TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING NETWORKS
INSIGHTS FROM FOUR CASE STUDIES OF NETWORKS

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WHAT ARE LEARNING NETWORKS?

• Place-based collaboratives
• Multi-scalar relationships
• Voluntary and facilitated
• Inter-organizational/multi-jurisdictional
• In environmental management, public health, and education
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A LEARNING NETWORK?

• Transformative capacity building
• A bridging organization
  • Ways of Practice/Knowing
  • Alternative Futures
WHAT CAN A LEARNING NETWORK DO?

• Nurture professional expertise
• Disrupt old habits
• Foster new collaborative relationships
• Foster autonomy AND cohesion
HOW CAN A LEARNING NETWORK DO THIS?
THE NETWORK LIFECYCLE
LEARNING NETWORK DESIGN CHALLENGES

- Voluntary, require high commitment
- Operate at multiple scales and use multiple modalities
- Promote change in turbulent institutional environments
- Reliant on support from multiple fickle sponsors, lightly resourced and staffed
THE LEARNING NETWORKS LAB AT CSTPR

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING NETWORKS
CAPACITY BUILDING FOR RESILIENCE

Learn more about the Fire Adapted Communities Learning network...

Learn more about the 100 Resilient Cities Initiative...

Learn more about the Locally Managed Marine Areas Networks...

Learn more about the STEM Learning Network...

Website: www.brugo.org
CASE STUDIES FOR THE NETWORK OF STEM EDUCATION CENTERS (NSEC)

- National Alliance for Broader Impacts (NABI)
- 100 Resilient Cities (100RC)
- Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FACLNet)
- Global Change SysTem for Analysis, Research and Training (START)
STRUCTURE OF ANALYSIS

• Review each network’s origins and history, design and approach

• Explore network contributions to:
  • Organizational learning,
  • Cross-scale integration
  • Netweaving
  • Transformative capacity building

• Method: Interviews, document analysis, literature review
  • Participant observation and feedback

• Cases: 100RC/Lee, FAC-Net/Jeremiah

• Discussion: Jeremiah
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSF RCN</th>
<th>Rockefeller Foundation Grants 1 mil to each city</th>
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<td>An. meetings, mo. committee calls, listserv, advocacy, training subcommittee work.</td>
<td>Comm. between CROs and RF mediated by managers. CRO working at the city level.</td>
<td>Monthly check-in, quarterly regional meeting, annual conf. and working groups.</td>
<td>Grants, workshops, online training and platform, connections between members.</td>
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KEY INSIGHTS - NETWEAVING

- Differing understandings
- Deft at operating at various scales, levels
- Facilitate flow of info
- Forging social ties
- Promote shared identify
- Spontaneous feedback
- Flexibility of their role
KEY INSIGHTS – ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

• Multiple opportunities:
  • Communication
  • Feedback
• Experimentation across scales
• Flexible structure
• Face-to-face interactions
KEY INSIGHTS – TRANSFORMATIVE CAPACITY

• Reflexive work, intentioned adaptation is necessary
• Network identity requires thoughtful intention, action
• Netweavers as linchpins, cross-scalar integrators
Transformation timescales are long, but...

- Individual and organizational learning can be observed early on.
- Collective actions and incremental change can occur on the way to transformation.
CONCLUSIONS

• “Soft touch” is necessary
• Loose, flexible network structure
• Cross-scalar interaction enhances potential for transformation
• Transformation timescales are long, but...
  • Individual and organizational learning can be observed early on
  • Collective actions and incremental change can occur on the way to transformation
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

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