

Types of Networks

(Source: June Holley's Network Weaver Handbook, pages 220-242)

Activity: Movement, Coalition or System Development

Read Section 1 with your network or a group within your network and discuss the questions in each box.

Section 1. Definitions and History

What is an intentional network? Intentional networks come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, but all need to have the following minimum specifications:

1. Intentional networks have a **focus**. They are addressing an issue, solving a problem, organizing a neighborhood or region, or developing a system or vision.
2. Participation in networks is **voluntary** though individuals or organizations may make agreements about their participation as part of forming the network structure.
3. People in the network are **peers**. The network participants may organize a governance board but people in the network work together as peers.
4. The network **fosters engagement** among participants in the network.
5. The network **mobilizes action**. The activity is often structured as a set of collaborative projects, with subsets of the network involved in each project. The type of network activity can be quite varied: examples are learning, advocacy, or implementation of a collaborative project.

Intentional networks have many different functions. Some are formed to coordinate services, others to enhance sharing of information or support collaborative learning. However, many intentional networks are focused on change or transformation and this section will describe some of the forms that such networks take. What is the difference between movements, coalitions and networks and how does each relate to the others? Can they be integrated? What can we learn from each structure that will increase the effectiveness of our networks?

Movements. The term movement has been used for more than a century to describe the dynamic process by which broad moral issues bubble up and – when successful – change the way people think and the way systems operate. For example, the women's movement has a broad vision of women and girls having equal access to opportunities combined with a sense that women's more relational approach to life could benefit everyone.

Movements are about raising issues – bringing issues that have been hidden or underplayed into the public spotlight so that people not only become aware of the issue but are moved to do something about it. Movements thus become a magnet for energy and if they are effective, create a sense of mass and pressure that influences policy and leads to transformation of beliefs, behaviors and systems.

Movements often operate very informally, connected primarily through what Robin Katcher in *Unstill Waters* calls *movement networks*. The women’s movement network consists of all the organizations and individuals who have been working in a wide variety of ways, with very different strategies, over the last two centuries, and their informal and formal connections.

Movements tend to have strong viewpoints about what is right. They raise moral flags. This moral imperative is useful for exerting pressure but can also be an impediment to the viral spread of the movement. Long-term success of a movement depends on the ability of the movement to persuade people to a particular viewpoint, on the one hand, and the openness of people to be persuaded on the other.

In the last few decades movements have become increasingly limited in their capacity to spread throughout society by the highly polarized political scene in the United States: few movements have been able to escape the label of either belonging to the left or the right. Rather than changing the discussion or bringing up a new discussion, movements have been increasingly forced into current discussions of left and right. Few on the left would take seriously any movement labeled as conservative, while those on the right would dismiss any movement emanating from the left. Some questions this raises are: can movements escape the narrowness of right and left? Can we frame issues differently so that they are more likely to become universal?

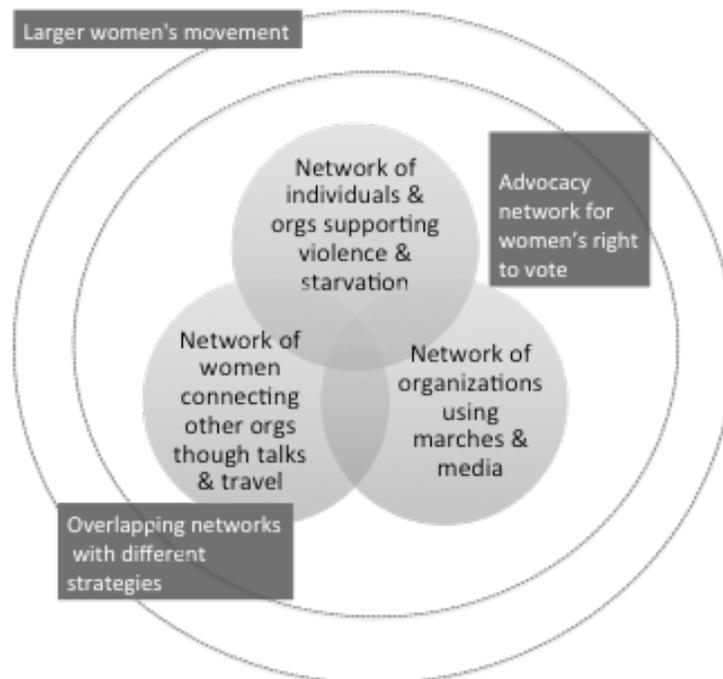
Your network as movement

It can be very useful to see your network as part of a larger movement because movements are about generating energy, increasing attention, and transformation. Have your network discuss the following questions:

- What movement or movements is your network a part of?
- What other networks are part of that movement?
- Are you connected to them?
- Are they connected to each other?
- How can you describe the movement your network is part of so that it generates energy and excitement? What is the transformation that your network is working towards?

Advocacy Networks. Within the women’s movement, there have been a series of advocacy networks. Advocacy networks are the sets of organizations and individuals advocating for

specific goals and implementing collaborative actions related to a specific issue. For example, advocating for the right of women to vote generated an advocacy network. Individuals or small groups of women throughout the United States organized marches and hunger strikes, wrote editorials, and gave speeches – all to raise awareness of that specific issue. Although organizations were formed to work on the issue, the movement was much broader than the membership of those organizations, engaging women from all walks of life in personal change, policy change, and system change.



Movements, movement networks and advocacy networks

This advocacy network not only led to the 20th Amendment but also succeeded in convincing virtually everyone that women were as capable as men of participating in the election process. The advocacy network also propelled the larger women’s movement forward as opportunities began opening for women: more women went to college and more businesses hired women for non-traditional jobs. In just a few decades, the power and position of women had shifted dramatically.

What is interesting is that, until recently, most advocacy networks were not formally organized. In fact, this was a strength in campaigns such as the one supporting women’s right to vote, where different types of organizations had quite different strategies for implementing the common goal and played different roles: Suffragettes were radicals pushing the front edge of the movement with hunger strikes and even violence, while the Women’s Christian Temperance Union appealed to a more moderate audience. The organizations were linked through key bridging individuals, such as members of the International Council of Women, who promoted communication among efforts in different countries through speaking tours. As a result,

individuals in the movement influenced and supported each other even though their beliefs and approaches differed.

The later part of the 20th century was characterized by many transnational advocacy networks – most informally organized – which held funder-sponsored convenings (such as those on ending violence against women) where priorities and strategies were developed. Smaller networks of organizations (often from one country or region) then determined which specific actions were most appropriate for their locale and implemented those.

Luther Gerlach labeled such networks *SPIN networks*:

- Segmentary: Composed of many diverse and changing groups
- Polycentric: Having multiple, often temporary, and sometimes competing leaders or centers of influence
- Networked: Forming a loose network with multiple linkages through travelers, overlapping involvement, joint activities, and common reading matter.

The loose structure of SPIN networks makes them very flexible and adaptable. The benefits of a SPIN structure include:

- The movement is difficult to suppress because it is not dependent on any one group or leader.
- Various parts of the network can engage people from different socioeconomic and subcultural groups.
- The movement is more reliable through redundancy, duplication, and overlap.
- Because of the diversity of people and purposes, the network can learn and adapt.
- This form encourages social innovation and problem solving.

In the 21st century, increasing numbers of advocacy networks – especially in the U.S. – have become more formalized with either a hub and spoke structure (usually an organization that coordinates the network) or a structure much like that of an organization with an emphasis on membership and planning. Most were structured this way due to comfort with the organizational model and the desire for faster results and efficiency. However, it is not clear whether (or when) this increased formality is beneficial. Virtually no research has evaluated the relationship between outcomes and structure.

SPIN networks can become more effective when they include four key ingredients:

- Many people who initiate action as they see opportunities for leverage
- Strategies to help people cluster into self-organized work groups
- Full use of the social web to connect, build relationships, inform, coordinate, and cluster
- Venues for learning and reflection
- System development networks have also been highly effective organized as SPIN networks

Your network as advocacy network

It can be very useful to see your network as an advocacy network because that can help you focus on raising awareness, educating the public, supporting policies, and negotiating agreements.

- Do you consider your network an advocacy network? Why or why not?
- To what extent have you worked collaboratively with other groups to make more people aware of your issue? What could you do to increase collaboration in this area?
- What policies (local, state, national, organizational) might you introduce?

Alliances. Another form of network is an alliance. Rather than making issues the focus (as in advocacy networks), alliances focus more on engaging grassroots individuals and organizations in building the collective power needed to make changes.

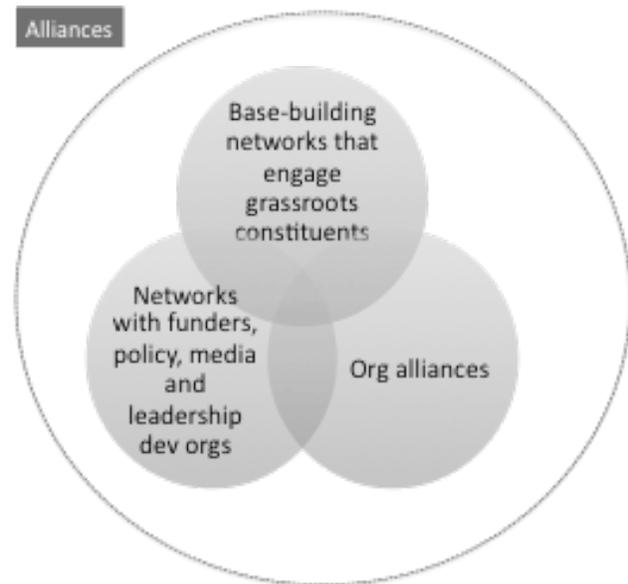
Manuel Pastor et al, in *Connecting at the Crossroads*, define alliances as long-term networks of grassroots groups to build power to bring about change. Examples are the Partnership for Working Families, an alliance of 12 local organizations, and the California Alliance, a set of organizations reforming the tax system. These networks bring people together for strategic dialogues, relationship building, joint action, and campaigns.

“The fundamental task of an alliance is to connect groups that have stood apart.”

Manuel Pastor et al.

Looking at alliances from a network perspective, we can see that they are strengthening and linking three different networks:

- Base-building networks that engage grassroots and neighborhood constituents
- Organizational alliances among organizations that usually don't interact
- Networks with funders, policy, media and leadership development organizations to enable efforts to expand and scale



Your network as an alliance

It can be very useful to see your network as an alliance because that can help you focus on the importance of seeing grassroots individuals (often those individuals you serve) as a critical part of your network. Engaging the grassroots with organizations that impact them and shifting the power dynamic between those groups are keys to transformation.

- To what extent does your network include grassroots constituencies?
- How have you handled the class and cultural differences?
- How have you engaged grassroots groups in effecting change that makes a difference in their lives and communities?

Coalitions and Campaigns. *Coalitions* are generally tightly defined advocacy networks with explicit membership that form around a specific policy initiative. Because everyone in a coalition needs to agree on a clearly defined set of objectives and because of the specificity of the objectives, coalitions tend to be short-term. (For more on characteristics of effective coalitions see the excellent *Power in Coalition* by Amanda Tattersall.)

Campaigns are short-term initiatives with very clearly defined outcomes that sets of organizations agree to work on together. Many advocacy networks, alliances, and coalitions organize campaigns. For an inspiring example of a network campaign see the 5-minute video on the Estonian campaign to clean up all the landfills in their country, which involved 50,000 individuals. This is an excellent video to share with people in your network when they are considering the development of a campaign. www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5GrylDI0qY

System Development Networks. Advocacy and alliance networks tend to focus on raising issues and changing policy related to **problems** they have identified. Other networks focus much more on **developing a new system**. For example, the many local food system networks around the country support local farmers growing food for local markets and have created farmers markets and community support agriculture initiatives (CSAs) to provide new local marketing channels. Local food activists have set up kitchen incubators (local processing facilities where entrepreneurs can make processed products) and community gardens. Local tourism bureaus have created efforts such as the 30-mile meal so that consumers purchase more local foods and restaurants feature local foods in their menus. Of course, most local food efforts include policy efforts and many communities now have local food policy councils.

In system development networks, subsets of the network create new system elements such as bike-sharing programs and solar retrofit projects in climate change networks or blood pressure clinics and mobile health units in health networks. Many networks see themselves either as an advocacy network or a system development network. Each could be more effective if the network saw itself as both. For example, an LGBT network might be most effective if it works on ending discrimination in the armed forces at the same time that it supported development of a school curriculum that helped children learn to be more open to differences. Different organizations in the larger network might work on different aspects of the issue but coordinate their efforts for maximum impact.

Your network as a system development network

It can be very useful to see your network as a system development network because this helps you focus on helping people co-create a world that is good for all. It also helps people's energy when they are not just problem-focused but are building a new system at the same time.

- To what extent is your network focused on new system development?
- In what ways could it become more involved in system development?
- Could you reach out to other partners that are already doing this and coordinate your efforts?

Multiscalar Networks. System development networks are most successful when regional or local networks encourage small self-organizing groups to implement opportunity-driven projects, which are linked together through a strong relationship network. When regional projects are linked regionally or nationally through learning networks and connections with other innovators,

their impact is often accelerated. Networks that include vertical networks as well as horizontal networks are called *multiscalar networks*. These networks have 3 linked levels:

1. Local networks where local individuals and organizations are linked
2. Regional or national networks where several individuals from each local network come together for learning or planning
3. Regional, national, or international networks where individuals come together to work on policy and new infrastructure

Such networks require network weavers who bridge the levels – bringing learning from the learning networks back to the local level or mobilizing locals in policy initiatives.

Section 2. Identifying your Intentional Network

Network Focus. Intentionality in networks occurs when a set of individuals decides to focus on a specific area. This focal point can be quite varied. Usually networks chose one of the following:

- An issue: e.g., immigration reform
- A problem: e.g., poverty
- A geography: e.g., a neighborhood network
- A system: e.g., a sustainable food economy
- A vision: e.g., healthy eating

Whether you are thinking about forming a new network or already have a network in place, you can benefit from understanding your network through each of these lenses.

Activity: Ways to Understand Your Intentional Network

Have your network complete the **Focal Point worksheet**. Discuss how each provides different insights. On a large chart paper, draw the system in which your focal point is embedded. What are all the entities and organizations in this system?

Clarifying Network Function. An important step is to clarify your network's function(s). What is your network doing (or for new networks, what do you want your network to do)?

Networks can do many different things:

1. Share information
2. Coordinate action, events or services
3. Organize joint training and skill-building
4. Set up joint purchases
5. Organize joint research
6. Organize joint learning
7. Form a joint publicity or education campaign
8. Set up a joint referral system
9. Develop a joint brand, standards, or criteria
10. Develop new collaborative programs or services
11. Move a policy or advocacy agenda forward
12. Advocate for a specific group or issue
13. Generate new system elements: programs, services, activities, institutions, etc.
14. Engage stakeholders or mobilize a base
15. Generate innovation and breakthroughs for field

Activity: Network Function Assessment

Have your network take the **Network Function Assessment** and identify the functions that are most important to your network. Then look at the functional categories on the worksheet **Three Functional Categories** to determine which category best fits your network

The chart **Three Functional Categories** organizes functions into three sets:

Some networks have **Light Functions**, such as sharing information or holding a joint training event. These types of activities are typically low-risk. What is needed is clear coordination, which can be provided by an individual or a small group. Many networks start with these kinds of activities because they offer a chance for key players to get to know each other and determine whether there is a basis for more complex network action together.

The activities of other networks often require more explicit agreement – about a brand, a message or a campaign. The network needs to move forward in a united way, so these activities are considered **One Front Functions**. To get this kind of agreement requires more clarity about membership, commitment, and principles.

Some network activities are much more about **Engagement and Experimentation**. Subsets of the network are trying out new approaches or developing new part of a system. In this situation, attention needs to be paid to helping people find each other and making sure different activities fit together and add up to something.

Most networks include combinations of all three of these functional categories but knowing which is most important can help a network select an appropriate structure.

Network Structure. Intentional networks can be structured in many different ways, and it's very important to think well about the structure of your network so that you don't over-structure or understructure it. Even if you already have an existing network with some structure, it's good to spend time making sure that the structure you currently have is appropriate.

One of the most difficult decisions to make is what structure your network should have. There is virtually no research on the type of structure that is most effective for different kinds of situations.

In looking at hundreds of networks, June Holley has found three basic types of structure:

1. Organization-like network structure
2. Self-organizing network structure
3. Hybrid network structures

Organization-like networks. Some networks are structured much like an organization – and in fact the network may actually set up a new 501c3 (tax-exempt corporation). People join the network as members (often as organizational members) and usually agree to make a financial and time commitment. Like organizations, these networks engage in goal setting and planning processes and work is accomplished through committees or task forces. In some cases this planning is done with the entire membership, but often a governing board is delegated with this responsibility.

Most networks are quite large and so engagement of all members becomes problematic. A common problem for organization-like networks is that too much of the work and decision-making becomes concentrated in the governing board and the rest of the membership loses interest and begin to participate less. Building relationships among members, having clear agreements and guiding principles, increasing opportunities for input, and spending time broadly distributing work are four ways to overcome problems with this structure.

This structure is most often selected for networks with One Front Functions – advocacy networks, coalitions, alliances – where members need to move a campaign or issue forward together.

Self-organized networks. In contrast to organization-like networks, self-organized networks are very loosely structured. Self-organizing networks are the structure most often used by System Development Networks whose functions are engagement and innovation. They operate in a decentralized fashion where decision-making happens in the many self-organized projects that emerge. This works because the network is well-connected, and many people take the initiative to start new projects.

Some self-organized networks offer nothing more than a web platform for individuals to connect with each other or form groups. For example, www.landshare.net enables an individual who wants land for gardening to link up with someone who has land. In addition, the site enables people to form community groups that set up face-to-face meetings and have discussions on policies to support local gardening, there is no coordinating body, no plan – only a platform.

Other self-organized networks have a bit more structure but are still very decentralized. In most local food economy networks people never all meet in one room and are not formally organized. There is no membership and boundaries of the network are very fuzzy – anyone who wants to take initiative and do something to build their local food economy is part of the network. Instead, these networks have a variety of venues (monthly meetings in bars or potluck dinners) where people get together informally and share information about opportunities and progress on projects. Individuals and small groups within the network cook up joint projects – new community gardens, cooperatives for farmers, local food brands and festivals, food policy councils – that usually involve several organizations. www.localfoodcleveland.org gives a glimpse of how innovative and productive this approach can be: there are 64 “communities” –

collaborative projects that have emerged from the local food network – that range from groups working on policy to allow chickens in the city to beekeepers sharing information.

Types of Network Structure

Organization-Like Network	Self-Organized Network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating group, governing body or board • Clear purpose statement, name and identify • Planning and goal setting • Committees of task groups • Membership • Membership commitments • Clear agreements • Funding often supports coordinating group • May form a 501c3 <p>Appropriate when coordinating joint services, setting up referral or organizing coalition campaigns when clear protocols and strategies need consensus.</p> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires expert facilitation if consensus needed • Coordination may be expensive • Problems if time not spent on building trust or agreements not clear • Often one group does most of the work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many Network Weavers trained as connectors and project coordinators • Several organizations (often a foundation) act as network guardians to make sure there is a supportive structure for communication • Usually not a formal name or identity • Resources available to support collaborative project • Learning occurs through informal conversations • Few or no convening of entire network • No membership or sense of network boundaries • Dense web of relationships, continually sharing of information and ideas <p>Appropriate when need creativity and innovation for new system development</p> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires considerable training or expertise in Network Weaving • Learning and breakthroughs may be missed • Generally, a catalytic group needed to get process going • Projects may not be sufficiently connected or integrated so synergies may be lost
Hybrid Network	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating body • Development of strategic directions and priorities • Training for Network Weavers and Project Coordinators • Funds available to support network coordination, training and projects • Relationship building and clustering activities at meetings; many people engaged in work of network • Much time spent on reflection, learning and identifying breakthroughs and insights • Membership loose and inclusive <p>Appropriate when need some exploration but want to engage people and gather insights more formally</p>	

Self-organized networks are most effective when many people in the network are playing the role of Network Weaver so that the relationship network is well-connected, and people have support as they self-organize. These types of networks also benefit when people play the Network Guardian role, articulating the connection among the projects, making sure adequate

communication systems are set up, and helping people notice opportunities for high-impact action.

Self-organized networks are powerful innovation generators and are most appropriate when experimentation and new approaches are needed. They also provide a means for many network participants to become engaged in network activity.

Hybrid networks. Most networks are actually hybrid networks – they contain some organization-like elements and some self-organized elements. They almost always have a Network Facilitator but may or may not have membership or a governance board. Facilitators organize the work of the network so that people within the network can take initiative rather than having a plan that all action must fit into. Because most networks can benefit from a hybrid structure, we'll discuss two examples in detail.

The first example is the Innovation Learning Network (ILN), a network of 17-member hospital systems located throughout the U.S. ILN is a combination of a joint research and a learning network. It has membership, a governing board, and two part-time network facilitators as most organization-like networks do.

However, it also has many self-organizing elements. Members only meet once every year, where instead of planning, the network uses an open space format where people can organize discussions or activities on any topic they choose. The governing body notices which sessions seem to have the energy to continue and works with people in that group to identify experts or activities for the group. Thus, most of the activity of the network is self-organizing.

The ILN also trains interested members to be Network Weavers, and these 25 individuals help connect people from different hospitals and coordinate the small groups. The network also spends time each quarter sharing what has been learned during the previous three months.

This network has been very successful. The innovations explored by the group and implemented by member hospitals have resulted in millions of dollars in savings, increased access to healthcare, and improved care for patients. See www.innovationlearningnetwork.org

The second example is RE-AMP, a network of 125 funders and organizations in the Upper Midwest whose goal is to lower emissions by 80% by 2050. Each year, members have the opportunity to determine priorities for the coming year. Working group coordinators are elected and are supported by a staff person. Once priorities are determined, the working groups develop proposals for collaborative projects and these are submitted to a group that distributes a multi-million-dollar pool of funds. The steering committee of 9 elected and 2 appointed members sets up the support structure for the network, identifies gaps in strategy and makes sure that time is set aside for reflection and learning.

Comparison of RE-AMP and ILN Structure

Structure	RE-AMP	ILN
Set up of Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year-long planning process with small group • Several changes and adaptations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very little initial planning • More emergent and flexible
Network Members & Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 funders and 113 nonprofits • Faith, youth, ag and social justice groups 	13 hospital systems, design firms, consultants from other disciplines
Coordination	1 general coordinator, 6 working group coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 half time coordinators • Champions help coordinate groups
Governance	Steering Committee	Governance Group
Action and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 working groups (added over 3 years) • Members can pick what they want to work on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continually changing learning/action groups • Big several year themes that generate smaller projects
Activities & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual meeting • Monthly working group calls • Webinars • Trainings • Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many ways to get engaged: brown bags, virtual Fridays, etc (all virtual or conference calls) • Network mapping • Annual FTF Meeting • Site visits to innovators • People can become Network Weavers or Champions
Communication	<p>An online platform, The Commons</p> <p>Share information transparently and use for joint work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Ning site • A listserv • Virtual Fridays, virtual brown bag lunches • Quarterly Learning
Network Building	Annual meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 Network Weavers trained and supported through monthly calls • Explicit building of periphery of experts and people from other fields
Tracking & Learning	Learning and progress system	Quarterly reflection sessions
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Warming Strategic Action Fund: a pooled fund providing \$3-4 million in grants per year • 12 funders contribute to operating budget 	Each member contributes to annual pool for operating budget and special projects
Planning	Annual strategic planning to develop priorities, used to guide funding	Open space process at annual meeting to identify projects for coming year

How Do Function and Structure Align?

Activity: Identifying your structure

Have your network read the preceding descriptions on the three structures and decide which structure best describes your network. After identifying functions of your network, does this structure make sense or might you need to adjust the structure somewhat?

Section 3. Leadership in Intentional Networks

“...you have to be listening to what other people want to do and not advancing your own agenda. My job is helping everybody connect a bunch of dots and plug into the right areas of the network.”

*Elizabeth Wheeler
RE-AMP Network*

Network Facilitator

All convened networks (intentional networks that meet and make decisions together) benefit from coordination. Larger networks may have a part or full-time person who is hired (or works as a consultant) to coordinate the network. Smaller networks may rely on volunteers who give their time for a set period of time.

The Network Facilitator needs to have the following skills:

- Meeting facilitation and agenda development skills
- Listening skills
- Negotiation and persuasion skills: because a Network Facilitator has no little or no power to force members to do anything, he or she must rely on his or her ability to persuade and negotiate
- Conflict resolution skills
- Planning process or prioritization skills
- Reporting skills
- Social web skills to set up transparent and easy to use web-based systems for discussions, collaboration and reporting

Network Guardian

Another role that is critical in intentional networks, especially those with less structure, is that of Network Guardian. Network Guardians are people who are aware of what is happening in all parts of the network and notice when something is needed. For example, they notice if communication is not flowing well to all parts of the network and take action to address that. Or,

they might notice that a lot of energy is gathering around an emerging issue or project and encourage the network to have a meeting to address that issue or share the success of a project more widely. Intentional networks need to make sure that people are filling the Network Guardian role and that those individuals are appreciated for their efforts.

Section 4. Network Elements

What are the key elements that each of the three types of networks need to set in place? Organization-like networks need to agree on the following:

- Purpose
- Guiding Principles
- Goals
- Membership
- Operations
- Planning or prioritization
- Governance
- Action
- Money/resources

Activity: What every network needs to decide

Have your network complete the worksheet **What Networks Need to Decide**, identifying which elements are most important for your network to decide now.

Self-organized networks depend on Network Weavers for success:

- Catalyst group of Network Guardians
- Network Weaver training and support
- Coaching for self-organized projects
- System mapping and identification of opportunities
- Venues for reflection
- Social web training

Hybrid network need to select thoughtfully from the elements of both the Organization-like and Self-Organizing Networks. However, minimum specifications include:

- Purpose
- Guiding principles
- System mapping and prioritization
- Working groups
- Innovation fund for supporting decentralized action

Optional: any of the items in Organization-like or Self-organizing network elements

Resources

Worksheet: Network Focal Point

Worksheet: Network Function Assessment

Handout: Three Functional Categories

Worksheet: Your Network Needs to Decide

Worksheet: Network Focal Point

Describe your network focal point as each of the following.

What is the issue you are addressing?	
What is the problem you are trying to solve?	
What is the geographical focus?	
What is the vision you want to manifest?	
What is the system you want to create?	

Worksheet: Network Function Assessment

How likely is each function going to be part of your network? Circle a number from 1 to 5, with 1 being “This function is not important to our network,” and 5 being “This function is very important to our network.”

1. Share information

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	Very Important
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2. Coordinate action, events or services

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	Very Important
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3. Joint training and skill-building

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	Very Important
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4. Joint purchases

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	Very Important
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5. Joint research

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	Very Important
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6. Joint learning

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	Very Important
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7. Form a joint publicity, education or messaging campaign

Not Important	1	2	3	4	5	Very Important
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8. Joint referral

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

9. Joint brand, standards or criteria

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

10. Move a policy or advocacy agenda forward

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

11. Advocate for a specific group or issue

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

12. Build a grassroots base

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

13. Develop new collaborative programs or services

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

14. Generate new system elements (activities, institutions, programs, services)

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

15. Support self-organizing

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

16. Generate innovation and breakthroughs for field

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

17. Other _____

Not Important 1 2 3 4 5 Very Important

Handout: Three Functional Categories

Light Functions Purposes 1-6 from Network Function Assessment

- Low risk, commitment only by coordinating group
- Need relationship building primarily within coordinating group
- Need little structure other than clear purpose and coordinating group but may form 501c3 or organization for liability or grant purposes
- Lead organization, coordinator, or coordinating committee
- Decision-making light, mostly procedural, done by coordinating group
- Most time spent on planning or setting up systems
- Work done by coordinating committee and/or staff
- “Members” may be those that sign-up or buy-in
- Costs shared or covered by grant
- Hybrid or Self-organizing

One Front Functions Purposes 7-12 from Network Function Assessment

- Moderate to high-risk
- Require moderate to high trust
- Higher risk because reputation at stake
- Need to spend considerable time on building relationships widely throughout the network
- More decision-making, and more consensus decision-making which means highly skilled facilitator needed
- Need agreement on purpose
- May need clear membership, commitment
- Need clear coordinating body, clear agreements about funds distribution
- Need strong conflict resolution and negotiation capacity
- Need to decide whether need one plan that all need to agree on or whether many small projects
- Work accomplished by staff or task groups (which need coordination)
- Organizational or Hybrid

Engagement and Experimentation Functions

Purposes 13-16 from Network Function Assessment

Risk varies, depends on size of collaborative projects

- Commitment high in project
- Requires trust based on accurate assessment of others
- Need Network Weavers and much relationship building
- Need joint training/coaching in project coordination skills
- Spend time to help people cluster and initiate projects
- More time on accessing new ideas and reflection
- Accountability through transparency and open communication
- Work accomplished through projects
- Funding project-based or for support system
- Self-organizing (no convening) or Hybrid

Worksheet: Your Network Needs to Decide...

Criteria	Questions	Your Network's Answers
Purpose	What is your network's purpose? Why do you think a network will help you meet that purpose?	
Principles	What principles will guide your network?	
Goals	What do you want to accomplish as a Network? How can you meet those goals more effectively as a network?	
Membership	Will you have members? Who will be members? How large a network do you envision? Why that size? How will you relate to others in your relational networks?	
	What are the responsibilities of members? What are their roles? What will they be expected to do? to contribute? to commit to?	
	What assets will each contribute? Skills? Resources? Connections?	
	How will members assess and reflect on their own performance? How will trust be built among members? Will there be training for members?	

Criteria	Questions	Your Network's Answers
Governance	Will a Steering or Coordinating Committee be set up? What will its responsibilities be?	
	What will the network need to make decisions about? How will the network make decisions? What decisions will need to be made by consensus?	
	How often will the network meet? How will conflicts be dealt with? How will the health of the network be assessed?	
Coordination and Operations	How will the network be coordinated? Volunteers? Staff? How will staff be paid? What will they be expected to do? How and where will it operate?	
Planning, Strategy Dev. and/or Priorities	Will the network develop a plan? What strategies will the network focus on? What are the priorities for the network? What are the leverage points (places where targeted action can make a difference now)?	
Action	How will you decide what actions to take? Will you develop a plan? Will you all be expected to be part of the same actions or will members be able to be part of some actions? What training and skill building will the network provide or access? How will actions be reflected on or evaluated?	
Money and Resources	What expenses will the network have? Where will the money and resources come to support the network? How and where will the network get money for collaborative projects?	

	<p>Are there other resources that can substitute for funding, such as pro bono services? Network resources?</p>	
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