of its economic collapse. These measures of the “First New Deal,” tentative as they were, represented a major break with the social policies of laissez-faire capitalism, however. For the first time in its history the federal government embraced a direct role in financing and organizing relief for citizens who were destitute in a time of financial crisis.

As important as they were, temporary relief and economic encouragement, Roosevelt quickly learned, were not enough to stem the rising tide of unemployment and economic malaise. A further shift in government action was needed. Massive agitation on the left from such figures as Huey Long of Louisiana, the La Follette brothers of Wisconsin, and Upton Sinclair and Francis Townsend of California were joined by “the American Public Welfare Association and the American Association of Social Workers [who] lobbied hard in the early 1930s for federal public works and employment relief.... Social workers never showed more interest in public welfare than they did in the Depression years,”³⁷ says James Patterson. They insisted that government take even more responsibility for managing the nation’s economic system, providing for the economic security and well-being of its citizens.

Many social workers advocated for progressive legislation and later became prominent in the Roosevelt administration, including Ewan Clague, administrator of the Social Security Administration; Jane Hoey, director of the Bureau of Public Assistance; Frances Perkins, secretary of labor; Wilbur J. Cohen, “Mr. Social Security,” author of the Social Security law and later secretary of HEW; Harry Hopkins, director of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and secretary

of commerce; Grace and Edith Abbott, Eduard Lindeman, Henry Morgenthau Jr., Adolph A. Berle, I. M. Rubinow, and Paul Kellog, editor of *Survey* magazine.

Because of the efforts of these social workers and others, Roosevelt moved to create a “welfare state,” instituting the most far-reaching and progressive social legislation in this nation’s history. He signed the Social Security Act of 1935, which permanently cemented the federal government’s role and responsibility in caring for certain categories of the poor, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a massive work relief program that put a third of unemployed Americans to work by 1936; the Fair Labor Standards Act, establishing a national minimum wage, the 40-hour work week, and national child labor laws; and the National Labor Relations Act, providing authority for employees to bargain collectively with management.

Social Policies in the 1940s and 1950s

After the momentous social legislation of the Depression era, social policy advocacy shifted from concern for the poor to prosperity for America’s rising middle class. American social policy of the 1940s and 1950s was built around two concerns: urbanization and the resulting urban crisis, and government efforts to manage and control the labor force.

Urbanization Policies around urbanization included urban renewal, housing for middle-income families, and the growth of the automobile industry.

Urban Renewal After World War II the federal government promoted a policy of constructing hundreds of thousands of low-income housing units, but, asserts John Eherenreich, little public housing was actually built.³⁸ In reality, “urban renewal” of the 1950s meant tearing down acres of slum housing and replacing it with commercial industrial construction, hospitals, museums, and universities. Little provision was made for the people whose housing, however substandard, was destroyed in the process. In fact, asserts Eherenreich, housing laws were used to *reduce* housing opportunities in the cities.³⁹

Middle-Class Housing The federal government, however, did subsidize enormous amounts of new home construction, but it was suburban housing for the middle class, not urban housing for the poor.

Ehrenreich says that “the net effect of federal housing policies in the postwar years was to strongly and systematically encourage the growth of new suburban areas while ignoring, or contributing to the destruction of, housing in the inner city.”⁴⁰

Automobile Industry The federal government embarked on a massive campaign to subsidize the automobile by providing funds for road building. The Interstate Highway Act of 1956 provided billions of dollars a year for highway construction, but not for mass transit. In the 1960s, federal subsidies for road building rose to \$4.3 billion a year, while subsidies for urban mass transit ranged from zero to \$103 million—and that amount only at the end of the decade. Fuel was also subsidized by the government by means of the oil depletion allowance, which provided billions of dollars to oil companies and enabled them to keep the price of gasoline artificially low. Public mass transit and long-distance passenger railroads stagnated, while the automobile and trucking industries prospered.

Urban Crisis Agricultural policies of the 1940s and 1950s contributed to expanded agribusiness and to the “urban crisis” of the 1960s. These policies included price supports and acreage limitations for farmers, keeping the price of farm products artificially high. Farmers used these supports to increase the quantity and quality of nonsubsidized crops while reducing the acreage for which government paid a subsidy. Government also subsidized research that underwrote the development of new high-yield seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, new machinery, and provided training for farmers in the application of new capital-intensive technologies, all of which primarily benefited larger farmers. Some farmers in the South with larger landholdings rented their vacant acreage to tenant farmers, often African Americans, who were unable to profit from government benefits.

Many other smaller farmers who grew specialized crops were often not able to benefit by government subsidies, however. As a result, millions of these farmers were forced to leave their farms, acreages were consolidated, and the remaining farms increased in size as agribusinesses bought up farmland at depressed prices. From 1940 to 1970 the number of American farms declined by more than half. African American tenant farmers, who could not compete with the larger, more efficient farms, were especially hard hit. Ehrenreich

says that between 1940 and 1969 the number of African American–owned or operated farms declined 87%, from 680,000 to 90,000.⁴¹

Many African Americans from rural areas of the South who were pushed out of farming headed toward the larger cities of the South and the North, lured by the hope of better jobs. Just as millions of unskilled African American began pouring in, white middle-class homeowners and businesses, encouraged by government-subsidized housing in the suburbs and increased use of the automobile, fled the central inner cities. When they arrived, however, African Americans often found that the jobs they were seeking had moved to the suburbs along with the city’s tax base that was needed to provide social services for the newcomers. Instead of prosperity, the cities offered unemployment, increased segregation, deteriorated housing, lack of recreational space, and lack of services. While African American unemployment in the 1940s exceeded that of whites by 20%, by 1955 it had soared to more than twice that level of discrepancy.

Management and Control of the Labor Force Officials of the Eisenhower administration in the 1950s were afraid that another severe depression would occur when unemployed veterans returned at the end of the Korean War. Advocacy on the part of conservatives turned to job and wealth creation and reduced social legislation. Government responded by encouraging women to leave the workforce by means of public media and by outright firings. Returning veterans of World War II and Korea were offered the GI Bill, which made it possible for millions to attend college instead of immediately entering the labor market.

At the same time government reduced the pool of private-sector civilian workers, simultaneously keeping demand high by maintaining a large standing army, expanding government civilian employment, and offering government contracts to the private sector, largely for military purposes. According to one estimate, asserts Ehrenreich, “these policies generated more than one quarter of all jobs in the U.S. economy, few of which, however, benefited the poor urban African or Hispanic Americans.”⁴² In addition, many whites insisted on segregating and overtly discriminating against African, Hispanic, and Native Americans in services, jobs, and facilities, and in the South and Southwest, denying them the political franchise as well.

Seedtime of Reform Although the late 1940s and 1950s were a period of relative calm, the seeds of radical protest were being planted by the very social policies intended to provide stability and prosperity. Masses of students were flooding the universities, many of whom had been schooled in war and racial division, providing the foundation for a student movement. Government policies that had undermined the careers of university-trained women, forcing them to remain at home as housewives, provided women with a lesson in injustice and sensitized them to their own powerlessness, inadvertently stimulating their readiness to engage in a feminist movement. The increasing concentration of African Americans in the inner cities of the North and Hispanic Americans in the Southwest were demonstrating the disparity between their lives and those of prosperous, white middle-class suburbanites. The times were ripe for concerted advocacy and civil rights activism.

The policies of the government in promising but not delivering on housing, and its reluctance to fund mass transit for inner-city dwellers while providing massive subsidies for highway, gasoline, and the automotive industries contributed to inner-city decline and raised people's consciousness about policies that worked against the urban poor. Combined with inadequate financial assistance and welfare services, these conditions provided a glaring contrast that favored one group of people while simultaneously disadvantaging another. Students, women, African Americans, and the urban poor, among others, were poised to challenge the inequitable government policies that kept them locked in unjust and inferior conditions.

Social Policies in the 1960s

Sparked by local community organizing and massive social movements, nonviolent protests between 1957 and 1973 were among the most significant of the century. The resulting social policies in the 1960s, including landmark legislation in civil rights and the War on Poverty, led to major improvement in people's social welfare.

Civil Rights Policies John Kennedy initially attempted to “temporize on black rights and sought solutions to social problems through a simple application of New Deal-style social policy,”⁴³ but it quickly

became apparent that these measures were insufficient. In June 1963 he sent a bill to Congress to “ban discrimination in all places of public accommodation, in employment, and to strengthen the Attorney General’s authority to speed up school desegregation.”⁴⁴

Lyndon Johnson continued these efforts to destroy segregation and discrimination through passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the 1968 Affirmative Action Order. The Voting Rights Act resulted in the registration of almost a million southern African Americans within three years, and by the mid-1970s in the South, African Americans had achieved registration in proportion to their population. Southern sheriffs and judges, representatives of institutional repression, became vulnerable to the African American vote, and the use of terror as a means of social control was diminished.

The War on Poverty The Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), passed in 1964, often called the War on Poverty, linked individual change to social reform, changing institutions, community patterns, and the “structure of opportunity.” The War on Poverty included antipoverty programs, community action programs (CAPs), and model cities programs.

Antipoverty Programs The EOA initiated a series of programs that provided for training and career development for young people: the Neighborhood Youth Corps for jobless teenagers, the Job Corps program for school dropouts, the New Careers programs for paraprofessionals, and college work-study programs and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), the domestic Peace Corps.

Community Action Programs Community action programs (CAPs) attempted to engage community residents directly in the development of locally based programs, funding inner-city projects of public and private agencies. They provided “advocacy for welfare recipients, establishment of day care and health care, and pressured welfare public housing and other agencies to respond more effectively and equitably to the poor.”⁴⁵ Programs included neighborhood health centers; Operation Head Start, a preschool training program for children; Upward Bound, a program encouraging slum children to go to college; Neighborhood Legal Services; Adult Basic Educational Services; family planning services; and addiction services.

Model Cities During the Johnson years, the federal government enlisted communities of the poor in advocating for and solving their own problems. The Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, often called the Model Cities program, provided for a concentrated and coordinated attack on the economic, social, and physical problems of selected slum neighborhoods. The poor themselves were asked to provide information and other input for planning the new programs, participate on the boards that planned and administered the programs, and perform some of the jobs that traditionally had been held by professionals.

Significance of the Kennedy and Johnson Initiatives By providing space for social advocacy on many levels, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had a significant effect in reducing poverty, increasing civil rights, expanding the arena of citizen participation, and empowering previously underrepresented groups in employment, political engagement, and educational opportunity.

The Civil Rights Act shifted the culture of the nation toward acceptance of African, Hispanic, and Native Americans and others as full-fledged citizens. The Voting Rights Act enormously expanded the entry of African Americans and other ethnic minorities into the political process. Improved legal and social status both stemmed from and led to a greater assertiveness on the part of African, Hispanic, and Native Americans and others. “Virtually all of the reduction in poverty since the mid-1960’s,” asserts Nathan Glazer, “came about through the expansion of social insurance and income transfer programs, such as welfare, food stamps, social security, and rent supplement programs initiated during the Kennedy/Johnson Administrations of the 60s.”⁴⁶

Social Policy in the 1970s and 1980s

The Nixon and Ford administrations (1969–1977) lost little time in dismantling much of the social legislation that the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had enacted, initiating a retrenchment in progressive social policy during the 1970s. The Reagan and Bush administrations (1981–1993) did the same for the social legislation of President Jimmy Carter (1977–1981), who had promoted a number of initiatives for local community and neighborhood development.

According to Gary Teeple, the goal of the Reagan and Bush administrations was to redistribute wealth upward, away from those with little.⁴⁷ Their policies emphasized “looking out for Number One,” and tended to ignore the concerns of the needy or the long-term general welfare of the American people. Social advocacy and confrontational tactics by neighborhood groups became less and less productive, and “local government officials argued that, although they were sympathetic to the issues, cities did not have the resources to address them, says Teeple.⁴⁸

As social organizations responded to federal cutbacks and the privatization of public services, activist community and advocacy organizations, including the IAF, shifted to partnership-based initiatives and consensus-oriented strategies to accomplish their goals. Kristina Smock observes that community development corporations tended to be pushed away from politics, forcing them to accommodate themselves to rather than redirect the course of the free market. Many social welfare organizations began to emphasize the importance of professionalism, strong management, and effective administration of programs. According to Smock, “grassroots neighborhood groups often developed into professional organizations that took a businesslike rather than an activist advocacy based approach to neighborhood improvement.”⁴⁹

Responding to the weakened condition of social advocacy, neoconservatives sought to cut social costs. Corporations went after labor unions, government programs, and social movements. “They shifted even the limited political dialogue about human needs to concern for corporate needs and delegitimized social action,”⁵⁰ says Smock.

Social Policies in the 1990s

Social policies in the 1990s included a return to interest in community affairs and reform of the welfare system.

Community Affairs At the federal level, in the 1990s the Clinton administration (1993–2001) based its urban agenda on the concept of government serving as a catalyst to develop strong networks of citizens, community organizations, and businesses in inner-city neighborhoods. Clinton’s approach emphasized the role of government in creating and sustaining strong, self-sufficient communities. Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Zone community projects, for

example, provided tax incentives and block grants to targeted areas. These initiatives encouraged private-sector investment, local collaboration, and comprehensive service provision.

Welfare Reform In the national elections of 1994, Republicans won control of both houses of Congress. The efforts of many social work organizations and individuals advocating for the poor were ignored. The 104th Congress instead initiated welfare reforms that limited the amount of time people could receive benefits, imposed stringent work requirements on recipients, and restricted the rights of single mothers under 18 to receive welfare. The legislation that was finally passed, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996, assigned responsibility for providing financial assistance to the states, and changed the name of AFDC to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The thrust of TANF was to move recipients of assistance off welfare and into jobs by providing them with work training and education to develop employable skills.

Social Policies in the First Decade of the 2000s

The George W. Bush administration (2001–2009) ignored most social and environmental advocacy efforts while increasing restriction of citizen access to government information. Rather than encouraging domestic policies to improve the infrastructure of the cities or engaging in the eradication of poverty, the nation saw a retrenchment in each of these areas. The Tokyo Accords, which would have provided a needed incentive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, were rejected. According to Jeremy Brecher, the second Bush administration was totally hostile to attempts to deal with global warming and other forms of environmental destruction.

The Bush administration did, however, attempt to engage in education reform, called the “No Child Left Behind” legislation. While this legislation was generally seen as ineffective, its “charitable choice” program assisted faith-based nonprofits to play an enlarged role in providing a variety of social and employment services. This executive order reinforced a trend of government ceding many of its direct service activities to social organizations.

During his first term in office, Barak Obama (2010–2013) signed the Health Care and Education

Reconciliation Act, which provided expanded health care benefits to many Americans, the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act for women, and authorized Secretary of Education Arne Duncan’s Race to the Top program, which created a competition among states for \$4.5 billion in extra funding tied to public school reforms. He also assisted in obtaining the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, designed to prevent economic meltdowns like the one he inherited when he took office, and rescinded the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy restricting rights of gay Americans in the military.

Implications of the History of Social Advocacy

The effectiveness of social advocacy tends to ebb and flow with the temperament of the political culture of those occupying the White House or holding a majority of seats in Congress. During the administrations of Roosevelt, Kennedy, Johnson, and Carter progressive social policy was given a sympathetic ear, and much positive social legislation resulted. The same trend held true for the administrations of Clinton and Obama.

The administrations of Nixon and Ford and especially those of Presidents Reagan and Bush, the 104th Congress, and President George W. Bush, however, with some notable exceptions, tended to turn a deaf ear to progressive legislation. Phyllis Day asserts that they “invested patriarchy—control of women children and workers—with a new “morality” that defies humankind’s vision of social morality ... creating a ‘Third-World citizenry’ within the United States, a neo-colonialism of our disadvantaged.”⁵¹

When progressive federal administrations are in office, advocates need to take assertive action to press for as much legislation as possible to achieve social change. When less progressive administrations are in power, their efforts need to shift to protecting their gains and building a foundation for future victories when the climate for change is more favorable.

HOW TO PRACTICE SOCIAL ADVOCACY

For all the challenges that exist, advocates in cities across the nation can achieve success in securing improved policies and practices and moving their interests forward. Liz Baumgarten says that “engaging

in social advocacy can encompass many activities such as building coalitions, grassroots organizing, messaging campaigns aimed to educate and engage the public, and direct lobbying.⁵² Whether you are advocating on behalf a social service agency, a professional organization, a PAC, or a cause supported by a social advocacy organization, there are eight steps in the policy advocacy process: choose an issue, discover key actors, gather information, generate interventions, develop a strategy, choose tactics and make a series of interventions, adapt and revise your strategy, and then repeat the cycle.

Choose an Issue

The critical first element in policy advocacy is to choose an innovative issue that promotes the social agenda of your group. In contrast to a program proposal, this idea should, according to Bessant et al., be theoretically based and have broad policy applications. “Approaching the field with an idea permits social workers to design a number of possible program proposals. In contrast, when social workers approach the field with only a program proposal and it is rejected, they are left with little else to work with,”⁵³ she says. Your group asks questions and considers their values.

Asking Questions Your idea and related program proposals should be aimed at making real improvements in people’s lives. Thinking creatively “outside the box” requires a broad perspective and a determined search for alternative approaches. As your group considers a variety of approaches, you ask how long it has been a problem, what has been tried in the past, and why the issue hasn’t been resolved.

Values You ask about the values embodied in the issue. Values are key factors in generating your policy idea or issue. For instance, one value that is important to consider is justice. Another is equity, the redress of imbalances or unfairness. Proposals can get onto the agenda if an existing policy is seen as unjust or unfair, even if your proposed remedies are more financially costly. Justice and equity may often override policy analysis based mainly on efficiency criteria.

Discover Key Players

Key players are those who have been affected by a policy issue, who have been working for the issue or

against it, who have opinions about it, who may be asked to decide its fate, and who have some kind of stake in the outcome. Key players are often perpetrators and victims, allies and enemies, those who may benefit from your policy proposal or lose by it, experts and decision makers.

You ask, “Who are these key players, and where do they stand?” Knowing how key players line up around the issue will help you assess what you can realistically accomplish and the best way of going about it.

Perpetrators Perpetrators are those who create, condone, or benefit from a particular issue. Targets could be individuals, interest groups, corporations, government offices, or bureaucracies. Often you can identify the source of the problem as an organization or a company as well as particular people who have the authority to do something about the issue.

Think about who benefits from the current situation and how. Harmful conditions, for example, are often set in motion by people who will gain from their creation and perpetuation. If you can examine who benefits and how, you have a powerful tool to understand the motivation of the perpetrators.

Victims Consider how people are injured or damaged by the problem, how often, and in what ways. Your efforts are aimed at bringing relief to victims of harmful situations. If you can document specific harm in identifiable ways and attribute the cause of that harm to activities of particular interest groups or organizations, you may have compelling evidence that can win your case.

Allies You want to go into your advocacy efforts with a clear sense of who is likely to be on your side—the more the better, and preferably a cross-section of the community. Try to discover who else is either working on the issue or has in the past, and how effective they have been. It is possible that you can combine efforts from your different positions or perspectives?

Recognize that everyone potentially has a role to play, even though they will not all play the same role. Some people will show up at a protest; others, a news conference. Some will join the coalition; others will agree to submit a letter of support. Some will work behind the scenes; others will be out front. Welcome all these efforts to garner maximum support.

Enemies You also need to know who is likely to mount opposition. Find out who your likely opponents might be and how effective and well organized they are. Discover their allies and supporters and how well connected they are. You will also need to know the kinds of messages your opponents will put out and the strategies and tactics that they will mount. If you can anticipate the content of their campaigns you may be able to develop competent responses.

Stakeholders Those who have something of financial, political, or personal value to gain or lose are called stakeholders. Depending on the salience of the issue for them and amount of benefit or loss they stand to encounter, stakeholders can be important contenders for your attention. Who stands to gain? They may be supporters of your proposal. Who will lose financially or politically? These are likely your most dangerous opponents.

Experts and Decision Makers Above all, your group must understand who has expertise in your policy arena and what they have had to say about it. You must also have an intimate knowledge of those people in authority who can decide for or against your proposal.

Experts Explore those who are considered the experts on this issue, including those whose names repeatedly come up in conversations, newspaper articles, and published reports on the topic. Expert commentators may have written articles or books, lectured, or served on influential committees and can speak authoritatively on the subject.

Experts are valuable people who have often devoted a great deal of time to investigating, working on, or studying an issue. Often their findings and opinions are important, even if their perspective does not agree with yours. It is important to understand the positions of these experts because others listen to them. If they support your idea, you have gained a powerful ally. On the other hand, if they disagree, their assessments can provide you and your group with important information that you will need to consider if your proposal is to succeed.

Decision Makers Decision makers are those who have power to actually do something about an issue. Often decision makers are legislators, commissioners, key government officials, or heads of government

agencies who are in a position to approve or defeat a proposed change. The overall goal of an advocacy campaign is to influence these decision makers in a direction that is favorable to your position.

Decision makers face ever-increasing amounts of communication designed to gain their attention. To be effective in this crowded environment, advocacy campaigns must frame messages in a compelling manner. Many tactics described below are aimed at reaching these key decision makers.

Getting Information

In advocacy, research means learning all you can about the problem you face and about possible solutions to it. Knowledge is power. When you know everything you can about an issue, you can put substance behind your position, frame the conversation, and paint the portrait of reality. You anticipate arguments the opposition will raise and seize opportunities to move your agenda forward. You know when and just how much to compromise without undermining your original goals,⁵⁴ says Theodore Stein. Your group has facts and uses that data to determine the reality of the conditions that your policy hopes to resolve.

Use Facts Facts are the fuel of advocacy. Facts provide direction. They can tell you what exactly needs to be changed, the best way to accomplish the change, and whom to hold accountable for making the change. Facts also bolster credibility. The media are more likely to pay attention, legislators are more inclined to listen, and allies are more eager to invest their resources when your effort is backed up with compelling information. Facts prove there's a problem. They convince decision makers of the best solution, poke holes in the arguments of the opposition, and otherwise make your case and build support.

Gathering Data On any given issue, there is lots of information in newspaper articles, published reports, scientific studies, and government documents. Much of this is easily accessible and understandable to the general public. In addition to reviewing these sources, gather facts firsthand, interviewing people in your community to see who is being hurt by a problem and how. You may also want to work with experts who are willing to help you with your advocacy agenda. These efforts can have a great deal of power in moving an advocacy agenda.

There is no magic formula or set way of gathering information. You can start anywhere you want: wherever seems easiest, comes to mind first, or feels most comfortable. You might start by surfing the Internet or going to the library for articles and reports. Then call some experts whose names appeared in the publications to clarify things you've read or to give you insights. Contact advocates who've worked in other places to locate other information you should get, who else you should talk to, or where to get ideas about possible solutions. After reviewing this information, you might go back to the experts and advocates to ask follow-up questions and examine solutions tried elsewhere to see whether they worked or could be improved upon.

Developing Potential Interventions

Your advocacy group devises possible interventions. You can generate solutions informally by brainstorming or more formally by using the policy analysis process.

Brainstorming When brainstorming potential solutions, be creative. Keep your mind open, and prioritize the possibilities in order of their potential in achieving success. Ask yourselves: What changes are likely to solve the problem? What do people affected by the problem and other stakeholders think? How have other localities addressed similar problems? What was effective? What wasn't?

Policy Analysis Process Your members examine issues they cannot change and those they can. Make a list of change points. Develop and rank the alternative solutions they have developed.

Issues You Cannot Change Eliminate those issues about which you can do nothing. For example, in considering the problem of elder abuse, your advocacy group may decide that eradicating the cause of elder abuse is an issue they cannot change. However, try to be conservative when deciding what the group cannot change. Things that at first appear unchangeable may turn out to be amenable to change after all. For example, the stress of caring for a frail elderly parent may be reduced by developing policies that allow for home-maker assistance, respite care, day programs, counseling, and other services.

Issues You Can Change After your group has eliminated those components of the problem they cannot change, your members are left with those elements over which they have some control. If your group discovered, for instance, that some elder abuse is caused by care workers, your advocacy group might recommend better screening of care workers and better standards for care workers, medical personnel, and social workers. Your group may examine the quality of care worker training or the ratio of care workers and other staff to elderly clients in a facility.

They could assess the system of reporting elder abuse. They could make recommendations about how to handle specific incidents of abuse. They could provide ideas about a variety of services to prevent elder abuse. These are windows of opportunity where changes can bring about different consequences for people.

List Change Points List your group's "change points" on a board to make them explicit. Help your members analyze the change points by asking the following questions.

1. Who will be affected?
2. What action will be taken?
3. Who will pay and by what means?
4. Who will implement the policy?
5. Who will have jurisdiction over the policy?
6. How will the policy be regulated?

Consider the problem of elder abuse in Northtown. For each category, list as many items as your group can think of. For example, assume your group wants to examine the quality of caretaker training. Those affected would be the elderly persons, siblings, children, doctors, nurses, social workers, and caretakers. Actions might include screening caretakers, giving examinations, tests, and internships. The issue of who will pay would include citizens, businesses, and others. Financial measures include taxes, grants, contracts, loans, rewards, incentives, subsidies, and compensation for loss. Jurisdiction could be the Department of Social Services, county sheriff's department, or city police. Regulation may occur by means of standards, licenses, codes, warning, fines, probation, or incarceration.

Place each of these lists in separate columns and, using iteration, take the first item from the first column and add one item from each additional column to it,

putting together different combinations of items. For example, an item may look like “screen caretakers, paid for by taxes, monitored by welfare department, implemented by Area Agency on Aging, regulated by fines.” Then move to the second item on the first column and repeat the process until you have worked through every item. Some combinations will make no sense, but using this technique will open your group to thinking of alternatives they may not have visualized.

Examine and Rank Alternative Solutions

Your group examines the lists of alternatives and eliminates those that are obviously not workable. Then the group ranks the viable alternatives in order. Leaving things just as they are is an option that your group should always consider.

Convene a public forum or arrange for focus groups to get input from the community on the issues and on the various alternatives that your group is now considering. Community forums or focus groups are intended to present alternatives and to solicit input. These community gatherings may help your advocacy group sharpen their perspective. Members may discover issues they have not previously considered. They may obtain a clearer sense of the community's interests.

Choose among Alternative Solutions

In the best of all worlds the advocacy group would choose an alternative that members consider the best one. The best solution, however, may not be feasible. Your group, therefore, needs to assess which of their most highly ranked alternatives have the best chance of being implemented. There are three ways to consider which of the alternative solutions are the most feasible. You can assess political feasibility, economic feasibility, and social feasibility.

Assess Political Feasibility If your advocacy group recommends implementing a proposal, you need to consider political actors—those who hold power—and their influence. Many political actors will have a stake in the outcome of any policy. Each of these individuals or groups may have preferred solutions that will compete with your solution in the political arena. Politicians may be interested in your group's policy

solution only to the extent that it enhances or detracts from their chances for reelection or its effect on their constituencies. Think of the most important political decision makers who will influence the choice of a policy. Consider the issue position, power, and salience that a policy commands for these decision makers.

Issue Position Issue position indicates the strength of support an actor expresses for a particular alternative solution. Score each of the decision makers who you believe support your policy with a +1 to a +3. Score those who oppose your policy with a -1 to a -3, and assign 0 to those who are neutral or who have no opinion about the issue.

Power The power variable estimates the amount of power possessed by the actor to decide on the alternative. If the actor has maximum influence to decide, assign a 3, moderate influence a 2, and low influence a 1. Assign a 0 to those who have no influence at all.

Salience The third variable is salience, the degree to which the actor cares about and pays attention to the issue. Salience measures how high the issue stands on the actor's list of concerns, in contrast to issue position, which indicates the strength of the actor's preference for the particular alternative solution. Score 3 for actors who feel strongly about the policy issue, 2 for decision makers who are moderately concerned about the issue, 1 for those who have low interest, and 0 for those who give no importance at all to the issue.

Calculate the Political Feasibility Calculate the political feasibility for each of your top alternatives by multiplying the three variables for each decision maker and then adding the scores. The larger the positive number, the more likely that support for this alternative will be strong. The closer the net score is to zero, the more likely the alternative will be politically contentious. The larger the negative score, the more likely this particular alternative will not be politically feasible.⁵⁵

Assess Economic Feasibility There are three ways to assess economic feasibility: benefit-cost analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, and decision analysis.

Benefit-Cost Analysis Benefit-cost analysis is a method by which your group compares costs and

benefits of alternative policy options. Given two proposals, each of which will meet your goals, the one with the highest benefit–cost ratio will often be more appealing to decision makers. Generally speaking, a benefit–cost ratio that equals or exceeds 1 will attract attention because the benefits of that alternative will equal or exceed its costs.

Add all of the benefits in dollars that will be incurred by implementing the alternative. Divide these benefits by the sum of all of the costs to obtain a benefit–cost ratio. For example, in considering a problem involving gun control, suppose your group decided on the three most politically feasible alternatives to control access to guns in Northside. Assume that the cost of a child’s life is \$500,000 and that each alternative has equal benefits; that is, the life of one child will be saved for every 10,000 guns neutralized. The hypothetical benefit–cost ratios for three alternatives are as follows:

1. Require all guns to have a special child-proof safety device at \$10 additional cost, to be borne by the buyer. Assuming 10,000 guns, the estimated total cost of saving the life of one child is $\$10 \times 10,000 = \$100,000$. The benefit–cost ratio is $500,000/100,000 = 5$.
2. Require anyone owning a gun to have special training in safety, paid for by the gun owner. Training costs \$100 per gun owner. Total cost for 10,000 owners is $100 \times 10,000 = \$1,000,000$ to save one child’s life. The benefit–cost ratio is $500,000/1,000,000$ or 0.5.
3. Institute an amnesty program in which guns would be accepted by the local government for destruction in return for a \$200 rebate per gun, paid for by taxpayers. The total cost for alternative 3 for 10,000 guns recaptured for each life saved is \$2,000,000. The benefit–cost ratio is $500,000/2,000,000$ or 0.25.

Given these three proposals, the most favorable benefit–cost ratio is to provide guns with safety devices. It is also the most politically feasible because the cost is borne by the buyer rather than by taxpayers. The amnesty program is least cost-beneficial, not only because it is most expensive but also because the cost is borne by all taxpayers. A limitation of benefit–cost analysis is the difficulty in assigning monetary costs to such intangibles as a human life and the difficulty of calculating future unknowns with any accuracy.

Cost-Effectiveness Analysis Sometimes costs and benefits of different policy options cannot be clearly identified to allow for benefit-cost analysis. When this occurs, benefit–cost analysis is often replaced by cost-effectiveness analysis. Cost-effectiveness analysis expresses the actual monetary cost per unit of benefit or expected outcome. Examples of costs effectiveness include the following:

- The amount of money needed to reduce the number of incidents of elder abuse by a certain number.
- The amount of money needed for an alcohol abuser to achieve abstinence over a period of time.
- The amount of money needed for a former convict to not recidivate.
- The amount of money needed to achieve a certain percentage increase in the literacy rate of the population.
- The amount of money needed to reduce infant mortality by a certain percentage.
- The amount of money needed to reduce child abuse by a particular number.

By themselves, cost-effectiveness dollar amounts say little about whether a policy should or should not be implemented. Therefore, policymakers often compare the cost-effectiveness of several different options. For example, each of the following costs are compared.

1. The cost per offense to the county of rehabilitating an alcoholic convicted of drunk driving: \$10,000.
2. The cost per offense of incarcerating the driver for a particular period: $\$200 \text{ per day} \times 30 \text{ days} = \$6,000$.
3. The cost per offence of withholding the driver’s license and imposing a fine \$300 administrative costs – \$300 fine = 0.
4. The cost per offence of mandating community service and driver training courses, borne by the offender: $30 \text{ days community service @ } \$60 \text{ wages per day} = \$1,800$ cost savings to the county.
5. Doing nothing = \$,2000 cost per offense.

The cost of doing nothing may be determined by the average cost of property damage, injuries, and deaths incurred per alcoholic. By comparing costs, policymakers can then judge which of these alternatives is the best use of taxpayers’ money. In this case the most

cost-effective solution would be option 4, mandating community service and driver training courses, borne by the offender, saving the county \$1,800 per offense. An advantage of cost-effectiveness analysis is the ease by which expenses of one alternative can be calculated in comparison to other alternatives. Policymakers can judge whether a policy option is sufficiently effective to warrant its cost.

Decision Analysis Decision analysis requires a panel of experts to assign a numeric score to an agreed-upon common denominator to all benefits and costs. For example, the cost of the abuse of a child or the benefits of preventing or rehabilitating abuse would be calculated. With such numeric scores, statistically expected values of each alternative policy solution can be computed. Comparing these values for each policy alternative will then yield the optimal policy decision.

Assess Social Feasibility Social feasibility estimates the impact on people, groups, organizations, and communities that will result from one or more policy options. Social feasibility is measured by means of a social impact assessment (SIA). In developing an SIA for a crosstown expressway in Northtown, for example, a policy analysis group first studied a variety of costs including aesthetics, traffic, and directness of route in addition to construction and maintenance costs. Then they assessed potential beneficial impacts of the expressway on employment, urban renewal, property values, and community life. Each variable was assigned a subjective score for acceptability, from 0 to 10. Benefit scores were divided by costs to yield a benefit/cost assessment. The alternative with the highest benefit/cost score would be determined to have the best social impact.

While SIA acceptability scores cannot be used to calculate social benefits in monetary terms, by considering a range of costs and benefits, SIAs do consider less tangible but important aspects of social concern. Because SIAs help policymakers assess the extent to which an alternative will have an adverse impact on the public, they give some indication of public acceptability of a particular alternative.⁵⁶

Develop a Strategy

An advocacy strategy is the road map that lays out where you are, where you want to go, and the

resources, tools, and tactics you will use to get there. It will help keep you focused, organize your time, mark important deadlines and interim wins, and tell you where you need to go from there.

Strategies should include compelling objectives to get people interested in working for your policy idea. Your objectives must be politically attainable. At the beginning, concentrate on objectives that are tangible, practical, and that everyone can relate to and wants to be a part of achieving. In addition, you should work to accomplish immediate, concrete, short-term objectives that you can easily win, those that will provide important steps toward your ultimate goal. Objectives need to be small enough to achieve at least part of your goal within a year or two to keep people interested.

Build your strategies by outlining who, where, when, and why you intend to engage in activities to accomplish your objectives. Once you have devised several strategies, you ask how you will achieve them. Answering the “how” question leads your group to tactics.

Tactics

Tactics are actions that your advocacy group takes to deliver its advocacy message and accomplish its interventions. The Democracy Center says that “generally, the best actions are those requiring the least effort and confrontation, but which still get the job done.”⁵⁷ Advocacy tactics include media campaigns, consensus policy advocacy, lobbying, political pressure tactics, initiative and referendum, legal action, e-advocacy, and blending approaches.

Media Campaigns At the societal level, media campaigns are often effective in reaching a broad audience. The media play an important role in advancing the agendas of the legislative and executive branches of government as well as those of nonprofit and social advocacy organizations seeking to resolve a policy problem. Your group can use public information campaigns including television, talk radio, newspaper articles, stories, and letters to the editor as important parts of the policy change process. Media bring issues to public attention, creating a climate in which change is possible.

Just as the media is shaped by carefully crafted political campaigns and by special interest groups, your group can also develop relationships with media

to increase their understanding and support of your position. Sometimes media attention can sway opinion, but at other times it is not immediately effective.

While media attention may focus public attention on an issue, at any given time a number of issues compete for a place on the agenda of persons or groups proposing policy solutions. According to Theodore Stein, “media attention alone is sometimes not sufficient to ensure that an issue will find its way onto the agenda of governmental bodies.”⁵⁸ Stein asserts, for example, that the media reported extensively on the AIDS epidemic for years before Congress eventually took up the issue.⁵⁹

Consensus Policy Advocacy Your organization can link up with other advocacy and special interest groups that support concerns in your area of interest. By combining forces, you can increase your power, range of options, and access to resources.

Lobbying Just as large corporations continually work for their self-interests, you and your members can lobby governmental officials in the public interest, equalizing the power balance. You ensure that individuals, groups, and communities who cannot lobby for themselves are represented in the political bargaining process. Lobbying is a fundamental part of the American system of government,⁶⁰ say Haynes and Mickelson. You and your advocacy group can lobby face-to-face, by telephone, letter, or by giving testimony.

Face-to-Face Lobbying Lobbying involves talking to public officials about a particular piece of legislation. Within specific state or federal guidelines, nonprofits are permitted to spend up to a million dollars on lobbying. Keep in mind that a legislator needs your information and assistance. When you lobby a legislator face to face, be honest and factual. Know your issue thoroughly. Anticipate the opposition’s claims and formulate persuasive counterarguments. Acknowledge the merits of competing proposals. If your group members are unwilling to acknowledge the strengths of alternative proposals or the weaknesses of your organization’s own proposal, your members may be seen as propagandists, which will damage their credibility.

Straightforward presentations with data are generally the most persuasive. Be able to answer two critical concerns of legislators: What will the proposed legislation cost? and What will be the bill’s social impact?

Provide succinct supportive documents. Thank legislators for their time and for being open-minded. Follow up with a thank-you letter that includes a synopsis of the position taken by that legislator during the meeting and with anything that you have agreed to do.

Letter Writing Letters to legislators are an effective way to get your point across. Make them short, to the point, and credible, one or two pages at most. Describe your position succinctly and provide documentation. Avoid form letters or those that look like form letters. The more personal the letters are, the more persuasive they will be. Clearly handwritten letters on a member’s own stationery are the most effective. End your letter with a short thank-you for considering the proposal.

Telephoning Phone calls, usually 48 hours before a legislative vote, will signal a legislator which way the wind is blowing on a piece of legislation and may swing those who are undecided. When calling, state who you are and the message you wish to convey. For example, “I would like to urge Representative Smith to vote yes on Bill 33 because....” Leave your name, address, and phone number to confirm that you are a constituent.

Advocacy Testimony Legislative committees gather as much information as possible from a wide variety of viewpoints. You or your members may be asked to testify on behalf of the social issue about which your organization has been advocating. The key to offering successful testimony is preparation. Keep your presentation to ten minutes or less. Never read a statement, but make your testimony interesting and conversational.⁶¹

Political Pressure Tactics Your group may consider using the variety of political pressure tactics described in Chapter 9, including exposure of perpetrators and direct confrontation to achieve your policy goals.

Initiative and Referendum In a number of states, the public at large is able to set its own policy agenda through the mechanism of the voter initiative. Here, the ability of a group to place an issue on the ballot is contingent on convincing a percentage of the voting public to sign a petition supporting the initiative. Social workers were among the originators of initiative and referendum laws. In states where initiative and

referendum are permitted, your group may be able to develop a campaign to collect enough signatures on petitions to qualify for voting on your proposal.

Legal Action Encouraging your group to seek redress by means of legal action is one way to set precedents and secure change. Class action lawsuits against cigarette smoking, for example, have had a major impact on public health. Others have been employed in protecting consumer rights and preventing environmental contamination by industry.⁶²

Theodore Stein adds that advocacy agencies may develop agendas to guide activities during an upcoming legislative session. When courts are considering cases of concern to their constituents, they may file *amicus* (“friend of the court”) briefs urging the court to consider the issues they believe to be important.⁶³

E-Advocacy Unlike print media and television, where information is directed to a passive audience and shaped by editorial policies, the interactive nature of the Internet creates the potential for influencing public opinion in ways not previously imagined. E-advocacy, asserts Arnold Chandler, “increases the pressure to make change happen.”⁶⁴ It presents organizations and coalitions with heightened opportunities to affect public policymaking tailored to an organization’s specific campaign goals.

As a complement to traditional strategies, e-advocacy expands possibilities for framing policy problems for a wide audience, providing almost instant dissemination of information and availability of documents. It facilitates audience engagement around policy solutions. E-advocacy promotes interaction among advocacy supporters, mobilizes supporters to take action on behalf of a campaign, including lobbying public officials, and influences the media to help shape public opinion.

E-advocacy is relatively inexpensive and easy to use. It allows advocacy groups to reduce costs and extend their reach, and it is most useful when combined with traditional media techniques. E-advocacy includes an entire arsenal of techniques for getting people involved in social causes including websites, e-mail, blogging, independent networks, virtual marketing, online publishing, e-government, and web journalism.

Websites Websites allow organizations to contact their audiences with targeted messages to build and strengthen their support base. After seeing a news

story or hearing about a campaign issue, audiences who want to know more about a campaign can visit an organization’s website. Potential supporters can be reached by e-mail message forwarded to them by a friend or colleague and, by contacting a website, find answers to their questions in an interactive way, 24 hours a day. Websites excel in garnering member support, monitoring supporter feedback, and raising funds.

Garner Support. A well-organized website with engaging content can turn passive viewers into active supporters and even convince them to recruit friends to join the campaign. In this way, an advocacy website serves both to deepen awareness and to create avenues for participation that other types of media cannot match. Websites are a way for organizations to garner new supporters and entice their participation in the campaign. Supporters can sign up for information updates, enabling the host organization to collect e-mail addresses and build e-mail lists.

Monitor Supporter Feedback. Websites are a means to target communications with content that is specific to supporter concerns. They can monitor supporter feedback and track online activity to identify strong supporters. Monitoring the number of times a campaign website is visited and the actions taken by its visitors is an efficient means for organizations to track the effectiveness of their online messages and content.

Fundraising. Websites offer considerable capability to conduct fundraising in support of political and advocacy campaigns. “Whether the actual fundraising transaction takes place online or whether supporters send checks via postal mail, the impact of the Internet to reach untapped audiences increases the potential to raise substantial amounts of money,”⁶⁵ says Chandler.

E-Mail The actions of e-mail recipients can be monitored after they respond to an e-mail “call to action.” E-mail allows the campaign to view recipients’ actions and gauge their level of involvement with the campaign. “The invaluable capability to track how audiences are interacting with a campaign’s advocacy messages sets online advocacy apart from traditional offline approaches.”⁶⁶ says Chandler.

E-mail also has the capacity to circulate breaking news and invite supporters to shape political discourse. Keeping supporters informed of breaking news and developments is central to an advocacy campaign. The power of e-mail is unmatched for turning around a quick response to breaking news and developments.

Organizations can quickly update information about a campaign and provide supporters with information to use in response to calls to action.

Blogging Blogging permits people to “post information immediately and encourages audiences/supporters to participate in shaping the discourse around an advocacy issue.”⁶⁷ Blogs are known primarily for being platforms for delivering opinion and commentary, but many actually do real reporting as well. One example is *New Politicus*.⁶⁸ Twitter, a form of microblogging, enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters, known as “tweets.”

Independent Networks Perhaps the most compelling characteristic of e-advocacy is the ease with which it allows individuals to form their own networks on behalf of an advocacy campaign. Independent networks provide technology tools that enable individuals to engage in “peer-to-peer” organizing by recruiting their friends and colleagues into “mini-campaigns” in support of larger advocacy efforts. Chandler claims that the potential for mass mobilization increases considerably when supporters are equipped with the tools to recruit, organize, and help others take action on behalf of an advocacy campaign.⁶⁹

Virtual Marketing E-advocacy is a kind of “virtual marketing” that allows campaigns to grow a dispersed but connected base of supporters they might not otherwise reach with offline approaches alone.⁷⁰ Individuals spread advocacy messages via e-mail to their friends and colleagues, often utilizing compelling visual narratives in short animation pieces that persuade individuals to learn more about advocacy campaigns and to get involved.

E-Government Electronic government (e-government) is the process of delivering government services through technology. Today a movement is growing to put a large portion of available government information on the Internet. This will increase the capacity of government to respond electronically and encourage citizens to think of cyberspace as an arena of government action, making e-advocacy more acceptable to decision makers.

Blending Approaches Rather than relying on only one technique, encourage your advocacy group or organization to blend media, political pressure, legal tactics,

and lobbying along with e-advocacy approaches. For example, if the goal of the organization is to increase the city’s commitment to open housing, representatives of the organization might generate general community interest and provide information by developing media attention and by e-advocacy. They can lobby to get a strong open-housing ordinance on the books (a political pressure tactic), simultaneously seeking a court injunction to halt the city’s receipt of state development funds until its housing profile improves (a legal tactic), while conducting demonstrations in front of city hall to publicize the difficulties facing the poor in finding housing (a confrontation tactic).

Revise Strategy and Begin Again

Advocacy often requires going from one strategy to another—and back again. If you win, you have to make sure that the changes you won are really carried out. If they aren’t, you may have to go to court, city hall, or the legislature to demand that the responsible government agency take action. Your opponents may try to undo your win. If you succeed in passing a new law, they may take the issue to the ballot or the courts. And even if you lose, there’s always another day, another strategy, and another set of circumstances with new opportunities. “Every small accomplishment is a step towards something better,”⁷¹ say Ebright and Borron. Through all the ups and downs, successes and setbacks, pick yourself up and keep going. Advocacy is one of the most powerful forces for change.

SOCIAL ACTION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social action is a process by which groups of people engage in agitation to express their collective grievances over conditions in society that have been either ignored or ineffectively addressed in the normal course of political affairs. Social action continues to be a strong and viable means of social change as social problems become entrenched in the economic and political institutions of our society. When smaller social action groups or local community organizations join together in a prolonged, coordinated, nationwide, or even global effort, social action becomes a social movement.

Today we are experiencing two different kinds of social movements operating more or less simultaneously, with different goals and different methods. First and

most common are modern social movements. Modern social movements generally accept the political and economic framework of society, along with its premises and values, but seeks to reform specific conditions that have been left unattended or to correct defects that have distorted society's functioning. Modern social movements try to improve society by making it better, more effective, and more just.

Second is a deeper and more radical movement that seeks to move beyond the modern project of reform. Rather than reform, the goal of postmodern social movements is to transform modern society and its structures, bringing about an alternative culture based on renewed values and structures.

Modern Social Action and Social Movements

Modern social action is not seriously opposed to the premises of the market system or mass representative democracy. In fact, modern social action and movements are aligned with modernity and seek to improve it. Practiced under many names, it has been variously called social reform, social protest, and resistance. It has occurred under the labels of cultural resistance, civil disobedience, and even civil insurrection. Modern social action and social movements have accomplished a great deal and brought about many positive changes in our society.

Modern social movements seek to ensure that both the economy and the government will deliver on their promises, providing increasing opportunity for ordinary people to achieve their self-interests and obtain at least some of their policy aims.

Modern social movements try to slow down or stop practices that many citizens perceive as politically unjust, socially harmful, or economically inequitable. They seek to extend the benefits of the free market and representative democracy to more and more people. They most often focus on a single issue such as gun control, health care, or an end to corporate influence in politics. Modern social movements attempt "to realize the democratic dream of equality, justice, peace, cooperation, equal and full opportunities for education, full and useful employment, health and the creation of those circumstances in which man can have the chance to live by values that give meaning to life,"⁷² says Saul Alinsky.

Modern social movements have helped many groups of people share in the benefits of modernity:

immigrants, people of color, women, laborers, children, and others. The abolitionist movement struggled to end the scourge of slavery, and later the civil rights movement worked to end segregation and discriminatory social policies in the United States. The women's suffrage movement helped secure voting rights for women in this country. The labor movement worked at ending the exploitation of workers including women and children in sweatshops, factories and mines. It struggled to obtain safe working conditions, reasonable work hours, decent pay, the establishment of fair employment policies, and right to engage in collective bargaining.

Modern social movements are open to and, in fact, must mobilize as many people as possible from all walks of life to effect societal change. Social movements may take a long time to win the struggle in which they are engaged. Once the struggle for adoption of public policy has generally been won, however, the movement slows and its membership often shifts to a watchdog role. For example, the women's suffrage movement progressed with increasing vigor over a period of about 50 years. Once the constitutional amendment was passed giving women the vote, the movement had achieved its purpose and disbanded. Its remnants continue, however, as the League for Women Voters. The abolitionist movement began in the 1830s and ended with the Thirteenth Amendment 30 years later. The struggle for complete civil rights continued for the next 50 years with the activities of tens of thousands of individuals, hundreds of local community organizations, and numbers of larger associations that comprised the civil rights movement. Today civil rights groups such as the NAACP, the National Urban League, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the National Council on Educating Black Children, Rainbow PUSH Coalition, and others continue to monitor and work to stamp out the discrimination and racism wherever they exist.

Postmodern Social Action and Social Movements

"Some time between 1965 and 1973," says Peter Drucker, "we passed over a divide and entered the 'next century.' We are in political *terra incognita* with few landmarks to guide us."⁷³ Members of modern North American civilization, whether or not they are fully aware of it, are living in a transition period between the modern world created by the Enlightenment in

Europe, which is passing away but is still much with us, and the new postmodern era, the outlines of which remain to be fashioned.

Social critics such as Anthony Giddens, Amílcar Cabral, Herbert Marcuse, and others assert that America's propensity toward violence, second-class status for women, and the compulsion to destroy the environment are intimately connected to a unified, dominant modern culture. In this culture, a scientific control orientation, organized systems of power relations, rational self-interest, and possessive individualism dominate the modern worldview. The coming postmodern era cannot be constructed from the combined ideology of these components or its modern structures. The newly emerging society cannot be built on the foundations of free enterprise capitalism, mass representative democracy, or the complex organizational systems that comprise modernity.

Postmodern Social Action Postmodern social action goes beyond modernity. Postmodern social action does not aim at reforming modernity, improving its functioning, or extending its benefits as important and worthy as these efforts are. It is aimed at eradicating the innate antinomies of modern society and restoring its missing elements, including the social commons and authentic human action. Postmodern social action intends to dissolve its individualist, power- and wealth-seeking orientation and its reliance on political passivity in order to bring about a new society.

Postmodern Social Movements Postmodern social thinkers challenge the premises on which the dominant modern culture is based and, along with social activists, engage themselves in understanding and creating “new social movements” to bring about a society freed from captivity to the modern mind. Their aim is to shape a new era unlike anything that has been seen before. Eyerman and Jamison assert that society is “continuously being recreated through complex processes of interaction and innovation in particular contexts,”⁷⁴ by means of a variety of these new social movements. By 1983, for example, the major media were reporting a new kind of social action around the country, what John Herbers of the *New York Times* called a “new wave of citizen initiatives.”

Women's liberation, the peace movement, the environmental movement, the new consumer movements, and the Occupy movement represent “new

kinds of citizen involvement in which ordinary people became knowledgeable about the most complex issues,”⁷⁵ says Harry Boyte. Postmodern movements reach beyond issues of economics to include issues of collective identity, new modes of consciousness, and a reconsideration of the basic premises upon which modern Enlightenment culture is founded.

Postmodern social movements are fundamental efforts to make public decision making fully accountable to those affected. Rather than have their futures determined by the decisions of others based on the amount of wealth they have been able to grasp, or determined by a male-dominated gender orientation, postmodern social movements aim to give people in their communities the chance to control their own futures,⁷⁶ according to Richard Flacks. The shared logic of the new movements is the demand that society be structured so that people themselves shape the conditions of their lives and create a social commons that will provide opportunity to all.

A Brief History of Postmodern Social Movements A brief history of postmodern social movements includes the women's liberation movement, the peace movement, the “green” environmental movement, and the Occupy movement.

Women's Liberation Movement In the late 1960s, the women's movement took on renewed vigor with the National Organization for Women (NOW), the effort to pass an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution, promotion of equal pay for equal work, and the right of women to obtain an abortion on demand. While the ERA did not obtain the approval of two-thirds of the states needed for ratification, it heightened the consciousness of America to women's issues. Women were elected to public office in increasing numbers. Even more important, the women's movement worked to redefine the role of women in society, searching for a way for self-expression and a new identity that did not depend on modern gender stereotypes.

The new identity was encapsulated in the term “feminism.” The feminist or women's liberation movement is not just about gender equality, however, an attempt to reach parity with males, nor was it merely a rejection of male dominance. Feminism aims at a fundamental restructuring of power relations between the sexes. Feminism was a rejection of dominance itself

as a framework on which human relationships were based, a renunciation of the mentality of paternalism. Women were reaching for a new way of being, overturning the premise that some people have an innate claim to superiority based on membership in a particular racial, gender, economic, or hereditary class.

The “Green” Environmental Movement The miracles and benefits of science and technology have been the hallmarks of modernity since the Enlightenment, but in the 1960s the relationship between the general public and those who create, manage, and profit from technology soured. The litany of ecological disasters and technical failures included Love Canal disaster, the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown, and the pesticide poisoning from the Dow Chemical plant in Bhopal, India. It continued with a number of massive oil spills including the *Exxon Valdez* disaster in Alaska and the British Petroleum oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico. Acid rain, the devastation of vast ecosystems in the oceans and on land, extinction of numerous irreplaceable species of plants and animals, destruction of the ozone layer, global warming, and endemic industrial and agricultural pollution turned many Americans away from technological optimism. The movement that resulted involved people of every age and station in life around the issue of preserving a sustainable environment.

People realized that they needed to influence major environmental problems caused by ineptitude, corruption, and greed at the highest levels of business and government as well as limit the dangerous side effects of technological miscalculations in their own neighborhoods. The result was a reaction against the most cherished ideals of the modern era: rejection of technological progress for its own sake. This reaction was seen not only in the people whose impoverished neighborhoods were often used to dump hazardous wastes but also with intellectuals, professionals, and the middle class. The environmental movement extended beyond attempts to preserve the ozone layer or save rain forests, but the adoption of an entirely new attitude toward nature, the globe, and the future. This new attitude renounced compulsive consumption, the exploitative control orientation toward both biological and human nature, and the mentality that places economic growth as the preeminent social value.

Peace Movement The civil rights movement created an atmosphere of ferment that was translated into

the protest movement against the war in Vietnam in the mid-1960s, a general sense of disenchantment with government, especially the military, large complex organizations in general, and the values of the “establishment.” The movement to end the war in Vietnam decisively rejected the American colonialist mentality and imperialist national policy of the Johnson administration that used war as a way of defending America’s hegemony of power.

It revealed the misunderstanding of authentic democracy on the part of those who believed that democracy could be unilaterally imposed on a small, underdeveloped nation “for their own good,” and the utter futility of thinking that modern rationality and weaponry could make any difference against a communally based culture of defiance. The peace movement was not merely “anti-war”; it was a challenge to the presumption that a powerful nation, under the pretense of democracy or “freedom,” had a right to interfere with the self-determination of a weaker nation and use to military violence toward that end. The peace movement was a rejection of the mentality of colonialism, imperialism, and international exploitation. The protest against the war in Iraq was another example that this lesson had still not been learned by the power elite.

The Occupy Movement Outrage against economic inequality and the undemocratic intrusion of corporate power into politics broke out internationally in mid-May 2011 as the Spanish *Indignados* movement began with camps in Madrid and elsewhere. By the end of the month hundreds of encampments were in place around Spain and across the world.

Inspired by the Arab Spring, a leader of the *Indignados* called for a worldwide protest on October 15, 2011. The Canadian Adbusters Media Foundation proposed a peaceful occupation of Wall Street to protest corporate influence on democracy, address the growing disparity in wealth, and government’s unwillingness to punish the bankers who allegedly created the recent global financial crisis. At almost the same time, the Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* legitimized corporations as persons entitled to Fourteenth Amendment protections and rights, adding fuel to the protestors’ already inflamed outrage. The first Occupy protest was Occupy Wall Street on September 17, 2011, in New York City’s Zuccotti Park. By October 9, Occupy protests had taken place or were ongoing in over 95 cities on

every continent, across 82 countries, and in over 600 communities in the United States.

While each local group may have different foci, the Occupy movement tends to be directed against capitalist corporatism and the hegemony of the global market society. The Occupy movement is seeking a new way of sustainable living rather than reliance on the modern mentality that drains the world's resources and damages the ecology of the planet, benefiting a few while creating poverty for many.

CHARACTERISTICS OF POSTMODERN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Carol Miller asserts that “postmodern social movements attempt to forge a new construction of social reality.”⁷⁷ They are concerned with self-determination rather than dominance, the right to choose and decide rather than have others decide for us, and the need of ordinary people to shape their own future with friends and neighbors in their own communities. Postmodern social movements “are distinct from modern protest organizations or mobilization campaigns. They are characterized by self-conscious awareness that the very foundations of society are at stake or in contest,”⁷⁸ say Eyerman and Jamison.

New social movements look for new structures, reject individualism, advocate for alternative ways of thinking, and seek revitalized sense of community. They work toward a redefined role of government, the transformation of public life and development of an entirely new culture.

New Structure

Postmodern social movements arise around communities of mutual interest, not necessarily protesting against companies, factories, or wealthy executives as did many modern social movements.⁷⁹ They tend to be made up of heterogeneous groups of people from across the spectrum of social life. A postmodern movement on behalf of a woman's right to choose, for example, may include people of different economic and social status and different cultural identities, such as white and nonwhite groups, working women and professionals, the poor and the wealthy, the young and the old.⁸⁰

Postmodern social movements are often comprised of open, loosely structured networks. They tap

local knowledge and resources, and respond to problems rapidly and creatively. They often have deep and complex channels, remaining underground for long periods of time as new identities are forged. These hidden networks are composed of small, separate groups in a circuit of exchanges. Information circulates through the networks, and specific agencies ensure a certain amount of unity and allow multiple memberships,⁸¹ says Alberto Melluci. They function as social laboratories, experimenting with new ways of understanding, new kinds of communally based social relationships, new organizational forms, and new ways of conceiving politics and of devising policy.

Rejection of Individualism

Postmodern social movements reject possessive individualism in which people are treated as components, objects, or functions of social systems. Michel Foucault argues, for example, that postmodern social movements “assert the right to be different and underline everything which makes individuals truly individual.”⁸² They encourage us to resist forfeiting our individuality for individualism. Instead of being forced back on ourselves, we fall back into community. Postmodern movements attack everything that separates us from one another, alienates us, or splits up community life.

For example, when people make changes in their personal lives and relationships, they concurrently create a ripple effect across society, simultaneously generating social goods and producing social capital. When people become empowered, they discover they can overcome the emotional inertia characteristic of imposed dependency, reclaiming their anger and the hope that change is possible. When social workers challenge community members to think critically about social issues, they find their collective voices and begin to speak out against the forces that have deceived them. When they join with others, they find the strength to shrug off the passivity on which oppressors depend.

New Ways of Thinking

New social movements are cognitive processes that develop alternative ways of social thinking and new understandings about the world. They attempt to broaden unidimensional modern reason, which limits thinking to instrumental means, accepts organizational ends as valid, or reduces thinking to mere calculation

of costs. When complex organizations restrict people's values or ideas to narrow operational arenas, postmodern social movements encourage consideration of pro-social reason, multiple ways of thinking, the exploration of rival ends or goods, the value of creativity, and new ways of meaning creation arrived at by means of social interaction. The result is the creation of arenas of social space that allow for the consideration of new ideas that differ from the programmed ideas and functional thinking of systems processes.

Cognitive Movements Just as modern calculative reason was born out of the Enlightenment shaping our modern institutions and systems' mentality, social thinking is being born out of community and those structures that support community. It is precisely in the creation, articulation, and formulation of new thoughts and ideas that a postmodern social movement defines itself in society. New social movements create new types of knowledge as well as recombine or connect previously separate types of knowledge. They are "cognitive movements" that seek entirely new approaches to understanding.

Social Knowledge Social knowledge is not merely a "discovery" by an individual genius, nor is it the determined outcome of systemic interactions within an established research and development system. Knowledge is primarily a social creation, and postmodern social movements are a source and model of this way of understanding. Postmodern social understanding is the product of a series of social encounters within movements and between movements and their established opponents. Knowledge creation is seen as the collective creation of social groups. The collective articulation of movement identity can be likened to a process of social learning in which movement organizations act as structuring forces, opening space in which creative interaction between individuals can take place.

New Sense of Community

Of greatest importance, however, postmodern social movements develop new conceptualizations and associational forms that can serve as social laboratories for trying out new ways of thinking and being,⁸³ assert Eyerman and Jamison. The new forms of consciousness discovered in new social movements provide something

crucial in the constitution of postmodern society. They focus on community self-help and empowerment. For example, emerging postmodern social movements of the 1960s brought about a new awareness of the power of community as the locus where social problems need to be solved. The necessity of creating the social commons is one example of such an effort.

Community building thus becomes the natural focus of new social movement efforts, not necessarily community as locality, but as a flexible group that transforms society internally. Community is increasingly seen as assuming responsibility for itself and is envisaged as the center of new grassroots politics and social action. The ideology of community participation is sustained by the belief that the power of governance and especially the economy has extended too far, diminishing the freedoms of ordinary people and their right to control their own affairs.

Redefined Role of Government

Richard Flacks says that postmodern social movements fundamentally reconceptualize the nature of the state. The top-down solutions and centralized welfare state solutions to social problems are seen as a dead end. "The rejection of the welfare state and the substitution of community suggest a radically redefined role of government in society,"⁸⁴ he asserts.

This new role sees the state not as the source of social welfare but as a vehicle for community empowerment and local control. The state is the source of capital and law that enable people to solve their problems at the level of the community. Reconstituted government validates new community-generated solutions, provides institutional legitimization of community, and acts as a financial sponsor of community projects, either directly or by means of third-party social organizations.

Transformation of Public Life

Postmodern social movements challenge the "closed and settled" questions of modern liberal politics and the "frozen decisions" that constitute complex organizational megastructures. Postmodern social movements are "transforming agents of political life,"⁸⁵ allowing for new understanding, claim Eyerman and Jamison. New postmodern social movements struggle against the interlocking megastructures that override the public interest.

While megastructures assert that their solutions are the only ones possible, often hiding their specific interests and their core of arbitrary power, new social movements reveal “what the system does not say about itself.”⁸⁶ They unmask the deception and paternalism that are often covert in modern systems-based society. They expose the unobtrusive coercion and implied violence that clothe monolithic organizational control machines.

Culture Building

Postmodern social movements support the right of people to frame and develop their own cultures and the need for people everywhere to construct their own social reality. Some see postmodern social movements as nonideological because they dismiss the old ideologies of capitalism and socialism, nationalism and imperialism, paternalism and colonialism. Participants engage in the process of defining new historical projects by reflecting on their own identities and by articulating values such as respect for the environment as an end in itself and development of the social commons as a utopian goal of the future. They encourage people to resist becoming trapped in commodifying, dehumanizing social systems, and reject technological progress as an unqualified social good.

Implications for Macro Social Work

Early social work was aligned with and in many respects provided leadership to modern social movements including the women’s suffrage movement, the labor movement, the abolition movement, and the temperance movement during the Progressive Era. Social work continues this effort today, helping remediate the dysfunctions that occur as the nation experiences stresses.

Simultaneously, however, social work is also aligned with postmodern social activism and new social movements, although in less overt and more subtle ways. By means of fostering community and growing the social commons, social workers provide fertile soil for the planting of a new worldview, alternative ways of thinking, and new value orientations. The understandings about the human condition and sociality that result then slowly develop into new social movements that can gradually replace a culture of modernity with a new postmodern era.

The challenge for macro social workers at the turn of the 21st century is to align itself with these new stirrings and actively seek niches for change using social thinking and the action-social model of social work, ultimately bringing about a new society. This new and better society is being constructed in hundreds of ways and by thousands of daily actions and interactions by social workers and others alike. All social workers need to be on the forefront of these changes and intimately involved as leaders in their development.

FUTURE OF THE GOOD SOCIETY

Western culture has arrived at a point in its history in which a large component of understanding and discourse about what a good society consists of has been virtually proscribed from serious consideration. There no longer seems to be an ideal “good society” but rather only one that supports individual acquisitive man, who is free to pursue his interests.

And yet there remains a cadre of individuals, groups, communities, and social organizations that hold up social ideals and a vision of a better society. Social work can help reassert the importance of sociality, the social commons, and the concept of social goods as important and fundamental components on which such a good society ought to rest. Advocates and activists in social movements, moreover, help us hold onto ideals of making a good society and to the belief that there is worth and value in citizenship, participation, authentic democracy, and in working for the welfare of all people.

Social workers use community building, civic engagement, participatory democracy, and global citizenship as components on which a good society ought to rest. A number of tactics of a democratic future are available to us today.

Community Building

Community building is essential for the creating of a good society. For Ebright and Borron, “civic institutions including community-based organizations, block groups, organizing networks, mission-driven nonprofit organizations are critical to realizing participatory democracy.”⁸⁷ These institutions help advance collective goals and assert community values. They hold government accountable and guide market activity toward more equitable outcomes. “Unions, regional labor

councils, and community-labor partnerships, for example, are needed to renew the social contract between workers, businesses, and communities.”⁸⁸

Civic Engagement

“Civic engagement and participation,” assert Blackwell and Treuhart, “not just voting, but participating in community organizing and engaging in policy advocacy is essential for crafting creative solutions and ensuring that public policy is responsive and accountable to communities.”⁸⁹ People of all racial, ethnic, and social groups need to be able to contribute their voices, helping a good society come alive.

Participatory Democracy

In his book *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*, Benjamin R. Barber provides a persuasive argument that participatory democracy is essential for any conception of a good society.⁹⁰ Hilda Blanco says that “Many of the strategies in Barber’s program, in particular the formation of nationwide neighborhood assemblies of up to 5,000 people with deliberative functions, should become part of a progressive agenda in public policy and planning.”⁹¹

Strategies of the Democratic Future Lewis A. Friedland asserts that “as much as the ‘information society’ implies a rupture with industrial capitalism, electronic democracy suggests new citizenship practices. New communications technologies are being used in ways that can extend democratic communication practices as wider publics gain access to them, dissolving control of information as a discreet, privatized commodity.”⁹² These strategies include devolution and e-democracy.

Devolution Social worker John McNutt says that one of the trends that creates a basis for e-democracy is devolution, the trend to decentralize government authority, first to states and later to lower levels. Devolution is creating a decentralized and diffused decision-making structure that makes electronic democracy more compelling.

McNutt claims that citizen participation in the democratic process is becoming more accepted, including virtual town meetings, forums, and eventually, online elections. Direct democracy, citizens voting on every issue, is probably years away, if it happens at all,

but electronic elections should be easier to implement more immediately.⁹³

E-Democracy There are two approaches to e-democracy: the plebiscitary approach and the deliberative approach,⁹⁴ says Lewis Friedland.

Plebiscitary Approach The plebiscitary approach to e-democracy provides citizens with the capacity to directly express their opinions through an expanded “electronic marketplace” similar to the advertising marketplace, in which advocacy and social action groups mobilize mass media including e-mail and information networks to immediately capture public attention and mobilize people for action. For example, MoveOn.org was able to generate a huge number of citizens in protest against the Iraq war via the Internet and e-mail, bombarding the federal government with their messages.

In addition, e-democracy using the plebiscitary approach is capable of developing strengthened neighborhood assemblies, televised town meetings, national civic communications cooperatives, a service to equalize access to information and promote full civic education of all citizens, and electronic balloting.

Deliberative Approach The deliberative approach to e-democracy argues for a “communitarian” framework, in which dialogue rooted in identifiable communities takes precedence over direct voting, and in which a concept of the public good goes beyond individual and group interests. One of the key organizations using the deliberative approach is the Institute for Global Communications (IGC).

The IGC is a loose coalition of Free-Net groups including PeaceNet, EcoNet, Women’sNet, and Anti RacismNet. In partnership with six international organizations, IGC cofounded the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) in 1990. APC is an international coalition of progressive computer networks that to date includes 25 wholly autonomous but affiliated members and 40 partners. APC provides effective and efficient communications and information-sharing tools to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and citizen activists working for social change in more than 130 countries.

Since 1992, IGC and its APC partners have been the primary information and communications service provider at United Nations world conferences, including

the 1992 U.N. Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, the 1993 U.N. Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, and the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Women'sNet. Women'sNet was launched in early 1995. Women'sNet is an online community of individuals and organizations who use computer technology to advance the interests of women worldwide. Women'sNet played a key role in disseminating information at the World Conference on Women in Beijing and to the outside world as well.

AntiRacismNet. AntiRacismNet provides information and technical support for those interested in issues of civil rights, racism, and diversity related issues. For antiracism advocates, this network also offers a directory of antiracism/social justice organizations, resource links and an events calendar.

IGC helps these and other groups make use of computer and communications technology to further their own agendas; it provides resources for individuals, groups, and organizations engaged in advocacy for social justice, human rights, and the environment. Each of these groups shares information resources, giving people a sense of community and a feeling of membership.

Global Citizenship

"Globalization compels us to think and act as global citizens, considering the well-being of natural and human communities located outside of our borders but linked to us through trade, culture, and social networks,"⁹⁵ say Blackwell and Treuhaft. More and more of our challenges are connected to institutions that are transnational in nature and defy traditional political boundaries. Global warming, labor conditions, immigration, and corporate accountability are examples of issues that cannot be addressed through national politics alone.

CONCLUSION

"A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual wellbeing ... and the wellbeing of society,"⁹⁶ free from war, corruption, poverty, injustice, inequality, and discrimination. This chapter focused on making a good society by means

of advocacy and social action. You discovered that if you see government as a hub around which social betterment occurs, change can be accomplished both inside and outside government.

You found that most macro social work is aimed at the outside approach, including advocacy and social action. You explored components of policy and advocacy practice and a brief history of social advocacy. You learned that progressive social policy ebbs and flows with the particular ideology of the person who occupies the White House. You learned how to practice social advocacy step by step, including choosing an issue, finding information, developing potential interventions, choosing among alternatives, and developing strategy and tactics.

You learned about social action and social movements. You learned how modern and postmodern social movements differ. You explored a brief history of postmodern social movements, and learned about their characteristics. You learned that making a better society requires modern social action to help bring about changes where inequities and injustices continue to exist. You explored the future of constructing a good society.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In the first chapter of this book you read about Francisco Martinez and his search for a better society, a search that ended in death and disappointment. For many in the United States, the land of opportunity has become a place of desperation and exploitation. For others in foreign lands, the hope of living in a good society is a dream even farther off. Think about how this nation could create conditions that would bring a life of goodness to all regardless of economic, ethnic, national, or other designations. Of what would such an ideal society consist? Choose one issue and consider how the circumstances around this issue could be modified and become transformed into a better world.
2. Ann Schaefer says that American society is deteriorating at an alarming rate. Do you agree or disagree? If you agree, to what do you attribute this deterioration?
3. Eric Voegelin claims that society is both progressing and regressing at the same time. Do you agree with this assessment? If you disagree,

provide your perspective on societal change. If you agree, describe the areas in which we are progressing. In what areas are we regressing?

4. In this chapter the point was made that modern technology is making politics accessible to each person in ways never before thought possible. E-democracy, e-government, and e-advocacy make distance no barrier to political decision making. Will technology make politics and social policy processes more accessible to people, increasing the quality and representativeness of policy solutions? Why or why not?
5. Given the fact that often less than 50% of those eligible to vote actually exercise this right, is it realistic to expect that citizens will want to become more directly involved in politics even if they have the opportunity?
6. Koontz, O'Donnell, and Weinrich define policies as "general statements ... which guide or channel thinking and action in decision-making."⁹⁷ DiNitto and Dye assert that social policy is a *continuing political struggle* over "conflicting goals and objectives, competing definitions of problems, alternative approaches and strategies, multiple programs and policies, competing proposals for reform, and even different ideas about how decisions should be made."⁹⁸ If this is an accurate statement about social policy, can decisions that are good in themselves ever be made about social issues?
7. If resolving policy disputes by bargaining or voting are the only options available, what assurance is there that policies will be developed that rise above dominance by those groups that have the most power or the most votes?
8. John McNutt of the Boston College School of Social Work asserts that the information divide—access to computers and computer information—between haves and have-nots is the policy problem of the new century. What do you think of McNutt's assertion? (For more information, you can obtain a PBS series on the *Information Divide* that discusses this policy issue.)
9. The National Rifle Association has successfully carried the battle to uphold the right of people to bear arms. The result has been little gun control legislation in this country. Some people assert that the Second Amendment provides a moral, if not a legal, right to own handguns.

Are there ethical values that override this moral and legal right? If so, what does that higher good consist of?

10. Kingsley and Pettit remind us that "America has now learned a great deal about the tragic consequences of concentrated poverty and how past trends in that direction were exacerbated by a range of public policies."⁹⁹ Do you agree with these thinkers that Americans have finally learned a lesson about the deleterious consequences of poverty and are now on a road to resolving this issue by means of more enlightened social policy? What do you think is the status of America's concern for the poor and others who have few advantages? What ought the role of macro social work be in relation to this situation?

EXERCISE 13.2

Solving a Housing Problem

Read the following excerpt from John Perkins's book, *With Justice for All*. Then respond to the questions that follow.

Once I was talking with some of the staff members of the housing authority in Atlanta. They asked me, "What can we do to help change the dehumanizing conditions of these apartment buildings?" My answer was simple. "Give the apartments to the people." They thought I was crazy. But that's exactly what we need to do. These apartments can be turned into cooperatives or condominiums. Rent subsidies need to be replaced with mortgage-payment subsidies. We don't need a new program or any more money to do this at all. We just need to redirect the subsidies to the poor family and subsidize home ownership among the poor, rather than subsidize landlords and local and county governmental housing authorities.

Ownership creates responsibility. If I go into one of these housing authority apartments and see a broken screen and ask, "Why isn't your screen fixed?" The mother may answer, "The landlord hasn't gotten around to fixing it yet." Then if I ask, "Who broke it?" She'll say, "My kids broke it." Her lack of ownership has removed her sense of responsibility. If she owned that apartment, she would feel responsible enough to fix it herself. She would also feel responsible to teach her children to take care of the apartment. The key to

redistribution and empowerment of the poor is helping people accept responsibility for their own development.¹⁰⁰

1. What is your opinion of John Perkins's solution to the housing problem? Do you think it would work?
2. Would helping people become home owners develop empowerment and commitment?
3. Why do you suppose a solution like Perkins's meets with surprise? Who would be for it? Who would be against it?
4. Can you think of similar solutions to social problems such as drugs, crime, gang violence, or others that affect our communities which would empower people and assist them to gain affiliation, mastery, and community ownership?

EXERCISE 13.3

Thomas Bender on Politics

Read this excerpt from Thomas Bender *Community and Social Change in America*, and discuss the questions that follow.

A sense of commonwealth, rather than community, provides the essential foundation for a vigorous and effective political life. A commonwealth is based upon shared public ideals, rather than upon acquaintance or affection. Personal knowledge of fellow citizens ... is not necessary. What is necessary is full political communication that examines the consequences of proposed and enacted public policies.

Such public communication undergirds civic responsibility and enables us to determine whether we share a common interest in certain public policies affecting the whole.... Power and political problems in modern society are more extensive than a neighborhood or a community.... Any effort to concentrate one's efforts on neighborhood or community political activity may mask a denial of access to sources of power affecting local life through the general polity."¹⁰¹

1. Do you agree that community is not the level at which politics should be conducted?
2. Is Bender correct when he states that "community political activity may mask a denial of access to sources of power affecting local life through the general polity"? How do you think

community organizers such as Saul Alinsky, Fred Ross, or Cesar Chavez would respond to this assertion?

3. Does Bender's argument preclude community-level politics?
4. What arguments for or against Bender's assertion can you present?

EXERCISE 13.4

Developing Social Policy

Listed below are a series of social policy questions. Break into groups of six or seven. Choose one of these questions or another social issue of concern. Gather facts by asking the who, why, what, where, and how questions in relation to the issue. Each group divides into pro and con positions. The groups engage in a debate, each advocating for their position.

1. Should certain drugs be legalized?
2. Should a system of universal national health insurance be adopted?
3. Should a program that guarantees a free college education to everyone who desires it be established?
4. Should the death penalty be abolished?
5. Should affirmative action programs be eliminated?
6. Should *Roe v. Wade* be overturned?

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14

The Practice of Social Work at the Global Level

Working with People

It is not our role to speak to the people about our own view of the world, nor to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours. We must realize that their view of the world, manifested variously in their action, reflects their situation the world.¹

Paulo Freire

Philippine Land Reform Saying

Just because you own the land doesn't mean you own the people.²

Advice to You

If you have come to help me you can go home again. But if you see my struggle as part of your own survival then perhaps we can work together.

Lila Watson, an Aboriginal woman

We have not had the same past, you and ourselves, but we shall have the same future. The era of separate destinies has run its course.

Cheikh Hamidou Kane, Senegalese novelist

Power

Our awesome power is deployed to defend the rights of capital and commerce, but not human rights and people exploited by the global system.³

William Greider

Ideas in This Chapter

HOW TO ELIMINATE A SOCIAL PROBLEM
WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER
WHAT IS SOCIAL WORK AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL?
A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK
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HOW TO ELIMINATE A SOCIAL PROBLEM

“Everyone is afraid,” he said as he fiddled with a piece of plastic tape, keeping his eyes on the table. Sister Beatriz Semiano and a social worker, Wolmer Nascimento, a coordinator for the National Movement for Street Boys and Girls, listened as A.G., a thin, dark boy, one of the ragged legion of street kids who live by their wits in São Paulo, Rio, and Recife, told how death squads hired by local merchants roam the streets exterminating homeless children. “He was sleeping,” A.G. said, “and they filled his face with bullets.” Cleiton, 12, used to steal from stores in a shopping gallery near the center of Duque de Caxias, Brazil, one of the grimy, violent suburbs only a few miles from the swaying palms, elegant hotels, and white sand beaches of Rio de Janeiro. Cleiton’s death was not an isolated incident.

Hundreds of children are murdered each year by bands of private security guards, many of them off-duty or former police officers, the very people who should safeguard the children. A.G. said that he had known “a heap” of youngsters killed in Duque de Caxias. One was Luciano, 16, picked up by his killers and shot in the head. “He robbed stores,” A.G. said of Luciano. Two weeks after Luciano’s death, gunmen killed his friend Ademir, 16. “He also robbed,” A.G. said. There is no doubt, A.G. insisted, about who the killers work for. “The store owners pay them to kill us.” A.G. has slept on the streets for 11 of his 16 years. He said the killers almost got him when he

was 13. The merchants treat the children like rats. Kill them and the problem goes away. Sometimes in a shrewd if twisted scheme, they pay members of some street gangs to exterminate children in rival gangs.

Sr. Beatriz confirmed the dangers A.G. described. “He lives in the street, he sleeps in the street, and he is threatened with death,” she said. “It is a terrible problem in Brazil.” The problem, she and others say, has its roots in urban poverty, antiquated laws, police corruption, and ineffective systems for providing child welfare and criminal justice.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS CHAPTER

On every continent and in virtually every nation, international social workers engage the most difficult problems people face. In this chapter you will explore the practice of social work in the poorest nations of the world. You will learn what the practice of social work at the global level consists of. You will review a history of international social work.

You will learn about global social problems, including the population explosion, poverty, slavery, the manufacturing of violence, refugees, and the destruction of the global ecosystem. You will explore a number of arenas in which social workers offer assistance. You will learn how to use the Internet in international social work practice. You will learn how you can get involved in international social work practice, assisting members of the world’s poor and destitute

nations strengthen their communities, overcome poverty, and engage in social change on a global scale.

EXERCISE 14.1

The stories of Francisco Martinez, told at the beginning of this book, and A.G., the homeless street boy described in this chapter, are not too different. For many people these individuals would be considered social problems, and their elimination from society would not be events to be greatly concerned about. And yet they are members of a global society that tends to be in the majority today, a group that lacks basic access to shelter, food, clean water, health care, education, and support.

Do you consider people like Francisco Martinez and A.G. social problems? Why or why not? What should our response be to such individuals? How would you as a social worker respond to them? The question was raised earlier about how clinical social work would attempt to remedy these problems. Can counseling or other forms of individual remediation solve the problems of the Triqui Indians or homeless street children such as A.G.? How would a macro approach help people like A.G. and Francisco Martinez?

WHAT IS SOCIAL WORK AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL?

The South African term *ubuntu* refers to the spirit of community. It is a shortened version of a Xhosa saying that means “I am a person through other people.... My humanity is tied to yours.” This is probably the single most important aspect of living in a highly connected planet: Our lives, whether we are aware of it or not, are tied together. We must respect each other, and we must always keep our interconnection in mind, says Julian Hewitt.⁴

Globalization means that actions in one part of the world affect people in other areas. Social work is one among many professions, including teachers, health professionals, ecologists, and employees of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and transnational nongovernmental organizations (TNGOs) who work to improve the global social environment.

International social workers may assist with community and economic development projects in

underdeveloped nations through World Vision International and the UN Development Program (UNDP). We work in the area of international refugee and relief services with the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, CARE, Oxfam, and others. We are present in international child welfare organizations such as International Social Services (ISS), assisting in relocation and adoption. We work with human service and youth service organizations such as UNICEF, the World Alliance of YMCAs, World YWCA, international scouting, and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts whose efforts provide character and leadership building, and in the struggle against child slavery, trafficking in persons, violence, and oppression of women worldwide.

We assist with international advocacy and social justice organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch to combat torture, unjust imprisonment, and other human rights violations. We become engaged at the policy level to help bring about humane international cooperation among nations to help reduce pollution, end international conflict, and reduce weapons production and sales. We are active in postmodern social movements aimed at creating a sustainable natural and social environment, and we work to end exploitation and economic injustice.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

International humanitarian efforts began as early as 1838, gathering momentum in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The movement grew slowly in the period between the world wars, but after 1945 international awareness and concern exploded across the globe with the United Nations and a proliferation of nongovernmental organizations NGOs. Those efforts saw experimentation with large international development projects, along with the rise of local grassroots organizations (GROs) in the decade of the 1960s, an expansion of transnational nongovernmental organizations (TNGOs) and transnational support organizations (TNSOs) in the 1970s, human rights and advocacy organizations in the 1980s, increased influence of NGOs in the 1990s, and their expansion, coordination, and diversification in the first decade of the 21st century.

Origins of International Assistance (1800–1920)

The history of international humanitarian service has its origins as early as the 19th and early 20th centuries, with community development, relief efforts, refugee work, and international youth services. By 1914, 1,083 humanitarian organizations existed worldwide.⁵

Community Development The earliest international community development efforts were church related,⁶ according to Ward Goodenough. The first international community developers were Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist missionaries.⁷ Although the major aims of Christian missionaries were evangelism and conversion, many soon realized that improving the living conditions of their converts was inseparable from their religious goals. While Western missionaries have been criticized for trying to destroy tribal culture by superimposing Western values, culture, and religion on traditional communities, “this criticism has often been too extreme,” asserts Roland Oliver.⁸

Missionaries pioneered in establishing experimental pilot community development projects to discover appropriate methods of assisting indigenous people. One of the earliest community development efforts, for example, was a mission program begun in 1838 that organized and conducted day schools, model farms, and normal schools for emancipated slaves in the British West Indies.⁹ International humanitarian organizations, including the Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in London (1823), the World Evangelical Alliance (1846), and the World Alliance of Young Men’s Christian Associations (1855), contributed to early international assistance,¹⁰ and the numbers of these organizations continued to increase in the second half of the 19th century.

Gradually, “community development efforts of the [British] missions became intertwined with community development efforts of the colonial government,”¹¹ say Chau and Hodge. In this combined effort, the British “set up in each territory a pilot project to experiment with a comprehensive and intensive program of rural betterment and experiment with a team of technical offices and missionaries in a single unified program.”¹²

International Relief Two important relief efforts were initiated in the late 19th century, the International Red Cross and Save the Children Fund.

International Red Cross While the Civil War was still raging in America, Jean Henri Dunant began heading a movement in Europe for relief of wounded soldiers. In 1864 a convention was held in Geneva, Switzerland, at which almost every major nation was represented except the United States. Ten articles of agreement were adopted, known as the Treaty of Geneva for the Relief of Sick and Wounded Soldiers, providing that all wounded or sick soldiers and the surgeons and nurses attending them would be held neutral in time of war and not captured by either army.

Twenty governments affixed their signatures on August 22, 1864. As a compliment to Switzerland, the Swiss flag with colors reversed was adopted as the organization’s insignia, and with it the International Red Cross, the world’s greatest humanitarian movement, was born. Due in large part to the strenuous efforts of Clarissa (Clara) Harlowe Barton, President Chester V. Arthur signed the Geneva Treaty in 1882. Barton founded the American National Committee of the Red Cross (later the American National Red Cross) and was its president from 1881 to 1905. She extended the scope of the Red Cross in America to provide aid in any great national calamity. As the U.S. delegate to the Red Cross Conference in Geneva, she successfully proposed that the Red Cross provide relief in peace as well as in war. Known as “the American Amendment,” this helped distinguish the United States as “a Good Samaritan of Nations.”

Save the Children Fund In 1919, after the First World War, children in Austria and Eastern Europe were dying of hunger. Ignoring angry views in Britain that she was helping “children of the enemy,” Eglantyne Jebb began Save the Children’s Fund, supplying food to starving children in those nations.

International Youth Services International youth services originated as well, as the YMCA, YWCA, and Boy and Girl Scouts were organized in the middle and late 19th century.

YMCA In 1844, twelve young men led by George Williams founded the first YMCA in London, England, to “improve the spiritual condition of the young men engaged in houses of business, by the formation of Bible classes, family and social prayer meetings, mutual improvement societies, or any other spiritual agency.”¹³

Williams and the other founding members wasted no time organizing YMCA branches throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Over the next ten years, YMCA movements also began to develop across Western Europe, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and India. Henry Dunant, secretary of YMCA in Geneva, who would later go on to found the International Committee of the Red Cross and win the first Nobel Peace Prize, successfully convinced YMCA Paris to organize the first YMCA World Conference in August 1855, bringing together 99 young delegates from nine countries. This was a turning point for the Central International Committee, which would eventually become known as the World Alliance of YMCAs.¹⁴

YWCA The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) was founded in 1855 by Emma Roberts and Mrs. Arthur Kinnaird in London. By 1858 the YWCA movement made its first appearance in the United States. The first world conference of the YWCA was held in 1898 in London, with 326 participants from 17 countries from around the world cementing the principles of unity based on service and faith on a global scale.¹⁵

Boy Scouts Sir Robert Baden-Powell founded the Boy Scouts in 1907 in England. Scouting rapidly spread internationally. In 1910, for example, the Boy Scouts of America was established.¹⁶

Girl Guides and Girl Scouts In 1910 Baden-Powell and his sister Agnes founded the Girl Guide movement. In 1918, Sir Robert's wife, Olave, became the United Kingdom's Chief Guide, and the following year formed the International Council, which officially became the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 1928.¹⁷

Finding the Way (1920–1945)

In the interregnum between the two world wars, nearly 80% of the world's population was dominated by the industrialized nations of the world that administered colonial governments. The stirrings of international efforts to assist people who lived in these deprived areas began to be felt, most importantly in the areas of community development and international relief efforts. New organizations were created to deal with emerging problems such as slavery and trafficking in

the colonies. The first transnational support organization (TNSO) was founded.

Community Development The experiences of British, German, French, and American missionaries in colonial regions resulted in a growing understanding of community development work. In 1923 an international conference brought together missionaries from several countries to share information and explore community development principles. The result was a report by the Advisory Committee on Native Education in tropical Africa, "often regarded as the original foundation of modern community development."¹⁸ This committee recommended that community development should

render the individual more efficient in his or her condition of life ... and promote the advancement of the community as a whole through the improvement of agriculture, development of native industries, improvement of health, training of people in management of their own affairs, and the inculcation of true ideals of citizenship and service. It must include the raising up of capable, trustworthy, public-spirited leaders of the people.¹⁹

The term "community development" was first used in 1928 by the International Missionary Council. The council defined its methods, its focus, and its principles, which continue to be relevant today. They included the following: (1) preserving all of the permanent values of indigenous family systems; (2) renewing and giving major attention to the role of women; (3) fellowshipping, building and ministering to the whole life of the community; (4) assisting in education by means of local schools; (5) developing economic and social voluntary organizations and training in self-government; and (6) promoting harmonious relationships with government.²⁰

International Refugee and Relief Work In 1921, the YWCA undertook a survey of the needs of people migrating between countries, setting up service bureaus in several countries and offices in Prague, Warsaw, Paris, Athens, and Constantinople, becoming the International Migration Service in 1924.²¹

In 1933 Albert Einstein called for the founding of an American branch of the European International Relief Association in order to assist German refugees from Hitler's regime. Later the American branch joined with the Emergency Rescue Committee based in Vichy, France, evolving into the International Rescue Committee in 1942.²²

In that same year the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief in Britain adopted the name “Oxfam” and campaigned for food supplies to be sent through an Allied naval blockade to starving women and children in enemy-occupied Greece during the Second World War, originating what was to become one of the largest and most effective international humanitarian relief organizations.²³

New International Organizations Between 1921 and 1940 the League of Nations created a number of new organizations to help resolve the increasingly important international refugee problem,²⁴ as well as slavery and trafficking in women and children.²⁵

International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) The world’s first transnational nongovernmental support organization (TNSO), the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), was founded in Paris in 1928. The ICSW represents and provides support and training to national and local NGOs throughout the world that work directly with people in poverty, hardship, or distress.

Expansion (1945–1960)

The fighting during World War II made many people aware of the concerns and needs of people in the colonized nations of the world. As the war shifted the power structure, the way was paved for many colonies to begin pressing for independence, struggling with the problems of entering the modern industrialized world. The victorious Allied powers responded by founding the United Nations. In addition, the postwar period saw an explosion of international efforts to assist people in developing nations. Many indigenous local and national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) were founded.

The United Nations (UN) Established in 1945, the United Nations (UN) is the world’s largest, oldest, and most important international support and advocacy organization.²⁶ Operating under the auspices of its Economic and Social Council, the United Nations provides programs and services to developing nations worldwide. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) provides expert assistance to developing countries, regional training centers, scholarships, and

planning projects for investment. International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), one of the best-known UN programs, develops long-term programs for health, social welfare, and teaching.

The UN continues to provide assistance and protection to refugees who are displaced due to political reasons, war, famine, floods, and other disasters through the UN Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO). This agency “is on the scene first to protect the human rights of people outside their own countries and to offer material assistance where forced migrations occur.”²⁷ The United Nations High Commissioner for Relief (UNHCR) was established to help displaced children and coordinate refugee protection worldwide as one of the main functions of the UN.²⁸

Other Humanitarian UN Programs The UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) assists communities in applying knowledge of population dynamics to family planning services and training, and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) provides grants and low-interest loans for community development in the least developed countries. The World Food Program distributes agricultural surpluses or gifts in kind to developing countries. The UN is also involved in health issues, mainly through its affiliated World Health Organization (WHO). WHO coordinates research, provides a system for notification of infectious diseases, and helps developing countries organize their public health services and control health-related problems such as poor sanitation.²⁹

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) After World War II, multitudes of indigenous organizations pressed for recognition as colonial nations struggled for independence, seeking to decide their fate through the United Nations. Recognizing the importance of these burgeoning national organizations, the UN officially applied the term “nongovernmental organization” (NGO) to them.³⁰ The World Bank defines a nongovernmental organization as any nonprofit, voluntary citizens group organized on a local or national level that “pursues activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development.”³¹

International NGOS (INGOs) Groups of people in the Allied nations saw a need to assist members of

poor colonized nations of the world by creating non-profit organizations aimed at assisting people internationally, called international NGOs (INGOs). Often based in a western developed nation such as Britain or the US, INGOs reached out to the people of one or more developing nations. They provide direct assistance to individuals and communities in the form of child welfare, relief, and refugee services, among others. For example, Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE) was founded in 1945, when 22 American organizations came together to rush life-saving CARE Packages to survivors of World War II. The International Social Services (ISS) superseding the International Migration Service, engaged in a variety of child welfare services, specializing in relocation and inter-country adoption of children.³² Rev. Bob Pierce began building an organization dedicated to helping the world's children, and in 1950 World Vision was born. The first child sponsorship program began three years later in response to the needs of hundreds of thousands of orphans at the end of the Korean War.

The Decade of Development (1960–1970)

The 1960s was known as the decade of development. Grassroots organizations (GROs) sprang up and some international NGOs began expanding beyond traditional efforts.

Development In January 1961, the United Nations resolved that the decade of the 1960s would be the Decade of Development. In his inaugural address as president, John Kennedy signaled this new sense of purpose in international affairs, announcing, “To those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves.”³³

As new countries rushed to freedom, no fewer than 17 former colonies in Africa achieved independence in 1960. The climate was one of excitement and hope. “Having cast off their colonial status, the new countries of the ‘third world’ now needed to cast off their poverty. But for this they needed aid in the form of funds and know-how from their richer neighbors.”³⁴

Influenced heavily by Walt Rostow’s modernization theory, about which you will read more below, in

the first year of his presidency Kennedy launched the Alliance for Progress, the Peace Corps, Food for Peace, the Agency for International Development (AID),³⁵ and a number of development projects.

Development Projects Doling out billions of dollars in foreign aid often for large projects such as dams, hydroelectric power generation, irrigation, highways, and flood control in India, Vietnam, Brazil, Nigeria, Swaziland and other countries, international development became a part of the political and economic modernization strategy of the United States, ensuring that the progress of poorer nations conformed to the interests of Western democratic politics and the emerging free global market.

Grassroots Organizations (GROs) In the 1960s, Catholic priests in Central America and Brazil were impressed with the way that people who lived in poverty survived by helping each other. They generated their own perspective on biblical interpretation, known as liberation theology, and began organizing grassroots communities called *comunidades eclesiales de base*, or base ecclesial communities. These grassroots *comunidades* are small, unobtrusive, low-profile, non-hierarchical groups within submerged networks in villages, barrios, and neighborhoods that raise people’s consciousness about social problems.³⁶

The communal culture that emerged rejected the premises of modernity that had brought indigenous people nearly 400 years of oppression, poverty, and genocide. They refused self-interested market economies, top-down decision making, impersonal liberal democratic politics, and self-serving “development.”³⁷ They realized that oppression and poverty are not “givens” in the nature of things. They worked to understand their situation, not to accommodate to it but to change it.³⁸ The “absent ones” were making their presence felt.³⁹

The spontaneous rise of these small, local GROs “contrasted sharply with large state-initiated or administered development projects that were so prominent across the developing world during the 1950s and 60s,”⁴⁰ says Hubert Campfens. At the same time *comunidades de base* were emerging in Latin America, similar GROs began developing autonomously and spontaneously in Africa, India, and Asia. People came together in villages, neighborhoods, and shantytowns around the world in response to modern forces that

endangered their communities and the planet.⁴¹ They not only emerged independently of one another but diffused transnationally more rapidly than has any other social movement,⁴² asserts Sidney Tarrow. What was remarkable about these new GROs was “the speed with which the masses in each country converged on particular strategies, coordinated their operations, and successfully executed their plans.”⁴³ In Indonesia, for example, in the late 1960s and 1970s only a handful of such organizations existed. Less than two decades later, more than 3,000 had been formed.⁴⁴

Expanded Role of INGOs Leaders in several nations began to see the need for an expanded role for INGOs. Moving beyond their original national base of operation some INGOs saw a need to join forces with people and groups in other nations who had similar interests and concerns, becoming multinational in character. In 1961, for example, an international meeting was held with delegates from Belgium, the UK, France, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland, and the United States, establishing “a permanent international movement in defense of freedom of opinion and religion,”⁴⁵ which became Amnesty International. In that same year ACCION was founded, issuing its first micro loan in 1973 and growing to become a world pioneer in microfinance.

Rise of TNGOs and TNSOs (1970–1980)

The decade of the 1970s showed a decisive expansion and differentiation of NGOs and INGOs. In both developed and developing countries, the NGO sector experienced exponential growth during the 1970s.⁴⁶ From 1970 to 1985 total development aid disbursed by international NGOs increased tenfold.⁴⁷ In addition, many INGOs, following the lead of Amnesty International, grew into multinational and even global organizations called transnational nongovernmental organizations (TNGOs) that operated on a worldwide scale. At the same time other INGOs shifted their approach from operating their own direct service projects in developing nations to supporting the autonomous efforts of indigenous local and national NGOs to plan and carry out projects of their own devising. These reconstituted INGOs became known as transnational nongovernmental support organizations (TNSOs).

Transnational Nongovernmental Organizations (TNGOs) By the 1970s many of the venerable non-profit organizations that originated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries expanded their services internationally dispersing their administrative offices, and operations throughout the globe becoming known as transnational nongovernmental organizations (TNGOs).

While the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was already conceived as the world’s first transnational nongovernmental organization at its creation in 1863, by the 1970s the ICRC had become a global Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. In addition, the YMCA became transformed into the World Alliance of YMCAs, based in Geneva, Switzerland, a confederation of National Councils of YMCAs.⁴⁸

Scouting became the largest voluntary youth movement in the world providing youth in many different nations and cultures with opportunities to learn character building and social skills. The YWCA grew to become the World Young Women’s Christian Association (World YWCA), a global network of women leading social and economic change and supporting equal opportunities and rights of women everywhere. The Girl Scouts developed into the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), assisting girls and young women on every continent and nearly every nation to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world.⁴⁹

In addition, many other international NGOs grew to achieve global TNGO status, among them Oxfam, Africare, World Vision, Lutheran World Relief, the Mennonite Central Committee, the Christian Children’s Fund, and others.

Not only did these former INGOs expand their global reach, some began to expand their missions as the complexity and extent of the social problems in developing nations became more apparent. In the 1970s, for example, World Vision embraced a broader community development model, established an emergency relief division, and worked to address causes of poverty by focusing on community needs including water, sanitation, education, health, leadership training, and income generation in many nations worldwide.⁵⁰

Transnational Nongovernmental Support Organizations (TNSOs) As indigenous NGOs grew in numbers and asserted autonomy in struggling with

local conditions in their own nations, INGOs in first world nations shifted their roles, recognizing that in order for individuals and communities to become self-reliant and independent, local organizations must assert their prerogative to care for themselves. Rather than continuing to provide direct assistance to local groups, many INGOs developed into nongovernmental support organizations (TNSOs), providing consultation, education and training, and technical and financial support to indigenous NGOs, strengthening and empowering them in their efforts to assist local people. The Save the Children Federation, for example, supports a network of women's clubs in Colombia to promote small enterprise development and health education. TechnoServe has provided assistance in agrarian reform to indigenous and independently operated cooperatives in Peru and El Salvador.⁵¹ The Inter-American Foundation and the African Development Foundation have funded many international grassroots support organizations.

Advocacy and Human Rights (1980–1990)

World circumstances during the 1980s called for expanded public awareness efforts,⁵² spurring the rise of international advocacy and international human rights watchdog organizations that monitor the activities of nation-states and corporations. At the same time GROs continued to expand globally.

International Advocacy In the 1980s numerous transnational advocacy networks, including international and domestic NGOs, research and advocacy organizations, local social movements, foundations, religious groups, trade unions, international intergovernmental organizations, and executive or parliamentary branches of government⁵³ promoted awareness, programs, and policy changes internationally.⁵⁴ They become involved in a variety of issues including child abuse and child trafficking, slavery, torture, the death penalty, rights of people with disabilities, refugees, and the status of women and women's rights, among others.⁵⁵ The ability of advocacy networks to generate information quickly and accurately and employ it effectively is their most valuable characteristic and is central to their identity,⁵⁶ say Keck and Sikkink.

Three among many international advocacy organizations that became prominent in the 1980s are World

Vision International, Human Rights Watch, and World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).

World Vision International World Vision International has strengthened its advocacy efforts related to child survival and poverty alleviation. It became more active in working with governments, businesses, and other organizations to address issues such as child labor, children in armed conflict, and the sexual exploitation of women and children.⁵⁷

Human Rights Watch Originating in 1978, Helsinki Watch supported citizens groups to monitor Soviet compliance with the 1975 Helsinki Accord, contributing to dramatic democratic transformations in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and generating the human rights watch movement. As bloody civil wars engulfed Central America in 1981, Americas Watch was founded, not only addressing abuses by government forces, but investigating war crimes by rebel groups as well. In rapid succession in the 1980s, Asia Watch (1985), Africa Watch (1988), and Middle East Watch (1989) joined what was then known as "The Watch Committees." In 1988, the organization formally adopted the all-inclusive name Human Rights Watch.⁵⁸

World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) Created in 1985, OMCT has become the main coalition of international nongovernmental organizations fighting against torture, summary executions, enforced disappearances, and all other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. With 311 affiliated organizations in its SOS-Torture Network and many tens of thousands of correspondents in every country, OMCT works for the protection and the promotion of human rights throughout the world.⁵⁹

Expanded Role of Grassroots Organizations In 1984, some 2,000 GROs with more than 60,000 participants in Machakos, Kenya, were actively involved in tree planting, cooperatives, savings groups, water projects, enterprise development, and consumer shops. By the end of the decade the lives of more than 100 million peasants in Latin America, Africa, and Asia had been directly affected by the activities of GROs, and no doubt their influence has increased since then,⁶⁰ says Mansour Fakih. The picture shows an expanding latticework covering the globe.

At the local level, particularly among the nearly 4 billion humans in developing lands, it appears that the world's people are better organized today than they have been since European colonialism disrupted traditional societies centuries ago. Julie Fisher asserts, "The proliferation of grassroots efforts is in fact a hallmark of our era."⁶¹

Increased Influence of NGOs (1990–2000)

During the 1990s NGOs achieved increased growth, influence, and recognition in policymaking, becoming increasingly important actors on the world stage. NGOs providing international child welfare and relief and support to women increased.

NGO Growth According to the World Bank, in 1992 TNSOs channeled over \$7.6 billion of aid to developing countries.⁶² It is now estimated that over 15% of total overseas development aid is channeled through NGOs.⁶³

Recognition in Policymaking Indigenous national and international NGOs continued to function on a consultative basis with specialized UN organizations. About 130 NGOs are linked with the World Health Organization (WHO), for example, and several hundred are tied into the UN news and information system.

In addition, NGOs have made their influence felt outside the centers of UN decision making. NGOs "together with governmental and intergovernmental representatives, are part of a global inter-organizational network in which policies are discussed and formulated."⁶⁴ NGOs became an accepted and increasingly integrated part of the international policy network. The UN and many Western governments alike recognize the role NGOs play.

Both local and national NGOs contribute to energizing civil society and strengthening democratic traditions in third-world countries where they originate. Increasingly, the UN and Western governments are turning to indigenous NGOs rather than working directly through third-world governments to promote local reforms and economic development.

NGOs rather than the regular political channels of UN member states brought most of the important global social and political issues of the 1990s to the

attention of the UN and other international bodies. The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the first Earth Summit), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for example, was a direct result of NGO lobbying efforts. The summit included not only the largest-ever gathering of heads of state (118), but more than 1,000 accredited member NGOs, the largest participation of NGOs ever in an international inter-governmental conference.

In addition, NGOs kept social and economic development, participative democracy, human rights, and the environment at the forefront of international policy. According to Anheier and Cunningham, they comprise the "basic ingredients of an emerging international society of social organizations."⁶⁵

As of 1996, some 22,000 NGOs, including indigenous NGOs, INGOs, TNGOs and TNSOs, existed worldwide, promoting national or international social development.⁶⁶

International Child Welfare and Relief International child welfare organizations have multiplied in many developing nations providing orphanages, adoption services, food and medical aid, and protection against child trafficking, child labor, and child abuse. Among these organizations are World Vision International, Save the Children International, International Social Services, and Children's Home Society and Family Services (CHSFS).⁶⁷

In 1989, thirty-eight international child welfare NGOs, representing approximately 300 child welfare organizations on six continents, formed the International Forum for Child Welfare (IFCW) "to strengthen national non-governmental child welfare organizations worldwide through capacity building and to collaborate on new initiatives on behalf of this planet's most valuable resource children."⁶⁸ IFCW is a TNSO dedicated to the promotion of the rights and well-being of children globally.⁶⁹ IFCW encourages, nurtures, and strengthens new child welfare initiatives by small, developing child welfare nongovernmental organizations that depend on collaboration and technical assistance for capacity building.⁷⁰

Women-Led NGOs (WNGOS) Women-led NGOs (WNGOs) in India, particularly those assisting in the empowerment of women and social development, women's health, and advocating for women's rights, are breaking the gender gap as well as providing

needed services. These WNGOs are highly organized and effective. They “have a clear idea of their activities as well as scheduling of services provided and tasks for paid personnel and volunteers.”⁷¹

Expansion, Coordination, and Diversification (2000–Present)

As the global society moved into the new millennium, many INGOs that had acquired TNGO status in the 1970’s and those that were established since then continued to expand geographically. While maintaining their central core, they began to shape their programs and services to fit the particular cultures, circumstances, and needs of the people where they became planted. Others diversified even more, expanding their mission, adapting their focus, meeting new needs, and taking on new projects in the changing world scene to bring about a better, more socially healthy planet. Still others joined together to coordinate and cooperate in common ventures.

Geographic Expansion The International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) formed in 1928, the world’s first TNSO, expanded to provide support and assistance to NGOs in more than 70 countries around the world. While continuing its involvement in microfinance activities, BRAC, formerly the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, has grown into the world’s “largest development organization,” reaching more than 110 million people, delivering health, education, business development and livelihood support services into nine countries in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.⁷²

CARE International, has grown from a US based relief organization into an international confederation of 12 member organizations committed to helping communities in 84 developing countries, supporting 1,051 poverty-fighting projects, and reaching more than 122 million people in 2011.⁷³ Amnesty International has become a global movement of more than 3 million supporters, members, and activists in more than 150 countries and territories.⁷⁴ ACCION helped build 62 microfinance institutions in 31 countries on four continents.⁷⁵ Oxfam expanded as well, becoming the Oxfam International Confederation, a union of independent nongovernmental organizations in 15 member nations.⁷⁶

Today, scouting has over 125 member organizations worldwide. The World Alliance of YMCAs also

operates in 125 countries around the world, with over 45 million members.⁷⁷ Each year, the YWCA reaches more than 25 million women and girls through work in over 22,000 communities in 128 countries worldwide. The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) provides programs for girls and young women in 145 nations. The Salvation Army operates in 24 countries. World Vision International, together with microfinance subsidiary VisionFund International, has become a leading humanitarian organization, with some 40,000 staff members including part-time and temporary staff and employees of microfinance institutions in nearly 100 countries worldwide.⁷⁸

Working in over 120 countries, Save the Children International has become the world’s leading independent organization for children, reaching 100 million children. International Social Service (ISS) is active in around 140 countries serving more than 50,000 people throughout the world each year, through a network of national branches, affiliated bureaus, and correspondents.

Diversification Today Amnesty International focuses on the death penalty, freedom of expression, reproductive rights, international justice, and human rights.⁷⁹ Care International (CI) has expanded beyond sending CARE packages to homeless refugees, now carrying out a range of project-related advocacy, fundraising, and communications activities in support of its relief and development programs.⁸⁰ In addition to leading the world in the delivery of emergency relief, Oxfam International is part of a global movement campaigning with others to end unfair trade rules, demand better health and education services for all, combat climate change, help reduce poverty and injustice, and implement long-term development programs in vulnerable communities.⁸¹

The YMCA works to bring social justice and peace to young people through its programs in sustainable development, education and vocational training, and gender equality. The “Y” operates health and HIV/AIDS prevention, food security, leadership development, emergency response, and peace-building activities. YMCAs advocate for national and international public policies that protect and promote the rights of youth and women.⁸²

The World YWCA not only provides housing and group services for young women, but advocates for peace, justice, human rights, care for the environment, and it has been at the forefront of raising the status of

women. Through its advocacy, training, and development programs, the World YWCA empowers women to lead social change world wide.

The Salvation Army has become a transnational faith-based organization, moving beyond its initial concern for the poor in London's slums to provide literacy, child welfare, housing, nutrition, community development, anti-trafficking, and emergency relief services. World Vision International not only provides financial support to individual children, but has expanded its role to include community development, emergency relief, and promote justice. While the mission of Save the Children organization was to prevent starvation among children following WWI, it now provides expanded programs in health, nutrition, education, protection, and child rights, as well as providing response to emergencies. International Social Service (ISS) continues to provide intercountry adoption, and relocation services, and is also active in assisting in child abduction, alternative care, foster care, and in the protection and care of unaccompanied or separated minors in the countries of origin and receiving countries.⁸³

Global Cooperation Many TNGOs are engaged in cooperative efforts. In 2003 Amnesty International, Oxfam, and the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), for example, launched a cooperative global Arms Control campaign. In 2007, following intense campaigning by Amnesty International and its partners in the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, the UN adopted the first-ever resolution calling for a global moratorium on the use of the death penalty.

Organized by NGOs throughout the world, the World Social Forum, a rival to the World Economic Forum, cooperatively engages in humanitarian issues, development aid, and sustainable development. In January 2005, for example, the fifth World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, was attended by representatives from more than 1,000 NGOs.

Implications for Macro Social Work As early as 1838 international humanitarian efforts aimed at alleviating the suffering of people in deprived nations had begun. These efforts grew in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Since then, the history of international humanitarian organizations shows an expanded, diversified, and often coordinated effort by independent NGOs, INGOs, TNGOS, and TNSOs tackling some of the most entrenched problems facing our global

society, often in ways that national governments or even the UN are unable to accomplish.

There is ample opportunity for macro social workers in the United States not only to become deeply involved, but to provide leadership to the many international humanitarian efforts that exist today. Social workers are uniquely qualified to engage in international child welfare, child protection, refugee and relief, human rights, community development, and social policy concerns. Social workers can and should seek arenas of need and help establish new international entrepreneurial efforts to cope with the many global social problems that remain unaddressed today.

BRAVE NEW MILLENNIUM: SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN OUR GLOBAL SOCIETY

Over the past several centuries, the forces of modernity have become international and now global in character, bringing wealth to many developed nations in Europe, North America, and Asia.⁸⁴ While people in developed nations have prospered, those in third-world, developing nations have not.

People in many of these countries confront a seemingly endless list of problems including economic injustice, ethnic violence, political instability, corruption, lack of education, and now AIDS.⁸⁵ Among the most important of these issues are the population explosion, endemic poverty, slavery, the manufacturing of violence and international conflict, increasing numbers of refugees, and destruction of the global ecosystem.

Population Explosion

In the year 2000, the world population was an estimated 6 billion. There are currently over 2 billion people under the age of 20 in developing areas of the world; 400 million of these are adolescents aged 15 to 19. It is estimated that if world childbearing rates rise to 2.5 children per childbearing woman, the world's population will increase to 11.2 billion by 2050 and surpass 27 billion by 2150.⁸⁶ The vast majority of this increase is expected in southern Asia and Africa. Two-thirds of the world's population will be living in cities by 2025, with more than 100 cities having 5 million or more residents. A highly urbanized world population combined with an increase in the median age from 25 (1995) to 36.5 years (2050), meaning an aging population,

will present unparalleled challenges for people in developing nations.⁸⁷

Poverty

Most of the people in developing nations face poverty, a consequence of overpopulation, disease, changing climate, famine, war, and a growing global market economy. More than a billion people in underdeveloped nations have incomes below the poverty line and 1.2 billion people live beneath the threshold of basic needs.⁸⁸ Almost half of all people, over 3 billion people, live on less than \$2.50 a day, at least 80% on less than \$10 a day. The problem of poverty in third-world nations involves global consumption, lower standards of living, widening income differentials among citizens, and child poverty. Global poverty has at least some of its origins in the developmental/modernization theories of the West.

Global Consumption While the top fifth of the world's population enjoyed 30 times the goods and services as the lowest fifth in 1960, by 1994 the wealthiest 20% of the world's people consumed 78 times more than the remainder of humanity.⁸⁹ In 2003 the United States contained 4.65% of the world's population, but its people used nearly one-third of the entire global gross domestic product, seven times its share of the world's goods. Japan had 2% of the world's population, but its citizens consumed 13.4% of the global domestic product, 6.2 times more than other nations.⁹⁰

In 2004 the total wealth of the top 8.3 million people around the world, about 0.13% of the world's population, "rose 8.2 percent to \$30.8 trillion, giving them control of nearly a quarter of the world's financial assets."⁹¹ By 2005, the wealthiest 20% of the world accounted for over three-fourths, 76.6%, of total private consumption, while the poorest fifth had just 1.5%. The poorest 10% accounted for just 0.5% and the wealthiest 10% accounted for 59% of all the consumption.⁹² In that same year the world's 497 billionaires were worth \$3.5 trillion, owning over 7% of gross domestic product (GDP) on the entire planet, while 2.4 billion people in the world's poorest nations claimed less than half that amount, only 3.3% of the world's GDP.⁹³ Today, according to a 2008 World Bank report, those figures have not improved.⁹⁴

Lower Standard of Living Purchasing power parity (PPP) is an economic indicator that adjusts amounts of income in other nations to dollar equivalents. Thus, a dollar for a person in a poor country would purchase

the same as a dollar for a person in the United States. The 15 nations with the highest per capita PPP income averaged more than \$37,000 in 2007, over \$100 a day, according to the International Monetary Fund. At the top was Qatar, whose citizens took in \$85,600 each, about \$234 per day, more than 274 times as much as people in the poorest nation on earth. Qatar was followed by Luxembourg at \$79,660, a daily average of \$218, and Norway whose average PPP was \$53,152 in 2007. In 2003 the average American took home \$37,600, about \$103 per day,⁹⁵ increasing to \$45,735 in 2007, or \$125 a day, ranking people in the United States as having the sixth highest income in the world.

On the other hand, in 2007, the per capita yearly income of the 15 poorest countries of the world was less than \$980, or \$2.68 per day. In 2005 the average annual income of a citizen of Burundi was \$470, declining in 2008 to \$372, or \$1.02 per day. The yearly income for a citizen in Liberia was \$383 in 2005, decreasing to \$358, less than \$1.00 a day in 2007. The PPP of a person in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was \$264 or 72 cents a day in 2003. In 2007, however, this figure climbed to \$312, or 85 cents a day, still lower than any other nation in the world.

Widening Income Differentials Not only are 35% to 75% of the population in most third-world cities poor, but more than 80% of the world's population lives in countries where income differentials are widening.⁹⁶ In 2007 a study by member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) over the last 20 years showed that economic inequality had increased for 27 of its 30 members as top earners' incomes soared while others' stagnated. The United States has the highest inequality and poverty rates in the OECD after Mexico and Turkey, and the gap has increased rapidly since 2000, the report said. In the United States the richest 10% earn an average of \$93,000, the highest level in the OECD, while the poorest 10% earn an average of \$5,800—about \$20 lower than the OECD average.⁹⁷

Child Poverty Of the 2.2 billion children in the world, 1 billion, every second child, lives in poverty. According to UNICEF, 26,500–30,000 children die each day due to poverty, double the number a decade ago. They "die quietly in some of the poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny and the conscience of the world. Being meek and weak in life makes these dying multitudes even more invisible in death."⁹⁸ Among

the consequences of poverty are malnutrition, poor health, lack of clean water, and inadequate education.

Malnutrition In 2007 around 27–28% of all children in developing countries were estimated to be underweight or stunted.⁹⁹ One-half of all rural children in India are underweight for their age—roughly the same proportion as in 1992.¹⁰⁰ If these trends continue, the Millennium Development Goals target of halving the proportion of underweight children will be missed by 30 million children, largely because of slow progress in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰¹

Poor Health In 2003 a total of 10.6 million children died before they reached the age of 5, equaling the entire number children in France, Germany, Greece, and Italy combined.¹⁰² Twenty-five percent of babies in Sierra Leone and 10% of toddlers in Iraq die before 5. In October, 2004, the *New Zealand Herald* reported that 1 in 12 children worldwide do not make it to their fifth birthday due to poor care for newborns, malaria, diarrhea, malnutrition, and even measles, and half of these occur deaths in sub-Saharan Africa. Some 2.2 million children die each year because they are not immunized and 15 million children are orphaned due to HIV/AIDS.¹⁰³

The 2003 UNICEF report asserted that there is “alarmingly slow progress in reducing child deaths.”¹⁰⁴

AIDS

In 2004 an estimated 40 million people were living with HIV/AIDS, with 3 million deaths.¹⁰⁵ The worst situations are in African countries south of the Sahara, where the highest concentration of AIDS exists: 70% of world’s total, with an estimated total of nearly 30 million people infected by the virus.¹⁰⁶

AIDS threatens a “tidal wave” of death, affecting children worldwide. In sub-Saharan Africa, 3.8 million children have lost one or both parents to AIDS since 2000. AIDS orphans in sub-Saharan Africa will top 18 million in 2010, up from 15 million in 2003 and 11.5 million in 2001.

In the region’s 11 worst-hit countries, one in seven children are orphans, and by 2010 6% of all children in Africa will have lost at least one parent to AIDS. Even if by some miracle the spread of HIV is stopped today, the number of orphans would still rise because parents who are HIV-positive will continue die in the next few years.¹⁰⁷

HIV/AIDS is not only a human crisis, it is a threat to sustainable global social, and economic development, asserted Juan Somavia, director general of the UN International Labour Organization. “The loss of life and the

debilitating effects of the illness will lead not only to a reduced capacity to sustain production and employment, an increase in poverty, but will be a burden borne by all societies rich and poor alike.”¹⁰⁸

Lack of Clean Water In the decade following 2000, 1.4 million children died each year from lack of access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.¹⁰⁹ According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), some 1.1 billion people in developing countries have inadequate access to water, and 2.6 billion lack basic sanitation.¹¹⁰

PRIVATIZING WATER IN BOLIVIA

Cochabamba, Bolivia, lies in a semidesert region where the minimum wage is less than \$100 a month and water is a scarce commodity. In 1999 Bechtel Corporation, in collusion with the World Bank, forced the Bolivian government to privatize Cochabamba’s municipal water supply company (SEMAPA) by passing a Drinking Water and Sanitation Law, which eliminated government water subsidies to citizens, began private ownership of the community’s water resources, even going so far as to forbid Bolivians from drawing water from their own local wells.¹¹¹ Water prices skyrocketed in a country already desperately poor, hitting \$20 a month, nearly the cost of feeding a family of five for two weeks.

In protest, citizens formed La Coordinadora de Defensa del Agua y de la Vida (Coalition in Defense of Water and Life) and shut down the city for four days. Within a month millions of Bolivians marched to Cochabamba, held a general strike, stopped all transportation, and issued the Cochabamba Declaration, calling for universal water rights.

The government, however, reneged on its promise to reverse the price hike, and in February 2000 La Coordinadora organized a peaceful march demanding repeal of the law, termination of the water contract, and participation of citizens in drafting a water resource law. The people’s demands were violently rejected.

In early April the Bolivian government shot hundreds of protesters in the streets to protect itself and its corporate benefactor and tried to silence the water protest by arresting activists and censoring media. On April 10, however, Bechtel left Bolivia, and the government was forced to revoke the hated privatization legislation. The water company was handed over to the people, who began to hold public hearings to decide its policies. Bechtel’s reprisals have not ended, however. It is now suing the Bolivian government for \$25 million in damages and potential lost profits, while the Bolivian government continues to harass the activists of La Coordinadora.¹¹²

Lack of Education Based on enrollment data, about 72 million children of primary school age in the developing world were not in school in 2005, 57% of whom were girls, and these are regarded as optimistic numbers.¹¹³ Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names.¹¹⁴ Less than 1% of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000, and yet it didn't happen.¹¹⁵

Why is it difficult to divert spending on luxury items or military expenditures to such necessities as food, health care, and clean water for people who live in poverty-stricken areas of the world? Is the problem one of indifference, hard-heartedness, or lack of compassion? Is the problem ideological? Why does our global society fail to resolve social problems such as poverty, lack of health care, education, hunger, or clean water that are well within its reach?

EXERCISE 14.2

World Spending Priorities

It is economically possible today to create a world free of hunger and disease; to provide education, clean water, and a healthy social environment for the entire world population without interfering with the survival of the remainder of the world's people. And yet, in spite of appeals and the work of aid organizations, this effort is not made, and what is worse, rarely seriously considered. Review the world's spending priorities below. Then answer the questions that follow.

Global Priority	\$U.S. Billions
Cosmetics in the United States	8
Ice cream in Europe	11
Perfumes in Europe and the United States	12
Pet foods in Europe and the United States	17
Business entertainment in Japan	35
Cigarettes in Europe	50
Alcoholic drinks in Europe	105
Narcotic drugs in the world	400
Military spending in the world	780 ¹¹⁶

Compare these figures to estimated costs to achieve universal access to basic social services in all developing countries today

Global Priority	\$U.S. Billions
Basic education for all	6
Water and sanitation for all	9
Reproductive health for all women	12
Basic health and nutrition	13 ¹¹⁷

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FIGURE 14.1 Global Spending Priorities 1998

Global Poverty and Developmental/Modernization Theories

While development and modernization theories attempt to account for intransigent global poverty and drive many of its contemporary solutions, the developmental/modernization paradigm according to many theorists reveals that it is a major cause of world poverty.

Development Theory For nearly 400 years many indigenous peoples throughout the world lived as aliens in their own land, as subjects of Britain, Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy, Germany, Japan, and United States. As overt colonization generally came to an end following the Second World War, a vision of engaging newly forming nations began to take hold in the West, particularly in the United States, whose booming corporate enterprises were looking for ways to invest their surplus capital, seek new markets, and obtain resources.

This vision, however, was dependent on the capacity of these new nations to create production- and consumption-driven free market economies based on manufacturing and trade, called modern "development." The developmental model "marked the beginnings of the period of massive state and international intervention in the new 'developing countries,'"¹¹⁸ asserts Norman Long, transforming nations with non-market based economies into systems of production and consumption modeled on Western capitalism. As a form of social engineering, development was geared to designing and actively shifting the mindset of people in colonized areas of Africa, East and South Asia, and so-called "traditional" societies of the Western hemisphere into a market mentality through massive transfers of capital and technology, doling out development aid by the fast-growing aid industry, and labor in the form of volunteers, says Hubert Campens.¹¹⁹

Inspired by the success of the Marshall Plan, which helped rebuild European economies after World War II, the Western Allied nations attempted to improve the living standards of the poor in “stagnant” and “backward” regions. Economically developed nations engaged in technology transfer, doled out aid, and supported political regimes that claimed to encourage free enterprise capitalism, industrialization, and urbanization. John F. Kennedy, for example, launched the Alliance for Progress in 1961, which pumped billions of dollars into Latin America, expecting to create markets for U.S. products, while supporting political regimes that claimed to embrace free enterprise capitalist democracy.

Modernization To this model of development was added a theory of modernization, an approach to comparative history that emerged in the 1960s as the dominant explanation of societal change. Popular interpreters of this idea, such as Walt Whitman Rostow, asserted that social evolution is believed to be an inevitable sequential process in which all emerging modern urban societies converge as a single unified type, exemplified by liberal democratic capitalist nations of the West, in particular the most modern nations of North America.¹²⁰ According to its logic, history automatically progresses in a straight line from the past to the present, uncivilized to civilized, rural to urban, undeveloped to developed, East to West. Premodern economies are replaced by the free market, modes of natural communal human association by artificial organizational systems, and social thinking by rational calculation. Modernization is an organizing principle or worldview diffused by modern complex organizations, including universities, corporations, and governments, that supports the rationalization of world processes. Public and private material accumulation, along with formal democratic elections, was presumed to solve other social problems of the world’s impoverished people as well.¹²¹ The cumulative effect of these improvements was supposed to automatically “trickle down” in an administrative fashion to those at the bottom. “The sooner they become like the West, it was believed, the sooner will mankind enjoy peace and fulfillment,”¹²² says Robert Lauer.

It is only rational and socially beneficial, therefore, to insert into the “primitive” consciousness of underdeveloped people the worldview that individualism, self-interest, competition, economic growth, wealth

accumulation, privatization, and a host of other modern premises of the free market economy and modern mass democracy are the epitome of civilization. The solution to underdevelopment is to “change these people’s thinking by bringing them into the modern world as quickly and painlessly as possible,”¹²³ says Mansour Fakih.

Failure of the Developmental/Modernization Model The developmental model and modernization theory represent misleading views of society.

Development. Attempts to apply the top-down development model to the non-market economies of South America, India, and other regions was an unequivocal failure.¹²⁴ “Despite a number of development efforts,” asserts Mansour Fakih, “both the absolute number and percentage of the world’s people who lived in utter poverty continued to increase.”¹²⁵ Politically, attempts at “destabilizing” governments that were leaning toward socialist economies, such as those in Chile, Nicaragua, the Philippines, and others, replacing their leaders with those friendly to corporate capitalism, often resulted in the installation of dictatorships and repression of indigenous populations in South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia.¹²⁶

Economic and political experts created poverty instead of eradicating it, and they increased the dependence of these countries within an inequitable global order, asserts Ponna Wignaraja.¹²⁷ Development, it turns out, is all too often a euphemism for exploitation, another form of colonialism, says H. Norberg-Hodge.¹²⁸ When one-third of the world’s population consumes two-thirds of the world’s resources and then exhorts others to do as they do, it is little short of a hoax.

Modernization. The failure of modern global change occurs because it is based on deceitful premises, according to Mansour Fakih. The myth of unidirectionality and the assumption that a modern, industrial society is tantamount to the ultimate in human achievement becomes a destructive ideology. It inserts premises of ideological control, domination, and patriarchy into every area of human life, “creating a hegemony of thinking that distorts human consciousness,”¹²⁹ says Fakih. “Man’s future is not converging toward some social system that is essentially an extrapolation of the contemporary West, ... nor is it possible to justify the idea of a singular path to that end,” asserts Robert Lauer.¹³⁰

The imposition of modernization deprived the people of their identities, disallowed them from making decisions on their own behalf, and ignored their traditional ways of thinking. People were invariably worse off than before, stripped of their culture, their communities, their land, and even of their selves.

While overt colonialism has generally ended today, economic and cultural exploitation continues unabated as the fabric of former colonial societies continues to erode. The developmental paths of modern industrialized societies, in either their socialist or capitalist variants, have destroyed the economies of less “developed” nations, bringing massive and pervasive poverty to four-fifths of the world’s population.

How to Solve World Poverty What is clear to most of people in the poor nations of the earth and to many social workers is that the military power, economic might, political control, and the cultural hegemony of modernity cannot correct the disparities that these systems have created. Modernity is helpless in resolving the dilemmas on which it is based and can only exacerbate those inequities as it proceeds along the path of its rational self-interest. It is impossible for the global market to reform, restrain, or reshape itself into a kinder and gentler system. The billions of the earth’s people who live under conditions of inhumanity, trauma, deprivation, upheaval, and decimation forced upon them by the demands of the self-interested global market system cannot endure.

International governmental organizations such as the World Trade Organization, IMF, or World Bank may be able to offer resources, but the answer to poverty will never come from top-down solutions, capital investment, or gigantic corporate or governmental development projects. The cure for poverty will not come by converting local economies into high-powered market systems, or by inducing people to accept the premises on which modern market economies are based. Economically developed nations cannot create wealth in poor nations when they appropriate people’s land for their own benefit or exploit citizens as cheap sources of labor.

Poverty will only be eradicated as people in their own local communities take charge of their lives. It will begin when people reject an image of themselves, often imposed by the “modernization” mentality, that impoverishment is due to their inability, laziness, and lack of intelligence, or a desire to be dependent on others.

The economic capacity of people will continue to grow as they work together on common projects for the benefit of all. It will come to fruition as they develop self-sufficiency, primarily using their own resources, guided by their own ideas, engaging in their own common effort to better the lives of their children and their communities.

MAKING CAPITAL AVAILABLE

Today over 2 billion people in the world have little access to any type of financial services, 1 billion live in inadequate housing, and 2 billion lack electrical power. To them and their families, reaching full economic citizenship would mean having access to improved products and services that meet their basic needs, increasing the value of their local production, and being able to leverage their often illiquid assets to gain new opportunities.

In 2003, Ashoka launched the *Full Economic Citizenship* (FEC) initiative in collaboration with its community of social and business entrepreneurs to drive large-scale change through business-social models for low-income communities worldwide.¹³¹ Ashoka’s FEC initiative is promoting a new way of thinking about housing, health-care and small producers, one that seeks to enable business-social alliances or *Hybrid Value Chains™* (HVC) to develop products, distribution channels, and financing solutions to better serve these underserved markets. Beyond business-social partnerships, Ashoka aims to transform entire sectors by demonstrating the HVC model and foster its replication. Ashoka’s goal is for every individual to have the ability and choice to play a role in local and global economies, as consumers, producers, and creators of wealth.¹³²

Slavery

For North Americans, debt bondage, known as indentured servitude, and chattel slavery are problems of the past. What many people in our global society fail to realize, however, is that the problem of human slavery has not ended. When compared to estimates of slavery at the end of World War II, in fact, the number of slaves today has increased tenfold,¹³³ asserts the *New Internationalist* magazine.

The *New Internationalist* reported in 2001, for example, that a conservative “estimate of 27 million people, many of whom are children in developing nations, were enslaved around the world, a little short of the population of Canada, and higher than during

the heyday of the colonial slave trade.”¹³⁴ The value of global slavery is estimated at \$12.3 billion a year, including a significant amount of international trade in slave-produced goods.¹³⁵ Six kinds of slavery exist in our modern world: trafficking in persons, child slavery, debt bondage, forced labor, marriage as slavery, and chattel slavery.

Trafficking in Persons Trafficking occurs when people are transported from their homes, often with a promise of a better life or forced through violence, threats, and deception to work in conditions of slavery.¹³⁶ “Traffickers use threats, intimidation, and violence to force victims to engage in sex acts or to labor for the trafficker’s financial gain.”¹³⁷ In 1997, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimated that more than 50,000 persons a year were trafficked into the United States alone,¹³⁸ and as of 2008 “some 2.5 million people throughout the world at any given time were recruited, entrapped, transported, and exploited,”¹³⁹ according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Educated young women from Ghana and Cameroon, for example, lured with a chance of further study in the United States, have been enslaved as domestics. Large numbers of Nigerian women have been forced into prostitution in Italy.¹⁴⁰ With the cooperation of the Japanese government, Filipino, Romanian, and Russian women are brought to Japan on “entertainment visas,” often by the Yakuza or Japanese Mafia to service its many bars and brothels.

Child Slavery Children are increasingly forced into slavery within and across national borders. According to a 2007 report by UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman, 1.2 million children per year are trafficked within countries as well as across borders.¹⁴¹ In 2004, 218 million children were involved in child labor, 126 million of whom were in hazardous work.¹⁴² Estimates from 2000 suggest that 5.7 million of these children toil with their families as bonded laborers on farms or as forced laborers.¹⁴³

Others are sold by their parents or tricked by agents into servitude as camel jockeys, fisher boys, or beggars. Some children are kidnapped by the state and forced to become soldiers. In 2001 more than 300,000 children under the age of 18 were estimated to be fighting in conflicts in 41 countries around the world, and of those 120,000 are fighting in sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁴⁴

According to a 2006 report to the UN, at least 1.8 million children were forced into prostitution or exploited by pornography,¹⁴⁵ with the greatest numbers in Thailand, India, Taiwan, and the Philippines, says the International Labour Organisation.¹⁴⁶ Forty thousand children are prostitutes in Bangkok, Thailand, at least 60,000 children in the country as a whole, although some estimates go as high as 200,000. Fifteen thousand of Manila’s street children survive through prostitution.

Almost 200,000 Nepali girls, many under the age of 14, are smuggled into India each year to join the sex industry.¹⁴⁷ Procurers of these children might be the wives of village heads, says Sompop Jantraka, a leading Thai activist who has saved thousands of girls from being sold into brothels. Teachers know which children are vulnerable, and some inform procurers for a fee. Even those responsible for law and order can be made to turn a blind eye through bribes, leaving slavers to operate undisturbed.¹⁴⁸ Jantraka himself has seen pickup trucks full of girls sold to brothels leaving from schools ... often with a police officer at the wheel.¹⁴⁹

Debt Bondage Poor villagers fall into debt to a landlord because of marriage expenses or the need for medical treatment. They are forced to slave from morning to night to repay debts of as little as \$10 or \$20, with usuriously inflated interest, or use their labor as collateral, making repayment virtually impossible. Sometimes their wives and children also end up working for the landlord as bonded laborers.

SHRAMAJEEVI SANGATHAN

In 1979 a young couple, Vivek and Vidyullata Pandit, who began working in Bombay’s slums, decided to focus their energies in the rural areas. Discovering that his uncle, with whom they were staying, kept debt slaves in bondage, Vivek began demanding their release. Only after being attacked by his own uncle’s men did the Pandits gain the trust of the people they wanted to help. They knew that India had outlawed debt bondage, and also that no one was being paid the minimum wage, so in 1982 they demanded the landlords pay up. They called a local official, who threatened the landlords with police action. Strengthened by this approach, bonded indigenous Adivasi Indian laborers in 15 villages united to go on strike. For 24 days the Adivasis survived by gathering wild vegetables in the forests as the agitation

continued. When the landlords' unattended crops began dying, the landlords started fighting among themselves, and some became willing to pay the minimum wage. Their unity was broken.

Two decades later the Shramajeevi Sangathana organization, begun by the Pandits, had freed 450 villages from debt bondage. They keep the police force in check by protesting their excesses. Today numerous farms operate cooperatively, special schools are opening to help children who cannot attend regularly, savings groups are beginning, and in a strange reversal, landlords are turning to the Sangathana for advice on farming methods.

It has not been an easy struggle, however. The Pandits' guiding principle is that power is never given freely; it must be taken. The Sangathana prepares bond slaves to face conflict and backs them 100%. In the face of death threats, assaults, false imprisonment, and vilification in the press, the Sangathana organization has survived. Despite the malaise of Indian politics, a police system overly friendly with the rich, gangster rule in many areas where they work, and discrimination against the indigenous Adivasis, the Sangathana has come through.¹⁵⁰

Today, according to the *New Internationalist*, debt bondage is the major form of slavery in the world. In Pakistan and India, North Africa, Southeast Asia, and Central and South America, debt bondage enslaves up to 20 million people. Ten million debt slaves, who may be in their third or fourth generation of bondage, live in India despite the fact that debt bondage has been illegal there since 1976.¹⁵¹ Police are often ignorant of these laws or, as in Brazil and Thailand, they may be profiting from bonded labor themselves.¹⁵²

Forced Labor Forced labor often occurs through government or paramilitary coercion. In Sudan women and children captured as war booty enter into forced labor. Forced labor exists for minority groups in Burma, for prison camp slaves in China, and for exploited migrant workers in many Western nations. Forced laborers work against their will in construction, road maintenance, and building railroads and bridges, often under threat of violence. In 2007, the U.S. State Department reported that 12.3 million people were forced into labor worldwide, almost 9.5 million in Asia and the Pacific, 1.3 million in Latin America and Caribbean, 660,000 in Sub Saharan Africa and over 900,000 in Europe and the United States.¹⁵³

Marital Slavery Marital slavery occurs in situations in which a woman, without the right to refuse, is given in marriage as payment for money or in kind. In some nations girls as young as 10, unable to give informed consent and without choice, are compelled to enter into marriages where they are forced into domestic servitude, often accompanied by physical violence. In parts of rural China and the Central Asian republics, women are sometimes abducted and forced to marry men from neighboring villages. In other situations, to atone for an offence committed by a family member, girls are pledged to priests in Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria, becoming domestic and sexual slaves.¹⁵⁴

YANAR MOHAMED, WOMEN'S ADVOCATE

Yanar Mohamed, a 43-year-old Iraqi Canadian woman whose grandmother was forced as a teen into marital slavery with a cleric 40 years her senior, is often the advocate of last resort for women in Iraq. Last year a group of 47 women bank clerks were accused of theft by their supervisor. After days of waiting to plead her case, Mohamed lost her patience and began shouting at the Iraqi clerks and the American military officials. "I had bad manners," she said, "but they listened to us." Three weeks later all 47 women were released and the supervisor was arrested.

In the summer of 2004, the Organisation of Women's Freedom in Iraq, which she founded, opened the country's first two women's shelters, with facilities for ten women. In addition, she runs a newspaper, organizes lobbying campaigns, and employs a lawyer who offers legal services to women. She is fighting against "honor killings," in which a man murders a female relative who has violated the family honor and often is given a much-reduced sentence. A book written by Iraqi Rega Rauf, for example, detailed 400 cases of honor killings in the Northern Iraqi district of Sulaimaniya in 1998 alone. "I don't want to take us back to the time of my grandmother," Mohamed said. "It depends on us whether we resist or not."¹⁵⁵

Chattel Slavery Chattel slavery, the outright ownership of a human being and his/her descendants, continues today in many parts of the world. Although this is the least common form of slavery, it exists in Sudan, where women and children from villages in the south are abducted by pro-government militias and sold to households in the north. In Mauritania and Niger,

nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes have slave castes. Even among slaves who have managed to become free and earn money, tribute must often be paid to their family's former master, who also maintains inheritance rights over any property the freed slave may have accumulated.¹⁵⁶

Manufacturing of Violence and International Conflict

Two-thirds of the arms trade in our global society is conducted between developed and developing countries, but the only nations that win are the developed nations that sell the weapons.¹⁵⁷ Developing countries can least afford to spend their capital on the military, weaponry, or armed conflict, which destroys their country's infrastructure, kills its citizens, and burdens the nation with debt to developing nations.¹⁵⁸ The United States, often in the guise of ensuring stability and security in the world, is often its major practitioner.

INTERNATIONAL ARMS SALES

The United States sells arms to its NATO allies and others, such as Japan and South Korea. But it often also arms both sides in a conflict, such as Greece and Turkey, which have been threatening to go to war with one another over the island of Cyprus. The United States also supplies arms to nations with dismal human rights records, including Indonesia, Colombia, and Saudi Arabia. Under a Defense Department policy initiated in 1993, Congress created the Defense Export Loan Guarantee program to finance U.S. weapons sales to foreign countries. If a country defaults on its payments for arms, the company gets paid anyway and U.S. taxpayers are left holding the bag.¹⁵⁹

The United States isn't the only arms dealer in this lucrative market. Robert Grimmet of the Congressional Research Service, in his report "Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations—1993–2000," states that in 2000 Britain sold \$5.1 billion in arms, Russia ranked third with \$3.5 billion deliveries to developing nations, and France was fourth with \$2.38 billion. The United States, the global arms sales leader, ranked first, with \$14.3 billion in sales. Determined to improve its performance, in 2002 Russia's President Putin put the final figure at \$4.4 billion in arms sold to developing nations, including tanks and MIG fighters to India and China.¹⁶⁰

From tanks, helicopters, and fighter jets to missiles, remotely piloted aircraft, and even warships, the United States is the top arms supplier to the world. The U.S. government sells or gives away weapons to virtually every nation on earth. Once he was elected, reports the MoJo Wire, rather than insert human rights concerns into the arms sales equation, President Bill Clinton aggressively continued the sales policies of former President George Bush, requiring our diplomats to shill for arms merchants to their host countries. In his first year in office, arms sales more than doubled. From 1993 to 1997, the U.S. government sold, approved, or gave away \$190 billion in weapons to developing countries throughout the globe.¹⁶¹

In fiscal year (FY) 2008, the second Bush Administration agreed to sell or transfer more than \$32 billion in weapons and other military equipment to foreign governments, compared with \$12 billion in 2005.¹⁶²

This pattern continues even more vigorously under the Obama administration. Even though Obama publicly supported efforts of the United Nations to develop an arms trade treaty in 2009,¹⁶³ on November 19, 2010, the administration sold \$60 billion worth of fighter jets and attack helicopters to Saudi Arabia, the single largest sale of weapons to a foreign nation in the history of the United States, outfitting Saudi Arabia with a fully modernized, potent new air force.¹⁶⁴ Two years later Obama resumed military sales to Bahrain despite human rights concerns,¹⁶⁵ and sold F-16 fighter planes, four warships, including a stealth 500-ton fast attack missile boat, to Taiwan.¹⁶⁶

Licensed American commercial corporations also sell less sophisticated weapons and the services to maintain these weapons systems directly to foreign governments. In FY 2007 that amount was \$96 billion, up from \$58 billion in 2005.¹⁶⁷ Whether they are aware of it or not, American citizens subsidize the growing U.S. arms industry with their taxes. Not only does the United States directly sell arms, for example, but about 60 countries get annual military aid from the United States, \$4.5 billion a year, 80% of which goes to Israel and Egypt, allowing them to buy weapons from American manufacturers.¹⁶⁸

With this assistance and encouragement, leaders of developing nations continue to squander their limited budgets on their obsession with military might. In 1995, for example, South Asia spent \$15 billion on weaponry, more than it would cost annually to achieve basic health and nutrition for its entire population.

Sub-Saharan Africa spent over \$8 billion on arms, nearly the same as the estimated annual cost of achieving universal access to safer water and sanitation in all developing countries; and East Asia spent \$51 billion, nine times the annual amount needed to ensure basic education for all children in that region.¹⁶⁹

Not only do some third-world nations waste their resources purchasing weaponry from first-world countries, ironically; they are often the chief targets of military campaigns from those same industrialized nations. “Since 1945, for example, armed conflicts between developed and underdeveloped nations have taken 21 million lives most of whom have occurred in the third world, and of these lives, where a meaningful distinction could be made, three out of every five were civilians,”¹⁷⁰ according to Sen and Grown.

Of the 21 countries that the United States has bombed since World War II, all have been third-world nations,¹⁷¹ and these interventions “have been fueled not by devotion to any kind of morality, but to the necessity of making the world safe for American corporations, profiting arms manufacturers, extending the political and economic hegemony over as wide an area as possible,”¹⁷² concludes William Blum.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS BOMBED 21 COUNTRIES SINCE WORLD WAR II

China	1945–1946, 1950–1953
North Korea	1950–1953
Guatemala	1954, 1960, 1967–1969
Indonesia	1958
Cuba	1959–1961
Congo	1964
Peru	1965
Laos	1964–1973
Vietnam	1961–1973
Cambodia	1969–1970
Lebanon	1983–1984
Grenada	1983
Libya	1986
El Salvador	1980s
Nicaragua	1980s
Panama	1989
Bosnia	1985
Sudan	1998
Former Yugoslavia	1999
Iraq	1991–2010
Afghanistan	1998, 2001–present ¹⁷³

Refugees

According to Rodreck Mupedziswa, “the refugee problem is perhaps the most serious crisis facing humankind today,” particularly in developing nations.¹⁷⁴ There are a number of causes of displacement. The number of refugees is growing, and many nations are experiencing “refugee fatigue.”

Causes of Displacement People become refugees because of environmental disruptions including sudden natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, as well as gradual changes in the environment such as desertification, deforestation, overfishing, and the destruction of rivers, lakes, and the ocean. People also become displaced because of ethnic conflicts, armed conflicts between opposition groups in a nation, governmental oppression, human rights violations, and invasion by external forces. Armed conflict, furthermore, often leads to homelessness and economic disruption, creating masses of refugees. After the Gulf War, for example, 1.8 million Iraqi Kurds fled to the border region of Turkey and Iran. Recently more than 400,000 refugees flooded into Kenya from Somalia, Sudan, and Ethiopia, and more than 1.2 million victims of violence in Yugoslavia sought refuge in Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Macedonia.

The Extent of the Refugee Problem The more than 1 billion people in underdeveloped countries who live near or under the poverty line deteriorate further when their way of life is disrupted or destroyed. When faced with displacement, they become destitute, often becoming victims of massive starvation and famine. The numbers of refugees who have been displaced has reached unprecedented proportions, and nearly all of these people are in developing countries. In 1964 there were 1.4 million international refugees in the world. In 1970, the number grew to 2.5 million and by 1980 it stood at 5 million. In 1990 the number of refugees exceeded 14 million, in 1993 the number was estimated to have reached 17 million. In 2005 27.4 million refugees existed around the world.¹⁷⁵

By the end of 2006, the number of refugees declined to an estimated 9.9 million, but one year later, the global figure rose to 11.4 million, including 1.7 million people considered by UNHCR to be in refugee-like situations.¹⁷⁶ As of March 2008, 3.4 million persons were displaced inside Iraq, and between

2.2 and 2.4 million Iraqi refugees were forced to live abroad, including 3,222 fleeing to the United States.¹⁷⁷

These numbers however, only account for those who have crossed international borders. The U.S. Committee for Refugees estimated that in 1993 about 24 million internally displaced people fled violence and persecution but had not crossed international borders,¹⁷⁸ and in 1997 the UNDP asserted that more than 40 million refugees and internally displaced people were still living outside their homeland.¹⁷⁹ The *New Internationalist* magazine reported that in 2001, though many thousands of refugees returned to countries where conditions have improved but remain unsafe, the UNHCR estimated that a further 22 million, not protected by international refugee law, may be “internally displaced” and might be at even greater risk.¹⁸⁰

Refugee Fatigue Because of the numbers of refugees, some nations have become “refugee fatigued” and are less accommodating to people seeking asylum. In 2002, for example, Australia refused asylum to Indonesian refugees. The UNHCR has “found itself in the unenviable position of pleading for permission to shelter refugees with unwilling leaders.”¹⁸¹ Mupedziswa says that, increasingly, African governments are becoming ambivalent and even hostile to accepting refugees from other nations.¹⁸²

Destruction of the Global Ecosystem

What is obvious to the poor people of the earth is that the natural capacity of this planet cannot sustain the perpetual rapacious consumption that the global market society demands. Rich countries are the primary users of scarce global resources, but poor countries are the most likely to be hurt by ecological deterioration and are least capable of adapting. Underdeveloped countries typically have weak infrastructures and less than adequate social services, making them particularly vulnerable to the floods, droughts, and spread of infectious diseases that global climate change brings.¹⁸³

The international policies of wealthy nations implemented by global economic international governmental organizations (IGOs), including the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, are part of the problem, says Kevin Danaher. “It is now generally recognized that the environmental impact of the IMF-World Bank on the South has been as devastating as the economic and social impact on peoples

and societies.”¹⁸⁴ C. Caulfield asserts, furthermore, that the Bank’s decades-long experiments with large development projects aimed at poverty reduction have required the sacrifice of vast areas of productive forests, soils, rivers, and coastlines,¹⁸⁵ and “have created environmental deterioration or even permanent environmental degradation in many third world nations.”¹⁸⁶

Five years after the historic 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the Worldwatch Institute offered an assessment of the progress of the world’s nations in reducing environmental destruction. The assessment found that the nations of the world have fallen short of attaining an environmentally sustainable global economy. Much of the earth’s biological riches have been rapidly and irreversibly diminished. Huge areas of old-growth forests have been degraded or cleared in temperate as well as tropical regions—eliminating thousands of species of plants and animals. Biologically rich wetlands and coral reefs are suffering similar fates. The annual emission of carbon in the form of carbon dioxide, the leading greenhouse gas, has climbed to a new high, altering the very composition of the atmosphere and earth’s heat balance.

Brown and colleagues conclude that “governments still pursue economic growth as an end in itself, neglecting the long-term sustainability of the course they chart.”¹⁸⁷ Teeple adds that “governments minimize their import, mouthing concern but doing little to clean up or prevent further destruction; and corporations resist the idea of accepting responsibility for the external costs of their industrial processes.”¹⁸⁸

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The profession of social work has a responsibility to assist in solving social problems, not only in the United States, but globally as well. Social workers concerned about specific arenas of international social work use their skills to develop services to protect street children and orphans. We rescue children who have been forced into prostitution, war, and labor. Social workers engage in policymaking to change laws to improve social conditions. All of these are important areas of social work intervention. In this section, you will discover how international social work engages international refugee and relief services, sustainable development, community economic development, and new international social movements.

International Relief and Refugee Social Work

Macro social workers whose generalist education involves helping at multiple levels are in a unique position to be of service in assisting people needing refugee and relief services. Vera Mehta asserts, for example, that

Relief work with individuals and families involves intensive counseling; physical, medical and psychological rehabilitation; tracing missing family members across borders and reunifying them; and repatriating and resettling refugees. It also includes empowering victims to exercise their rights and organize collaborative enterprises.

Because there are ever-increasing numbers of civilian war victims to be reached and relatively few social work professionals available, group and community methods must be used to provide these services and a new cadre of personnel must be created by training community aides and using indigenous leadership.... War zones demand a multifocal social work practitioner equipped with generic and integrated methods and skills.¹⁸⁹

Social workers become involved in international relief and refugee work with individuals, groups, and at the community level.

Individuals Many refugees have lost families, homes, their livelihood, friends, and a sense of belonging. Many have been victims of violence, human rights abuses, and physical and emotional trauma. Often they experience posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, loss, and grief. Social workers can train volunteers in communication and listening skills so that refugees become capable of helping one another in a therapeutic community of friends helping friends.

Group Work Many refugees live in camps or other locations where they are in close proximity to one another for lengthy periods of time. Social workers can assist people in these camps by training group leaders and forming support groups for trauma and loss and for women who have been victims of sexual assault. In addition, we can help members of the community develop self-help groups in which members begin to utilize their strengths to come to terms with their situation and begin to rebuild their lives. Adult volunteers, for example, may be recruited to develop

primary or high schools and become schoolteachers, health workers, or others.

Community Social Work Social workers use their community skills to help members engage in community task groups to develop projects of their own choosing. They assist people form planning groups to assess their situation. They develop resources and form larger structures to decide what needs to be done to strengthen the community. Others may engage people in community development projects, providing medical, construction, agricultural, childcare, or economic development.

Social workers can assist in building leadership among refugees, train members to advocate on their own behalf, or help members form refugee NGOs to coordinate with transnational support organizations (TNSOs). When refugees are returned to their homes, social workers can be a resource to people in rebuilding their communities and engaging in economic development projects. Social workers can sensitize the social work profession about the plight of refugees. They can provide advocacy and mobilize efforts with the United Nations and existing relief and refugee NGOs.

Social Work and Relief Efforts There are great opportunities and challenges for international relief and refugee social work. Numbers of international relief and social development agencies, such as CARE, Oxfam, and the International Rescue Committee exist. Mupedziswa asserts, however, that “social work’s major professional associations have not organized on behalf of refugees or made effective representation to those in positions of power and influence who are able to bring about improved conditions for refugees.”¹⁹⁰ He also claims that social work has not yet developed a specialized body of knowledge in relation to practice with refugees, nor is there a great deal of curriculum content in social work education in this area. “Millions of desperately needy people among the world’s refugees deserve the profession’s attention. The crisis is too severe—and the needs of refugees are too great—for social work to neglect this field any longer.”¹⁹¹

Sustainable Human Development

Social workers concerned about the effects of modernization on individual lives, communities, and societies must think about alternative ways of living. One of

these ways is through sustainable human development. According to the United Nations Development Programme, “sustainable human development ... is concerned with models of material production and consumption that are replicable and desirable. It does not regard natural resources as a free good to be plundered at the will of any nation or corporation, any generation or any individual.”¹⁹² Sustainable development

puts people at the center of development and points out forcefully that the inequities of today are so great that to sustain the present form of development is to perpetuate similar inequities for future generations.... Sustainable human development means that we have a moral obligation to do at least as well for our successor generations as our predecessors did for us ... that current consumption cannot be financed for long by incurring economic debts that others must repay.

Sufficient investment must be made in the education and health of today’s population so as not to create a social debt for future generations. And resources must be used in ways that do not create ecological debts by over exploiting the carrying and productive capacity of the earth.¹⁹³

Prigoff asserts that “social workers ... in partnership with community organizations can be effective in building public awareness and community based coalitions which will hold the economic and political power groups publicly accountable for the costs of their actions, expose the bankruptcy of their leadership and build alternative systems that support sustainable human development.”¹⁹⁴

Community Economic Development

Community economic development is one of the more important areas in which indigenous NGOs are active. Local people develop alternative cooperative models, engage in housing and other projects, utilize international community investment to build social capital, reject dependency, and develop empowerment.

Alternative Cooperative Models Many indigenous local NGOs work to develop alternatives to capitalist industrial models, state-controlled social programs, or centralized, hierarchical, top-down, institutionalized structures of decision making. In many ways they resemble North American asset-based community development projects, helping communities

become economically sustainable, using the communities’ resources, and building on their strengths in ways that are compatible with the ecology and with their own culture.

In Latin America a majority of the estimated 20,000 squatter settlements have created their own community economic development organizations. In the Lima squatter settlement Villa El Salvador, nearly 350,000 people have constructed hundreds of thousands of neatly designed homes. Mostly community volunteers built the nearly 200 nursery, primary, and secondary schools. Virtually everyone knows how or is learning to read and write.

Residents piped in water. Desert areas that were once barren now yield tons of oranges, vegetables, sweet potatoes, papayas, and corn. What most impresses visitors is organization. Every block and every activity is intensely organized through crisscrossing neighborhood associations, women’s groups, youth groups, artisan associations, and production cooperatives. An estimated 2,000 organizations are nestled within federations of larger federations, and these confederations largely control the democratically elected local government.¹⁹⁵

Housing Construction Just as in North America, many community economic development NGOs emphasize housing. In Colombia there are more than 700 public nonprofit community housing organizations. A grassroots community organization in Costa Rica built 1,300 houses in two years at final construction costs that were 40–50% lower than houses of comparable quality built by either the government or the private sector. Ordinary people learned to erect prefabricated walls and used computers for accounting, planning, and compiling data.¹⁹⁶

Other Projects Many community economic development NGOs engage in a wide variety of other self-help projects, including carpentry, sewing, building, basketry, wood carving, livestock grazing, school uniform making, vegetable gardening, poultry keeping, cement sheet making, knitting, mat making, ox-yoke making, baking, grinding mills, food storage, water, and sanitation.¹⁹⁷

Some economic development NGOs help provide needed programs of assistance. In Peru, they developed popular kitchens. In 1986, 625 kitchens existed in Lima. By 1990, the number had grown to

1,500 community kitchens, averaging 50 members each. Some 100,000 people, mostly mothers, are organized into barrio, zonal, and district organizations that raise funds for 7,500 *Vaso de Leche* (glass of milk) committees that work through the community kitchens to distribute powdered milk as well as participating in developing popular libraries and health projects.¹⁹⁸

International Community Investment In Chapter 8, you learned that community investment institutions (CIIs) in the US focus primarily on rebuilding communities. International CIIs have a broader mission as they pioneer individual and community enterprises and neighborhood infrastructure development in countries emerging from years of conflict and war. There are a vast number of U.S.-based and non-U.S.-based CIIs that invest in the development of small entrepreneurs, families, and communities in other nations. They focus their loans, guarantees, and equity investments abroad to microfinance institutions and small and medium-size enterprises, often making or guaranteeing smaller loans to communities and individuals in need. The Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA), for example, has provided some of the first long-term and sustainable economic development aid to Kosovo, Haiti, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan, all nations in need of capital to rebuild after political unrest.

Shared Interest, a U.S.-based fund, works in South Africa to redress the economic legacy of apartheid, guaranteeing loans for small and micro-enterprises and affordable housing to black South Africans, primarily women. Many CIIs are aiding the people of recently democratized nations in Latin America in their efforts to establish small businesses and become economically independent.

The common goals of these projects are to foster individual and communal self-reliance, help people control their own futures, and provide a forum by which members can discuss ideas and develop projects. Community economic development NGOs promote solidarity and foster self-management while working to improve the life chances and well-being of their residents. They work to construct their communal reality out of their values, history, culture, and traditions, and by their own actions, regardless, and often in spite, of those in authority.

New International Social Movements (ISMs)

By means of new activist social movements, the 80% of the world's population that comprises the poor people of the earth is disarming the modern developmental worldview by disassociating themselves from its methods, abandoning belief in its promises, refusing to accept its goals, and ignoring its premises. In 2002, at the Second World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Nicola Bullard, deputy director of Focus on the Global South, a Bangkok-based think tank, reported, "There are strong social movements in Asia. We have a vibrancy that I believe is important."¹⁹⁹ In Indonesia, former President Suharto, for example, was driven out of office in 1998 by public outrage, and in the Philippines a popular uprising in 2001 by people tired of corruption ousted then President Joseph Estrada. Marwaan Mancan-Makar says, "These two episodes ... show that despite all the ill effects of market-driven development models and policies, Asia has a healthy record of public protest that reminds the world that people's power does work,"²⁰⁰ and the same is true in other areas of the world including Africa and the especially Arab nations of the Mid-East today.

Bullard asserts, furthermore, that we need to build such social movements against the ill effects of the neoliberal economic order found in many parts of the world. The Porto Alegre conference and its affirmation of new social movements, reports Mancan-Makar, sends a powerful message to the mandarins of the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO that the critics of neoliberalism and corporate-driven globalization have by no means disappeared from Asia.²⁰¹

New international postmodern social movements are qualitatively different from earlier movements against colonialism and for liberation, land reform, or labor unions.²⁰² New social movements, as described in Chapter 13, do not aim at overthrowing governments or seizing the assets of the world's global corporations; instead, they represent a rupture with authoritarian political cultures in South America, Africa, and Asia, a rejection of market-centered thinking, and a repudiation of the developmentalist worldview of the West.²⁰³ The new international social movements engage in critical consciousness raising, reject the culture of oppression, and seek to regain identity, reconstitute their culture, and promote strategies of renewal.

BOLIVIA'S POOR SAY "NO" TO GLOBALIZATION

South American labor unions, student and civic groups, and a new wave of leaders are expressing doubts about who actually benefits from a free flow of international trade and investment. "Globalization is just another name for submission and domination," said Nicanor Apaza, an unemployed miner, at a demonstration denouncing the International Monetary Fund. Protestors see an unbroken line from Bolivia's colonial history to the failed economic experiments of the late 20th century in which Bolivia was one of the first Latin American countries to open itself to the modern global economy.

The Indians of Bolivia got a foretaste of globalization centuries ago with the age of exploration and the arrival of European colonizers. Silver from the mines of Potosí provided Spain with the wealth that allowed it to forge a global empire, and in modern times tin made a few families fabulously wealthy. "But the wealth always left the country and enriched foreigners, rather than staying here to improve our lives," claimed Pascuala Velazquez, an egg vendor, "but we cannot allow that to happen this time."

Starting with the end of a military dictatorship at the beginning of the 1980s, Bolivia embraced the free-market model. State-owned companies were sold off; foreign investment was courted; and government regulation was reduced, all in the name of a new era of growth and prosperity. After a few years it became clear, however, that the policies urged by the United States, the IMF, and the World Bank were not working. Exports declined, growth stalled, and unemployment soared. Bolivia sank to being the poorest country in South America, with a per capita income of less than \$900. After 21 years the economic model in place has not solved the problems of poverty and social exclusion, says Carlos Toranzo, of the Latin American Institute for Research.

Rather than export gas and other resources, Bolivian protesters are determined to use them to build an industrial base. The protesters are sending a powerful message: No to the export of gas and other natural resources; no to free trade with the United States; no to globalization in any form other than solidarity among the downtrodden peoples of the developing world. They plan to force the government to abandon a plan to export natural gas to the United States. But freedom from powerful interests does not come without a price. Protests in only one month in 2003 have already left more than 80 people dead.²⁰⁴

Critical Consciousness Raising Like community organizations and the new postmodern social movements in Europe and North America, international social movements in poor nations of the world work to promote people's collective "critical consciousness" that names and denounces the philosophies of dominance,²⁰⁵ bring about human liberation, and create diverse grassroots structures in which people construct their own social reality. They reject the modern developmentalist hegemony as a "false consciousness." New social movements struggle against the dominant modernization worldview.

Reject the Culture of Oppression Amílcar Cabral, one of the foremost leaders and thinkers on globalization, asserts that there is an inseparable gulf between the economic and political domination brought about by modernity and the preservation of the cultural identity of an oppressed people, and it is impossible to harmonize the two. This is because of the tremendous differences in the history and culture of those who are dominated and the culture of the oppressor. It is also because it is impossible for the oppressor and the oppressed to move along the same path simultaneously.

A modern oppressor may claim to work for progress, growth, and development, but these assertions can only occur on the oppressor's own terms, within the framework of his dominant mentality, and at the expense of the indigenous people. Indigenous people, however, are continually in a state of maintaining and spreading their culture, developing their identity, and seeking ways to crack the domination of their oppressors.

Regain Identity The goals of new social movements are often modest and simple. Indigenous people seek to reclaim their lives and the cultures that modernity has taken from them. The forest people of India speak for many: "The major interest [of first-world leaders] is the development of the forest as a resource rather than as a habitat of people. This basic difference distinguishes 'us' [the forest dwellers of India] from 'you.' You believe that we should reap the dubious benefits of 'development,' and become like you or your serfs. We reject your notion of development and we want back our lives."²⁰⁶

Reconstitute Their Culture If people are to be authentically free and liberated, says Ponna Wignaraja, "they must be the final arbiters of their lives. They need

to form their own organizations and through their own organizations counter the socio-economic reality that keeps them in poverty.²⁰⁷ Amilcar Cabral believes that a new social movement must base itself on people's own popular culture. In this effort indigenous people must reconstitute their history-making and culture-building capacities in a nationwide movement to oppose and replace the colonizer's cultural hegemony with the counter-hegemonic culture of the colonized. For Africans this means the re-Africanization of minds, including reclaiming each nation's suppressed history and culture from both colonialism and neocolonialism, building a popular, democratic, and collectively oriented political process, and educating people who have been denied the possibilities of fully learning their own indigenous culture.²⁰⁸

Promote Strategies of Renewal International postmodern social movements promote strategies of popular resistance and cooperative alliances, engaging in political action, environmental protection, and women's rights.

Popular Resistance New social movements engage in popular resistance and social change worldwide. Multiple and varied activist projects range from the struggle of members of a Caracas barrio to prevent the removal of a tree to the armed defense of their culture by ethnic groups in Guatemala. They range from efforts of small, politically oriented *comunidades eclesiales de base* that engage in social action in local villages to global movements that help bring social justice, equality, and equal rights to people who have been oppressed and exploited.²⁰⁹

In 1973, in the midst of Brazil's military dictatorship, for example, mothers' clubs in southern Rio de Janeiro initiated a neighborhood movement against the high cost of living and denounced the high levels of pollution in the water supply, mobilizing 20,000 in a street demonstration that remains a landmark in the struggle for democracy.²¹⁰ Tens of thousands of students in Mexico City led mass demonstrations to eliminate obstacles to university entry, and in Buenos Aires grandmothers and mothers continue their daily march around the Plaza de Mayo, protesting the disappearance of their children and grandchildren.²¹¹

Cooperative Alliances Not only do social movement GROs work on behalf of their own particular

concerns; they also form alliances with one another. In Mexico, neighborhood organizations systematically join with independent workers, peasants, and teachers in their struggle for housing, clean air, education, a decent environment, solidarity, and democracy. Economic development *Vaso de Leche* committees in Peru became integrated with broad-based community organizations, with the workers movement, and with women's movement organizations.

Political Action International social movements mobilize around a vision of people-centered development policy and political reform. The cumulative effect of direct political action by these new social movements has begun to change the political climate in many impoverished nations, says Daniel Camacho.²¹² Voluntary associations in urban areas in Africa have promoted social change by spearheading struggles for independence. New democracy movements and people's struggles in the Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Haiti, and some Latin American countries have been dramatic responses to repressive regimes and military dictatorships. Jeff Dumtra reports that by 1991 political reform in 25 countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America allowed for wide voter participation in free elections with multiple candidates.²¹³ Today, these same impulses have spurred the "Arab Spring," involving stirrings in 17 nations, ranging from minor protests to revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria. The protests have practiced techniques of civil resistance learned over the past two centuries including strikes, demonstrations, marches, and rallies, as well as the use of social media to raise awareness in the face of state attempts at repression and Internet censorship.

Environmental Protection Many new activist movements have begun, involving thousands of people to protect the endangered ecosystems in their countries. In 1976 activist GROs in Mexico joined to agitate for the defense of nature.²¹⁴ Ecological movements in India and people's movements against commercial destruction of rain forests in Brazil build countervailing political power against predatory development projects. A Brazilian congressman, for example, asserted that legislation against deforestation of the Amazon had been passed not because of international pressure or because Congress understood the greenhouse effect, but because it was facing intense, organized pressure

from Brazil's environmental movement and networks of Indian tribes.²¹⁵

Women's Rights Social movement organizations raise special questions about human development for women in developing nations where women often have a doubly subhuman status. Social movement organizations help women think and act independently of the men to whom they are often held to be subordinate. Landless women's groups assert, for example, that

We know that there is no easy or quick solution to our problem of food and clothing. As women did not even have the right to speak, in our organization we can now meet and speak, and share and discuss our problems. We feel that we are now human beings. We look forward to our weekly meetings where we stand up and speak—we can release ourselves as we have never been able to do before, and we now have the courage to speak the truth.²¹⁶

The Role of Social Work in International Social Activism Social workers can align themselves in the struggle for emancipation with the oppressed people of the world by understanding that oppression inevitably carries within it the seeds of its own demise, and by joining new postmodern social movements that protect the environment, oppose corporate greed, work against international conflict and the arms trade, and assist in the struggle against slavery, torture, and the exploitation and trafficking of women and children.

USING THE INTERNET IN INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

Networks of grassroots women's groups and indigenous peoples have discovered that several powerful tools formerly used to achieve the conquest of land and labor may now be used to construct a more caring world. Electronic communications, including the Internet and the World Wide Web, which were initially introduced for military surveillance and continue to serve as a means to control populations, have now become tools for liberation. The World Wide Web is now being used as a tool in international social activism, providing services, empowerment, and community development.

International E-Activism and E-Services

E-Activism The Internet is a tool ideally suited for networking by international activists. Because the goals of transformation are often urgent, you may empower working people and youth to use the Internet to gain worldwide access to sources of liberating information that can be freely shared. You help local people organize their communities and beyond by sending messages of protest that are heard around the world

E-Services NGOs and individuals are beginning to use the Internet to assist in providing services. For example, Mark Homan observes that although most of the library books and documents were destroyed at Kabul University in Afghanistan, a country devastated by 23 years of war, a grant from UNESCO provided a cyberspace connection to an Internet café located inside the main library with nine computers.²¹⁷

In Bangladesh, many doctors and health workers lack the expertise to recognize an illness in its early stages. A private company called Bangladesh Telemedicine Services (BTS) has set up telemedicine centers to help doctors identify diseases early. The centers will be linked to a network of 200 specialists on hand to offer their expert opinion.

In South India, five to ten fishermen died each year due to drowning. An NGO called MS Swaminathan Research Foundation established a telecenter to collect data from a U.S. Navy space satellite that measures wave heights to predict storms at sea. Pakkialouchme, a 24-year-old Dalit woman in India, translates this data on the Internet into Tamil, and every afternoon while fishermen sit on the beach to mend their nets, storm warnings pour out through a series of loudspeakers planted along the shoreline. Since installation of the telecenter two years ago, there have been no additional deaths.

As a result of its innovative application of open-source mapping software, the Nairobi-based organization Ushahidi (Swahili for "testimony" or "witness") was conceived in response to the disputed elections in Kenya and the widespread violence that followed. In 2007 a group of "citizen journalists" established a website to map incidents of violence and peace efforts throughout the country based on reports submitted via the web and mobile phones. This website quickly amassed 45,000 users nationwide, with the data aggregated and mapped for

anyone who needed it.²¹⁸ From providing real-time mapping to assist first responders during the Haitian post-earthquake relief effort in 2010, to contributing to the UN Office for the Co-Ordination of Humanitarian Affairs' "Standby Volunteer Task Force" for Libya, Ushahidi has changed the face of how crucial information concerning conditions on the ground can be collected, analyzed, and disseminated at high speed to relief workers.²¹⁹

E-Empowerment

The Asian Women's Resource Exchange (AWORC), an Internet-based women's information service and network, increases access and application of communication technologies for women's empowerment. Its goal is to enhance Internet literacy and social activism among women and women's organizations. The website includes a keyword search engine in English, Korean, and Japanese and links to participating organizations.

E-Development

Two international organizations—One World, an online sustainable development and human rights network, and the Benton Foundation, founder of the Digital Divide Network—have created the Digital Opportunity Channel, an online community that focuses on the use of information and communications technologies for sustainable development, bringing greater equality and international understanding by means of news and information pieces, success stories in development, and search capabilities on information and communication technology.²²⁰

Implications for International Social Work

Ultimately, the possibilities for combining the Internet with international social activism, public accountability, advocacy, policymaking, justice seeking, and empowerment are limited only by the imagination of the organizations and groups seeking to drive change. The Internet provides tools that make international social work more immediate, personal, fast, and effective. Using the Internet can provide social workers with the capacity to help people internationally in ways that were never before conceived, opening new doors for humanitarian efforts.

HOW TO PRACTICE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

Practicing international social work depends on the history and culture of the people with whom you are working, the issues you are facing, the area of your service, and the organization with which you are affiliated. However, some general principles apply to many of your efforts. You will need to find a position, orient yourself, engage people, and apply the action-social model of macro social work.

Find a Position

International social work areas of employment include child welfare, adoptions, child protection, family planning, group work, youth and young adult services, refugee and relief services, social and economic community development, advocacy, human rights, and social policy work.²²¹

Working abroad can better your understanding of the world and the forces that keep people impoverished, and enhance your appreciation of the richness of other cultures. Obtaining a social work internship or a volunteer or even paid position may mark the beginning of a lifelong commitment to ending poverty and hunger. Many organizations exist, such as Oxfam, CARE, or World Vision, that provide relief or promote community development. International YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts, and Girl Guides and Girl Scouts offer many opportunities to assist young people develop leadership, and expand women's rights. You could seek a position with an international refugee service organization such as Refugees International; a child welfare organization such as Save the Children or Children's Aid International; a research and policy advocacy organization such as Worldwatch; a human rights organization such as Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International; or with an indigenous child welfare agency or human service NGO or agency working with street children or orphans. Many international faith-based organizations such as Lutheran World Relief or Church World Service, Mennonite Central Committee may be suitable for you. You may also find employment in one of the United Nations organizations such as UNICEF, UN Development Program (UNDP), UN Disaster Relief Organization (UNDRO), the High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), or one of a variety of specialized programs that complement the UN's efforts.

In 2008–2009, about 7,600 United Nations Volunteers (UNV) contributed to the strategic objectives of UNDP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and 21 other United Nations organizations. UNV volunteers are made up of 163 different nationalities, working in 136 countries, making it a truly global program. You can contact UNV at www.unv.org to inquire about a volunteer or internship position.

If you consider volunteering, one place to begin is to contact the website of the International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA). The IVPA is an alliance of nongovernmental organizations and promotes high standards international volunteer work and internship experiences:

International Volunteer Programs Association
(IVPA)
P.O. Box 11703
Jackson TN 38308
(914) 380-8322
info@volunteerinternational.orgxchanges

Reflect on Why You Want to Volunteer Asking yourself the following questions will help you sort out your motivation.

- What people, events, and experiences have led to your interest in volunteering abroad?
- What do you hope to get out of your experience?
- What do you hope to contribute?
- How do you see international volunteering affecting your life?

Examine Your Requirements

- What kind of programs and countries will provide the greatest opportunities for hands-on work in the area of your interest?
- Would you prefer working in a rural or urban environment?
- Do you like the idea of traveling and volunteering independently or with a group?
- How much support or structure do you require of the agencies you'll be working with?

Think about Your Budget Constraints

- What are the program fees and expenses?
- Does the sending organization offer scholarships?

Would you be willing to engage in fundraising if you were given some support from an organization?

Find Out about the Organization Itself When you call an agency representative, ask for the names and numbers of returned volunteers to learn about their experiences firsthand. You will also want to ask specific questions to help you make a decision. For example, ask if you will need to learn the language of the country where you will be working. If one of your goals is to practice a new language, look for a program that offers home stay or a cultural immersion experience. Ask:

- Are the sending and host organizations congruent with your values and objectives?
- How long has the organization been conducting programs?
- How many people does it send each year?
- How often will I see those people?
- How many full-time staff members does the organization employ?
- What are the roles of the full-time staff positions at the program where I will be volunteering?
- With how many of these people will I come into contact during my program?
- During a typical day, how often will I be with a staff member of the organization?
- Are any other benefits included, such as language training, pre-departure and reentry orientations, health and accident insurance, emergency evacuation, living stipends, travel within the host country, or academic credit?
- How and how often are accommodations selected and monitored?
- What type of security is in place overnight?
- Will I have a bilingual staff member on site and available to me in person at all times?
- Does the organization hold current and adequate domestic and foreign liability insurance?
- Does it have an operating manual and universal crisis management plan that is available to all staff?

Orient Yourself

Before you go abroad, try to learn as much as possible about local customs, beliefs, history, and the language of the people with whom you will be working. Get in the habit of reading newspapers and news magazines long before you travel abroad, so you'll be informed about the current affairs in your home country as well as abroad. You may also find it helpful to educate your friends and family about where you'll be going and what you'll be doing, so that they can advocate for your work abroad. Having a strong support system will also help you get through the challenges of living in an unfamiliar environment far from home.

Free Your Mind Only with a mind freed from the presumption that Western ideas are superior can you prevent yourself from unintentionally reinforcing the conditions you intend to change. You may, for example, come with the sincere intention of helping develop people in an impoverished nation. It is important to understand that social workers who come from Canada or the United States, however, cannot develop people who live in poverty. The only person you can develop is yourself, and the only people who can develop people who are impoverished are the people themselves.

Modern developmental models represent top-down, rational, market-orientation ideas of “progress.” You cannot be a representative of these ideas. Instead, you honor the ideals of human potential, self-determination, self-development, and the necessity for people to construct their own community culture. Self-reliant action by the people will not be determined by others’ knowledge but by the knowledge and action of the people themselves. You cannot assist in the process of liberation if you are not first liberated yourself.

Tarun Mandals (poor people’s village organizations) give this advice:

We need outside help for analysis and understanding our situation and experience, but not for telling us what we should do. Initially we had genuinely thought that outsiders had our good at heart and knew better. We did not think much of ourselves and did not have ideas of our own.

An outsider who comes with ready-made solutions and advice is worse than useless. He must first understand *from us* what our questions are, help articulate the questions better, and then help *us* to find solutions. An outsider also has to change. He alone is a friend who helps us to

think about our problems *on our own*. The principle should be minimum intervention.²²²

Engage People

One of the hallmarks of an international social worker is the ability to engage people. No matter whether you are working through INGOs, TNGOs, TNSOs, or the UN, in the early stages of social work your main job is simply to get to know people and make friends with them. Talk to members about their lives and about the life of their community, organization, or program.

Share with them who you are, and be as authentic and genuine as you can. Express real interest in people, their surroundings, their hopes and fears, and their personal situations. Relate their lives to something in your own life. When you develop common ground or rapport, deeper understanding and communication can begin. The more you talk with people and get to know them, the closer to them you will become and the more you will become one of them.

Apply the Action-Social Model of Macro Social Work

You work to build trust, develop strengths, and stimulate empowerment.

Build Trust Relationships and communication develop trust. Trust is essential in all international social work. Your influence will depend on the extent to which the community, NGO, or social program members trust you. The fastest way to develop trust is visibility. Go to places where people congregate. Go to religious celebrations and traditional festivals. Try to become close to several key citizens. Once you have done this, you will more than likely be able to expand to other subgroups, because most communities, NGOs, and social organizations have overlapping networks of relationships. Take time to talk to key community leaders.

Develop Strengths You assist members to develop their strengths and help raise the consciousness of these people. One way to do this is by using Paulo Freire’s conscientization, says Anisur Rahman.²²³ Conscientization is a deepened consciousness that leads people to understand their situation as an historical

reality susceptible to transformation. You can use his model of education of critical awareness and critical assessment exercises.²²⁴

Stimulate Empowerment One of the overriding tasks in an underdeveloped nation is helping its members break the bonds of oppression that hold them in chains. Overt oppression continues to plague many people who are homeless, slaves, women, and children. These conditions need to be changed.

In addition, the oppressed people's perception of their situation and their internalization of that oppression can also become a persistent and insidious enemy. After centuries of conditioned helplessness, many people are trapped in "self-colonization," as described in Chapter 3. You break the cycle of disempowerment by using active-social thinking, helping people examine their self-perceptions, stimulate reflection, encourage decision making, develop plans, provide training, develop leadership, and evaluate.

Challenge Perceptions You ask your members: "Who are we? For what reason do we exist? Why are we poor?" You help them understand that they are no different from the rich and the powerful and that poverty is not inherent in them but lies in situations that they can change.²²⁵

Stimulate Reflection Stimulate people's reflection and analysis, assisted but not dominated by the knowledge and considerations you may have. Help each person to speak his or her mind with a spirit of acceptance, and listen carefully to his or her ideas. As you listen, try to develop commonality, and look for patterns you can use in helping them organize in a common direction. Clarify objectives. Ask people to deliberate on what they want to do in the long term and how their social movement organization can help them.

Encourage Decision Making At the ends of meetings, assist the group to come to some sort of decision. Your goal is to help members of communities take action on their own behalf, not to judge whether the direction is the right one. Involve members in understanding principles of good decision making. The key value in decision making is not efficiency but participation. Only those directly involved have the right to decide whether to implement or refuse an

idea. You may provide information and support, but the ultimate strategy must remain the possession of those affected by the consequences, says Si Kahn.²²⁶

The strength of your method is your conviction that ordinary working people are capable of social inquiry and analysis, and this capacity can be enhanced by practice. Liberating education is more than the transfer of information: It is the practice of freedom. You affirm that even impoverished villagers have the capability to direct their own development and discover a "truth" of their community that becomes as valid for them as scientific truth is to technologically minded people of the West.

Develop a Plan You help members organize around their decision and come up with a plan. When they are ready, help them move toward implementation. Implementation of change in a community may include initiating a project or volunteer effort, coordinating efforts with other communities, or developing a project that members agree will benefit them. On the other hand, because those who dominate and exploit people control most of the material and financial resources in less developed nations, your members may decide to work toward justice and equity in the use of public resources.

Provide Training Depending on the kinds of projects or issues with which your group is confronted, you may need to arrange for training in legal rights, government policy, or process. You help people obtain their rightful share of normal public resources, learn how to use them, and engage in this process on their own.

For example, it does not make sense to help members who are impoverished depend on voluntary agencies or special donors to obtain financial help for their projects when public resources are available. You assist members to learn how the banking system works. You assist people who are poor to understand that they have a right to receive credit from the banking system just as do others. You help your citizens use an NGO to obtain a loan for a brief period to establish themselves as good credit risks. Once they have a credit history and gained confidence and skill in using credit wisely, you help them through a process of obtaining financing through regular financial lending agencies.

When a system unjustly discriminates against the people with whom you are working, you help them

affirm their rights. You train them in direct action tactics and strategies and help your members organize themselves to exercise their collective power.

Develop Leadership One of your most important goals is to develop leadership. You liberate members from the need for a trainer so that they become self-educators in their own learning. You help train members as facilitators who assist one another, consulting with other grassroots organizations or NGOs in cultural, political, and economic self-reliance and decision making.

Evaluate Assist your members to periodically evaluate their own experience, review their progress collectively, and draw lessons from successes and failures. Help members see short-run failures as a learning process upon which subsequent strategy is to be built. A struggle is never lost if constructive lessons are drawn from its failure. After your members have reviewed their own work, ask an NGO to do a more systematic and formal assessment based on the members' own objectives.

THE CHALLENGE OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

In the 500 years since European explorers first encountered indigenous people in the Americas, India, and Asia, the Enlightenment project has increased the wealth of European and North American nations. It has also created poverty for much of the remainder of the world's population. Modernity and its premises continues to destroy communal identity and negates the freedom, self-determination, and humanity fundamental to indigenous cultures of non-market-centered nations. While many positive aspects of modern technological culture exist, its mentality also tends to perpetuate violence, creates hopelessness, breeds dependency, and undermines the human spirit. It has contributed to human bondage, slavery, and trafficking in persons. It has fomented war and international conflict, resulting in the displacement of people. It endangers the land and decimates wildlife, forests, rivers, lakes, and oceans.

Members of the least developed nations are beginning to exercise their right of refusal to accept the market-centered, rational, goal-maximizing Enlightenment tradition and reject colonial mentality and patriarchal rule. They are autonomously and spontaneously

reasserting their prerogative as humans to choose new social forms worldwide that provide room for the social, renewed communal relations, and recognition of the value of their indigenous cultures.

You discovered that where windows of opportunity emerged, they began to create small *comunidades de base* and other GROs. As they acquired experience and strength, they began joining forces in an amazing variety of processes through NGOs, expressing the ingenuity, diversity, and creativity that people generate when they solve problems together. They have become a global social movement of momentous proportions.

Trained in a variety of methods, social workers who think creatively and broadly about helping remediate social problems and who are motivated to empower and strengthen our social environment may be among the most capable professionals in international assistance. International social workers may be able to engage people in sustainable human development projects by means of community social planning, community organization, and economic and community development. International social workers can use skills in advocacy, policy, and political intervention to help shift the extent to which the global market society has created an hegemony of exploitation and oppression in developing nations.

International social workers, dedicated to eradicating economic, political, and social injustice, can help indigenous people claim the right to their own culture and way of life, free of the encroachments of global corporations. By working with larger social movements, they can help establish economic justice, eradicate slavery, prevent the arms trade and armed conflict, protect the environment, and eradicate human rights abuses. Enormous challenges and opportunities await the social work profession, and especially macro social workers who help orphans, refugees, street children, families living in poverty, and victims of disaster and war.

While social workers are among those professionals best suited for the complicated social issues facing people in our global society, many more social workers are needed to accept the challenge of becoming engaged in international social work efforts. Working at the international level is the "conquest of a small piece of humanity for the common heritage of human kind," asserts Amílcar Cabral.²²⁷ When you engage in international social work, you participate in an emancipatory project with people in one of the most important and vital arenas of social work. Those of you who

become involved in international social work will no doubt play an increasingly important role in shaping the future. Helping people build a new social world, create their own communities, and in the process construct themselves is what social work is all about. The new global social revolution and practice of international social work waits for you to accept its challenge.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter you learned what comprises social work at the international level. You explored a brief history of international social work and the role of international social organizations including *comunidades de base* or GROs, NGOs, INGOs, TNGOs and TNSOs. You learned about the UN and a number of its programs.

You examined some of the major social problems that people encounter in so-called “less developed” nations including the population explosion, slavery, the manufacturing of violence, and destruction of the ecosystem. You explored poverty in third-world nations, including the developmental/modernization model. You discovered that intransigent poverty is due to the effects of forced colonization combined with a developmental/modernization mentality imposed by transnational corporations and first-world nations that support them. You discovered how poverty can be overcome. You explored a number of arenas of international social work practice including international refugee and relief services, sustainable human economic and community development, and international postmodern social movements. You explored how indigenous people are using community-based new social movement organizations to shape their own identities, construct their cultures, and take ownership of their lives outside of the boundaries of modernity and the global market economy.

You learned how to become an international macro social worker and how the Internet is being used in international practice. You discovered that international social work can be an exciting and challenging field and that many opportunities await social workers who enter this field.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is meant by “development”? What positive benefits has development provided? What negative consequences has it had? Can development be used to help poor people in poorer nations enter modernity?
2. The point was made that because of modernity, the developed nations of Europe and North America have prospered economically and politically. Critique this assertion. In your critique, consider the comment of Alberto Guerreiro Ramos, a Brazilian scholar, politician, and author of *The New Science of Organization*, who asserts that modernity has won a Pyrrhic victory. In what sense has modernity benefited Europe and North America? Has modernity benefited less developed nations? In what sense is the triumph of modernity a Pyrrhic victory?
3. What would happen if the entire global society were to become completely modern? Would this be an event that you would welcome? Why or why not?
4. David Beckman, president of Bread for the World, asserts that foreign aid to developing nations contributes to combating hunger, disease, and poverty. Critique his assertion. Is foreign aid the answer to helping people in developing countries? Under what circumstances should it be used? When should it not be used?
5. Rodreck Mupedziswa has asserted that U.S. and Canadian social workers individually and as a profession are often *not* as active at the international level as they could be.²²⁸ Do you agree with this statement? If so, what are its implications for the field of social work and for our global society?
6. What is the role of international social work in the 21st century? Do you see yourself playing a role as an international social worker?

EXERCISE 14.3

Money or Ideas

For three years you have been working with a social movement organization in a developing nation. You have become fluent in the language and are familiar with the culture and history of the people. Along with a native-born social worker, you are beginning to work directly with a village in a poor area of the nation. You are authorized to provide grant money for a limited number of development projects. You are meeting with 40 of the villagers. As you talk with them, they say to you, “Don’t give us money, give us ideas, because ideas would permit us to forge our own means of

fighting hunger.” What is your response? Meet with three of your classmates and come to a group decision. Return to class, and your instructor will lead a discussion.

EXERCISE 14.4

Social Critique

Review the following statement:

The modern global economy has made a few people wealthy at the expense of the rest of the world’s population. It has provided a fraction of the world’s people with an adequate income. It is no longer possible that a small minority can appropriate the material and human resources of the globe for their own benefit. This state of affairs is untenable. It cannot be a way that the growing world’s population may be sustained.

1. Critique the statement. Is it completely true, partially true, or false?
2. If you were asked to change this statement to reflect your own understanding of the facts, what changes would you make?
3. If you were to change this statement to reflect your own beliefs about the correct diagnosis of the world economy, what changes would you make?
4. If you were asked to change the last sentence to reflect your position about the modern global economy, what would you say?

Bring your written statements to class. Form into threes and compare your statements. Develop a composite response to the various questions and return to class. Your instructor will lead a discussion reflecting your responses.

EXERCISE 14.5

Read the following item and answer the questions that follow.

Our Global Society in Perspective

If we could shrink the earth’s population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, there would be:

- 57 Asians
- 21 Europeans
- 14 from the Western Hemisphere, both North and South
- 8 Africans
- 52 would be female
- 48 would be male
- 70 would be nonwhite
- 30 would be white
- 70 would be non-Christian
- 30 would be Christian
- 89 would be heterosexual
- 11 would be homosexual
- 6 (all from the United States) would possess 59% of the world’s wealth
- 80 would live in substandard housing
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- 1 would have a college education
- 1 would own a computer
- 70 would be unable to read or write

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of the world’s people. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world’s wealthy. If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the millions who will not survive this week. If your parents are still alive and still married, you are very rare, even in the United States and Canada. If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are more fortunate than 500 million people in our global society.

1. What should the response of the field of social work be to this assessment?
2. What has the response of North American social work been?
3. What does this response say about the state of social work in North America?
4. What does it say about the values of North American social work?

EXERCISE 14.6

Is Representative Democracy the One Best Way?

Mass representative democracy atomizes subjects as citizens and limits decision making to

a token gesture of voting annually for officials who may or may not serve the interests of the people. Decisions are made by a few, and authentic participation by ordinary people is denied. These limitations weaken the legitimacy of nation-states and their capacity to protect or advocate for people who are most vulnerable. As a result, the modern political system is becoming increasingly irrelevant to people at the local level in many poverty-stricken nations.

Comment on the utility of representative democracy as a meaningful governance structure for people in so-called developing nations. What kinds of governance structures might be better? Could alternative structures also be better in North America?

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