Collaborative Social Change: A Transformational Approach

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Chapter 1 – Purpose of the Study

Statement of Problem:

The effects of globalization, as well as rapidly-increasing levels of partnership between US and international social change\(^1\) and development projects, have created a strong link between social change and development projects throughout the world (Whitman, 2008, Ekins, 1992). However, the fields of social change and development have faced a complex, challenging landscape and continued lack of success (Adelman, 2001). As Robert Putnam argued in *Bowling Alone* (1995, 2000), United States society has become increasingly atomized, with an extensive breakdown in social capital\(^2\), what some call ‘social trust,’ or ‘community.’ This makes social change challenging, while simultaneously increasing the importance of such work. International development projects have similarly experienced difficulty in reaching their original goals (Easterly, 2001, 2006, Kahane, 2004).

In light of these trends, this study examined principles of collaborative social change and social capital (specifically, the Center for Ethical Leadership’s “gracious space” concept), as related to development projects and social change organizations serving vulnerable populations (individuals or groups that do not have adequate access to basic human necessities such as sanitation, security, education and/or health care as well as those who are disenfranchised due to lack of political, economic or social power.)

Throughout, collaborative social change (CSC) refers to “social change that occurs through the shared labor of two or more entities working in a relationship of equality, leveraging their

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\(^1\) Organizations involved in work aimed at changing social structures: the nature, the social institutions, the social behavior or the social relations of a society, community of people, etc., or which advocate for causes which will change society in a way subjectively perceived as normatively desirable (Wikipedia.com)

\(^2\) Social capital is defined here as “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (Putnam, 1995). A comprehensive discussion of social capital is provided in the literature review.
unique resources, experiences, skills, or ideas to yield an outcome that significantly impacts society” (Bacon, 2009), especially in a manner which would generally be viewed as positive for society. Collaborative social change is locally led and strongly values teamwork and partnership-focused relationships.

*Gracious space* refers to a specific form of social capital, “a spirit and setting where we invite the stranger and learn in public” (Hughes, et. al. 2004, p. 5). Gracious space was originated by the Center for Ethical Leadership and Bill Grace and Associates in Seattle, Washington, USA.

In the context of organizational culture, these concepts can be described as follows:

1) “Welcoming the stranger” refers to a culture fostering an open environment which communicates the following, “We welcome differences of all kinds: background, experience, perspective, etc. We need to ask who else in our community needs to be included in this work” (Hughes, et. al. 2004, p. 6).

2) “Learning in public” as a part of “gracious space” encourages practitioners to be willing and open to learning together in a shared community, based on the belief that more robust, creative, sustainable and effective solutions can be achieved when individuals allow themselves to learn in public. Learning in public entails asking questions like the following: “How will you open up to learning? What do you need to let go of – certainty, expertise, solutions, etc.—to open up? How will you create space for the ideas, wisdom, and expertise of others to show up?” (Hughes, et. al. 2004, p. 6).

The study aimed to answer the following research question:

a) Is there an association between an organization’s
   i. Integration of *gracious space* into their organizational culture
   ii. Emphasis on *collaboration* in social change
   iii. Organizational success (key indicators for success discussed below)?
**Hypothesis:**

The study hypothesizes that (as illustrated in the schematic on this page) the greater the integration of “gracious space” into organizational culture\(^3\), and the deeper the levels of collaboration, the greater the likelihood of organizational success. It is acknowledged that “organizational success” is subjective and that the factors contributing to “success” are difficult to pinpoint, but for the purpose of this study, the following indicators were used to indicate organizational success and to lend objectivity to the analysis.\(^4\)

- Length of time organization has existed
- Financial sustainability\(^5\) and diversity of funding
- Number of people served.

These criteria were selected because the number of years an organization has existed indicates a minimum level of financial sustainability and longevity. Diversity of funding was selected as an indicator because it follows that if an organization has a diversified funding stream, it is likely to be much less beholden to any single funding source and thus more resilient should they lose one or more funding arms. It is also likely that a diversified funding stream decreases high

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\(^3\) Defined here as “the glue that holds and organization together through a sharing of patterns of meaning. The culture focuses on the values, beliefs, and expectations that members come to share” (Siehl and Martin, as cited in Hatch, 1997, p. 214).

\(^4\) Since some presence of these criteria dictated which organizations would be included in the study, a baseline level of success was therefore assumed.

\(^5\) Financial sustainability was based on an organization’s annual report. Financial sustainability is understood in a simple sense: does the organization have adequate funding to “break even” at the end of the fiscal year? Diversity of funding is also viewed as a positive indicator of strong financial sustainability.
levels of pressure or power coming from only one funding group. Finally, the number of individuals the organization serves was selected so as to further limit the scope of the study. (Admittedly, the number of organizations that an organization serves may not be directly correlated with societal impact. Many sizes and types of organizations, including those that serve small and large sized populations can have an equally significant effect on society. For example, a small non-profit, while only serving a small number of individuals, may ultimately produce significant societal impact, inspiring such great leadership within participants, that the effects on society are tremendous.)

Examining these concepts more closely, it may be useful to look at the following concepts in the context of:

1) *Gracious space*, understood in the context of social capital, and
2) Locally-led development projects, as an example of collaborative social change.

The center of this Venn diagram, where gracious space, locally-led development and social change and development intersect, is the focus of this study. The emergent hypothesis is that the greater the overlap between these three concepts (as depicted below in diagram 4), the greater the amount of organizational success.
Although beyond the scope of the present study, this research fits within the larger context of transformational change and suggests an acknowledgement that beyond these rudimentary indicators of success, transformational change is the goal. There are certainly crisis or disaster situations which demand quick aid relief and transactional change (for example, by providing food and shelter after a natural disaster). In the long term, however, for sustainable development projects to work, transformational change is indicated. The development spectrum (shown below) illustrates the range of development projects, from transactional to transformational. Transactional work affects only basic needs in the short term, resulting in immediate impact. Transformational work differs from transactional work because it moves beyond basic needs, and seeks long term, gradual impact.

**Diagram 5: Transactional Change vs. Transformational Change**

An illustrative example of what transformational social change can be is given by Joanna Bargeron in describing the graduates of Ashesi University and how they are achieving
transformational change in Ghana through “innovation in small ways that have a large impact. It’s each student going out and making small changes that make processes more efficient, blast away roadblocks, move around them, and find innovative solutions to problems” (J. Bargeron, personal communication, April 6, 2010). According to Bargeron, because these students are given tools, knowledge, and given space to think creatively and independently, it “opens the door” to their creative problem-solving and their transformative contribution to their society, which in turn has a ripple effect with far-reaching positive effects on society.

It should be noted that this is a pilot study, and seeks to identify if any association between variables exists, but does not seek to establish causality.

Specific Purpose:

The general purpose of this study was to establish if there is an association between an organization’s integration of gracious space into their organizational culture, emphasis on collaboration in social change, and the organization’s success. The specific purpose of the study was focused on the social change and development organizations themselves, as well as the vulnerable populations with which they work. The goal was to provide information for these organizations that could be beneficial for them, and that the vulnerable populations with which they work could be better served.

Scope and Focus of Problem:

Who: Social change and development practitioners focused on vulnerable populations

What: Collaborative social change and gracious space within the context of social change and development organizations

When: For the period 1960 – 2010

Where: Organizations throughout the world engaged in social change and development work
Why: This project seeks to identify associations between social capital (specifically, “gracious space”), collaborative social change and organizational success. If such an association exists, it is possible that increasing the levels of social capital (including gracious space and other forms of social capital) and collaborative social change within organizations could contribute to their long-term success.

Justification of Importance of the Study and Benefit to Society:

This study sought to benefit not only a small group of practitioners, but also the fields of development and social change as a whole, the individuals and organizations engaged in social change, those who advocate for vulnerable populations, and the partners and individuals with which these organizations work, both in collaborative partnership and the populations being served (often called the “recipient” or “end-user” of services). Research regarding patterns and possible associations (between collaborative social change, gracious space, and organizational success) would be helpful to the social change community as a whole. Identification of such associations could motivate social change organizations to focus more on collaborative social change and gracious space, thus positively affecting the success and effectiveness of these organizations. Global society would indirectly benefit because the focus of this research is on social change, the goal of which is to positively affect the global community by working for a more just and sustainable world.

Limitations of the Study:

This project had significant limitations. It examined a limited population, and had a small sample size. The study was conducted over a limited time period, from September 2009 until June 2010. Thus, the project was limited in the following ways:
1) This study did not seek to establish a direct correlation\textsuperscript{6} between collaborative social change, gracious space, social capital and organizational success. Such analysis is recommended for further research on this subject.

2) The study was a preliminary pilot project analyzing concepts of collaborative social change, social capital and successful social change organizations. Due to its status as a pilot project, the deeper levels of possible research on this topic, including research studying possible direct relationships between collaborative social change, social capital, gracious space and organizational success and sustainability, are not included in the scope of this study.

3) In approaching this study, it was acknowledged that there is no panacea for successful social change or development organizations (Adelman, 2001); the project did not seek such a panacea.

4) The goal of this project is not to offer a solution, but rather to inform the collaborative process of seeking a “better” (more efficient, just, effective, sustainable, collaborative, locally-driven and socially conscious) field of social change organizations, whether domestically or internationally focused.

5) Finally, a further limitation is the inherent difficulty of measuring organizational success. There are a number of key limitations related to organizational success. First, one must differentiate between the success of an organization according to its own mission and goals and the success of the individuals that the organization serves. For example, an organization may clearly meet its mission, quarterly and annual objectives, but one could argue that the true test of a social change organization’s success is whether the individuals with which the organization works are ultimately successful.

\textsuperscript{6} “A measure of the direction and strength of the linear relationship between two quantitative variables,” (Moore and McCabe, 2006, p. 24)
and benefit from the work done by the organization. Therefore, there is an additional element of organizational success which is missing: the ability of vulnerable populations to attain security (i.e. to move out of poverty, to become independent, self-reliant, and “enfranchised” and to not only be involved in communities rich in social capital but to contribute to social capital themselves). This aspect of organizational success is beyond the scope of this study, but future work related to collaborative social change and gracious space would be well-advised to include this aspect of organizational and constituent success.
Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The literature on the topics of collaborative social change and social capital is substantial. The following literature review provides a representation of the relevant literature organized around the following key themes: social capital, collaborative social change and social change and development. Social capital also includes a discussion of gracious space, collaborative social change addresses issues of power dynamics and social change and the social change and development section will also address participatory anthropological methods.

Social Capital:

“We Americans need to reconnect with one another. That is the simple argument of this book.”

– Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone

It is not entirely clear who originated the term ‘social capital,’ but among those behind the popularity of the term are Robert Putnam (1995, 2000) and L. J. Hanifan (2010), who described social capital as “those tangible substances that count for most in the daily lives of people: good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social engagement” (L.J. (Lyda Judson) Hanifan, Para. 1)

Many definitions of social capital have been offered. Here, Putnam’s (1995) definition is used: “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (p. 6). Coleman (1990), offers a similar theory, emphasizing, “social relationships which come into existence when individuals attempt to make best use of their individual resources . . . [thereby also creating] . . . resources for the group of individuals” (p. 300). Very similarly, Harpham et al. (2002) define social capital as “the degree of connectedness and the quality and quantity of social relations in a given population” (p. 106). Woolcock (1998) offers another definition, “a broad term encompassing the norms and networks facilitating collective action for mutual benefit” (p. 101). Barbara Arneil (2006) classifies social capital as a “clarion call for a renewed civic engagement in the Western industrialized world” (p.
and acknowledges its relevance and value to all aspects of society, individuals, and organizations. Arneil states that Putnam’s model is powerful in that it provides an analytical framework for understanding social capital, establishing it as measurable and providing complete data in support of his theory (p. 1–14).

According to Putnam, social capital is on the decline in the US. Reasons behind this may include the time pressures of modern careers, economic necessity of both partners in a couple or family to work, urban sprawl (which increases commute times), technology and the media, as well as generational differences and what Putnam calls an “other” factor (Putnam, 2000). Putnam suggests that this decline is important because social capital impacts a broad spectrum of areas: education, child welfare, safe, productive communities, economic productivity, health, happiness and democracy. Putnam states that the importance of social capital lies in many areas, including positive child development and education, economic productivity and vitality of a community, and maintaining an orderly society with the associated rules of conduct.

While the literature provides extensive evidence of the value of social capital to the community, other benefits are cited as well. Coleman (1990) also asserts the economic value of social capital. Coleman states that personal relationships and networks, generate productive activity. “For example, a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparative group lacking that trustworthiness and trust” (p. 300). Harpham et al. (2002) also claim that social capital has a positive correlation with key health indicators, citing substantive research done in the United States regarding how social capital has a positive effect on “life expectancy, infant mortality rate, heart disease, violent crimes, and self-rated health” (p. 106). The authors also cited the need for further research regarding the effects of social capital on health in the developing world, and in terms of formulating strong health-related public policy.
A discussion of social capital should also include the related concept of “communitarianism,” which has contributed to this body of knowledge. Amitai Etzioni (1995, 1998), Jean Elshtain, and Michael Sandel have been at the forefront of this argument.

Communitarianism is focused on society, emphasizing society and community over the role of the state (Etzioni, 1998, p. 20). Furthermore, the communitarian perspective values community over individual self-fulfillment or self-actualization (Eberly, 2000). The literature states that Americans (in the USA) are also coming to the realization that the value of a positive social sector (family, neighborhoods, volunteer organizations and other groups) is crucial to the health, vitality and safety of the US. These intangible, yet irreplaceable, qualities to civil society affect quality of life, and have economic and political implications as well. Etzioni (1998) further warns that in recent years, extreme pursuit of self-actualization and a potential decrease in concern for others and the community is responsible for much of society’s social disorder and discontent.

Others are more critical of Putnam’s work on social capital. Barbara Arneil (2006) offers an alternative narrative regarding social capital, criticizing Putnam for an alleged “oversimplification of an idyllic past” and claims that that “the current ‘collapse’ in participation is better understood as change rather than decline” (p. 191). Arneil states that while there may currently be less social trust within US society, this is a positive phenomenon in that it achieves greater justice for women and cultural minorities. Arneil urges her audience to “recognize the conflicting narratives,” (p. 201) including the allegation that perhaps we are idealizing a time that was less than ideal for women and minorities. Joining Arneil as a critic of social capital, Portes (2000) is also critical of the relevance and claimed benefits of social capital. Portes claims that many of the alleged benefits of social capital are questionable when controlling for other factors. For example, Portes conducted a study which examined the effect of social capital on the children of recent immigrants to the United States. When controlling for age, sex, socioeconomic status, English language knowledge and
length of residency in the United States, the effects of social capital dropped markedly in terms of statistical significance.

Xavier de Souza Briggs, as cited by Putnam (2000) also warns of an overly simplified, positive view of social capital. Specifically, for those left out of social networks, the results can be devastating. Also, social capital can accumulate in such socially detrimental structures such as gangs, “not in my back yard” (NIMBY) syndrome, and power elites.

Finally, Woolcock (1998) also presents various critiques of social capital. He claims that civic groups (who foster social capital almost by definition) may hinder macroeconomic growth by unfairly securing more than their share of national resources. Woolcock also alleges that nepotism results from extraordinarily strong familial ties and that anomie (where individuals have linkage, but no integration, and thus lack a stable community base to provide guidance, support and identity) may also be an unforeseen result of social capital. This issue of anomie can result in violence and even suicide. In summary, Woolcock states that “relations within and between social groups at different levels of society shape the prospects for sustainable, equitable growth and just, participatory governance” (p. 187).

**Gracious Space:**

This paper presents gracious space as one of the key constructs studies, and is understood within the context of social capital. Gracious space was originally conceptualized by the Center for Ethical Leadership and Bill Graces and Associates in Seattle, Washington, USA. The Center for Ethical Leadership has recently undergone a quantitative evaluation of gracious space. Data from this study show that 83% of participants said use of gracious space provides better services and communication. 71% of participants said that gracious space results in more inclusive leadership and better results. The report concludes that those who use gracious space enjoy significant improvements in
communication, leadership and effectiveness (Center for Ethical Leadership, 2010). Bill Grace, Founder and former Executive Director of the Center for Ethical Leadership, states that when workers in a hospital practiced gracious space, there ended up being many fewer malpractice suits. Allegedly, this is because employees were more likely to admit a mistake, and thus more able and likely to correct it, rather than cover it up, which may have caused more serious bigger problems in the future. Grace reports that health care and Patient Safety leaders around the US have reported these trends (B. Grace, Personal Communication, March 8, 2010). While this is anecdotal evidence, these reports, combined with the quantitative data above, suggest that gracious space has the potential to improve communication, leadership and effectiveness, and to transform an organizational culture in a positive way.

Another concept closely related to gracious space is adaptive change. When there is no technical solution possible, adaptive change is required (Kahane, 2004, Heifetz, 1994). “To solve a complex problem, we have to immerse ourselves in, and open up to its full complexity. Dynamic complexity requires us to talk not just with experts close to us, but also with people on the periphery” (Heifetz, p. 68). This is exactly what gracious space emphasizes: invite the stranger.

Kahane’s work on power is important because it offers new ways to approach social change and development work, much like collaborative social change. It acknowledges the shortcomings of the part and offers an alternative approach for the future.

**Collaborative Social Change:**

In the context of this paper, collaborative social change is defined as social change that occurs through the shared labor of two or more entities working in a relationship of equality,
leveraging their unique resources, experiences, skills, or ideas to yield an outcome that significantly impacts society (Bacon, 2009). Again, the literature offers extensive insight into these concepts.

Nancy Bacon, Program Director of the international non-governmental organization (NGO) Bahia Street, who originated this concept, has also written and lectured extensively on this subject. Bacon writes of the need to model “collaborative social change” in an organizational culture so that precisely the type of change an organization is working to enact is mirrored within that organization’s own culture. For example, “organizations that seek to “empower” a target population for example, create an international infrastructure that gives up power to that population, giving space for them to make decisions and drive the project” (Redefining the Toolbox, Bacon, 2009, p. 16). The main point here is recognizing and respecting the inherent knowledge, wisdom and expertise of the local people, and then, as described by Bacon, giving them the space within which to realize their own, internally-generated plans and solutions. It is nearly impossible for an outsider to truly understand a local culture and environment, due to the complexity and subtle nuances of local cultures and norms. In her text, Organizational Theory, Mary Jo Hatch (1997) illustrates the multifaceted levels and depth of complexity inherent in most modern organizations: cultural, legal, political, social, technological, economic and physical (p. 75).

Without a complete understanding, it becomes challenging, or even destructive, for an outsider to conceive a “solution” for local people without their input and buy-in (Willson, 2010). It is also much more sustainable in the long-term if local people originate a project. People have greater investment and buy-in in a locally-originated project. Both Alex Hannant and Magdaleno Rosa-Avila supported this in their interviews (Rose-Avila and Hannant, Personal Communication, 2010), stating that individuals have higher levels of buy-in and investment in a project if they are involved in the process.
David Ellerman (2005) emphasizes the need for true, respectful collaboration. He emphasizes that in order for social change and development to be successful, the projects “must come from within those who are changing. It must, therefore, be something that they want – not something that the donors (or teachers, community organizers, therapists, or managers) have told them they want” (vii). Put another way, Ellerman quotes Dewey, who states that, “The best kind of help to others, whenever possible, is indirect, and consists in such modifications of the conditions of life, of the general level of subsistence, as it enables them to independently help themselves” (p. xiii). Ellerman cites broad agreement amongst development professionals that “helping people help themselves is the best methodology for development assistance in the developing countries as well as for other types of helping relationships” (p. 1). Therefore, one begins to see that these issues transcend borders. Whether working domestically or internationally, there are certain tenets of collaborative social change and locally-led social change or development which may apply broadly around the world.

Specifically, with regard to Freire, Ellerman cites the following, “in contrast with the antidialogical and non-communicative “deposits” of the banking method of education, the program content of the problem-posing method – dialogical par excellence – is constituted and organized by the student’s view of the world, where their own generative themes are found” (Freire, 1970, p. 101, 254). The emphasis here is on the autonomy and dignity of the “doer” (what most development literature would define as the recipient – but calling them the “doer” gives them the agency for positive change).

Nel, Binns and Motteau (2001) offer an important link between collaborative social change and social capital, “the delicate balance between ensuring local control and involving limited, yet appropriate, external support and guidance needs to be carefully mediated. It is suggested that two of the key factors impinging on the success of such a scenario will be the role of local social
capital” (p. 3). Without adequate social capital, community-based development projects will likely have limited success and sustainability.

Fowler (2000) states that for a development relationship to be a true partnership, it must include the following: long-term involvement, joint responsibility, “trust, respect, integrity, accountability and equality,” (p. 589) including partners in important decisions (especially those that place obligations on either party, especially due to funding and the subsequent required reporting), collaboration should not drastically alter either organization’s mission, and it should be assumed that each organization progress and become more competent independent of the relationship. Perhaps most importantly, Fowler stressed that the local organization must have the final power to set its own agenda.

**The Role of Power in Social Change and Development:**

“Giving away power is a learning experience of the deepest kind.

*Through giving away outward power, I realized I had begun to gain internal power: of myself, of not needing so much to control others.*”

- Margaret Willson (*Dance Lest We All Fall Down*, p. 179)

“*To have power, you have to give up power.*”

- Magdaleno Rose-Avila, Personal Communication, March 25, 2010

This paper explores any possible associations between gracious space, collaborative social change, and organizational success. In this context, the concept of power as related to social change and development is important insofar as it informs collaborative social change. Because a key component of collaborative social change is equality, and because equality includes equal access to power, it is important that social change and development practitioners be cognizant of power dynamics, and any potential inequalities in power
distribution. Although naturally not always the case, much of the literature has suggested that development partners from the global North often have disproportionately high amounts of power in development relationships (Fowler, 2000). Fowler (2000) stipulates that much of the common resistance to Western aid on the part of the local people (for example, misappropriation, lack of buy-in, delays, foot dragging, etc.) are due to unequal power balances. However, such challenges are likely only a minor indication of more significant underlying issues such as the preservation of human dignity which takes place when all partners involved enjoy equal access to power, to have control over their own future, and to transcend the challenging realities of poverty. Giving space in which all partners (regardless of who is funding the work) have equal power over decisions and priorities may provide an environment in which social change and development outcomes can be achieved more successfully, and in which all partners feel respected and treated with dignity.

The dynamics of power are central to social change and development. The literature is extensive, abounding with other authors offering insight into the relationship between power, international aid and social change work. The quote above by Margaret Willson conveys her belief in the importance of giving up power when engaging in development work. Both de Sardan (2005) and Willson (2009) argue that anthropological training provides the ideal toolbox with which to approach development work, and support a broader application of anthropological models in international development work.

Groves and Hinton (2004) also discuss dynamics of power as related to international aid and development. They state the present system is based on patterns of “dominance, hierarchy and control.” They cite the Oxford dictionary definition of power, the “ability to do something or act in a particular way, especially as a faculty, quality,
capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others, or the course of events,” (p. 10) and stress the importance of being aware of where the power lies, how it may be used and how it relates to change.

A chapter in Inclusive Aid (Eyben, 2006) is dedicated to “Changing Power Relations in the History of Aid” (p. 21). Aid and development is described as a system which is perpetuating inequality, and Groves and Hinton call for a reversal of the rampant inequalities and unequal distributions of power inherent in aid. Concluding the book on a positive note, the authors state, “as the potential for personal agency, awareness and responsibility is recognized more widely and put into practice, many pathways for action will open up for inclusive aid . . . The first challenge for those seeking change is to take the necessary steps to understand and analyze power” (p. 158).

Alan Fowler (2000), in “Beyond Aid: NGDO Values and the Fourth Position,” also contributes to the discussion on international aid and power dynamics. Fowler discusses power and reflexivity, examining the violation of human dignity inherent in many aid transactions. Without true partnerships, and more equalized power structures, aid and development will continue to repeat the mistakes of the past. Fowler calls for a “fourth position,” which would draw on best practices already in place (donor coordination, participatory approaches, and decentralization, for example) and form a coherent set of values, principles, strategies, capacity and practices for their reform (p. 598).

Adam Kahane (2010) also provides an interesting discussion of power, framing it in the context of love. He states that, “If we want to create new and better realities – at home, at work, in our communities, in the world – we need to learn how to integrate our love and our power (p. 1).” He defines love as “the drive towards the unity of the separated,” and power as “the drive of everything living to realize itself” (p. 2).
Kahane acknowledges the inherent risk in such an approach, and cites Martin Luther King, Jr., “Power without love is reckless and abusive; love without power is sentimental and anemic” (p. 8). Kahane urges social change practitioners to acknowledge our connectedness to others (what Willson has called “collective survival”). Kahane places priority on working towards societal goals collectively (which would be an example of the type of network illustrative of social capital) all while carefully merging and balancing the dynamics of power and love.

From a practitioner’s perspective, Leslie Collins of Arts Corps talks about power dynamics, the interplay between power and ethnicity, and how this is approached at Arts Corps. “It’s really important . . . to understand the power dynamics that come with just who we represent in terms of ethnicity, what you represent when you come in a room and what that says to kids, that you can walk in with all of these wonderful intentions, and yet you’re speaking through who you are, and what you represent. And you have to just be aware of that, and not necessarily something you can undo, and you don’t want to. You just have to be aware of that impact when you’re teaching” (L. Collins, Personal Communication, March 25, 2010).

**Social Change and International Development:**

The body of literature on social change and development is extensive. The scope of this paper precludes an exhaustive overview of related literature. However, the discussion below addresses two key topics which both relate directly to, and inform social change and development work. These topics are participatory approaches to international development and the concept of approaching development from an anthropological perspective.
**Participatory Approaches:**

“It is important to appreciate that if NGOs are to have meaningful impact, they should ideally operate in a sensitive and participatory manner.”

-Chambers (1993, p. 5)

The participatory development model is one that has increasingly gained interest and support in recent years (Schoonmaker-Freudenberger, 1999). David Korten (1980, 1983) and Robert Chambers have written extensively on this topic. Two main types of participatory approaches are rapid (or “relaxed,” both have been used) rural appraisal (RRA) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participatory learning and action (PLA) (Chambers, 2002). PRA places community involvement in all levels of the development project planning as a high priority. Both PRA and RRA rely on “triangulation” as a primary method. Triangulation attempts to avoid bias by including diverse stakeholders in the development process, attempting to involve as many perspectives as possible. Participatory methods also identify, and attempt to avoid, various biases (researcher, informant, gender, wealth and education biases).

Korten’s premise, as related to participatory learning approaches to development, is that “Third World development assistance programs must be part of a holistically perceived learning process as opposed to a bureaucratically mandated blueprint design” (Korten, 2009, p. 480).

Chambers (2002) describes participatory models that “enable and empower people to share, analyze and enhance their knowledge of life and conditions, and to plan, act, monitor, evaluate and reflect” (p. 3). However, Chambers warns emphatically against the many traps inherent in participatory, and many other, approaches to development. He urges practitioners to avoid rushing, lecturing, interrupting “imposing” outside ideas, being

**Development and Anthropology:**

Margaret Willson, Co-Founder of Bahia Street, stated during a personal interview that she sees anthropology as the strongest, most viable framework from which to approach development work (M. Willson, Personal Communication, March 25, 2010). Anthropology offers an alternative perspective from which to approach development projects. As an experienced anthropologist, Willson believes that anthropology offers a valuable toolbox with which to approach development work. For example, anthropological fieldwork involves extensive immersion, and a model through which to truly understand others. Willson describes her first experience with fieldwork as follows, “anthropological fieldwork is vital . . . you spend years trying to put yourself in the mind of somebody who things very differently than you do” (M. Willson, Personal Communication, March 25, 2010). While time constraints may not permit years to understand local populations, anthropology can serve as a viable method with which to approach development work. Anthropology may also potentially illuminate methods which contribute to a more holistic understanding of collaborative social change and how this model can in turn contribute to the potential success of social change and development work.

Other academics have echoed Willson’s belief. Stull and Schensul (1987) discuss in *Collaborative Research and Social Change: Applied Anthropology in Action* various methods for collaborative, anthropological research and how this relates to international development. They discuss an example of a positive case study, where anthropological methods succeeded in a development context. In the 1950s and 1960s, Cornell University collaborated with an indigenous community in Peru. It was a “holistic rural development
and agrarian reform program” which was ultimately successful in that community members were able to purchase their land and their freedom with funds they were able to earn through selling potatoes at a local market.

De Sardan (2005) aims to link anthropological and sociological approaches to development processes, and to persuade anthropology to recognize that the study of contemporary development ought to be one of its principal concerns. The author asks for “a socio-anthropology of change . . . simultaneously a political anthropology, a sociology of organizations, an economic anthropology, a sociology of networks, and an anthropology of conceptions and belief systems” (p. 3).

De Sardan (2005) argues that anthropology and development are strongly related, that development should be studied from an anthropological viewpoint, and that anthropologists should value and focus on development. He calls for development to “be embraced by fundamental anthropology as an object that deserves scientific attention, methodological vigilance and conceptual invocation” (p. 3). Of special importance is the need to make a distinction between plans and reality, something which an anthropological perspective is especially well suited. De Sardan states, “in the development universe, there is a wide gap between discourses and practice: what is said about a development project (in theory) has little in common with the project itself as it exists in practice...Thus anthropologists play a permanent role which consists of ‘calling people back to reality’...‘you announced that, but this is what is happening, which is quite another matter.’ They diagnose and describe sidetracking” (p. 4).

Similarly, Willson makes a case in her article Incorporating Anthropological Consciousness as a Model for Development Practice (2010) that anthropology is the ideal discipline with which to engage in international development. She states that
anthropological training is particularly well-suited and valuable to international
development. The Bahia Street values can also be seen as specific guidelines for facilitating
an anthropological consciousness into development work: 1) let locals initiate, 2) learn to
listen, 3) reject first ideas as false, 4) reject ideas of charity, 5) leave self-respect intact, 6)
apply change to your own organization first, 7) limit size and diversify funding, 8) give
credibility to local partners, 9) think process and, finally, 10) be aware of political
implications. Willson, who co-founded and has co-led the international NGO Bahia Street
for the past twelve years, states, “my anthropological training, which made me acutely
aware of how power works, is why I am able to play these dual roles and to not only
understand the effect of my person in the dynamic, but to use it for the benefit of the
organization as a whole.”

In her book Relationships for Aid (2006), Rosalind Eyben affirms De Sardan and
Willson. Eyben, formerly of the United Kingdom’s Department for International
Development, urges development practitioners to adopt a more holistic view of aid and
development, to be aware of power and politics, to question how development practices
may be insidious, working to undermine local cultures, and to respect the role of the
individual and the organization as key to the poverty reduction movement (p. 29). Related
to power and reflexivity, Eyben cites Robert Chambers, who urges that development
leaders work for “honest reflection on how one’s own ego, mindset, institutional context,
and social and political interests combine and shape personal knowledge” (p. 31).

Connecting Social Capital, Gracious Space, Development and Social Change:

Social capital provides a context within which to understand gracious space by providing
an overarching umbrella under which gracious space can be understood and analyzed. As Karma
Ruder, Director of Community Collaboration at the Seattle, Washington, USA-based Center for
Ethical Leadership argued; gracious space and social capital are related because “Both recognize the importance of relationship as core to successful civic life. They both recognize that for social capital to exist requires an investment of time and intention. Gracious space provides a framework for increasing both kinds of capital” (K. Ruder, Personal Communication, Dec. 7, 2009).

Eyben (2006) talks about how she and her colleagues involved in immersion development work strived to “unlearn.” She says “immersion was a safe and secure place to let go . . . if you can’t do that, how can you listen?” (p. 51). This involves going beyond one’s assumptions and general paradigm to a place of openness, humility, and questioning, as suggested by gracious space. This concept is at the center of collaborative social change, focusing on equality and understanding between partners.

Nel, Binns, and Motteau (2001) provide a useful link between social capital and development. They assert that “Social capital . . . measures the degree to which a community can cooperate towards achieving desired results . . . Evans argues that social capital is a critical ingredient for sustainable improvement in the welfare of Third World citizens and that pre-existing endowments of social capital are valuable resources in development” (p. 4). The authors identify social capital as a catalyst working to facilitate community-led development work, which often contributes to the “sustainability and economic survival of the project” (p. 3). Development work in Kerala, India is cited as an example of a successful project which relied on local social cohesion and mobilization to ensure the success of both local community and broader state development projects (p. 5). Concluding with a key connection between social capital and development, Nel, Binns, and Motteau state that “possessing physical and human capital are not in themselves adequate to ensure project success. Community-based projects are likely to be of limited relevance and effect if local pools of social capital are not present” (p. 8, italics added).
Tarrow (1996) presents a direct challenge to this argument. While many have suggested that much of the weakness of development in certain parts of the Third World can be attributed to a lack of social capital, Tarrow sees that as false. He believes that structural factors such as capital flight, unstable commodity prices, and corrupt or exploitative governments are more likely at the root of many shortcomings in development, concluding that, “policy makers who attack the lack of social capital by encouraging association would be attacking the symptoms and not the causes of the problem” (p. 396).
Chapter 3 – Methodology

*Background and Community Partnership:*  
This study was undertaken as part of a community partnership with the international NGO Bahia Street. Bahia Street is an example of a development organization that implements collaborative social change. Working to achieve transformational change in Brazil, Bahia Street is an educational center (NGO) in Salvador, Brazil. The organizational mission is “to break cycles of poverty and violence through quality educational opportunities for economically impoverished young women and girls in Brazil” (Bahia Street, 2010, About Us, Para. 1). Bahia Street’s main goals are “to allow the students to reach their highest academic potential . . . to support the girls’ physical health . . . to build each student’s sense of identity and self-esteem and foster creativity; and to support the families of the students and the communities in which they live” (Bahia Street, 2010, About Us, Para. 1). Initial indications suggest that the Center had a significant impact on the lives of these young girls, some of whom are able to escape poverty. Key examples illustrating this success include the twelve Bahia Street girls gaining entrance into university, and the fact that none of the Bahia Street girls has gotten pregnant in the past ten years (Bahia Street, 2010, Recent Accomplishments, Para. 1). For a region of Brazil where education is often viewed as unobtainable for the poorest sector of society, and where teenage pregnancy is rampant, this data is telling.

Bahia Street exemplifies collaborative social change in part because the concept originated in 1997 when Margaret Willson and Rita Conceicao inquired with the local community of Salvador, Brazil about what they needed to improve their community, and to break cycles of poverty and violence rampant in their communities. The local people responded to “invest in the girls,” believing that the girls would in turn reinvest in their families and community.

Observing the success of Bahia Street, and their model of “collaborative social change,” this study aimed to study the concept in depth, and to determine if any association between
“collaborative social change” and organizational success could be determined. Bahia Street provides the model and framework by which the other organizations were analyzed.

**Study Design:**

The research methodology for this study involved interviews with key stakeholders in social change organizations. The interviews tested the hypothesis that the more deeply an organization integrates gracious space into the organizational culture, and the deeper the integration of collaborative social change into the organizational approach and philosophy, the more likely it is that the organization will achieve and maintain success.

The interviews were focused around twelve questions (see Appendix A). The goal of the interview questions was to examine, via a coding system, an organization’s levels of collaborative social change and gracious space. All interviews were audio taped. Following the interviews and data collection process, interviews were transcribed completely. Then (as shown below), interview transcripts were coded on a scale from zero to five, with zero indicating no “collaborative social change,” and five being the highest possible level. “Invite the stranger” and “learn in public” were also coded, using the same method. Note that questions seven and twelve for gracious space are marked as “not applicable,” or “NA” as these questions did not relate to gracious space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative Social Change: A Transformational Approach?</th>
<th>Collaborative Social Change</th>
<th>Invite the Stranger</th>
<th>Learn in Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Name of organization?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Number of employees/ Volunteers?</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Annual budget</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
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<td>4. How many locations?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. How many branches?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How does communication with your location partners work?</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. In what ways do your work with local partners?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Do you foster collaboration between short term and long term interests?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. How are decisions made?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How are you viewed?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. What would you like to be accomplished with your project?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Is your project updated in other countries?</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Total</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1**

**Coding system based on a scale of 1-5, 5 indicating a high level of collaborative social change. Invite the stranger, or learn in public, indicating a high level.
The coding method used was the “grounded theory method,” as defined by Babbie (2004)\(^7\). This process is iterative, seeking to “discover patterns and develop theories from the ground up” (p. 372). In this spirit, a “key phrase taxonomy” along each of the three dimensions (“collaborative social change,” “invite the stranger,” and “learn in public”) for each of the twelve questions was developed initially, and then following the interviews, additional statements corresponding to each of the coding dimensions were added.

The taxonomy included statements from all interviews. Data analysis also included calculating the averages for each question for each organization, the averages for the three dimensions (“collaborative social change,” “invite the stranger,” and “learn in public”), and then preparing an overview table to portray and analyze the data.

In summary, research objectives were met via 1) literature review, 2) data collection via interviews with key stakeholders, 3) interview transcription and coding, 4) taxonomy of identifying statements created, 5) data summarized and analyzed, 6) any existent associations between the variables of collaborative social change, social capital (specifically “gracious space”) and organizational success and sustainability were isolated and examined, and 7) conclusions and recommendations for further research written and compiled.

**Sampling Procedure:**

Participant selection and participation was based on the organizations and individuals the primary investigator (PI) had access to, as well as the organization’s success based on the following factors: organization has been in existence for at least five years, financial sustainability as outlined in the organization’s annual report, and the number of individuals served annually. No age, gender, ethnicity or race was specifically targeted (nor did the researcher have access to such information).

In terms of specific interviewees, participants were from a variety of positions: Executive Directors,

\(^7\) “An inductive approach to research...in which theories are generated solely from an examination of data rather than being derived deductively,” Babbie (2004).
Program Managers, Presidents, Board Members, and Development Officers. The Directors and Managers were generally the most helpful in terms of overall organizational knowledge and experience relevant to the target question set. It was necessary to speak with a representative who had an intimate knowledge of the organizational history, operations, processes and culture.

The specific measurement instruments for this study involved the interview and then the quantification of the interview data into the previously mentioned coding rubric. An Excel spreadsheet coding system was then used to assess the results of this study.
Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion

This study set out to test the following research question: Is there an association among an organization’s:

i. Integration of gracious space into their organizational culture

ii. Emphasis on collaboration in social change

iii. Success?

The work hypothesized that the greater the integration of “gracious space” into organizational culture\(^8\), and the deeper the levels of collaboration as an approach to social change, the greater the likelihood of organizational success. In other words, the hypothesis was that there is an association between gracious space, social change and organizational success.

The analysis of the interview transcripts was completed via a qualitative methodology, seeking common themes and emergent similarities between the organizations interviewed and their incorporation of gracious space into their organization culture and collaborative social change into their organizational structure and policy. As a second step, quantitative analysis of the collected coded data of the interviews was completed and offered as corroborating evidence for the qualitative themes which emerged throughout the course of this study during the fifteen interviews conducted, and as supported by a comprehensive literature review. In analyzing and synthesizing the interview transcripts, various themes emerged. An in-depth discussion of these patterns follows below.

\(^8\) Defined here as “the glue that holds and organization together through a sharing of patterns of meaning. The culture focuses on the values, beliefs, and expectations that members come to share” (Siehl and Martin, as cited in Hatch, 1997, p. 214).
**Values: The Importance of Organizational Values**

One pattern consistent throughout the interviews conducted was the importance and emphasis placed on organizational values\(^9\). This was most strongly present in Arts Corps, the Social Justice Fund Northwest, the One Equal Heart Foundation and Bahia Street (while also a part of other organizations as well). Values, in the context of these interviews, were emphasized not only in terms of an organization merely having values, but also that they are an integral and accepted aspect of the organization’s culture (following from the definition above). Naturally, each individual organization, with its unique circumstances, priorities and environment has diverse and unique organizational values, which become an integral component of the organizational structure, culture and ethos.

Bahia Street is an illustrative example of the high level of integration and reliance on organizational values. Bahia Street’s values are strongly interwoven into their organizational culture. Both Nancy Bacon and Margaret Willson emphasized the importance of values. As Bacon stated, values are important because they are a beacon, a guiding light, when organizations need to make decisions (N. Bacon, Personal Communication, April 13, 2010). Bacon also stated during an interview that “[It is] important that organizations think about their values and know what their values are. Many organizations don’t think about this, but it is important.” Margaret Willson, International Director of Bahia Street, has also consistently emphasized values. For a complete set of the Bahia Street value statement, refer to Appendix B.

Aaron Katz of Health Alliance International (HAI) also emphasized values. During his interview, Katz described the importance of values to HAI’s culture. Katz stated that HAI “is a

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\(^9\) This discussion uses the following definition of organizational values: “social principles, goals, and standards held within a culture to have intrinsic worth. They define what the members of an organization care about, such as freedom, democracy, tradition, wealth, or loyalty. Values constitute the basis for making judgments about what is right and what is wrong, which is why they are also referred to as a moral or ethical code” (Hatch, 1997, p. 214).
community of activists, scholars and teachers. Those are all characteristics that greatly help our work. People at HAI are humble scholars and they take that humbleness to their work in other countries and that is a great asset for HAI” (A. Katz, Personal Communication, March 23, 2010).

Based on this statement, one can ascertain that HAI deeply values inquisitive research and discovery (“scholars”) and values humility.

Leslie Collins, Deputy Director of Arts Corps acknowledged the importance of values within the organization. For example, when hiring teachers, it is important that the teacher’s values are strongly aligned with Arts Corps. The specific values she cites include, “respecting the kids, understanding the dynamics of power in the relationship, especially between an adult and a child. Those things are not easily taught... they portray a certain set of values, and we want to look for someone who shares values about how you work with youth...They are also learning by engaging in the process of that learning because for us the real important part is not necessarily what you find yourself with the end, it’s that whole process of learning” (L. Collins, Personal Communication, April 14, 2010).

Jeannie Berwick also mentioned values during her interview, but in a slightly different context, stating that above and beyond the One Equal Heart Foundation’s mission in Chiapas, Mexico, to “build community with the Tseltal Mayan people of Chiapas, Mexico” (One Equal Heart Foundation, 2010), the organizations aims to “educate people in the US to live more intentionally, to change our values and look at the environment differently” (J. Berwick, Personal Communication, April 28, 2010). Here, values are important as part of the organization’s goals – to change values in the US, vs. values as part of the organizational culture. Despite this different angle, it nonetheless shows the central role that values play within this organization.

Anita Crofts of the Global Health Leadership Program (GHLP) also strongly emphasized organizational values, especially with regard to GHLP, the fact that their partnerships were based
on invitation only (overseas partner must invite the US partner to collaborate). For a complete list of GHLP values, please refer to Appendix C. Not only are these values part of the organization’s governing documents, this was supported during the interview, stating that an overseas partner must say, “we’d like to have you here, let’s work together.” Crofts affirms that a relationship of collaboration, information-sharing, and equality are key for GHLP.

**Connection to Original Research Question:**

Organizational values are based on what individuals within the organization care about. Here, the importance of values as an essential component to an organization was a prevalent theme revealed through the interviews, and confirmed by the quantitative coded data, which establishes an association between gracious space, collaborative social change and organizational success. It makes sense that values would emerge through the course of this qualitative research study as an important theme because both collaborative social change and gracious space are strongly linked to organizational values.

The strong presence of organizational emphasis on values also sheds light on the research question that values, collaborative social change and gracious space are strongly interconnected and conceptually linked. Thus, it makes sense that values would emerge as a prevalent theme. Results showed that 87% of successful organizations interviewed demonstrated at least a coded level of three or higher for the constructs of collaborative social change and gracious space. Because collaborative social change and gracious space relate very strongly to organizational values (i.e. value on collaboration, value on learning in public, value in inviting diversity), the qualitative interview theme which emerges is supported by the quantitative coding data showing a strong association between collaborative social change, gracious space, and organizational success.
Schein (1992) provides a useful schematic depicting organizational culture. He presents a model showing the three levels of organizational culture:

![Organizational Culture Diagram]

Schein’s schematic provides a useful pictorial to illustrate the connection between values and underlying assumptions. Gracious space and collaborative approaches may partially be categorized under “assumptions,” thereby contributing strongly to organizational values. Thus it makes sense that organizations with a strong emphasis on gracious space and collaborative social change would in turn emphasize the integration of values into an organization’s culture and operations.

**The Importance of Leadership:**

The importance of strong leadership to organizational success is undeniable (Heifetz, 2001). Among the organizations studied in this project, this was a key theme. Some of the best examples include Rita Conceiciao and Margaret Willson at Bahia Street, Patrick Awuah at Ashesi University, Lisa Fitzhugh (Arts Corps Founder), and many others.

While specific skills and attributes vary, all of the organizations included in this study have strong leadership. Here, a specific type of leadership is being referred to, one in which a leader
gives those in an organization, or with whom one partners, the space and opportunity to do what they know will be beneficial and also setting and perpetuating a culture and setting of gracious space which “inviting the stranger” and “learning in public” is supported. Margaret Willson describes it as “a learning process about how to give space to somebody else.”

Robert Greenleaf, in *Servant Leadership* (2002) offers a model for leadership which embodies both the leader and the servant in that “the great leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness” (p. 21). Greenleaf describes a sort of “eagle and mouse vision” necessary for leadership: on the one hand, one is aware of the realities and practicalities of leadership, yet on the other hand, a servant leader also always keeps the long-term, overarching vision in mind. This description of leadership also emerged in an interview with Joanna Bargeron of Ashesi University. Patrick Awuah was described as, “being a manager as well as being a visionary, bring[ing] together that detail and the big picture in a way that has helped to make the day to day operations of the school a success” (J. Bargeron, Personal Communication, April 6, 2010). Here, it seems that Awuah has struck the perfect balance between vision and pragmatism.

Leadership, in general, and within the development world requires facilitating adaptive change. Kahane (2010), Heifetz (1998) and Daloz-Parks (2005) have all written extensively on adaptive change. Daloz-Parks discusses adaptive learning, and the “holding pattern” in which adaptive change and learning can take place. A skillful leader regulates the holding pattern, increasing the heat when necessary to increase conflict, and thus learning, and turning it down when the system threatens to explode. Adaptive change, because it often involves a reframing of one’s values, can involve loss and grief, challenges to self, but ideally achieves a new equilibrium that was missing before. Adaptive change, and a leadership style inclusive of this approach, is especially relevant to international development work due to the inherent complexity of the work and because to date, development work has suffered substantial setbacks in achieving the aims of
many project’s original goals. Alex Hannant affirmed this during his interview, “There is a growing recognition that the technical approach doesn’t necessarily work very well and [we] have to start looking at other options now and focus on locally-owned and self-built institutions and that the agents and actors which enable that to happen [are] at the local level” (A. Hannant, Personal Communication, April 15, 2010).

**Connection to Original Research Question:**

Linking this analysis back to the original research question, it is clear that leadership is strongly connected to gracious space and collaborative social change. Often, organizational leaders will “set the tone” for an organization and will be among the strongest contributors to an organization’s culture. A strong leader can help to shape organizational culture. A leader who fosters a culture and sets an example by being open, accepting, taking positive risks, to “invite the stranger” and to “learn in public,” may cause an organization to be more likely to adopt gracious space as part of the organizational culture. Similarly, the level that an organization’s leadership focuses on, and favors, collaboration, will to a large extent determine how collaborative that organization is. Since inclusion in this study was based on key indicators of success, it is quite possible that an essential component to the organization’s success was strong leadership.

**Collaboration: The Long-term Benefits and Buy-in of Inclusive Decision-Making**

Another notable theme which can be traced through the various interview transcripts is the long-term benefit of collaboration. Many of the organizations stated that collaborative processes and an inclusive decision-making process greatly improve sustainability and employee buy-in and investment in a project. When those affected by a decision are involved in making the decisions, they are simply more engaged, and have more long-term buy-in with the decision and subsequent plan of action.
As Alex Hannant of LEAD International states, decisions are made “through discussion and the sharing of perspectives or interests, understanding and appreciating respective interests and then reaching compromise and consensual decisions” (A. Hannant, personal communication, April 15, 2010). He explains it is not a culture where any one individual can move ahead unilaterally without discussions with others. This at times produces conflict, but results in stronger, more consensus-driven decisions.

Magdaleno Rosa-Avila of the Social Justice Fund Northwest sums up his philosophy on teamwork, how it fosters buy-in and investment in his team and grantees, and the importance of collaboration with his team, “You want to have a team approach, so if people say this is something we ought to do together, then we do. Because if everyone buys into it, you are in a much better position...You won’t get as much energy if you tell everyone what you’re going to do, vs. if you decide what you’re going to do together” (M. Rose-Avila, Personal Communication, March 25, 2010).

In another example, Rose-Avila described the importance of a facilitator in a recent meeting, and the beneficial way in which the facilitator solicited input from all members of the organization:

Sometimes a good facilitator is great because they ensure that everyone is heard and that everyone can get to some consensus which is good because it helps you develop. Sometimes people talk too much; facilitators help, there may be a person who has the best thoughts in the back of their head but they’re not talking because the other people don’t give them oxygen. [The] facilitator will ask to hear from other people...So the process will get you to the product, *if you get to the product without getting a good process, it is harder to keep it together*. (M. Rose-Avila, Personal Communication, March 25, 2010).
Further validating the power of a collaborative approach were comments made by Project Ethiopia. During their interview, they stated that when the villagers work together, volunteering on a given project, “it gives them buy-in into the project” (J. Sanderson, Personal Communication, April 28, 2010). And finally, the GHLP also was clear that their project is inclusive and collaborative. Crofts describes a general approach that all decisions are the product of shared decision-making. Furthermore, when decisions were related to the partner country, the US partners deferred completely to their partners, trusting their expertise and authority over that jurisdiction. The interview content of this study provide examples of how inclusive communication and strong collaboration increased the levels of buy-in and investment in the given project or outcome.

**Connection to Original Research Question:**

Again, similar to the “leadership factor” discussed previously, this project studied a cross-section of organizations deemed to have achieved at least a minimum level of organizational success. Perhaps collaboration and inclusive decision making, like leadership, are key factors contributing to organizational success.

It was a clear theme that collaboration increases the buy-in and investment of those involved. Here, many organizations stated that the more their employees were involved with the decision-making process, the greater investment and buy-in, the greater responsibility that these individuals felt for the final decision, project or result. This increased buy-in, which is shown here to be a result of collaboration, may explain the association between organizational success and collaboration. Perhaps collaboration, and the resulting high levels of investment and buy-in on the part of all those involved in turns contributes to organizational success (increased productivity and efficiency, greater likelihood that employees work harder, or even longer hours because of their personal investment).
How much an employee cares or feels personally invested in an organization’s projects and goals may be one of the most important indicators of success (MacFalda, 1998). It is a classic market failure, the “principle-agent” dilemma (Garson, 2010). Without employee buy-in and investment, the “principle-agent” market failure will likely occur (for example, due to employees not thoroughly applying themselves to their work, cutting corners, and settling for less than excellence in their work). Therefore, if collaborative social change and gracious space can contribute to employee investment and buy-in in their professional work and the subsequent outcomes (affirmed via the qualitative research undergone here), this may make progress in overcoming this common market failure, which detracts from organizational success, profit and long-term sustainability.

**Locally-Led Development Projects:**

Bahia Street is the model on which this project and the concept of collaborative social change is based, and therefore a key illustrative example of a locally-led development organization. Locally-led development is at the heart of collaborative social change because it is the operationalization of the partner contributing their unique knowledge of local resources, culture, practices, etc.

Jeannie Berwick of the One Equal Heart Foundation also favors a locally-led approach to development and social change. Berwick states that their focus is on “accompaniment…we don’t impose solutions from the United States. We accompany the poor in their struggle to find solutions to the problems they’re experiencing” (J. Berwick, Personal Communication, April 28, 2010). She goes on to talk about the high level of complexity inherent to the culture and society of the Tseltal people with whom her organization works, and the challenge of understanding that, let alone having such an in-depth knowledge of the local climate that outsiders could somehow “solve” it. She puts it this way, “It is out of our league; it is a complex, multidimensional perspective, it is hard
for us to offer solutions for that.” As Berwick states, it is truly challenging for those outside of such a complex system to understand the intricacies of a foreign culture. Often, unless you grew up in that context or are somehow intimately aware of the culture, needs and priorities of a society, you may not even know what questions to ask.

Berwick continues, “I have learned so much from [the Tseltal people of Mexico, program partners]. I have learned to be patient. I want results, but that is my personality and this has been a learning experience that what I want is not necessarily what the community wants. What good would it be to have what I want happen but the community doesn’t think it is right?” (J. Berwick, Personal Communication, April 28, 2010). This is reminiscent of a passage in Margaret Willson’s 2007 book Dance Lest We All Fall Down where she recounts a conversation with Rita Conceicao (Bahia Street Co-Founder and Brazilian activist) that they had at the founding of Bahia Street. Willson refused to take charge of the project, stating that if she did it would “reinforce the usual patronage system,” and that it would “not really [be] change. Not at a deep level” (p. 121).

While working or partnering with local people does not guarantee that that relationship is in turn based on equality and power-sharing, it is nonetheless a positive step towards local leadership when organizations hire solely, or mostly, local individuals for their work overseas. Many of the organizations included in this study hire primarily in-country staff and leadership (World Concern, PATH, Bahia Street, Good Shepherd, Health Alliance International and others). The representative interviewed from PATH was adamant about this point, stating that the work of PATH would be virtually impossible without relying on the expertise of these local leaders and staff.

Connection to Original Research Question:

Essentially, this study is focused on locally-led development and gracious space, and examining the relationship between them and organizational success. Locally-led development is key to collaborative social change. Therefore, the high percentage of organizations which indicated
high levels of collaborative social change are likely the same organizations who reported high levels of locally-led development. The predominance of locally-led development also supports the hypothesis that the more collaborative social change and gracious space inherent in an organization, the greater the level of organizational success.

**Technology: Playing a Key Role in Communication**

Interviewees emphasized the role of technology as key in terms of the value it provides in facilitating communication. Skype, a mostly free, domestic and international online telephoning system, was emphasized multiple times as an essential communication tool. Skype is free, or very low-cost, and thus enables regular, affordable teleconferencing. Alex Hannant of LEAD International put it this way, “Skype is incredibly important, being that it is reliable and cheap . . . We do a lot of work which involves multiple participants on telecommunications” (A. Hannant, personal communication, April 15, 2010). Other organizations, such as the GHLP, also cited Skype as a key tool, and added that Google Chat also has tremendous value. At Bahia Street, technology similarly plays a key role in facilitating technology. Communication is ongoing and regular, with Skype, email, constant phone calls, and even Google translator. In most organizations interviewed, email, phone, and in-person visits were also stressed as imperative to the successful operations of many of the organizations interviewed.

**Connection to Original Research Question:**

Technology emerged as a key theme because it fosters communication, which likely contributes to collaboration through increased dialogue and information-sharing (Okada, 2005). Since the organizations interviewed are successful, it makes sense that they would in turn also identify the importance of technology as related to communication. As with leadership and inclusive decision making, frequency and quality of communication (which is greatly eased via
technology) is an important component of gracious space, collaborative social change and organizational success.

Here, technology, primarily in terms of how it facilitates and simplifies communication, is important in terms of its ability to facilitate communication amongst development and social change partnerships. Technology is important because it facilitates easy, reliable, convenient communication between international partners, even though they may be in different time zones and on different continents. For example, before Skype was available, affordable telecommunication was more difficult. Email, internet chat and teleconferencing have also greatly eased the challenges of long-distance communication. While some interviewees cited challenges with these methods (dropped calls, the impersonal nature of teleconferencing), the benefits of these enhanced communication methods were emphasized over any potential downfalls.

It is possible that, in the past, some organizations were less collaborative and incorporated gracious space into their organizational culture to a lesser extent than they may have liked due to the challenges of long-distance communication. Perhaps with the advent of technology, and inventions such as Skype, GoogleChat and email, this has greatly enabled the possibility for collaboration and graciousness by making it easier for partners to be more inclusive and to engage in more regular and in-depth discussions with partners. It is likely that these technological advancements greatly facilitated communication and that one of the positive by-products of this has been increased collaboration and a greater integration of elements of gracious space into the organizational culture.

Development Work: The Value of Keeping Projects Small and Manageable

Margaret Willson (2010) warns international development projects against scaling up. She acknowledges the intense pressure on development projects to scale up, but warns of the many pitfalls inherent in such expectations. First of all, the organization can become so large that it
becomes consumed with upholding the existing positions and reputations perpetuating it, thereby neglecting its original mission. Mission drift can also occur, as leadership begins to mold projects after donor demand and development trends, rather than what is important and valued for the local communities with which one is working. The risk is that, as an organization grows, efficiency, nimbleness, ease of communication and a number of other important elements may suffer.

Ashesi University shares a similar philosophy. Joanna Bargeron of Ashesi stated, “Part of the magic of Ashesi is that it has been small and not intended to go big. There have been several funders who would fund Ashesi if they brought in ten thousand students today . . . who want to make big change now . . . The school has been very strong in standing up to that, that success is not about the size, two thousand is the maximum size where you can still have close relationship with professors and students” (J. Bargeron, Personal Communication, April 6, 2010). The potential connection between small size and success definitely warrants further research. The work Ashesi is actually setting out to accomplish extends beyond education (as important as education is). Founder Patrick Awuah has stated that he is on a mission to transform Africa. With such a big goal, it is important that the education and work provided by his school be of the highest quality, that each student becomes a catalyst for change. It is therefore important to keep the size small, and to emphasize quality over quantity. This has been effective; Ashesi graduates are highly sought after, with a 100% employment rate following graduation (Ashesi, 2010).

**Connection to Original Research Question:**

While limiting organizational size does not relate directly to the original research question, organizational size may be an important factor in the success of development or social change organizations. Here, the inherent tension is that development projects are under intense pressure to scale up, and at the same time, practitioners such as Bahia Street and Ashesi University
recognize the value in keeping projects small. Further research regarding how to reconcile this
tension would be beneficial to the field.

**Tension Between Funder’s Expectations vs. the Realities of Social Change and Development Work:**

Many organizations cited a tension between their funders and the reality of their “on the
ground projects” and results. Bahia Street, for example, aims to be nimble and responsive to the
needs of the community with which they partner. However, as Nancy Bacon stated, “We struggle
with the fact that the funding mechanism is not aligned [with] being nimble. The funding
mechanism is to have five year strategic plans and not be nimble. And so we have a conflict there”
(N. Bacon, Personal Communication, March 22, 2010). Jeannie Berwick of the One Equal Heart
Foundation, echoes this sentiment, stating that she “has had experience with donors walking away
because they say that, “This isn’t making progress in the way [they] want it to” (J. Berwick, Personal
Communication, April 28, 2010).

Moving beyond this potential conflict, however, Bahia Street has worked to educate some
of their potential and current donors about the realities of, and realistic timeframes for, the work
they do. This has been a successful strategy for maintaining compatibility between their funding
stream true and their mission and organizational priorities, and not imposing undesired or
unnecessary project expectations on their partners (which would completely counter their
organizational philosophy).

Alex Hannant of LEAD International cited similar tensions. “The thinking of donor
organizations is that a lot of the development is about technocratic fixes. It is not about change for
the people, so it doesn’t fit into their (the donor organizations) development discourse in many
respects” (A. Hannant, Personal Communication, April 15, 2010).

One interviewee eloquently summarized this tension as follows:
Regarding the challenge of philanthropy is that they [funders] are so keen to have meaurables and ... brings timeframe to their projects that is accelerated beyond what is reasonable for the countries where they are invested in...The talent they attract is used to getting results fast they are from corporate environments and expect deliverables in a swift and appreciable period of time...You try to explain to a foundation the idea of long-term impact. There [are] organizations like [name omitted] which don’t always walk their talk about understanding about what long term change looks like. Always fixated on an eighteen month cycle...I don’t think they’re designed to build long-term success. (name kept confidential, Personal Communication, March 26, 2010).

This individual also commented that foundations and other funding sources will rarely finance operating costs, which makes the daily operations of social change work often difficult to fund. As a result, this can also at times make the work of social change and development complicated.

**Connection to Original Research Question:**

The inherent struggle between funders and practitioners also relates strongly to gracious space and collaborative social change. While such a broad statement lies outside the scope of this study, one could argue that the more collaborative, the more inclusive, the stronger an integration of gracious space into an organizational culture, the less tension there would be between funders and practitioners. This is because, as in the case of Bahia Street, the development or social change relationship or partnership would be viewed in terms of equality, in terms of true collaboration and partnership, and a funding relationship would not be entered into without equal agreement by both partners, especially in the case of the partner in country. With Bahia Street, for example, they do not accept funding that would place an unfair, unwanted or impractical burden on their partners in Brazil. Preventing “mission creep” is a common issue in the non-profit world, but this concept
goes even farther, it is about not imposing outside ideas regarding what might be the “best solution” for development and social change partners. This topic is addressed extensively by Willson (2007, 2009), Bacon (2009) and Fowler (2000). Fowler emphasizes that for a development relationship to be a true partnership, it must follow the spirit of a partnership “within which neither party should accept other relational conditions that influence partnership (i.e. northern NGDOs accepting funding which imposes new or revised conditions for partners without prior consent of the partner)” (p. 600).

**No Silver Bullet or Panacea:**

It was clear throughout the interviews conducted that there is no “single solution,” and that each organization has unique strengths and approaches which enable their work. Each organization is effective in their own way. This diversity of approaches and the vast differences from one organization to the other supports the theory that given the high levels of diversity and complexity, there is no “silver bullet” which will solve the issues which are being focused on my social change and development organizations.

Echoing this statement, Adelman (2001) discusses the “three fallacies” of international development, one of which is that there is no one underlying cause for underdevelopment. Adelman states that “the fundamental reason for the many sudden changes in...development economics has been the (inherently misguided) search for a single-cause, and hence a single-remedy, theory of development...the process of economic development is highly nonlinear and multifaceted” (p. 1). Adelman urges a more complex, nuanced view of development economics, one which is inclusive of social, cultural, political, economic and other factors.

Eyben (2006) offers an explanation that may explain the continual search for a “one size fits all” solution which is broadly applicable across many diverse circumstances. Due to the influence of an economic perspective, and a prevalence of positivism in development, as well as they overlay of
the private sector and capitalist schemes being applied to development, there is a disconnect between the desire for fast, reliable, effective results, to “appear infallible.” Yet these assumptions do not match the complexities of international development work. Eyben states that “the attachment to single solutions seriously limits learning within the organization and the ability of partners to share ideas and learn together” (p. 36). In light of this, Eyben urges development agencies to become “learning organizations” which are more open to alternative viewpoints, more holistic in approach, and conducive to greater levels of collaboration (p. 36).

Arguably, the belief, and the corresponding actions taken as a result of the belief that a “silver bullet” solution exists is one of the greatest hurdles, explaining the many failures of social change and development projects to date. Most organizations interviewed, 73% (11 out of 15 total) do not replicate their work, and almost all of those who do replicate are cognizant of the challenges inherent in replication efforts, and make diligent and comprehensive efforts to tailor projects (to local culture, norms, needs, etc.) such that replication becomes viable.

Margaret Willson stated during her interview that “Replication is a panacea...projects need to remain small” (M. Willson, Personal Communication, March 25, 2010). Willson has also written extensively on this subject, stating recently in an article about the locally-originated, locally-driven and locally-managed NGO Bahia Street, that “the power and relevance of this NGO lie in the fact that it has been designed and developed by local people in response to a specific need in a specific place” (Willson, 2009, p.70). She also states that many education and development projects can threaten local cultural values, imposing Western ideas on the local community. She states that the challenge of replication is that “it assumes the world is homogenous...and can actually work to destroy a community that previously functioned in a balanced manner” (Willson, 2009, p.70). Willson does, however, differentiate between replication and sharing a successful model or
program design. Learning from past development work is productive; franchising and imposing at outside solutions can be problematic.

**Connection to Original Research Question:**

Relating the panacea effect back to the original research question, it is important to note that gracious space and collaborative social change is also not a panacea. However, gracious space has strong potential as the ideal vehicle for seeking comprehensive, multifaceted strategies.

**A Quantitative Approach:**

**Operationalizing Interview Data to Study Gracious Space and Collaborative Social Change**

The coding scheme used in this study was used to operationalize the data collected during the interview process. The results of the study did indicate an association between all three variables: organizational success, collaborative social change and gracious space (again, in terms of “inviting the stranger,” and “learning in public”). This analysis resulted in the following data:

- 87% of the organizations were coded at three or greater (on a scale of zero to five, with zero being the lowest, and five being the highest level) for all three constructs 1) collaborative social change and 2) the two aspects of gracious space: “invite the stranger” and “learn in public”

- Out of fifteen organizations, two organizations were coded at a very low level for both gracious space and collaborative social change. Even with these organizations kept in the data set, the overall average was 3.8. Removing these two outliers results in a slightly higher overall average of 4.1.

- Analysis indicated a strong association between collaborative social change and the two elements of gracious space: “invite the stranger,” and “learn in public.”
The null hypotheses were:

- \( H_{01} \): There is no association between collaborative social change and “invite the stranger”
- \( H_{02} \): There is no association between collaborative social change and “learn in public”
- \( H_{03} \): There is no association between “invite the stranger” and “learn in public”

Setting \( \alpha \) (alpha level) = 0.05 and identifying the degree of freedom as equal 13, we can then calculate the minimum correlation coefficient \( r \) needed to confidently establish \( p < 0.05 \). This minimum correlation coefficient was \( r = 0.514 \) which is \( > \) the \( r \) values of .94, .86 and .87. Therefore \( p < 0.05 \), indicating that these results are statistically significant.
Data for all fifteen organizations is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Collaborative Social Change</th>
<th>&quot;Invite the Stranger&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;Learn in Public&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ave.</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

While these numbers *in no way establish causality* between the three constructs (collaborative social change, gracious space, and organizational success), the identification of a strong association between the three constructs warrants further attention as it does illustrate a relationship among the three constructs. While this association may show promise, it is also important to stress the high level of complexity inherent in social change and development work. Further details regarding the coding system used are provided in Appendix D.
Chapter 5 – Conclusions

Summary:

This study was focused on studying collaborative social change and gracious space within social change and development organizations which serve vulnerable populations. Methodology involved interviews with key stakeholders from fifteen social change and development organizations. Throughout the course of the study, the researcher was able to not only establish an association between collaborative social change and gracious space, but also to make additional observations, and to recognize various emergent themes and patterns discovered throughout the interview process.

Limitations of the Study:

There were limitations to this study. As previously stated, it was a pilot study, and did not attempt to establish causality between the constructs of collaborative social change, gracious space and organizational success. Rather, the study focused on whether any association between these variables might exist. The study was also limited by a relatively small sample size (n), interviewing only fifteen organizations. Furthermore, the methodology was heavily reliant on qualitative vs. quantitative research methodology.

Another limitation of this study involved difficulty in measuring organizational success. One method which may prove more effective in measuring organizational success is the “Efforts to Outcomes” software system produced by Social Solutions. This software claims to “clarify with precision what factors and efforts [drive] outcomes” (Customer Case Study, 2010, Efforts to Outcomes, Para. 1). It allows organizations to track specific indicators and how these certain factors affect success.

Measuring and evaluating gracious space (“invite the stranger” and “learn in public”) based on one, sixty minute interview and twelve questions was also challenging. A more in-depth case
study would better accomplish an accurate, thorough analysis of whether an organization embraces and implements gracious space as part of their culture.

**Suggestions for Future Investigation:**

Further research is recommended in order to continue the work of this project. In the future, a continuation of such a study should strive to be more focused and precise in scope. Attempting to examine three variables, and using one interview based on twelve questions, and then attempting to extrapolate needed data and coding information was challenging. Future investigation should focus on only one variable at a time. Furthermore, studying *either* social change OR development organizations would make the research design more clear. Studying either one or the other kind of organization would make the research study, methodology and possible results more clear and well-defined. It would also allow deeper analysis of each of the organizations, obtaining a more thorough, complete understanding.

Shadowing, secondary interviews and further research regarding each organization’s background history and further analysis would also be beneficial. In the future, a series of at least three interviews with each key stakeholder would be beneficial. An in-depth case study of the organizations which coded the highest for collaboration and gracious space is recommended. These methods would again provide a more comprehensive overview of, and insight into, each organization, and how collaborative social change and gracious space are associated with organizational success.

The connection among organizational values, collaborative social change and gracious space also warrants further study. Arts Corps ranked second in terms of gracious space and collaborative social change, and was the most emphatic about their organizational values. This relationship may be worthy of further investigation. Future research could explore any possible
associations between collaborative social change, gracious space, and the existence and operationalization of, an organization’s values.

Finally, it would be interested to study if and how gracious space affects employee motivation and performance.

**Implications of the Study:**

Broadly speaking, this study has implications for the fields of social change and development. While it does not prove the efficacy and success of these concepts for organizational structure, philosophy and culture, the study results, and the association between “collaborative social change” and “gracious space,” suggest that these approaches to social change and development are worthy of consideration and possible implementation by practitioners in the field. Gracious space has been useful to organizations either to 1) change an organization’s culture or 2) provide a positive framework within which to navigate a transition or implement change (K. Ruder, Personal Communication, May 5, 2010).

Also, the high prevalence of coded levels of collaborative social change and gracious space in the fifteen successful organizations studied serves to confirm the success and efficacy of this model and to provide evidence that it may be a useful model to inform the operations of other social change and development organizations.

Expanding even further to fields of organizational structure, leadership and management studies, and philosophies of social change movements and development management, a further implication is that “collaborative social change” and “gracious space” offer both a successful, viable model (collaborative social change) and an approach to organizational culture (gracious space) which merits strong consideration as beneficial, sustainable options.
Overall Conclusions:

Diagram 6 (below):

**Diagram 6 (below):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODIFIED LOGIC MODEL: GRACIOUS SPACE, COLLABORATIVE SOCIAL CHANGE - POTENTIAL FOR POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highly complex, unpredictable environment and organizational landscape</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborative Social Change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gracious Space</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adam Kahane, &quot;reconcile love with power&quot;</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heifetz &quot;adaptive change&quot;</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toolkit/ CATALYSTS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unprecedented solutions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vulnerable populations attain security (i.e. move out of poverty, gain independence and self-reliance)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stronger, more successful organizations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL CHANGE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authentic Collaboration</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**<strong>NOTE: Not a panacea!</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4 (below): Related Definitions**

| Collaborative Social Change | "Social change that occurs through the shared labor of two or more entities working in a relationship of equality, leveraging their unique resources, experiences, skills, or ideas to yield an outcome that significantly impacts society" (Bacon, 2009) |
| Gracious Space | "A spirit and setting where we invite the stranger and learn in public" (Hughes, et. al. 2004) |
| Adam Kahane’s concept: "Reconcile love with power" | Kahane uses Paul Tillich’s definitions of love and power: Love - the drive towards the unity of the separated. Power - the drive of everything living to realize itself, with increasing intensity and extensity. "We must exercise both love (the drive to unity) and power (the drive to self-realization). If we choose either love or power, we will get stuck in re-creating existing realities, or worse. If we want to create new and better realities - at home, at work, in our communities, in the world - we need to learn how to integrate our love and our power" (Kahane, 2010) |
| Ronald Heifetz "Adaptive change" | Necessary when technical solutions are not available, a kind of leadership that induces learning even when the leader does not have a solution in mind, a reframing of values and a realignment of expectations and approach may be necessary (Heifetz, 2001) |

Diagram 6 above presents some possible lessons to be learned from this study. A combination of collaborative social change as applied to organizational policy and structure and gracious space applied to the practice, or culture, of an organization, has potential to contribute to organizational success in the future. These concepts provide a promising approach for the future of social change and development work. The power of collaborative social change is that it acknowledges the expertise and wisdom of local partners. It is based on a relationship of equality, vs. outside-imposed solutions. Similarly, the strength of gracious space lies in collective knowledge, of inviting
a wide variety of diverse voices to the decision-making table, of fostering an open, supportive environment and culture where it is acceptable to take positive risks, and to admit you do not have the answer, but that it may be possible to find one collectively.

This pictorial is not offered as a panacea, but rather as a model or tool for analyzing the various factors at play. For example, the qualitative interviews of this study indicated a strong emphasis on organizational values and the importance of organizational leadership. However, without further analysis, it is impossible to isolate which inputs shape what results (i.e. does collaborative social change and gracious space perpetuate leadership and a focus on organizational values, or vice versa? Is it more likely an amalgamation of all four inputs?).

This “take-away” schematic suggests that gracious space and collaborative social change hold potential as tools in fostering a positive, effective workplace culture and a collaborative approach to partnerships which is based on equality and the mutual sharing of power. Given today’s complex, fast-paced environment, new (and at times uncomfortable) approaches are necessary. It is recommended that more social change and development organizations explore collaborative social change and gracious space and consider whether these concepts might make sense for their organizations.

**Specific Conclusions from Interviews:**

In addition, the interview research process yielded numerous key themes, all of which have “take-away” knowledge which may apply to other development and social change projects:

- **Values: Importance of Organizational Values**
  - Consider organizational values. Are they clearly defined? Are they well understood, internalized and practiced?
• The Importance of Leadership
  o Leadership is key to organizational success. In the context of this study, leadership is especially important as related to fostering gracious space and collaborative social change. Due to the high complexity of international development and social change work, leadership should include any necessary adaptive change (Heifetz, 2001).

• Collaboration: The Long-term Benefits and Buy-In of Inclusive Decision Making
  o Most of the organizations interviewed emphasized the value of inclusive, collaborative decision making. The main reason was increased buy-in and investment in organizational decisions, direction and projects. Due to this increased investment, it is also hypothesized that collaborative decision making lessens the “principal agent” dilemma common in employer-employee relationships.

• Locally-led Development
  o Extensive evidence was cited by interviewees regarding the value of locally-led development projects. Project Ethiopia, the One Equal Heart Foundation and Bahia Street especially emphasized this approach. In Appendix E, Fowler provides useful guidelines for organizations wishing to follow locally-led development structures.

• Technology: Key Role in Communication
  o This point is fairly straightforward. Organizations are advised to facilitate communication however possible and to invest in and research new avenues for communication to further facilitate collaboration.
- **Keeping Projects Small and Manageable**
  
  o As demonstrated by Bahia Street and Ashesi University, it is often beneficial to limit the size of development projects. Replication plans should be approached with caution, and care must be taken to adapt best practices and successful models to the local context of culture, norms, politics, geography and other factors. This is challenging due to a prevalent pressure in the field of international development to constantly “scale up.”

- **Tensions in Social Change & Development Work**
  
  o Since many of the organizations interviewed discussed tensions related to funding and donor expectations, one possible area for further research or attention would be the founding of an educational and training organization about donor awareness, building better, more realistic donor and grantee relationships. Taking a leadership role in this area, Bahia Street has not only consistently made a point of not accepting funding which puts their partners in an unreasonable position, or imposes on them expected outcomes which do not make sense, or that is not feasible for them, and they have also worked to educate other NGOs on locally-focused, non “outside-imposed” funding mechanisms and outcome expectations. Other organizations facing similar challenges might also consider donor outreach programs to facilitate communication and understanding between funding mechanisms (foundations, private donors, etc.). Such outreach has potential to effect positive change in improving the relationships between funders and grantees and to facilitate more realistic expectations.
• No Silver Bullet or Panacea
  
  o Per Adelman (2001), there is no “one size fits all” or single factor solution to development issues. Development and social change work is inherently complex and multifaceted, and demands holistic, macro-level, comprehensive, and nimble approaches to global issues. It is also prudent to be aware and thoughtful should one regress and seek the allure of a (non-existent) development panacea.

  These qualitative themes were further supported by quantitative coding analysis, which showed that 87% of the successful organizations interviewed demonstrated high levels of collaborative social change and gracious space, as well as a strong association between the two concepts.

  Social change and development work is highly complex, and can even seem overwhelming. However, as Gannon Gillespie of Tostan International said, “it does not have to seem impossible” (G. Gillespie, Personal Communication, March 3, 2010). Hopefully, the innovative tools and strategies of today can provide insight into the answers of tomorrow.
References:


Center for Ethical Leadership. (2010). The Impact of Gracious Space in Communities and Organizations: Results of an Evidence-Based Research Project. Seattle, WA: Leinaweaver, J. and Hughes, P.


Appendix A: Interview Guide

1. Size of organization (if not possible to determine from organization’s website and materials):
   - Number of employees? Volunteers?
   - Annual budget?
   - How many locations?
   - Number of individuals served per year?

2. Can you tell me about the origins of your organization?

3. How does a typical project within the organization work?

4. Can you tell me about your organizational structure?

5. How does communication with your location partners work? Does this system seem to work well?

6. In what ways do you work with local people?

7. Do you make a distinction between short-term and long-term outcomes?

8. How are decisions made?

9. How do you resolve conflict? (In the dynamics of process vs. outcome, which gets priority when there is a conflict?)

10. How are you funded?

11. What would you like to be accomplished with your project?

12. Is your project replicated (implemented in other countries)?
   a. Where?
   b. Is there a standard procedure for scaling? What is it?
   c. In your opinion, how is this working out?
Appendix B: Bahia Street Values

1. Do what you know, let locals initiate, and begin with a local partner.

2. Learn to listen.

3. Reject any first idea as false.

4. Replace the concept of charity with notions of collective survival.

5. Leave self‐respect intact.

6. Apply principles of change to your own organization first.

7. Limit size and diversify funding.

8. Give credibility to practical and cultural expertise of those with whom you are working.

9. Think process.

10. Stay attuned to political implications.

11. Because a project becomes a community, it cannot be replicated. Only models can.

12. Grow your power in your home community, step away from it within the project community
Appendix C: Global Health Leadership Program Criteria for Sustainable Partnerships*

1. By invitation: The UW/GHLP was invited to participate in the initiative, based on the interests and articulated needs of in-country partners. Such impetus enhances mutual accountability, likelihood of success, and sustainability. The strong relationship the PLP has with its Fellows made this ambitious initiative possible.

2. True partnership: Our partners commit staff time and money to the project, as does the GHLP, making it truly collaborative and ensuring a strong sense of shared ownership. The strong relationships fostered by the GHLP training program at UW reinforce this sense of common purpose.

3. Mutual Accountability: Shared ownership naturally leads to mutual accountability.

4. New connections: The GHLP-FMOH initiative is connecting state and federal ministries of health in Sudan, and by carefully selecting training partners it is also connecting the public and NGO sectors.

5. Training design promotes knowledge transfer and sustainability: The partners jointly designed the Blue Nile State training as a pilot for district-level training for all states in Sudan. The curriculum integrates theoretical leadership concepts with practical application, leading to stronger knowledge transfer. The three-part design (two trainings with mentored projects between) will deepen relationships among trainers, participants, and mentors.

6. Project design builds capacity through involvement: GHLP Fellows and their in-country colleagues contributed to the original vision of the project, helped design the training, and led training sessions. Their involvement further strengthened FMOH’s training and leadership capacity. Because the PLP network links Fellows in various strategic organizations in Sudan’s health system, the training also strengthened relationships that will enhance policy development and implementation.

*This particular list refers to Sudan relationship
Appendix D: Details Regarding the Coding System

Table 4 (above): Excerpt from Interview Coding Taxonomy - Grounded Research Analysis.

Table 5 (above): Overview Table Indicating How the Constructs Were Coded for Bahia Street.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Statements Justifying the Code:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of employees? Volunteers?</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>“Rita and Margaret are co-founders, co-directors, and run this office [as] co-leaders. We don’t have a hierarchy within the office. Organizational structure is like a wheel with the center being the Bahia Street Center and then coming off of it is our office here and the Bahia Street Trust in England. (It is a circle structure, vs. a hierarchical pyramid structure.)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget?</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>“We email using Google translator so can write in Portuguese, Skype, calls, visits. We are trying more and more ways to keep constant communication going on.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many locations?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Frames answer entirely in terms of Rita, their local Brazilian partner, and what she does, not what the outside, US partners might do. “One of the things Bahia Street always tries to do is be very nimble because things are always changing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of individuals served per year</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>“Emphasizes negotiation when conflict might occur, “Negotiation based on trust and partnership, this is healthy and better than a CEO saying ‘this is how it is going to work.'”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 (above): Examples of Key Statements and Assigned Coding Value
Appendix E: Allen Fowler’s (2000) Recommendations for Creating Development Relationships Which are True Partnerships

1. Accept joint responsibility for achieving goals.

2. Partnership means long term involvement.

3. Partnership requires defined mutual roles and responsibilities – as covenants not contracts.

4. Partnership must have trust, respect, integrity, accountability and equality.

5. Requires an acceptance of the principle that a local organization has the right to set the final agenda for its own work.

6. Partnership must not lead to a situation where the link between an organization’s constituency and leadership is weakened.

7. When negotiating relations or contributions from outside the ‘partnership,’ the spirit and letter of existing partnerships must be taken into account and respected.

8. Within a partnership, neither party should accept other relational conditions that influence partnership (i.e. northern NGDOs accepting funding which imposes new or revised conditions for partners without prior consent of the partner).

9. Partnerships should not alter identity, vision and values of any of the organizations.

10. Underlying assumption of partnership work is that organizations involved will independently become more competent in reaching their goals beyond this specific relationship.