

The Starfish Community
*“Ordinary People Making an
Extraordinary Difference”*



CONCEPT DOCUMENT
August 2009

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Executive Summary

The world, as you know it, will not exist in 10 years. The top 10 jobs of 2020, do not even exist today. By 2010 technical knowledge will be doubling every 72 hours. Everything is changing; people, information, technology, communications, economies, even the global climate. The world is shrinking, challenges and opportunities are growing, and change is accelerating. Where are we going? What does this mean? One thing is for sure, life, as you know it, will never be the same.

A global shift is occurring in communications, information sharing, and social networking. This shift is leading to profound changes in how we live, learn, and solve problems. In order to manage an overflow of information, we have struggled for years to build a bigger database with more information that we could access at a faster rate. Now, we have begun to realize that people are the “database” and social networks are the “software” to access that database.

The Starfish Community Concept Document has been written to share a little about this global shift and what it could mean to the hundreds of millions of people that live in abject poverty and need. It will also help us, as caring individuals, understand a new way to make an extraordinary difference. Changes in technology and information sharing now enable us to operate in a more unified fashion. Many people working together make the job light. Working together is the key. We all need a place to plug in, preferably, a place we can connect with our friends. That is what this document is all about.

This document sets the stage by introducing our world of accelerating change. By looking at a few key domains of change, we begin to understand the scope and depth of our current challenges and future opportunities. Some will resign themselves to routines and rituals to escape the overload, others will charge forward, at home in the chaos. Purpose and meaning will provide a beacon for all. We have all been given a gift that we can employ to help others. Our purpose at Humanitarian International Services Group (HISG) is to provide a platform where we can all work together and use our gifts to help those in need. We specialize in connecting resources to needs.

In order to work together more effectively, we must understand how emerging social systems have increased our ability to interact. We do this by exploring three types of social interaction concepts including the rise of social networking, decentralized starfish-like organizations, and mass movements. By combining and leveraging the attributes of each, we hope to catalyze, support, empower, and influence the emergence and establishment of a decentralized starfish-like mass movement that will enable ordinary people to make an extraordinary difference.

To support this outcome, HISG is using the internet and social networking concepts to evolve our own organization from a centralized hierarchical infrastructure to a decentralized starfish-like network. Our hope is to identify and connect our global “tribe” who rally to the common cause of liberating the poor.

The HISG transformation is occurring at many levels from our operational structure to knitting of the network. Each change is designed to support the overall Starfish Community through establishment of common internet-based platforms for increased communications, information sharing, and resourcing to creating a common picture that we can all use to self-synchronize our efforts relative to community development and disaster response operations. Relief and development models have been designed so that a comprehensive range of private sector practitioners can all work together to achieve sustainable and transformation change at the community level. Training and best practices ensure success.

Performance metrics and an outcomes based approach ensure our partnering is not just talk but actually makes a difference.

In the final section, we provide step-by-step guidelines (with flowchart) for anyone interested in participating in the Starfish Community. There are no fees, no legal agreements, and no papers to sign. The Starfish Community is about friends working together to help the less fortunate. Participation is as easy as going to www.StarfishCommunity.net and learning about the community. The more you learn the more opportunities there are to get involved. A contact list of HISG members has been provided at the end of this document. Feel free to give us a call if you have any questions or want more information about how to plug in and get started today.

The Starfish Community is about ordinary people, like you and me, making an extraordinary difference in the lives of the poor and needy. Join the Starfish Community today, and bring your friends!



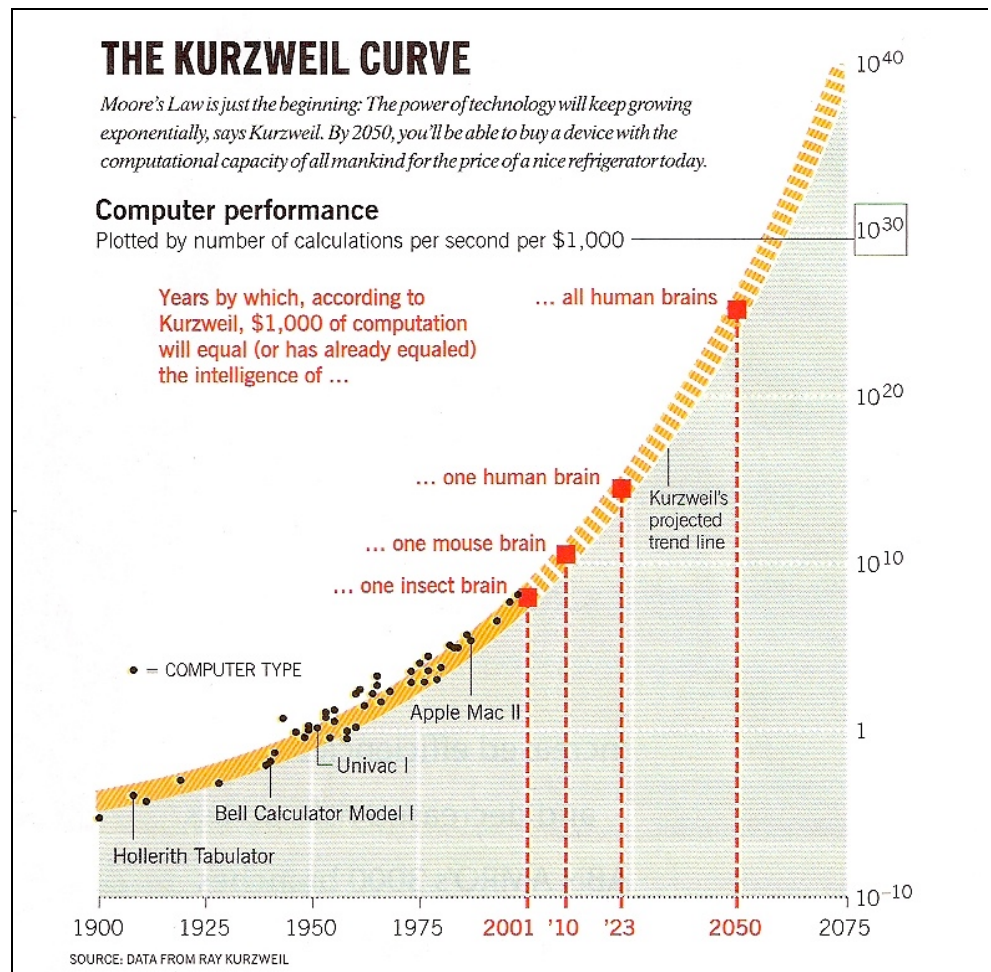
A World of Accelerating Change

Where are we now?

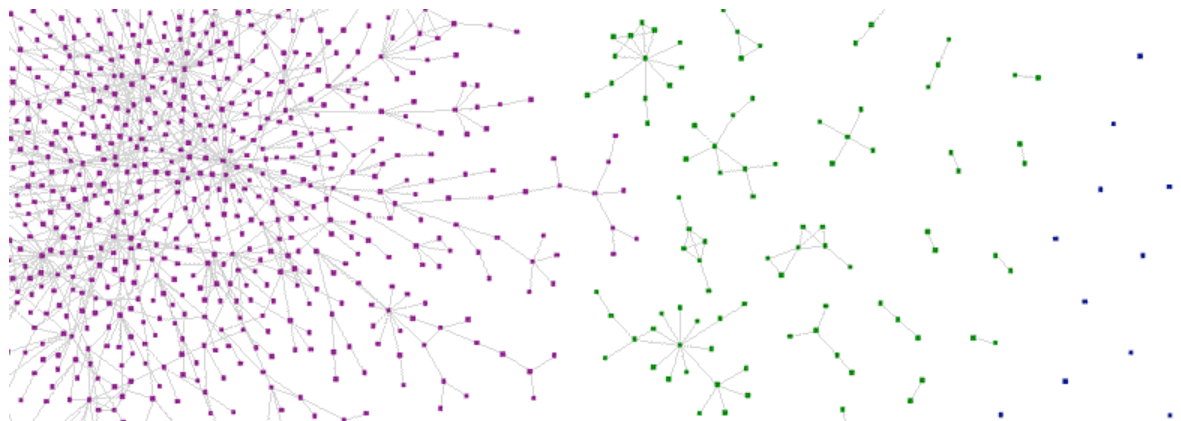
*Come gather 'round people wherever you roam
And admit that the waters around you have grown
And accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone.
If your time to you is worth savin'
Then you better start swimmin'
Or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'.
Bob Dylan*

We are living in an age of accelerating change. There is a global **acceleration of knowledge** that is unbridled by wisdom. In the late 90's we were told that knowledge on the face of the earth was doubling every eighteen months. A recent internet video states that by the year 2010, technical knowledge will be doubling every 72 hours! I think its obvious to all that the rate of change is escalating. How do we live in these times of change? One thing is for sure; life, as we know it, will never be the same.

Change is accelerating, but what does that mean? Yes, knowledge is increasing. But there are a lot of other things that are accelerating as well. **There is acceleration in communications.** In less than thirty years we have gone from the introduction of the cell phone to 3.3 billion subscriptions. In less than twenty years, the Internet has gone from commercial introduction to 1.5 billion users. These innovations have drastically changed the way we communicate and share information on a daily basis ...globally.



There is acceleration in social networking. A social network is a social structure made of nodes (which are generally individuals or organizations) that are tied by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as values, visions, ideas, financial exchange, friendship, kinship, dislike, conflict or trade. The resulting graph-based structures are often very complex as shown below.

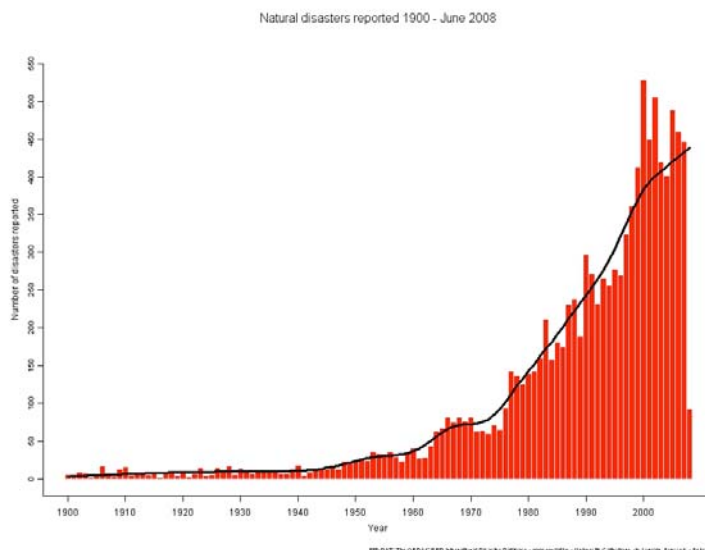


Social networks are the current rage of the Internet. With the Internet now providing the ideal platform for networking, the top three social networking sites (MySpace, Facebook, and Reunion) have grown to over 220 million users with over 500,000 new accounts being added daily.

Increased connectivity is accelerating globalization resulting in a flat and decentralized world. As Thomas Friedman writes, in “The World is Flat”, globalization is leveling the playing field, in terms of commerce, to the point where all competitors have an equal opportunity. A one-man shop in India can effectively compete for business against a large corporation in America. Ori Brafman, in “The Starfish and the Spider”, adds that the Internet is now enabling organizations and networks to decentralize their operations through distributive networks. These decentralized networks can create dis-economies of scale that can disrupt whole industries. A shy engineer named Craig Newmark never dreamed that the introduction of his website called Craig’s List could single handedly nearly bankrupt the entire newspaper industry.

There is acceleration in natural disasters resulting in chaos and disruptions to social structures. In the last 4 years, we have experienced four natural disasters with some of the greatest loss of human life in history. They include the 2004 Asian Tsunami (225,000+ dead), the 2005 Pakistan Earthquake (80,000+ dead), the 2008 Nargis Cyclone (100,000+ dead), and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake (80,000+ dead).

As of 2006, there were over 20 million refugees in the world. In addition, there are currently reported to be over 25 million Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), refugees within their own country, with 70-80% being



women and children. The Sichuan earthquake alone added another 3+ million IDPs to the list. Most are still living in tents this winter (2008-2009).

Presently, there are an estimated 130+ million orphans in the world with less than 400,000 being adopted on an annual basis. These numbers appear to be escalating out of control. The years 2007–2008 saw dramatic rises in world food price, bringing a state of global crisis and causing political and economical instability and social unrest in both poor and developed nations. Over 1.1 billion people live in extreme poverty earning less than \$1 USD per day and over half the population of planet earth live on less than \$2.50 USD per day.

The Starfish Community is Taking Action

A growing number of individuals and organizations are becoming increasingly aware of the magnitude of these changes. But what will they do about it? “What can I do?” you may ask. “I’m just one person.” The answer is – a lot! You can make a big difference! If each one of us was to do something, ...anything, and we all worked together, we could have an extraordinary impact! And that is precisely what the Starfish Community is attempting to do; help ordinary people make an extraordinary difference in the lives of the poor and needy people we serve in over 80 nations. That is what this concept paper is all about. Emerging technologies and societal trends are setting the stage for a new way of impacting the world. We are now able to effectively network people and resources across a wide range of private sector skills with participants from businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGO), faith-based and civic groups and academic institutions.

The Starfish Community is using the Internet and social networking concepts to evolve a decentralized starfish-like network. Simultaneously, we are working to understand the causal factors and principles that impact the emergence of mass movements in order to better influence the direction and outcomes of such a movement.

Our ultimate goal is to combine and leverage the attributes of social networking, decentralized starfish networks, and those of an emerging mass movement. By doing so, we hope to catalyze, support, empower, and influence the establishment of a decentralized starfish-like mass movement that will enable ordinary people to make an extraordinary difference on a daily basis!

A Starfish Mass Movement

Where are we going?

In some ways, the Starfish Community can be explained as a connector of networks. Relational networks of the community encompass nearly every nation of the world and a significant number of the more than 12,000 ethno-linguistic people groups. As a connector, the community mobilizes resources across the whole private sector including businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith-based and civic groups, and academic institutions. Relief and development models provide the framework for identifying and mobilizing 26 different categories of subject matter expert skill sets. Expanding social networks represent a broad range of private sector skill sets and participants from around the world. The growing question is, “How do we optimize these networks and connections to make a bigger difference?”

With this in mind, understanding the interactive dynamics of large social networks will help us to interact more effectively and to accomplish more working together. The purpose of this section is to explore three significant types of social network concepts including:

- The Rise of Social Networking
- The Decentralized Starfish Network
- The Nature of Mass Movements

Following a review of these concepts, we will explore a convergence of their attributes and characteristics from an operational perspective with the intent to leverage aspects of each for greater impact. By doing so, we hope to catalyze, support, empower, and influence the establishment of a decentralized starfish mass movement.

This section will be focused on addressing concepts. Practical application of these concepts relative to specific community operations will be addressed in a later section.

The Rise of Social Networking

Why do people join a social network? Eric Hoffer, in “The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements” states that community and equality are the passion of the masses. For some its about business, for others its about sharing a common cause, but for most, it is simply about belonging and equality.

Research in a number of academic fields has shown that social networks operate on many levels, from families up to the level of nations, and play a critical role in determining the way problems are solved, organizations are run, and the degree to which individuals succeed in achieving their goals.

In its simplest form, a social network is a map of all relevant ties between the nodes being studied. The network can also be used to determine the social capital of individual actors. These concepts are often displayed in a social network diagram, where nodes are the points and ties are the lines.

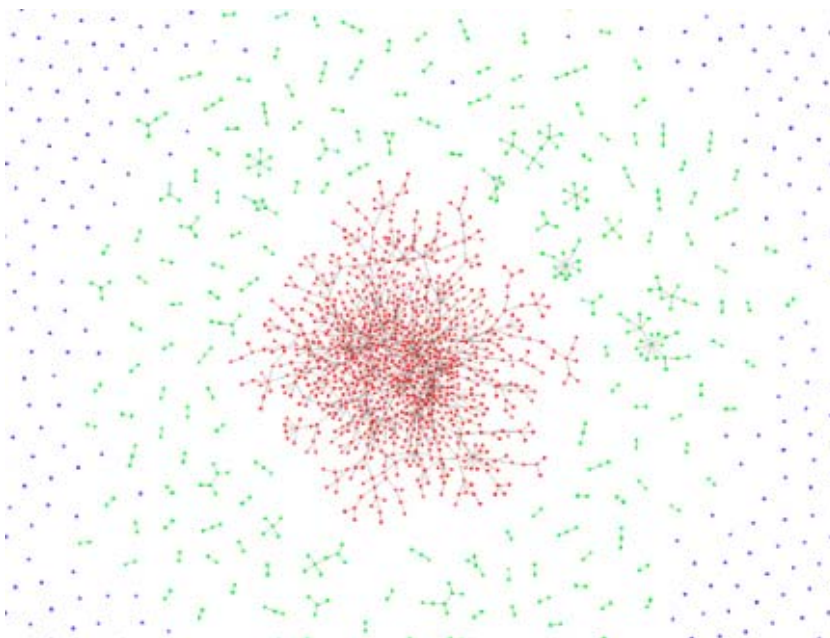
Connecting the Community

Communities have various levels of belonging. Lets explore online communities (OLC), since the Internet represents the prime social networking platform. Most OLCs consist of **three social rings** -- a densely connected core in the center, loosely connected fragments in the second ring, and an outer ring of disconnected nodes, commonly known as lurkers.

In this diagram, we see three distinct types of people in our community -- designated by blue, green and red nodes. The proportion of nodes in each ring in this overall population is fairly typical of online communities -- the isolates [lurkers] outnumber the highly-connected.

The outer orbit in the network above contains the blue nodes. They have been attracted to the OLC, but have not connected yet. This group is the most likely to leave the OLC or remain passive members with little or no contribution to the community.

Lurkers in online communities are often more than 60% of the group!



Map of an online social networking community

The green nodes have a few connections -- usually with prior acquaintances. They are not connected to the larger community -- no sense of belonging yet. The small clusters of friendships amongst the greens can be maintained by other media and do not need a particular OLC to survive. They are also likely to leave or become passive and will likely do so in unison.

The inner core of the community is composed of red nodes. They are very involved and have formed a connected cluster. The leaders of the OLC are embedded in the core. The core members will stay and build the community. Unfortunately they are in the minority. The core nodes are usually less than 20% of most online groups. Although small, they are a powerful force of attraction. It is the core that is committed and loyal to the OLC and will work on making it a success. They see a win-win for themselves and the group -- better connectivity will help the individual and the group simultaneously.

Sustaining a Social Network

Online communities and social networks are often conceived and developed by businesses and organizations that focus on: "How can we use the online community to benefit us?" They fail at community development by not creating a strategy that makes sure their target audience is gaining a positive experience and practical benefits from participating in the community. It is amazing how organizations build online social networks but ignore the needs of the very people they are trying to attract and influence. Its no surprise, then, when large chunks of their target group leave when the "next big thing" comes around: SixDegrees → Friendster → Orkut → MySpace → Facebook → Next? To build a vibrant and growing network, you need to support natural human behavior, not work against it.

Connections are key in online social networks -- people are loyal to what they are connected to and what provides them benefits. People stick with established ties they trust. Interacting with those we know and trust brings a sense of warmth and belonging to the virtual communities we visit via our computer screens. Yet, we are open to meeting new people -- as long as we are introduced by those we

trust. An established community, with dense interconnectivity, not only keeps existing members happy, but is also a large magnet for contacts of current members -- everyone wants to be connected and included in vibrant communities that provide benefits to members!

Building Connections

Networks and communities are built on connections. Better connections usually provide better opportunities. But, what are better connections, and how do they lead to more effective and productive networks and communities? How do we build connected networks that create, and take advantage of, opportunities in their region or marketplace? How does success emerge from the complex interactions within networks?

This section investigates building sustainable communities through improving their connectivity – internally and externally – using network ties to create economic opportunities. Improved connectivity is created through an interactive process of knowing the network and knitting the network. Knowing the network involves mapping the network. There are a host of social network tools available to accomplish this objective. Information can be found at www.orgnet.com from which much of the information in this section was gathered.

A vibrant community network is generally built or “knit” in four phases, each with its own distinct topology. Each phase builds a more adaptive and resilient network structure than the prior phase. Network mapping can be used to track progress through these four stages.

1) Scattered Fragments - Experience shows that most communities start as small emergent clusters organized around common interests or goals. Usually these clusters are isolated from each other. They are very small groups of 1-5 people or organizations that have connected out of necessity. If these fragments do not organize further, the community structure remains weak and under-producing. Begin weaving the network by asking questions:



- From whom do you get new ideas that benefit your work?
- From whom do you access expertise that improves your operations?
- With whom do you collaborate?

Network weaving can be accomplished a number of different ways. (7 is Best, 1 is Least)

7. Introducing A and B in person and offering a collaboration opportunity to get A and B started in a successful partnership
6. Introducing A and B in person and contacting A and B afterward to nurture the connection
5. Introducing A and B in person
4. Doing a conference call introduction of A and B
3. Doing an email introduction of A and B
2. Suggesting to A that A should talk with B and then contacting B to let B know to expect a call from A
1. Suggesting to A that A should talk with B

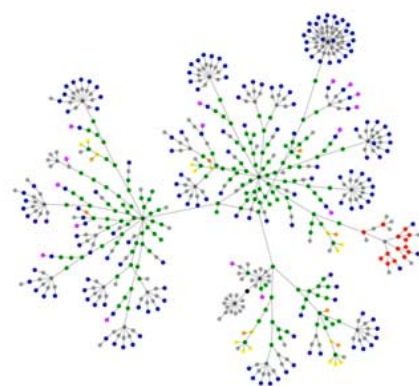


2) Single Hub-and-Spoke - Without active leaders who take responsibility for building a network, spontaneous connections between groups emerge very slowly, or not at all. We call this active leader a *network weaver*. Instead of allowing these fragments to drift in the hope of making a lucky connection, network weavers actively create new interactions among them

Network weavers begin with a hub and spoke network, with the weaver as the hub. The weaver has the vision, the energy, and the social skills to connect to diverse individuals and groups and start information flowing to and from them. The weavers usually have external links outside of the community to bring in information and ideas. This is a critical phase for community building because everything depends on a weaver who is the hub in the network. However, if multiple weavers are working in the same community, we may get independent multiple hub and spoke networks, with limited overlap between them.

3) Multi-Hub Small-World Network - The transition from network weaver to network facilitator is critical. The weaver is identifying and mentoring new weavers who will eventually take over much of the network building and maintenance. If the transition is not made, then, the community network remains dependent on the central weaver and his/her organization. At the transition point the weaver changes from being a direct leader to an indirect leader, influencing new emergent leaders appearing throughout the community. This transition is necessary for the network to increase its scale, impact and reach.

Now that other hubs [network weavers] are emerging in the network, the various weavers begin to connect to each other, creating a multi-hub community. Not only is this network topology less fragile, it is also the best design to minimize the average path length throughout the network – remember, the shorter the hops the better for work flow, information exchange and knowledge sharing! Information percolates most quickly through a network where the best-connected nodes are all connected to each other.



4) Core/Periphery

The end goal for vibrant, sustainable community networks is the core/periphery model. This topology emerges after many years of network weaving by multiple hubs. It is a stable structure that can link to other well-developed networks in other regions. The network core in this model contains the key community members, including many who are network weavers, and have developed strong ties amongst themselves. The periphery of this network contains three groups of nodes that are usually tied to the core through looser ties:

- Those new to the community and working to get to the core
- Bridges to diverse communities elsewhere
- Unique resources that operate outside of the community and may span many communities

The periphery allows us to reach ideas and information not currently prevalent in our network. The core allows us to act on those ideas and information. The periphery is the open, porous boundary of the community network. It is where new members/ideas come and go. The periphery monitors the environment, while the core implements what is discovered and deemed useful.

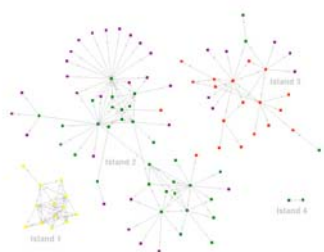


To summarize, starting with a disconnected community, network builders can start weaving together the necessary skills and resources to build simple single-hub networks, followed by a more robust multi-hub network, concluding with a resilient core/periphery structure – maximized for innovation and implementation.

Bridging Clusters

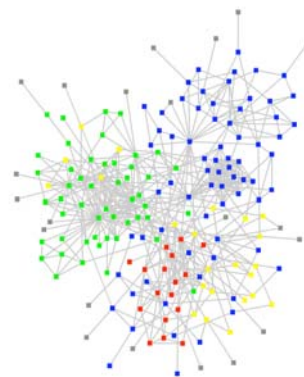
Working in isolated clusters is fine if the world around you is not changing. Bridging clusters allows everyone to learn and exchange perspectives and ideas. Connections create cross-fertilization and innovation usually follows

Shape of Networks



The shape of a social network helps determine a network's usefulness to its individuals. Smaller, tighter networks can be less useful to their members than networks with lots of loose connection (weak ties) to individuals outside the main network. More open networks, with many weak ties and social connections, are more likely to introduce new ideas and opportunities to their members than closed networks with many redundant ties. In other words, a group of friends who only

do things with each other already share the same knowledge and opportunities. A group of individuals with connections to other social worlds is likely to have access to a wider range of information. It is better for individual success to have connections to a variety of networks rather than many connections within a single network. Similarly, individuals can exercise influence or act as brokers within their social networks by bridging two networks that are not directly linked (called filling structural holes)



Vibrant and Effective Networks

What does a vibrant, effective community network look like? Research has been done to discover the qualities of vibrant networks. Sociologists, physicists, mathematicians, and management consultants have all discovered similar answers about effective networks. The amazing discovery is that people in organizations, routers on the Internet, cells in a nervous system, molecules in protein interactions, animals in an ecosystem, and pages on the WWW are all organized in efficient network structures that have similar properties.

Five general patterns are observed in all effective networks:

1. Birds of a feather flock together: nodes link together because of common attributes, goals or governance.
2. At the same time diversity is important. Though clusters form around common attributes and goals, vibrant networks maintain connections to diverse nodes and clusters. A diversity of connections is required to maximize innovation within the network.
3. Robust networks have several paths between any two nodes. If several nodes or links are damaged or removed, other pathways exist for uninterrupted information flow among the remaining nodes.
4. Some nodes are more prominent than others – they are either hubs 1, brokers 2, or boundary spanners 3. They are critical to network health.
5. Most nodes in the network are connected by an indirect link in the network. A-B-C-D shows a direct link between A and B, but indirect links between A and C and A and D. Yet, the average path

length in the network tends to be short. There are very few long paths in the network that lead to delay and distortion of information flow and knowledge exchange.

The Decentralized Starfish Network



The Starfish and the Spider

Most of us know that a spider is a creature with eight legs coming out of a central body. With a magnifying glass, we can see that the spider also has a tiny head and eight eyes. If you chop off the spider's head, it dies. It could maybe survive without a leg or two, and probably even stand to lose a couple of eyes, but it certainly couldn't survive without its head. The spider has a centralized control system that is similar to most organizations.



A starfish, at first glance, is similar to a spider in appearance. Like the spider, the starfish appears to have a bunch of legs coming out of a central body. But that's where the similarities end. The starfish is decentralized. With a spider, what you see is pretty much what you get. A body is a body, a head is a head and a leg is a leg. But starfish are very different. The starfish does not have a head. Its central body is not even in charge. In fact, the major organs are replicated throughout each and every leg. If you cut the starfish in half, the animal doesn't die, it regenerates.

Starfish have an incredible quality to them: if you cut a leg off, most species will grow a new leg. And with some varieties, such as the Linckia, or long armed starfish, the animal can replicate itself from a single piece of a leg. You can cut the Linckia into a bunch of pieces, and each one will regenerate into a whole new starfish. They can achieve this magical regeneration because in reality, a starfish is a neural network – basically a network of cells. Instead of having a head like a spider, the starfish functions as a decentralized network. For the starfish to move a leg, it must convince the other legs that it is a good idea to do so. The leg starts moving, and then, in a process that no one fully understands, the other legs move and cooperate as well. There is no brain to make a decision. The starfish doesn't have a brain, or a central command. Similar to the starfish, there are a host of emerging organizations that function in a decentralized manner like the starfish. Examples include such entities as Visa, Skype, Craig's List, Wikipedia, Alcoholics Anonymous and Apache Software, to name a few.

Legs of a Starfish Network

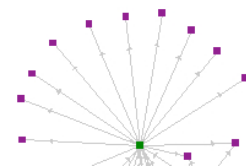
In his book "The Starfish and the Spider" author, Ori Brafman, identifies five legs upon which a decentralized network stands. As with the starfish, it can lose one or two legs and still survive. But when you have all five legs working together, a decentralized network can really take off.

Leg 1 – Circles

Circles are important to nearly every decentralized network. They provide the vehicle for independent and autonomous operation.

Characteristics of circles include:

- Once you join, you are an equal. It's then up to you to contribute to the best of your ability. People commit to what they help create.
- Virtual Circles are much larger, but the bonding is lower. Being in the physical presence of others creates more ownership and bonding, which produces a great level of trust.



- Circles are not lawless, they depend on norms or values. Clearly defined and inculcated norms (or values) control behaviors.
- When ordinary people are organized into Circles or cells, they gain immense power.

Leg 2 – The Catalyst

A Catalyst is any element or compound that initiates a reaction without fusing into that reaction. In a decentralized organization, a Catalyst is a person who initiates a reaction and gets the organization going and then fades into the background by ceding control to the members. In letting go of the leadership role, the Catalyst transfers ownership and responsibility to the circle or decentralized organization. Once the Catalyst moves on, however, their presence is still felt as they provide the inspirational motivation to continue to spur others to action. Additional characteristics of the Catalyst include:

- Develops an idea, shares it with others, leads by example
- They trust the community and let go of the organization
- Often they are not aware of who is doing what in the organization as they are focused outward
- Casual acquaintances fascinate them, and they are always trying to connect people
- They are good at navigating complex social networks
- Very comfortable at any level of engagement in influential circles
- They never work on commissions – easier to be ethically pure, introductions are more long-term
- They have fun meeting and helping new people. They always ask “How can I help this person?”
- Mobilize people by sharing inspirational stories
- They are never pushy but work to try to understand you
- Mission oriented, not command and control or objective driven

Most Catalysts draw upon similar tools to operate and get the job done. Catalysts’ tools include:

- Genuine interest in others - No one is boring; everyone is like a walking novel, because they care!
- Loose connections – They establish a loose social network with thousands of people. They are able to socially connect people into the network wherever they go.
- Mapping – When they meet new people, they immediately begin mapping out how they fit into their vast social network.
- Desire to help – wanting to help is the fuel that drives a Catalyst’s ability to connect.
- Passion – A Catalyst provides the inspirational drum beat for a decentralized organization because it cannot rely on command and control to motivate participants, it needs a strong and ongoing ideology to keep them going.
- Meet people where they are – You follow a Catalyst because he understands you.
- Emotional Intelligence – Intellectually brilliant, but they tend to lead with emotions. Emotional connections come first.
- Trust – With a decentralized organization, you never know what people are going to do. You can’t control the outcomes. All you can control is whether or not people have personal relationships with each other based on trust. Catalysts build trust throughout the network and the community.
- Inspiration – They are passionate about believing in the big dream and it is not about them. It is not for personal gain. They have a natural ability to inspire people to action.
- Tolerance for ambiguity – They do not know, nor really care who is doing what in the organization. They trust the community. The more decentralized, the less that is known. Starfish organizations need ambiguity to survive. It creates a platform for creativity and innovation.



- Hands-off approach – Once a Catalyst gets an organization going, they back off and cede control. People may get frustrated and say, “What are we supposed to be doing?” This leads people to take charge and have a high level of ownership.

Leg 3 – Ideology

Ideology is the glue that holds decentralized networks together. It is more than a sense of community or the desire to create a better world. It is a common set of beliefs or values that inspire members to fight and sacrifice of themselves for a common cause. These common beliefs define the norms or values of the network, which in turn, dictate the cultural DNA. Since there is no central command and control structure in a decentralized network, a clearly defined ideology is central to controlling behaviors. The greater the common cause and the stronger the ideology, the longer the network will last.

Leg 4 – The Pre-Existing Network

Almost every decentralized network that has made it big was launched from a pre-existing platform. But gaining entrance into a pre-existing network is not as simple as just showing up with a good idea. Centralized organizations are not setup to launch decentralized movements. Without Circles, there is not the infrastructure for people to get involved and take ownership of a new idea. Circles provide the vehicle to put people together in a close-knit community of empowered members with shared values and a belief that everyone is equal. Loose knit social networks provide the ideal breeding ground for decentralized circles and typically have a higher tolerance for innovation. Typically it takes the special skills of the Catalyst entering the social network to birth a decentralized movement, but today the Internet also provides an ideal launch pad for new starfish networks, by enabling rapid and simple communication and active participation.

Leg 5 – The Champion

The Champion is a restless pioneer in promoting a new idea. Catalysts are charismatic, but champions take the necessary steps to move the network forward to the next level. Catalysts inspire and naturally connect people, but there is nothing subtle about the Champion. Characteristics include:

- A natural people person and a good salesman
- Able to draw people in and make them feel comfortable
- People are fascinated by the excitement and charm of the Champion
- Naturally passionate and lively
- Tenacious, will not stop or let go until they have won or they are the best at what they do
- Do not do anything half way
- Inherently hyperactive and operate well in non-hierarchical environments
- Tend to be more like salesman than organizers or connectors; But, as a salesman, they help people get involved in some type of structure or activity

When a Catalyst joins up with a Champion to architect a movement, create self-empowered circles, tap into an ideology whose time has come, and draw upon a pre-existing network, they can change the course of history.

A flat, decentralized world

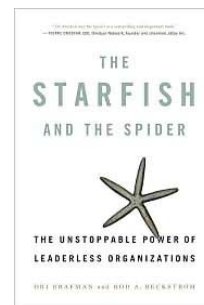
The Internet has forever changed our world. The speed and access of global communications has leveled or flattened the competitive playing field to the point that a single individual in the developing world can effectively compete against a large established company in the West. In a flat, decentralized world, there are dis-economies of scale where a single person or small team can financially and operationally disrupt whole industries. A shy engineer by the name of Craig Newmark never dreamed

that the site he launched, to post online listings in the San Francisco Bay Area, would nearly bankrupt the entire newspaper industry. Few could have believed that a new decentralized telecommunications network called Skype could radically impact the entire telephone industry. The world is becoming flatter and more decentralized by the day.

Decentralizing a Centralized Organization

With the rise of starfish-like decentralized networks, the more common centralized hierarchical organizations are increasingly faced with a formidable challenge; decentralize, learn to effectively interface with decentralized networks, or face possible extinction. Whole economies, like the newspaper and telephone industries, are on the brink of extinction by emerging decentralized networks like Craig's List and Skype. How do you know if your organization is centralized or decentralized? Review these questions provide by Ori Brafman in "The Starfish and the Spider".

1. Is there a person in charge?
2. Are there headquarters?
3. If you thump it on the head, will it die?
4. Is there a clear division of roles?
5. If you take out a unit, is the organization harmed?
6. Are knowledge and power concentrated or distributed?
7. Is the organization flexible or rigid?
8. Can you count the employees or participants?
9. Are working groups funded by the organization, or are they self-funded?
10. Do working groups communicate directly or through intermediaries?



Ori summarizes the Eight Principles of Decentralization as follows:

1. When attacked, a decentralized organization tends to become even more open and decentralized
2. It is easy to mistake a Starfish for a Spider
3. An open system does not have central intelligence; it is spread throughout the system
4. Open systems can easily mutate
5. The decentralized organization sneaks up on you (because it mutates so quickly)
6. As industries become decentralized, overall profits decrease – that is why you want to watch out for them before they take an industry by storm
7. Put people into an open system, and they will automatically want to contribute
8. When attacked, centralized organizations tend to become even more centralized

One of the greatest challenges in decentralizing a centralized organization is that of financial sustainability. As an organization decentralizes, overall profits decrease. Decentralized organizations must be innovative in developing financial income streams.

The Nature of Mass Movements

In a time of accelerating change, social structures around the world are under attack. Families and communities are being disrupted and undergoing decay. Natural and man-made disasters, food shortages and global migration all feed into and heighten the problem. The global environment is ripening for the emergence of mass movements.

The purpose of this section is to understand the causal factors and principles that impact the emergence of a mass movement and how we might be able to catalyze and influence the direction and outcomes of such a movement. Our hope is that we might catalyze a mass movement that will provide a platform for "Connecting Resources to Needs" for the poor and underprivileged people in developing nations.

Adherents to Mass Movements

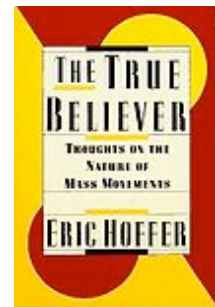
It is imperative that we understand the strength and depth of the convictions of adherents to mass movements. Awareness of their commitment helps us to understand the influence and impact they have within their social structures. They are a powerful force to be reckoned with. Most adherents to mass movements come with a similar mindset. As such, most movements are interchangeable. One movement can be substituted or birthed from another. Adherents typically embody the following characteristics:

- A readiness to die for the cause
- Proclivity for united action and self sacrifice
- Blind faith, uncompromising, and single hearted allegiance
- Enthusiasm, and willingness to attempt the impossible
- Intense fervor and reckless abandon
- Willing to sacrifice the present in preparation for the future
- Bold and immediate hope for the future
- A collective spirit of community and corporate success
- Every Mass Movement is in a sense a migration – a movement towards a promised land



Environmental Factors that Set the Stage for a Mass Movement

There are a host of environmental factors that help to set the stage for the emergence of a mass movement. The decentralization of networks and organizations, and the disruption of social structures, have already been discussed. In his book “The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements”, author Eric Hoffer provides a more comprehensive list to include the following.



- Boredom, Frustration, Discontentment, Disillusionment with Status Quo
 - There is no more reliable indicator of a society's ripeness for a mass movement than the prevalence of unrelieved boredom
 - Boredom accounts for the almost invariable presence of spinsters and middle-aged women at the birth of mass movements. Hitler made full use of the society's ladies thirsting for adventure, sick of their empty lives, no longer getting a kick out of love affairs
 - Frustration is greater when we have much and want more, than when we have nothing and want some
 - It's not suffering but a taste of the better things that excite people to riot
 - Adherents must be intensely discontent but not destitute
 - People are ripe for a mass movement immediately following a great loss of something they hold dear
 - Those who have tasted the better things and then lost them
 - Alienation by, or disillusionment of, the current authority structure
- People wanting to escape from an Unwanted Self
 - The innermost craving is for a new life, rebirth, or change to acquire new elements of pride, confidence, hope, sense of purpose and worth by identification with a holy cause
 - The movement offers a substitute either for the whole self or for the elements that make life bearable
- Disruption of the social glue to include such things as
 - Discrediting and undermining of authority

- Increased divorce and illegitimacy
- Others taking over responsibility for feeding, educating and entertaining
- Disruption of the family fosters a collective spirit and responsiveness to mass movements
- Alienation from or breakdown of the family, social structure, church structure, tribal structure, or sense of community
- Lack of Community and Equality
 - Those who see themselves as spoiled and wasted, crave equality and fraternity more than freedom
 - Equality is the Passion of the Masses
 - People may not be revolting against the powers that be, but because of their weakness
- A new mass movement can quickly emerge where one already exists
 - Movements are interchangeable since they draw from the same frustrated mindsets. One mass movement can transform into another. A religious movement can become a social movement or national revolution or vice versa
- The right leadership is necessary. Though many of the following characteristics provided in “The True Believer” may have negative connotations, they are worth noting. They will provide us with a heightened awareness towards monitoring the environment for evidence of these indicators. A mass movement is:
 - Pioneered by Men of Words (Articulate Speakers)
 - Undermines established institutions and discredits those in power, prevailing creeds, and institutions
 - Detaches them from the allegiance of the people
 - Indirectly creates a hunger for faith
 - Furnishes the doctrine and slogans of the new faith
 - Weakens prevailing beliefs and loyalties
 - Passion is to reform the present
 - Materialized by Fanatics (Inspirational Leaders)
 - Chaos is his element
 - Inspires people to action
 - Demands blind obedience and total allegiance
 - Proclaims an immediate hope for the future
 - Embraces a cause not primarily because of its justness and holiness but because of their passionate attachment that turns everything into a holy cause
 - Cannot be weaned away from the cause by an appeal to reason or moral sense; They cannot be convinced but only converted
 - The Fanatical Leader will joyfully sacrifice the present
 - Consolidated by Men of Action (Operational Managers)
 - Only the entrance of a Man of Action can save the achievements of the movement
 - This role is performed by different individuals than the Man of Words or Fanatic
 - Establishes process and structure to sustain and stabilize the movement
 - Makes the Doctrine intelligible to win the loyalty of the intellectuals
 - When the Man of Action emerges, the rapid expansion stage of the mass movement is over and adherents are becoming more interested in stabilizing the movement and achieving personal gain.

One of the closing statements in Eric Hoffer’s book summarizes the power and impact of emerging mass movements.

“In democracies people are too soft, too pleasure loving and too selfish to die for a nation, a God or a holy cause. This lack of a readiness to die, we are told, is indicative of an inner rot – a moral and biological decay. The democracies are old, corrupt and decadent. They are no match for the virile congregations of the faithful who are about to inherit the earth.”

There is much truth to this statement. But not all mass movements need to be negative. Accelerations in information, technologies, and the Internet have already created a rapid and positive mass movement, or migration, for billions of people to a new way of communicating and sharing information on a global scale.

Similarly, these advancements can enable a correlating mass migration in the way ordinary people are able to help one another. As a result, our intent is to facilitate and influence the emergence of a mass movement that enables a global tribe of like-minded practitioners that are bound by a common cause to serve the poor and needy.

Our goal then is to develop, promote, and make available, an established venue so that ordinary people can easily engage to make an extraordinary difference. We need to proclaim a bold and immediate hope for the future, one that is both doable and achievable. We need passionate leadership to rally the disillusioned and disenfranchised to this immediate hope, inspire them to action, and consolidate and leverage resources to serve the poor and needy.

Activities that support the emergence of a Mass Movement

Many factors ultimately impact the emergence of a mass movement. Leaders cannot create the conditions that make a mass movement successful. There must be intense dissatisfaction with things as they currently exist. The right leaders often wait many long years in the wings for the environment to ripen and bring forth a movement. Breeding discontent or championing the reasonableness or legitimacy of a new way cannot initiate a mass movement. When the environment is ripe, the following list provides the types of activities that will help influence the launch and direction of a mass movement:

- Create an audacious Hope for the Future
 - Those who have Hope for the Future proceed recklessly with the present, wreck it if necessary and create a whole new world.
 - People can live without hope if they are kept incessantly busy. This is the case for many 40-50 year old people that have acquired their fortune and now look for purpose in life. A mass movement provides a substitute for individual hope.
 - The unemployed are more likely to follow peddlers of Hope than those that provide relief
 - What have people lost that we can help give them back?
 - What is the “immediate hope” they can reach for and believe in?
- Define a common enemy
 - Solidify the people towards a common goal by picking a worthy enemy – nothing unites the troops like a common enemy.
 - When we have a common enemy, we look for allies.
- Create a Link to the Glorious Past
 - There is no more potent dwarfing of the present than by viewing it as a mere link between a glorious past and a glorious future.
 - Historical awareness imparts a sense of continuity and legitimizes the new movement.
- Define the source of irresistible power
 - The ones who rush into undertakings of vast change usually feel they are in possession of some irresistible power.

- Adherents of a mass movement feel that they are in possession of some potent doctrine, infallible leader, or new technique which is the source of irresistible power.
- Help people escape from self
 - Many people want to hide in the masses. They substitute corporate success for individual success. They allow others to make and have the responsibility for their decisions.
 - Innermost craving is for a new life, rebirth, or change to acquire new elements of pride, confidence, hope, sense of purpose and worth by identification with a holy cause
 - Offers substitutes either for the whole self or for the elements that make life bearable
 - Offers a substitute for individual hope or a way to forget self life
- Create community and equality
 - In order to succeed, form a compact community at the earliest possible moment.
 - Those who see themselves as spoiled and wasted, crave equality and fraternity more than freedom. Equality is the Passion of the Masses.
 - Any aid or support must be provided to the whole community or family versus individual help or success. Individual success undermines the family/community stability. For those in community, self-reliance amounts to individual isolation.
 - Develop the capacity to rapidly absorb and thoroughly integrate all newcomers.
 - There needs to be a quick and total absorption of the frustrated. The one who comes with the most perfected collective framework wins.
- Create unity of action and self-sacrifice
 - To school an individual for unity of action is to ready him for acts of self-denial.
 - To ripen a person for self-denial, he must be stripped of his individual identity and distinctiveness. The best way to accomplish this is by complete assimilation into a collective body.
 - Every act, no matter how trivial, the individual must associate himself with the group, congregation, or community.
 - Joys, sorrows, pride and confidence must spring from the group.
 - He must never feel alone; to be cast out would be worse than death.
 - Uniforms, flags, emblems, parades, music, logos and elaborate etiquette and ritual are designed to separate the individual from his self-identity.
 - The human plasticity necessary for the realization of drastic and abrupt change seems to be a by-product of the process of unification and inculcation of a readiness for self-sacrifice.
 - People in a hurry will imitate more readily than people at leisure. Hustling, thus, tends to produce uniformity. In the deliberate fusing of individuals into a compact group, incessant action will play a considerable role. Mass movements use action as a means of unification.
 - Men of thought seldom work well together. Men of action usually find camaraderie.
- Define the Doctrine
 - In order to be effective, it need not be understood, but believed in.
 - If a doctrine is unintelligible, it has to be vague, if it is not vague, it needs to be unverifiable. Believe with your hearts, not your minds.
 - When a movement rationalizes its doctrine and makes it intelligible, it is a sign that its dynamic span is over. The movement is stabilized by the intellectuals and, hence, the need to make the doctrine intelligible.
 - The true doctrine is a master key to all the world's problems and the Hope for the future.



- Propaganda cannot force its way into the unwilling mind. It penetrates minds already open and rather than instill opinion it articulates and justifies opinions already present in the mind of the recipient and echoes their innermost feelings.
- Propaganda succeeds mainly with the frustrated.
- Nationalism and tribalism are the most durable sources of mass enthusiasm.
- Substitute for an existing movement
 - All mass movements are interchangeable, since they come from the same mindset
- Identify and connect the leaders
 - Leaders personify the certitude, creed, and the defiance and grandeur of power. They articulate and justify the resentment dammed up in the souls of the frustrated. They kindle the vision of a breath-taking future, so as to justify the sacrifice of a transitory present. They stage the world of make-believe so indispensable for the realization of self-sacrifice and united action. They evoke the enthusiasm of communion – the sense of liberation from a petty and meaningless individual existence. Chaos is their element.
 - A movement is pioneered by men of words, materialized by fanatics, and consolidated by men of action.

Operational support to a mass movement

A mass movement typically emerges as a spontaneous reaction of the masses to some type of precipitating event(s) that is pioneered by Men of Words into a common cause, and materialized by Inspirational Leaders into a mass movement. There are certain types of operations that organizations can provide to support the emerging movement such as:

- Provide a venue and platform for the right kind of leaders to promote the Doctrine, Dogma and Rituals
 - Men of Words, Inspirational Leaders, Men of Action
- Infuse people with pride, and hope for the future
 - Give them jobs, purpose and meaning in life
 - Community success is more important than individual success
- Develop a Vehicle to capture, inculcate and assimilate all Comers to the Movement
 - The one who comes with the most perfected collective framework wins
 - Chief preoccupation is to foster, perfect and perpetuate a vehicle or venue for unity of action and self-sacrifice

Mass movements can emerge rapidly and elicit large-scale drastic changes. We would do well to understand their nature and causal factors. In doing so, our hope is to influence their direction and outcomes.

When hopes and dreams are loose in the streets, it is well for the timid to lock the doors, shutter the windows, and lie low until the wrath has passed for there is often a monstrous incongruity between the hopes, however noble and tender, and the actions which follow them.

The True Believer by Eric Hoffer



Operational Concepts Related to a Starfish Mass Movement



The purpose of this section is to combine and leverage the characteristics and attributes of the three types of social network concepts reviewed including:

- The Rise of Social Networking
- Decentralized Starfish Networks
- The Nature of Mass Movements

By doing so, we hope to understand the operational requirements to catalyze, support, empower, and influence the establishment of a decentralized starfish mass movement. The following thoughts and concepts are provided in the context of an operational nature to identify potential areas of support and focus for the starfish network to catalyze a movement. This section will be focused on addressing the following operational concepts: (Specific issues related to community operations will be addressed in detail in a later section.)

- Culture and Ideology
- A Common Cause
- Structure
- Leadership and Management
- Knowledge, Information, and Communications
- Finances and Resources
- Training
- Operations
- Performance
- Change Management

Culture and Ideology

In a decentralized starfish network or mass movement, there is no one in control. There is no operational chain of command or central headquarters. Even when building a social network, the network weaver is focused on raising up new leaders to take over the leadership role. As a result, an ideology is the primary means of controlling how the adherents behave.

A group's ideology is composed of a set of shared values or common beliefs. These values or common beliefs define the cultural DNA of the group. People of a common cultural DNA will typically gravitate to one another. Sometimes we talk about being of the same "tribe". The stronger the ideology, the more influence it has over actions, even to the point of people being willing to give up their life for the cause. Additional thoughts on a core ideology include:

- Most organizations identify 3 to 5 core values or common beliefs that define their ideology.
- Behavior statements should be developed that reflect actions indicative of the core values.
- It takes 27-45 days of continuous conscious thought and action to change behaviors associated with new values or ideology.
- A shared ideology or set of values produces strong ownership and commitment.
- Tribal relationships override any program, process, procedure, or business objective.
- People commit to what they help create.
- In an open system, people lead by example and take action.
- What is the process to inculcate the DNA across the organization?
- How do we engage the Catalyst to inculcate the DNA and inspire people to act?

In addition to ideology, the culture of the starfish network must promote community and camaraderie. Though a common cause will focus actions, and some will join a network for financial gain, most adherents to networks and mass movement join because they are looking for a culture of community that meets their personal need for equality and belonging.

A Common Cause

A common cause is a powerful tool for unified action within a starfish network or mass movement. Different adherents may engage for different reasons but they all have a common cause or outcome they are working together and joining forces to achieve. As the old saying goes, “nothing unites the troops like a common enemy”. The common cause or defined outcome must be specific enough to cause defined action but broad enough to cover a wide range of potential skill sets of the adherents that join the network or movement.

Structure

The structure of the starfish network should be decentralized with independent and autonomous Circles or cells being empowered by leaders and catalysts. With a lack of hierarchy, all members of the network are considered equal and work together for a common cause. In a completely decentralized starfish network or mass movement, the following characteristics may exist:

- There may be no central headquarters or common location for command and control.
- There may be no clear division of work or departments. Anyone can do anything.
- No central policing authority. Everyone is responsible for themselves and everyone else.

Hybrid organizations may support and empower the network or movement to achieve their designated outcomes or common cause by providing value added services. In the case of HISG, establishing a venue or platform to centralize and share information may be of significant value

Leadership and Management

In all three social network concepts explored, a small loose connection of people can have a large amount of influence and power. In all cases, and particularly when no one is in charge, the amount of power and influence leaders exercise is determined by the strength and trust of the relational connections.

In all cases, leaders are necessary to inspire and lead the people into united action. Management and decision-making needs to be decentralized to the front lines of operation where knowledge, creativity, innovation and ownership are greatest.

Each of the social network concepts we have explored requires different types of leadership summarized by the following.

- The Primary roles in the social network include:
 - Network Weaver
 - Network Facilitator
- The primary roles in the decentralized starfish network include:
 - Catalysts
 - Champions
- The primary roles in a mass movement include:
 - Pioneered by Men of Words (Articulate Speakers)
 - Materialized by Fanatics (Inspirational Leaders)
 - Consolidated by Men of Action (Operational Managers)

If we converge the requirements of all three concepts, we end up with primarily two types of leadership. It takes both working together to catalyze, inspire, empower, and establish the network.

- Inspirational Leaders
- Operational Manager

Knowledge, Information, and Communications

In a starfish network or mass movement, knowledge is greatest on the front line, at the edge of the network. When it comes to social networking, innovation and creativity lie at the intersection point of different social clusters. The operational focus should be for information to be shared and decentralized throughout the network.

Communications across the network should occur directly between members versus through intermediaries or through an established chain of command. The operational focus should be to establish a communications platform to enable and enhance interaction between individual members across the network.

Finances and Resources

As organizations or industries decentralize, profits decrease. In a pure starfish network or mass movement, there are no paid positions or titles because they create turf wars and focus on interests of personal gain and betterment. When people in a mass movement begin to focus on personal interests, the dynamic growth stage of the movement has ended and people are now looking to stabilize and establish the movement.

Individual units (Circles, cells) should be largely self-funded with unit leaders primarily responsible for acquiring and managing their own funds. The overall power or influence of the network or movement is proportional to the strength of the relational connections and the number of members or adherents. The ideal situation is that it costs nothing to add a member and each new member makes the network more valuable. With every new member, there are more resources within the network.

Training

Training must be a core component of any social network. Transfer of cultural DNA, sharing of information, and utilizing an established process or platform all requires some type of training. In addition, capturing lessons learned and sharing best practices optimizes performance.

Operations

In a decentralized starfish network, small Circles of 6-12 people are the key to action, creativity and ownership. As ordinary people become equal members, the Circle is empowered and gains greater influence and capability. Circles should be able to operate independently with autonomy. Leveraging the power of the Circles across a network or mass movement is enabled through information sharing and communications. Information sharing provides for a common picture, allowing adherents to self-synchronize their efforts without any chain of command.

Equality is the passion of the masses. Circles provide the ideal social setting to establish a strong sense of community and equality necessary for adherents. The operational imperative is for all newcomers to find an immediate place to plug in. Everyone should be able to participate and find equality and community. Assimilation is ensured through a sense of belonging and a defined ideology that controls behavior within the community.

Small Circles should be used to address issues and resolve challenges that the network or movement might face. For problem-solving or innovation, Circles should be provided with resources and released to address the issue as they see fit. People commit to what they help create. Performance metrics to monitor, measure, and manage the health and strength of the network should be through the vitality of the small Circles.

In a social network, strength of the network and performance are measured through such metrics as centrality (degree, betweenness, closeness), network centralization, network reach, boundary spanners, and peripheral players.

A centralized organization can decentralize the user experience through practices like User Ratings, a safety factor like that used in PayPal, and ongoing opportunities for public comments that have impact to their reputation.

Performance

Performance in a decentralized network or movement is best measured by the successful of the social vehicle used to carry out the actions of the network. For a starfish network or mass movement, success might be measured by the strength and vitality of the Circles or communal structure established, for a social network it may be the strength and centrality of the connection. If the focus of a group of circles is community transformation, then performance metrics must be chosen that are relative to the success of the community.

Change Management

In a world of accelerating change, organizational flexibility and adaptation have become survival skills. But they are the natural order for decentralized starfish networks and mass movements. They are both marked by their ability for rapid and drastic adaptation and transformation. This is enabled by spontaneous intra-network information sharing and empowered Circles that can operate independently. Decentralization involves chaos, but also provides a platform for creativity and innovation, essential for growth and adaptation.

When under attack or threat from the environment, Starfish Networks become more decentralized while centralized organizations become more centralized and consolidated. Starfish organizations naturally adapt to change while centralized organizations resist change. The typical evolution of an industry or environment is from decentralized chaos, to centralized organization, and then back to decentralization by distributive networks. The final stage is decentralized but instead of chaos, you have a distributive network that can function independently and with autonomy.

The Starfish Community

What are we doing?

In the previous, we explored the different characteristics of social networking, decentralized starfish networks and the emergence of mass movements. The attributes and characteristics of these social network concepts were then combined and viewed from an operational perspective.

The purpose of this section is to explain how the Starfish Community is evolving with the intent to facilitate the emergence of a mass movement built around a common cause. The following concepts are included:

- People Groups and Tribes
- Operational Concepts for the Starfish Organization
- Services to the Starfish Community

People Groups and Tribes

There are over 12,000 distinct ethno-linguistic people groups in the world. Though each may have its own unique customs and culture, globalization is having an interesting impact. People groups come in many different sizes but one of the fastest growing people groups in the world is that of “expatriates”, or expats for short. Expats could be defined as people living in a culture or location that is foreign to their native culture. Through globalization, people of all races, colors and creed are being interspersed throughout the world and an interesting phenomenon is occurring. Expats living outside their native culture are finding like-minded people from totally foreign cultures that seem to be of the same tribal mindset or cultural DNA. There are new “tribes” emerging that transcend local culture. These new tribes have their own unique set of customs and culture that are global in nature with relational bonds that can even supersede local cultural ties.



The Starfish Community is focused on connecting a global “tribe” with a common cause to help widows, orphans and the poor. The Mission of the community is to identify like-minded tribal members all over the world and connect them together into a decentralized starfish community that can share information, communications and resources. The Starfish Community transcends all sectors of society and encompasses representatives from across the private sector, including businesses, NGOs, faith-based and civic groups, and academic institutions. It costs nothing to add new members to the community and with each new member resources across the network grow.

Not all people we meet will become part of this tribe, have the same cultural DNA, or fit into this network. But our hope is that all who want to participate will have a place to immediately plug in, become part of the community, and help change the world. We want to birth a movement out of the Starfish Community where ordinary people can make a significant difference in the life of someone in need.

Operational Concepts for the Starfish Organization

In the previous, we addressed the operational requirements to catalyze, support, empower, and influence the establishment of a decentralized starfish mass movement. Concepts were provided in the

context of an operational nature in order to identify potential areas of support and focus for the Starfish Network to catalyze a movement. This section will be focused on addressing specific issues related to Starfish Community operations using the same categories including:

- Culture and Ideology
- A Common Cause
- Structure
- Leadership and Management
- Knowledge, Information, and Communications
- Finances and Resources
- Training
- Operations
- Performance
- Change Management

Culture and Ideology

The following list of attributes defines the culture and ideology of Starfish Community members.

Each of these attributes will be expanded with correlating behavior statements developed so everyone can understand specifically what is being presented as our culture and ideology.

- Culture
 - Work together with friends
 - Work hard and have fun
 - Learn and be learners, learn from mistakes
 - Share resources
 - Communicate openly and speak the truth
 - Share the credit (don't plant banners)
- Ideology
 - Liberating the poor
 - Community and equality
 - Trust and commitment
 - Losing self identity to gain a community identity marked by committed service and fun

Our values will be inculcated throughout the network by:

- Defining correlating behavior statements indicative of the values
- Promoting and recognizing those who embody the new behaviors

A Common Cause

Our common cause is to “Connect Resources to Needs” for the poor and underprivileged.

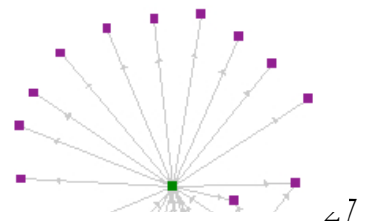
- Present and promote the common cause in such a way as to ensure it provides an “immediate hope” to the discontented, frustrated, disenfranchised, and disillusioned.
- Link our common cause to a glorious past.
- Ensure all adherents to the network experience success as a result of their participation. A potential slogan could be “Ordinary people making an extraordinary difference!”

Our common enemies are ignorance, hopelessness, apathy, lack of resources, and lack of preparedness.

Structure

For a starfish network or mass movement, small Circles provide the ideal communal structure and are the key to successful operations.

- What is the structure of the circles?



Circles should be comprised of 6-12 members that are working together towards a common cause. They should be able to operate independently and with autonomy. Circles should also be able to communicate with the larger Starfish Community to share information and resources and conduct collaborative initiatives. Since the breadth and scope of the social network is very large, communications and connectivity will initially be established through trusted relationships and expanded to new Circles of influence by participation online at www.StarfishCommunity.net.

Ongoing interaction with the Starfish Community can occur through collaborative initiatives, resource sharing (giving and receiving), and interactive online initiatives like country specific wiki reports, and regional and sector collaboration.

- How do Circles form?

Circles can be formed by anyone, anywhere that wants to join the Starfish Community. When forming, Circle members should determine what type of project they would like to focus on. This could include any one or more of the 14 disaster relief services or 12 development categories outlined in the Relief (IDR) and Development (HIST) Models provided on the website.

It is recommended that Circle members set some type of schedule to ensure they meet on a regular basis. Equality and community is a driving desire of most adherents. Being able to meet together regularly and successfully, accomplishing initiatives around a common cause, creates a strong sense of community and equality.

Drawing from our exploration of the concept of social networking, the Network Weaver builds or knits the network in the following four stages. These stages should be referred to for establishment of the Circles.

- Scattered Fragments
- Single Hub and Spoke
- Multi-Hub Small-World Network
- Core/Periphery

- How do Circles interact?

Any Circle can communicate with and work with any other Circle anywhere in the network. There are no limitations or controls on who or how they can interact. By completing the Capabilities Survey online, Circles can be linked with or connected to other Circles of similar interest. Regional and Sector initiatives will also provide a platform for interaction and connectivity.

- How are Circles empowered to have ownership?

Each Circle will be independently in control of their initiatives and activities. They are free to choose their focus, where they want to engage, and how much they want to do. As the saying goes, “People only commit to what they help create”. Circles will be in complete control of what they create. Access to the Starfish Community will provide a platform to empower Circles with 5 types of resources including venues for Grant Requests, Business Startup Capital, Gift-in-Kind, Logistics Support, and 26 different types of subject matter expert teams (14 disaster response services and 12 development categories)

- Almost every decentralized organization that has been successful was launched from a pre-existing platform. Circles provide the infrastructure for people to get involved and take ownership of a new idea. Circles provide the vehicle to put people together in a close-knit community of empowered members with shared values and a belief that everyone is equal. Loose knit social networks

provide the ideal breeding ground for decentralized circles and typically have a higher tolerance for innovation. The Starfish Community is working to address many of the following issues:

- How will the Starfish Community be promoted across pre-existing social networks?
- How do we capture knowledge and information from the edge of the networks?
- How do we share information across the network?
- How do we promote communications across the network?
- What are the value-added services we can provide to the networks?
- How do we mobilize networks to respond to a specific situation?

Leadership and Management

Leadership and management of starfish-minded organizations participating in the Starfish Community should actively engage in defining and carrying out the functions outlined below. As starfish-minded organizations engage the larger Starfish Community, leadership and management will be decentralized across the network.

The primary focus of Inspirational Leadership will be to:

- Clearly define, promote, and embody the values, or cultural DNA of the network
- Develop, cultivate, and address relational issues related to trust and unity across the network
- Weave or knit the network into Small Circles of committed adherents focused on common issues
- Facilitate network expansion once it expands beyond single hub and spoke
- Bridge networks for increased creativity, innovation and resource sharing
- Provide a platform for network leaders to interact, build trust, and collaborate on projects
- Provide a platform for diverse networks to work together for problem solving, creativity and innovation
- Inspire network adherents to unified action
- Globally monitor locations where environmental factors are ripe for a mass movement
- Present our common cause (Connecting Resources to Needs) in such a way that it ensures an “immediate hope” for the discontented, frustrated, disenfranchised, and disillusioned



The primary focus of Operational Management will be to:

- Identify social needs of network adherents, and ensure those needs are being met by the network.
- Map out the social networks, so there is an understanding of the complex human system we are embedded within.
- Create the vehicle or venue by which all newcomers to the network can be quickly and effectively assimilated into the community.
- Create doctrine, dogma and rituals to enhance identity with community.
- Develop a venue that supports centralized data fusion and provision of a common operating picture.
- Provide a venue for network members to conduct resource sharing.
- Provide adequate operational guidance and direction so that network members can focus their actions.
- Identify focused actions to continue decentralization of the Starfish Community.
- Address issues related to financial sustainability as the community decentralizes.
- Identify ways to ensure all network adherents experience success through their participation.
- Measure the vitality of the Small Circles to ensure success, particularly in relation to a sense of community and equality.
- Identify opportunities for collaborative actions involving network leadership.



Knowledge, Information, and Communications

Knowledge and information will be decentralized and distributed across all adherents to the network through such things as increased communications, interactive Internet platforms, and gatherings.

Communications will be encouraged through facilitation of leadership venue, development and implementation of models, regional networking initiatives, collaborative projects and resource sharing

Finances and Resources

There are no fees for participants to join the network. Adherents are expected to acquire and manage their own funding.

Training

HISG serves the Starfish Community by providing the following types of training:

- Starfish Concepts
- HIST Model on community development
- IDR Model on disaster response

Training on the starfish concept is provided to help organizations understand the Starfish Community cultural DNA, concept and network. Training on the HIST and IDR Models is provided as a proven process for practically engaging a comprehensive range of practitioners in community development and disaster response operations.

Operations

Small Circles will be promoted and developed across the network. Circles should be used to address issues and resolve challenges that the network might face.

Performance

Success will ultimately be measured by the vitality and effectiveness of the Circles. Are they doing projects? Are they giving and or receiving resources? Are people being helped? Are ordinary people able to make a significant impact in the lives of others?

In the Starfish Community, strength of the network and performance might be measured through such metrics as centrality (degree, betweenness, closeness), network centralization, network reach, boundary spanners, and peripheral players. A well-connected node (individual or organization):

- Hears about, and understands, what is happening in the network before others do
- Influences others through direct and indirect ties
- Acts as a broker of key information and knowledge among various parts of the network
- Combines information and knowledge gathered from various parts of the network to develop innovative products and services

Change Management

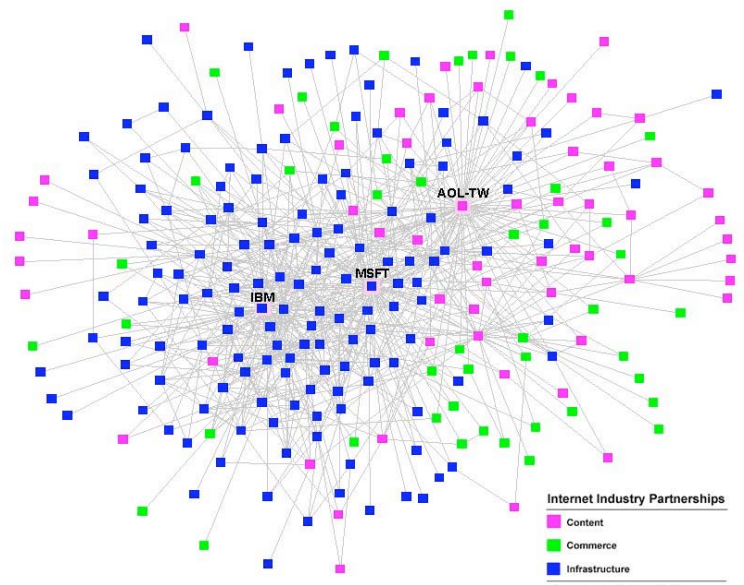
Change management and adaptability across the network will be enhanced by:

- The formation of small Circles that can act independently with autonomy. Empowerment is further enhanced by encouraging the Circles to be financially self-sustained
- Establishing information sharing venues to decentralize information across the network
- Facilitating leadership venues for increased interaction and information sharing
- Further decentralizing operations to increase creativity and innovation

Services to the Starfish Community

This final section provides a look at all the value added services and capabilities that are now available to the Starfish Community. With each new member joining the network, the overall resources available to members will grow. Available capabilities will be explained within the following categories below and posted on the website for interested viewers and updated on an ongoing basis.

- Infrastructure
- Services



HISG Infrastructure and Services Support to the Starfish Community

HISG leadership made a strategic decision to invest in infrastructure that could serve and enable the greater Starfish Community. The majority of this infrastructure is operational and available to support the larger network.

- Texas Global Information/Operations Center

The HISG Global Information Center (GIC) located in Texas, houses our Data Fusion Suite (DFS) that supports critical decision-making and development of a host of different types of information reports. The GIC is also home to our VOIP phone network.

The GIC shifts to a Global Operations Center (GOC) for disaster response operations. Alert Levels range from Alert Level 1 that represents the GIC in steady state operations to Alert Level 4 that includes a full-blown activation and response. Alert Level T (Transition) defines de-escalation of response activities back to steady state. During disaster response operations, the GOC can support the Starfish Community by gathering and disseminating information and helping to mobilize resources.



- New York Training Facility

The HISG Training Facility is located in upstate New York, near Rochester. Situated on one of the Finger Lakes, the facility has 110,00 sq. ft., 130 bedrooms with baths, and is located on 55 acres. This facility is currently capable of supporting training events about 8 months out of the year. Renovations have been completed on about 35% of the property.



- Colorado Operations Center

The Colorado Operations Center will provide a hub for operational support to decision-makers and network leaders across the Starfish Community.

- International Offices

HISG currently supports international offices in multiple locations. Each office functions independently within their own Circles of influence and may have multiple other projects and initiatives occurring simultaneously and in addition to HISG initiatives. Each office is encouraged to network their respective projects with the larger Starfish Community to leverage their impact and increase the potential for resource sharing across the network.

- Vancouver, Canada
- London, UK
- Beirut, Lebanon
- Nairobi, Kenya
- Dubai, UAE (under development)
- Khartoum, Sudan
- Singapore
- Jakarta, Indonesia

Additionally, HISG is looking for organizations and individuals to partner with for establishment of an HISG Starfish Community point of contact in a host of additional locations such as:

- Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Sao Paulo, Brazil
- Dakar, Senegal
- Bamako, Mali
- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Cape Town, South Africa
- Geneva, Switzerland
- Istanbul, Turkey
- Islamabad, Pakistan
- Manila, Philippines

Any organization interested in partnering with the HISG as a regional point of contact to help support the larger Starfish Community should contact the applicable HISG International Director or anyone within the HISG leadership structure.

- VOIP Phone Network

HISG currently has a 40-node Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) Phone Network. VOIP phones are currently being distributed across the International Disaster Response Network (IDRN). Additionally, qualified disaster response partners will be able to directly connect their VOIP Phone to the network for immediate connectivity for collaborative disaster response operations.



- HIST and IDR Models

HISG International Directors have worked with a host of globally experienced professionals to develop and implement two of the most comprehensive and effective models for relief and development. These models provide a solid and proven foundation for effective disaster response and sustainable community development.

The community development model is called HIST which stands for Holistic Integrated Sustainable Transformation. This model provides a paradigm shift from needs based development to a new concept called Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). The model also

highlights 12 different develop categories for mobilization of subject matter experts teams that can be engaged to support development operations anywhere in the world.

The relief model is called IDR, which stands for International Disaster Response. The IDR Model identifies 14 different services that can be mobilized from the private sector to support international disaster response operations.

- **Online Capabilities Survey**

Organizations can now map their assets for sustainable community development and disaster response through completion of an online Capabilities Survey at www.StarfishCommunity.net. The survey is designed to identify and categorize participants across 26 different subject matter expert skill sets (12 HIST/14 IDR Categories). Interested participants are asked to identify which areas they are interested in focusing on or supporting, along with nations or regions of focus for which they would be interested in supporting relief and development operations. Information gathered can also be used to respond to resource requests for skilled teams.

HISG is also offering organizations a unique service to conduct a Capabilities Survey across their organization. By doing so, participating organizations will gain a more accurate understanding of the types of skilled resources and areas of interest that exist within their own organization.

Organizations interested in receiving this service should contact us to receive an organizational specific code that responders will use to enter their data online. The code will enable the Global Information Center to provide an organizational specific printout of the survey results.

Organizations participating in this service can also request HIST and IDR Training to provide recipients with a better understanding of the overall process and opportunities related to relief and development across the network.

- **HIST and IDR Training**

HISG staff currently conduct HIST and IDR Training around the world. Training can be requested by contacting the HISG Training Director. Once approved, training will be jointly scheduled between HISG and the requesting organization.

HISG continues to look for organizations to partner with for provision of training services for the Starfish Community. The community would benefit greatly from those that can provide training on more technical or in-depth subject matter within and across the 26 different categories (14 Community Development/12 Disaster Response categories). Organizations or individuals interested in participating should contact the HISG Training Director.

- **GOCONX Secure Email**

Secure email is a requirement for many people operating in challenging environments and unstable regions of the world. The problem is that most local people in developing countries cannot afford to pay for this service. In response to this need, HISG has developed a capability, which is currently providing over 3,000 secure email accounts around the world. If you are interested in a free, secure email account, please contact us.

- **Non-Profit Status for Fund Raising**

Many people wanting to participate in the HISG Starfish Community and form their own Circles do not have a vehicle for managing donations to support their efforts. HISG will provide the non-profit status and administrative support for Circles wanting to come under the HISG covering. A processing and management fee will be required to provide this service.

Additional Starfish Community Networks, Alliances and Opportunities

Most of the services outlined below, are also currently operational and available to Starfish Community members.

- **International Disaster Response Network (IDRN)**

The Starfish Community is networking partners around the world to identify, train, and collaborate on disaster response initiatives. Once qualified, IDRN partners from around the world are capable of deploying together in response to a disaster situation. Qualified partners have access to a growing network of skilled practitioners for training and preparedness and direct connectivity to the HISG Global Operations Center during a disaster.

During disaster response operations, the HISG Global Operations Center establishes connectivity with a host of public and private Emergency Operations Centers and front-line implementing partners to gather and exchange information relative to relief operations. This information is published in our Spot and Situation Reports that can be received by direct email or accessed through our website. HISG is also working with prominent members of the United Nations to ensure effective connectivity to the IDRN for disaster response operations.

In disaster situations that are more localized, the HISG GOC may not be activated. In this case, Starfish Community members are able to share disaster related information and resources through the use of an information sharing template and the Starfish Community website.

- **Rapid Assessment and Local Coordination Teams**

The Starfish Community includes a growing number of organizations that specialize in rapid disaster response and assessment activities. In addition, many local practitioners are joining together to form Local Coordination Teams for their own regions.

Organizations receiving IDR training can be qualified at three levels in the IDR Network including:

- Level 1 – Introduction to the IDR Concepts and the Network
- Level 2 – Qualified to respond in-country as part of the IDR Network
 - Selection of Service Category(s) to Focus on
- Level 3 – Qualified to respond internationally as part of the IDR Network
 - Rapid Assessment Teams
 - Local Coordination Teams

Organizations interested in participating on the global IDR Network disaster response teams should contact the IDRN Director.

- **Hope Resource Network**

The Hope Resource Network (HRN) was formed to network warehouses and logistics partners that are interested in working together for relief and development operations. There is currently over 3 million sq. ft. of warehouse space and 40 members and locations in the network with operations expanding globally.

The HRN allows members of the Starfish Community to mobilize and manage a myriad of different types of gift-in-kind (GIK) resources for relief and development operations. Through our own Hope Warehouse and the HRN, HISG has supported container shipments to over 30 countries each year with materials ranging from hospital and school supplies to warm clothing and shoes. Contact the HRN Manager if you would like to join this network.

- **Business Partners Alliance (BPA)**
Another new network being launched is called the Business Partners Alliance (BPA). The purpose of the BPA is to provide business leaders with practical opportunities to fulfill their purpose in life and support corporate social responsibility initiatives in line with their business operations. Once participants have engaged the Starfish Community and successfully conducted some type of project, these business leaders are then empowered to launch their own small Circle of influence and select their own area of focus. BPA participants are encouraged to meet other Starfish Community partners and explore all the options of joining the community. Interested business professionals should contact the BPA Director.
- **Resource Sharing**
In the past, HISG specialized in mobilizing and providing the types of resources listed below. With the Starfish Community now being established, there are many partners within the network that are providing resources as well. The overall intent of the network has been for members to engage in resource sharing through both giving and receiving. Those who have been on the receiving end in the past are now beginning to give back into the network. Many times the giving can involve time or experience; it does not need to be financial. Each new member that joins the network continues to increase the overall assets of the network for relief and development. Examples of resources across the Starfish Community include:
 - Grant Requests
 - Business Startup Capital
 - Gift-in-Kind Materials
 - Logistics Support
 - 26 Subject Matter Expert Deployable Teams (12 HIST/14 IDR Categories)
 - Short-Term Internships (1-2 Months)
 - Long-Term Field Assignments (1-2 Years)
- **Internships and Field Assignments**
The Starfish Community provides unique short-term internships (1-2 months) and longer-term field assignments (1-2 years) for individuals interested in supporting relief and development operations in developing countries.

Joining the Starfish Community

How can you get involved?

In the previous section, we explored the actions being taken to connect and network a decentralized Starfish Community. We also reviewed the capabilities that have been developed and made available to the Starfish Community including infrastructure and services.

In this section, we will explore how interested organizations and individuals can immediately plug into the Starfish Community and begin making a difference. A flowchart is provided as Attachment 1. The following concepts are included in this section.

- Starfish Community Participation
- Starfish Community Members – Practical Stories
- Contact Information for Support

HISG Starfish Community Participation

The HISG Starfish Community is a global network based on strong personal relationships. Many members of the community have been working together for years, while others are relatively new. Regardless of how long a member has been interactive in the network, we all have one thing in common-- a desire to bring hope and a future to the underprivileged of the world. As a network of networks, the Starfish Community is committed to “Connecting Resources to Needs”. The goal is to provide a venue for ordinary people to make an extraordinary difference in the lives of those in need.



The following activities provide a number of potential opportunities for interested parties to join the community and begin making a difference today!

- Join the Starfish Community

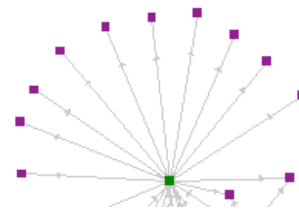


The Starfish Community is a relational network. There is no paperwork or agreement to sign in order to join the community. There are no dues or fees. Since the community is based upon relationships of trust, the way you join the network is to determine that you want to work together with friends! You can join by going to the website at www.StarfishCommunity.net.

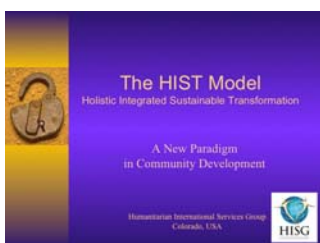
- Learn about the cultural DNA of this Tribe
It is important that joining members feel they belong to the “tribe”. The culture and ideology of the Starfish Community tribe will be shared by fellow members and posted on the website. We request that all community members learn about the cultural DNA of this community. Not all newcomers will belong to, or feel a part of this tribe and there is nothing wrong with that. We are all called to work together with someone or some group. Our hope is that each person will find the right place of fit!



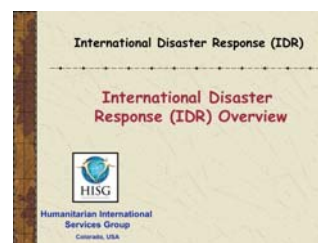
- Form an Starfish Community Circle of Influence
Small (6-12 members) relational Circles are the best vehicles to engage the Starfish Community. As a member of a small relational Circle (circles of influence), members find community, equality and camaraderie. Once the Circle is formed, members can work together to select a specific category of focus and regional location for operations in support of relief or development projects. Review of the HIST and IDR Models on the website will provide some baseline information helpful in making this decision. Once a decision has been made, members can work with other members of the community to begin moving forward.



- Review and Learn about the HIST and IDR Models



The HISTG HIST (Development) and IDR (Relief) Models provide a proven foundation for success. We highly recommend that all members of the community review these models. They can be found online at www.HISG.org.

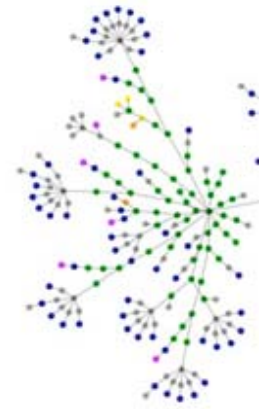


- Receive Training on the HIST and IDR Models
Interested individuals and organizations can receive training on the HIST and IDR Models. Training venues include interactive classroom style lectures and soon to be provided, web-based videos. Those interested in interactive presentations should contact the HISTG Training Director.
- Select a Category of Focus and Location for Operations
Selecting a category of focus (12 Development and 14 Relief Categories), is easier accomplished upon completion of the HIST and IDR Model review. Members are encouraged to select any area of operation in which they have an interest or skill. HISTG focuses primarily on the most difficult, unstable and underdeveloped regions of the world, but the Starfish Community will cover a much broader geographic region. If you need help talking through this decision, give us a call!



- **Build Your Network**

Once you have established a starfish Circle, chosen your area of focus, and determined where you would like to work, you can immediately begin making a difference. Start by building your relational resource network to support your project. Find out who would be interested in helping. Find experts in your category of focus and learn from them. Read articles and search out the website to gain more understanding. Determine what resources you have at your disposal. Develop a simple plan to move forward. Call us if you need help!



- **Complete the Capabilities Survey**

Completion of the online Capabilities Survey provides a clearer picture of the assets within your Circle or organization. Mapping your assets serves two purposes. First, the survey is built around the 26 service categories and enables members to network with others of similar interest across the network. Second, registrants will be provided opportunities to join a support team when their specific skill set is requested by a local organization in the field. The Capabilities Survey can be completed on the website at www.StarfishCommunity.net

- **Make Connections on the Ground**

When you are ready to move forward with implementation, interact with members of Starfish Community to identify connections in the geographic region or location where you would like to work. Ask them what they need and how you can help. These communications will help you more accurately define your simple action plan.

- **Begin Resource Sharing**

Resource sharing can include a wide variety of options including elements of both giving and receiving. Maybe you have funding that can help with a Grant or Business Startup. Maybe you have a container of material that you want to ship to your location of operation but you need help with logistics. Maybe you have a specific skill and you want to join a team that will travel to your area of interest, and you want to go with others who might be interested.

- **Qualify to become an IDR Network (IDRN) Response Team Member**

Those who choose to become part of the global IDR Network Response Team can get additional training to qualify them for participation. Level 2 Training qualifies participants to participate as an IDRN Response Team Member within his or her own country. Level 3 qualifies members to participate as part of an international response effort. Qualified members can establish direct contact with the Global Operations Center (GOC) during disasters to support information sharing and collaboration.



- **Share Information with the Global Information Center (GIC)**

Once your Circle is up and running with community development initiatives, sharing information with the HISG GIC will enhance the ability of the whole Starfish Community to support your efforts through resources sharing.

- Invite others into the Starfish Community
The Starfish Community is a network of relationships. If you like what we are doing, bring a friend. If you have problems, call us. We are here to serve those who want to make a difference!



Starfish Community Members – Practical Stories

The following stories are real-life examples of Starfish Community members that have participated in community development and disaster response initiatives. They are provided as practical examples for how community members can engage and participate in resource sharing across the community.

Community Development

- Medical Supplies in Indonesia – A successful businessman in Indonesia built a local hospital to serve the poor. The hospital is in need of medical equipment and supplies to outfit their operations. The Hope Resource Network has contacted medical providers within the community that are now responding to the need. The Starfish Community has multiple partners and networks that provide medical supplies at low to no cost.
- Field Assignments – An experienced NGO worker in Europe was looking for a long-term assignment in the field. An organization in the Starfish Community built a Guest House in Darfur Sudan that was in need of a manager and hired the worker. There are many partnering organizations scattered throughout the world that are seeking personnel for long-term field assignments.
- 15 Truckloads of Shoes – A tornado tore the roof off a shoe-manufacturing warehouse in the central United States. The business owner called and asked if the community could use the shoes. The Hope Resource Network (HRN) accepted and transported all the shoes within a couple weeks. The HRN was established to address issues such as these where it would be very difficult for a single organization to respond to or absorb such an offer.
- Business Conference in Mali – Local business leaders in Mali requested practical training for business startup, operations, and management. A trainer in South Africa responded by offering a one-month intensive training program. Another community member provided the funding.
- Education in Argentina – A small city in Argentina has been in great need of educational curriculum for many of their schools. A native from Ecuador had moved to the US and came in contact with one of the community members. A local donor responded to the need and subject matter experts reviewed two curriculum providers within the community to identify the best solution set. City leaders are now engaging this project as a pilot for their region.
- Computers in Ecuador – The First Lady of Ecuador requested computers for their school system. One of the community members donated 400 computers with software for school children. Another partner in the community transported the shipment.
- Global Information Center Internship – A college student wanted an internship that was focused on their specific area of study. The HISG Global Information Center provides summer internship opportunities and the two of them were connected. There are short-term internship opportunities throughout the Starfish Community.
- Hope Resource Network Warehouses – A successful business leader with significant warehouse space across the US wanted to participate in the community. They recently joined the Hope Resource Network with over 2.8 million square feet in their operation.
- Logistics Partner – A number of logistics partners have been excited about what has been

happening and wanted to join the Starfish Community. Many have now moved multiple container shipments in response to needs within the community and have even funded the transport.

- Medical Initiatives in Philippines – A local doctor in the Philippines wanted to help respond to the medical needs of the poor. Through their circles of influence they mobilized medical professionals from four cities to collaborate on a week-long initiative. The military provided transport and a community member funded the project.
- World Cup Soccer Player Benefit Tour – Following Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, world cup soccer players in Brazil wanted to support reconstruction efforts for local communities. A community member in Brazil coordinated the effort by raising support and managing the tour. They connected with a community member in South East Asia to support in-country arrangements.
- Students Support Efforts – A professor that teaches disaster relief operations wanted to get his students practically involved in relief operations. They talked with HSIG about supporting the Global Operations Center during disasters. Future plans call for these students to help gather disaster related information during a real event.
- HIST and IDR Training to Community Leaders – An NGO in the Southern Philippines wanted to conduct disaster preparedness and response training for local volunteers. A community member stepped up to provide the training, which was attended by government, military, police and business leaders within the community. This has opened the door to ongoing community development training and projects.
- School Supplies for Filipino Children – A housewife wanted to respond to the needs of schools children in the Philippines that had no school supplies. She worked with her local Girl Scout troop to put together simple backpacks, each containing a specific amount of school supplies. They provided over 400 backpacks that were transported by a community member and endorsed by the President of the country.
- Canada Office opens China Office - HISG Offices are located in multiple locations around the world. They function as independent and autonomous organizations that are connected to the community. Some are even launching their own satellite offices in new regions of the world. Circles birthing new Circles; simple, effective, and reproducible.
- Academic Institutions – One of the Starfish Community members is an academic institution that focuses on practical learning and holistic development. They have been interested in partnering with an organization that can provide their students practical opportunities for internships, especially in the international arena. The Starfish Community has a host of organizations with internship programs.
- Block Factory in Yemen – A business leader wanted to go to Yemen to see how he could help the poor with job creation. He toured a local community and talked with residents about a project to manufacture blocks. Working with a local NGO, he financed the project to launch the operation and he revisits the site periodically to provide business expertise to the operations.

Disaster Response

- “Let’s Save One” Campaign – A young couple was very interested in the work of the Starfish Community. As they explored the many opportunities to get involved, they were moved by the needs of a young mother in Sudan that was featured in the HISG Let’s Save One program. They provided a financial donation that helped enable a critically-required surgery. They helped save a life! Each person in the Let’s Save One program is in a life and death situation.
- Clothes for Syrian Refugees – A church member in the US was motivated by an incoming family from Syria to go and see the needs of Iraqi refugees in North Syria first hand. She was able to meet with the UN and establish the ground work for receiving container shipments of winter clothes. One Starfish Community member provided the clothing shipment and another member paid for the transport. Warm clothes are now on the way to needy refugees.

- Feeding Stations in Texas – A Starfish Community member located a community of over 20,000 people without food and water following a recent hurricane. One of the partners established a feeding station to respond to the needs of this community. This same partner has offered to train Starfish Community volunteers in food station operation to support future response initiatives.
- Myanmar Coalition – Cyclone Nargis relief efforts in Myanmar were hampered by restricted access. A community member facilitated a regional meeting in Bangkok that was attended by Myanmar leaders and a large contingent of NGOs. Another Starfish Community member funded the meeting. The meeting resulted in the formation of a Coalition that was later recognized by the Myanmar government and accomplished many significant response initiatives.
- Myanmar Medical Teams – Starfish Community members from three nations combined their efforts for a collaborative medical response to Cyclone Nargis. Medical professional from the US, Brazil and Singapore responded as a single unit to bring medical relief and water filtration systems to the impacted people of the Delta region. Four different members within the community combined their resources to fund the initiative.
- Sichuan Province – Disaster response to the Sichuan Earthquake in China was also met with access restrictions. One of the Starfish Community members had founded the premier local response organization more than 20 years earlier. Being respected by the local government, community members were allowed to be one of the first organizations to enter the earthquake zone with the Chinese Red Cross and the Chinese Army to support the response effort.
- Gaza Medical Teams – A medical response team from Hungary approached one of the Starfish Office members for financial support to respond to the crisis in Gaza. They had gained permission to enter the region through another partner. Two member of the community responded to fund the medical response effort.

Contact Information

The following information is provided to help those interested in joining the community, or those who are already members, get help. Please make contact with the appropriate individual first and if your communications attempts fail, then contact anyone of us and we will follow up.

- Catalyst – Kay Hiramine, KHiramine@HISG.org, 1-719-332-5006
- Executive Director – Mike McCausland, MMccausland@HISG.org, 1-719-337-4913
- Disaster Response Director – Keith Stone, KStone@HISG.org, 1-214-801-2000
- Intl. Director - Asia, S. America – Tom Jennings, TJennings@HISG.org, 1-719-650-4939
- Intl. Director - Middle East, N. Africa – Norm Brinkley, NBrinkley@HISG.org, 1-719-900-9197
- Training Director – Charlene Jennings, CJennings@HISG.org, 1-719-650-5228
- Hope Resource Network Manager – Scott Whiting, SWhiting@HISG.org, 1-616-502-3144
- Global Information Center Manager – Matt Wallace, MWallace@HISG.org, 1-303-222-1940

Attachment 1

