



Better Futures: An International Network and Forum on Communities, Universities, Livelihoods and Citizenship

Draft Program Plan for 2015 – 18

**For review at the BFN International Forum
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Table of Contents

I. Summary	1
II. Identity: Who we are, Vision and Values	2
II.1 Who we are – the partner organizations	2
II.2 Vision and Values	4
III. Role & Positioning, Outcomes, and BFN's Approach To Programming	5
III.1 The Role of the Better Futures Network	5
III.2 Outcomes of the 2015 – 18 Program Plan	6
III.3 Program Strategy and Activities	7
III.4 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	9
IV. Governance and Management of the BFN	10
IV.1 Boundaries and Membership	10
IV.2 Management and Governance of the BFN	11

ANNEX : Monitoring & Evaluation – Theory of Change Separate document

I. SUMMARY

“Better Futures” is an international knowledge network. We mobilize knowledge to strengthen sustainable communities, building on what now exists and generating new knowledge of livelihoods, the social economy, active citizenship and social and technical innovation.

The BFN embraces people from universities, research organizations, and the marginalized communities they work with, as well as organizations from the public and private sectors and from civil society. During the years 2015-18, members of BFN will develop and consolidate the network as an effective organization bringing practical and academic knowledge to bear on the diverse and difficult challenges to community well-being. Founded in 2012-13 by a partnership between universities and networks in Canada and Brazil, the BFN will transform itself into a global network by 2018.

This Program Plan sets out the essentials of the network, to be fully operational by December 2018:

1) Its programming, built around these key themes:

- Livelihoods – productive work and an income to live on;
- A new generation of community leaders—young women and men;
- Living with climate change and building a healthy environment;
- Secure and healthy food and water;
- Realizing the human, civil and social rights of active citizens; and
- Ending violence against women and all forms of discrimination.

2) The role, outcomes and program strategy of the BFN:

- Role: The BFN uses knowledge to support collaboration among communities and their organizational allies—partnerships which improve communities’ well-being, and which strengthen their resilience and sustainability.
- We foresee three clusters of outcomes:
 - Community outcomes: The principal test of BFN’s effectiveness will be the relevance and utility of Community outcomes of its knowledge, and its contribution to improvements in community wellbeing.
 - Institutional outcomes: The BFN will provide an effective space and structure in which members can learn from each other about issues, methodologies, successes and failures. Members will produce new knowledge, systematize existing knowledge, and disseminate both.
 - Policy outcomes: BFN members will build on their achievements with and within communities by engaging with public policy and decision-makers locally, nationally, and globally.
- The network’s approach to programming rests on an internet platform, with ICTs critical to both internal and external communications.
 - Every participant in the network will have the right to post information on the network’s platform, and every community involved has a similar right to a home page.
 - Personal interaction remains central to BFN’s way of working: regional and global learning forums, workshops for dialogue and exchange, training, planning and review; joint research projects; and the like. Face-to-face work builds and maintains mutual trust and

respect.

- Language policy: Currently, the working languages of the network are English and Portuguese, with English the default mode. The BFN will provide simultaneous interpretation
- in its forums, as well as translation to ensure that documents and audiovisual materials
- on its website are available in at least two working languages.
- The BFN makes the key assumption that knowledge gained from practice can be generalized and adapted, taken to scale, and applied to public policy.

Specific program activities will depend on members' thematic priorities, but will include:

- Applied research in diverse fields, with workshops and outreach to test and disseminate results;
- Learning forums and training workshops, big and small in scope and application;
- Website development and maintenance, especially for data-banks, interactive resources, and multi-media presentations;
- Public policy development, assessment and evaluation, based on BFN members' practice as well as wider evidence. Policy products include briefs, proposals, and dialogues; syntheses of original and secondary research to highlight key themes, conclusions and outstanding questions, and methods.

3) Its governance and management:

- BFN members will be individuals. At the same time, organizational relationships and action are essential to the network. Its focus is co-operation between communities and their organizational allies to improve community well-being, and individual members are a bridge between organizations and the network.
- The BFN's Co-ordinating Committee, therefore, will include among its twelve members, individuals from key organizations which have helped to resource the BFN, which are globally or regionally prominent, or which are themselves networks.
- A key consideration will be ensuring that young people and women participate in the leadership and governance of the BFN.
- Staffing will include a Co-ordinator, who leads the Co-ordinating Committee; an Executive Secretary, with overall responsibility for day-to-day management; complemented by administrative capacity.

4) Its budget. The Draft Mid-Term Program Plan presents a four-year budget for the program and management of the BFN. The financial budget for 2015-2018 is C\$ 980,000. Related in-kind costs and contributions are still to be detailed. An Annex summarizes potential funding sources.

5) The Program Plan concludes with an **Action Plan for 2014**. This is intended to guide the transition from the November 2013 Forum, so that by December 2014 the BFN is adequately resourced with people, structures, and budget.

II. IDENTITY: Who we are, Vision & Values

II.1 Who we are – the partner organizations

BFN began as the initiative of an Organizing Group comprising senior faculty members of Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada, and senior representatives of COEP, a social mobilization network headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with close links to the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. The members of this group are:

- Prof. Ted Jackson, Senior Research Fellow, Carleton Centre for Community Innovation (3ci), School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University
- Sr Andre Spitz, President, COEP, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Sra Gleyse Peiter, Executive Secretary, COEP National, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Technical Co-ordinator of the Herbert de Souza Laboratory for Technology and Citizenship in COPPE, within the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)
- John Saxby, Ph. D., independent consultant and researcher with COEP, based in Ottawa and also affiliated with 3ci.

The idea of the BFN arose from conversations over several years among members of this group. COEP has long been interested in communicating and co-operating with like-minded organizations outside Brazil which have knowledge and experience of community development. Carleton faculty members in turn see COEP's organizational model and experience as relevant to activists beyond Brazil.

Following is a brief description of the founding partner organizations.

COEP is a national social mobilization network. Established in Rio de Janeiro in 1993 to mobilize institutional and public action in support of the popular movement against hunger and poverty, its membership now includes more than 1000 organizations—public enterprises, non-government organizations, private-sector firms, and government departments. Its affiliates include a network of individuals (with more than 32,000 members) and a network of well over a hundred “COEP communities” throughout Brazil.⁽¹⁾ In 2008-09, COEP refocused its work towards Climate Change, Poverty and Social Inequality—particularly, the effects of climate change on vulnerable communities.

UFRJ, the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, one of Brazil's premier public universities, is a founding member of COEP and a key supporter of its work. COPPE, the Alberto Luiz Coimbra Institute for Graduate Studies and Research in Engineering of the UFRJ, hosted COEP's first secretariat in the late 1990s. In 2011, COPPE and COEP inaugurated the Laboratório Herbert de Souza de Tecnologia e Cidadania, the Herbert de Souza Laboratory for Technology and Citizenship.⁽²⁾ A joint undertaking of the two organizations, the Laboratório aims to promote sustainable communities by using technical innovation to strengthen communities' collective assets. The Laboratório will anchor the Brazilian node of the Better Futures network. Its Technical Co-ordinator is Sra. Gleyse Peiter, Executive Secretary of COEP's national network.

The Carleton Centre for Community Innovation (3ci) of Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, is a research unit within the graduate School of Public Policy and Administration. One of the largest and most active research centres in the university, 3ci uses research and education to strengthen social finance and enterprise, responsible investment, community-based economic development, and local governance both in Canada and beyond. 3ci's lifespan matches that of COEP:

1 COEP's website, www.coepbrasil.org.br, includes a description of its members and activities, as well as links to its data banks and its affiliated networks of communities and individuals. COEP's data banks include social and economic development projects as well as initiatives on climate change, poverty and social inequality.

2 The Laboratory Betinho, as it is known, is named in honour of Herbert de Souza, "Betinho", the key motive force in COEP's creation, a beloved social activist and (as a political refugee during the 1970's and early 1980s) a lecturer at York University in Toronto. COPPE's mandate includes excellence in engineering and research, but also responding to the challenges of Brazilian society, notably poverty, inequality and climate change.

celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2013, it has a well-established focus on research and program management in community economic development. In 2011, 3ci broadened its mandate and networks to include nonprofit and philanthropic management, by merging with the Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development. Prof. Ted Jackson is Senior Research Fellow and co-founder of 3ci; its Director is Dr. Tessa Hebb. 3ci will be the operational anchor for Carleton's node in the proposed network, the counterpart of the Laboratório. Its website is to be found at www.carleton.ca/ccci

In November 2013, Carleton is launching its own new Social Innovation Centre, 1124@carleton.ca. Dr Hebb, Director of 3ci, is the interim Director of the new Centre.

II.2 Vision and Values

Throughout much of the world, today's global political economy is not working for communities.⁽³⁾ Communities across the globe are working hard to meet the challenges of a world economy that is changing rapidly and profoundly. Faced with continued high unemployment, inhospitable labour markets, and depleted natural resources, young people desperately want to build new, positive futures for themselves and their peers. So do households facing poverty, and other groups in society coping with social and economic marginalization.

This situation is unacceptable. It is time for a serious, sustained effort to mobilize resources, create new solutions and build new momentum to address these issues—within communities themselves, among society's social and economic institutions, and among policymakers.

We see communities, universities and research organizations working together and learning from one another, to build a future that works for communities and their allies. We are convinced that the BFN can contribute to that process—creating social space and institutional structures for dialogue and learning across geographic and boundaries, promoting examples of innovation from the bottom up, testing ideas through practice, engaging sympathetic policymakers and challenging those who are not.

This network includes not only people from universities and research organizations. Universities are social institutions with valuable continuity and history. But, the BFN embraces individuals from other public and para-public organizations, such as NGOs and public operational agencies, which also have a strong record of research, analysis, and popular education with communities. The members of the BFN are also part of networks with member organizations from the private sector. We therefore opt for an inclusive approach, and welcome to the network and its forums people a diverse range of organizations as well as the communities with which they work.

3 As the Summary on p. 1 indicates, by “communities” we mean especially communities of place, especially communities which have been marginalized by and excluded from their country’s principal political and economic processes. They may also be impoverished, especially by comparison with more privileged regions or social groupings. We should note that in Brazilian discourse, the word “communities” carries this meaning.

Building better futures also means working for a different type of development—one which is equitable, participatory, and inclusive, and in which all members of society have a voice and share the benefits of development. A different development is one in which communities take an active part in the core decisions affecting their well-being: citizens are participants in public life, not targets of decisions taken by far-off governments or unaccountable corporations. We believe that people have a right to earn a decent living without being forced to face the uncertainties and hazards of migration.

We see a development in which:

- Young people and women, too often ignored, play lead roles in deciding what is to be done and how;
- Citizens’ rights to speak, assemble and organize are guaranteed, and actors in public life at all levels demand and reward transparency, accountability and ethical behaviour;
- The development “project” is ecologically sustainable, so that we leave a healthy environment for our children and for life on the planet.

We believe that universities, research organizations and communities can work together effectively in a common cause:

- Universities can offer technology, research-analysis-pedagogy, and networks which cross the borders of regions, countries & continents.
- Communities have built local and practical knowledge and expertise over many generations. They have deep experience with the discipline of applying and refining or rejecting ideas and techniques.
- There are real cultural differences between the two, but we can overcome these with mutual respect, shared values, and an honest readiness to learn together.

III. ROLE & POSITIONING, OUTCOMES, and BFN’S APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING

III.1 The Role of the Better Futures Network follows from its identity:

BFN is an international knowledge network. It generates, gathers and stores, and distributes knowledge, especially practical knowledge. And, it assists communities and their organizational allies to mobilize knowledge—using it to strengthen communities and improve their well-being. As they do so, the members of the network—people from universities, research agencies and civil society organizations—make themselves more relevant and effective.

- The BFN is not itself operational. But, practice and the knowledge accumulated from that experience lie at the heart of the logic and method of the network. Its “currency” is knowledge which is informed by practice, and which in turn aims to inform and guide the practice of people from universities, research organizations and civil society working with communities – including operational agencies⁴.

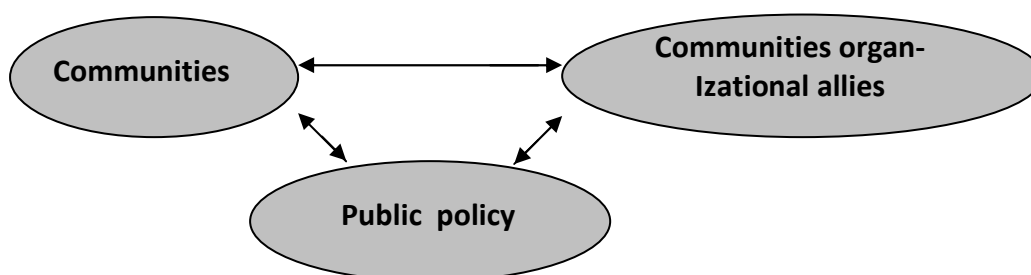
4 “Knowledge informing practice” may not mean applying knowledge—sometimes, it means not doing something.

- Nor is BFN a funding organization—but it will identify and help to mobilize resources for communities and their allies.

The BFN positions itself this way:

- Its purpose is to use knowledge to support collaboration among communities and their organizational allies—partnerships which improve communities’ well-being, and which strengthen their resilience and sustainability.
- It generates, gathers, stores and disseminates in-depth practical and theoretical knowledge which can advance this purpose.⁵
- The network includes but is not limited to people from universities and research organizations:
 - It members include people from operational agencies which have significant capabilities for research and/or training. These are public, para-governmental and civil society organizations. BFN member networks also count corporate entities within their membership. (Fn. 5 shows an example.)
 - The network extends to community members themselves, working with their organizational allies.

- BFN puts knowledge to work in three related domains:



III.2 Outcomes of the 2015 – 18 Program Plan: We foresee outcomes in three key areas:

1) Community outcomes: The test of the effectiveness of the BFN as a knowledge network—the creative dialogue, learning and diversity described above—will be the relevance and utility of knowledge generated and disseminated by the network, and its contribution to real improvements in community wellbeing.

There are two domains or stages here:

- First, **building the capacity to learn and to perform** within and among those diverse institutions and communities, both North and South;
- Secondly, **applying this capacity** to stimulate real improvements in the wellbeing of communities, and in the effectiveness of the institutions themselves. In this sense, “Capacity realized” will be the real test of the relevance and utility of the knowledge created by the network.

5 As an example: COEP’s documentation of PRONINC, a partnership including the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, FIOCRUZ, Brazil’s principal primary health care research agency and the site of the national school of public health; and Banco do Brasil, the country’s largest bank, which is a publicly-owned corporation. All are COEP members, who worked together in the late 1990s to create an

incubator for a popular co-operative in a large favela in Rio de Janeiro. That initiative became part of public policy, so that there are now more than 60 such incubators hosted by universities across the country.

2) Institutional outcomes, within the BFN itself: By the end of this Program Plan, we expect that BFN will offer an effective space and structure for its members to reflect on and learn from each other about issues, ideas, experience and skills, methodologies, successes and failures. The network will be adequately resourced, and its management and governance will be transparent and functional. Particularly important here will be the mobilization of the network's diverse human assets—the experience, knowledge, and commitment of organizations and communities collaborating across cultural, organizational, geographic and administrative boundaries.

We expect the BFN to work with two streams of knowledge—producing knowledge, gathering and storing it, and disseminating it:

- Systematization of existing knowledge, especially experiential knowledge. A current example is COEP's work to make the methodology of the Programa Comunidades Semiárido available to other communities in Brazil.
- Research to generate new knowledge and ideas.

3) Policy outcomes: We foresee BFN members building on their achievements with and within communities, and in the institutional development of the network itself, by engaging with public policy and challenging policymakers locally, nationally, and globally. Issues and conditions will vary with time and place, but we expect the knowledge of the network to inform policy proposals, support the mobilization of resources, and earn credibility and legitimacy for its members.

Note: We will construct a framework of results and indicators after the November 2013 Forum, when we have a profile of the network's members and their programming directions. These will be built into the monitoring and evaluation plan for this Program Plan. See below, Section III.4.

III.3 Program Strategy and Activities

BFN's programming strategy and its particular programming activities follow from the network's identity, role and positioning, and from the outcomes we expect to achieve.

Following is a summary of three key elements of BFN's approach to programming:

1) The core themes and issues of the work of the BFN are drawn from members' work with communities. Currently, these include the following:

- Livelihoods – productive work and an income to live on;
- A new generation of community leaders—young women and men;
- Living with climate change and building a healthy environment;
- Secure and healthy food and water;
- Realizing the human, civil and social rights of active citizens; and
- Ending violence against women and all forms of discrimination.

These themes can also be summarized in this way:

Themes	Transverse Issues (relevant to all themes)		
	Community Empowerment & Sustainability, especially engaging women and youth	Innovation – social & technical	Mobilization & advocacy
Climate Change & Vulnerability; Environment; Food & Water Security			
Livelihoods – work & income for a decent living			
Community Development and Organization			
Rights, Citizenship, Eradication of Violence & Discrimination			

The case studies presented at the November 2013 International Forum of the BFN examine these themes in depth and in specific contexts. The case studies show the current program strategies and activities of BFN members. They are also pointers for future programming.

2) Internal and external communications are foundations of BFN’s organization, methods, and outcomes: dialogue, exchange and outreach are the lifeblood of a network of this kind. The vehicles for communication are many:

- ICTs are critical enabling tools. They include email, social media, websites, conferencing software, multi-media streams, and databanks. BFN will be based on an internet platform. In the first instance, we suggest using COEP’s existing technology adapted to the new setting of an international network. Every participant in the network will have the right to post information on the network’s platform, and every community involved may have a home page. The platform will include both a public and a members-only section.
- The BFN uses printed text and images, in book and pamphlet form, as well as audio-visual records, carried in different media.
- Personal interaction remains central to BFN’s way of working. The November 2013 International Forum is the network’s first public event. Its future space and structures will include Forums, both global and regional; workshops for dialogue and exchange, training, planning and review; joint research projects; and the like. Such face-to-face work plays a big part in building and maintaining mutual trust and respect.
- The “building blocks” of the network’s communications, both internal and external, and carried by different media, will include: case studies of varying breadth, depth and complexity; reviews of literature; users’ guides; policy briefs and proposals; research proposals and reports; occasional papers; records of Forums and workshops. Our preference is to make these materials as accessible as possible to users of the public portion of the BFN website.
- **Language policy:** Currently, the working languages of the network are English and Portuguese, with English being the “default mode”. We foresee adding French and Spanish. The BFN will provide simultaneous interpretation in its forums, as well as translation to

ensure that documents and audiovisual materials on its website are available in at least two working languages.

3) The BFN makes the key assumption that **knowledge gained from its members' practice can be generalized and adapted, taken to scale, and applied to public policy**. This process takes different forms:

- There will be instances where programs are geographically or numerically expanded, adapted to new circumstances, copied, or even replicated. Examples include the PRONINC program in Brazil, noted above, where a single initiative formed the basis of public policy, and provided a template for other institutional partnerships. A further, related example would be the process now under way in Brazil, where the federal government has asked COEP to codify the methodology used in its work with communities in the Semiárido in Northeastern Brazil, in order to adapt it for use with communities and institutions in other parts of the country.
- As knowledge created through at the community level is projected into the sphere of public policy, BFN members will generate policy briefs and proposals, convene and animate policy dialogue, and possibly participate in framing legislation or administrative procedures. This may happen at different levels—municipal, state or provincial, and national.

The particular **program activities** embraced by this approach will depend on the priorities of BFN members and the communities they work with. Members will use the occasion of the November 2013 Forum to outline their program agendas for medium term future. We expect they will include the following types of activities:

- Applied research in diverse fields, including workshops and outreach strategies to test and disseminate the results;
- Forums and workshops, big and small in scope and application;
- Website development and maintenance, especially for data-banks, interactive resources, and multi-media presentations;
- Public policy development, assessment and evaluation, based on BFN members' practice as well as wider evidence. Policy products include briefs, proposals, and dialogues; syntheses of original case studies and secondary research, and of public and grey literature, to highlight key themes, conclusions and outstanding questions, and methods;
- In all areas, strategies and plans for outreach and dissemination.

III.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:

This Draft Program Plan covers two stages in the growth and development of the BFN; both will be monitored and evaluated, and both will hold lessons for all involved. The first of these is the **Startup Phase** of the network, from the November 2013 Forum until the end of 2014. The second is the **Development Phase**, the four years 2015-18, covered by this Draft Program Plan.

The link between the two is simple, although far from easy: The Startup Phase will be successful if it proves to be the entrée to the Development Phase. The indicators of success will be:

- a committed and effective leadership core within a growing membership;
- an established organizational structure; and
- a well-designed and well-resourced program plan for the medium term.

If these are in place by the end of the Startup Phase, they will provide an organizational foundation for the longer-term program outcomes of the network.

For a longer-term evaluation framework, we will elaborate results and indicators for the outcomes above, and link those to specific program activities. Underlying these results is a detailed theory of change for how universities influence and contribute, through external partnerships, to inclusive, sustainable community and regional development. (This theory of change appears in Annex II, a separate PDF document accompanying this Program Plan.) The prime channels are: knowledge creation, knowledge mobilization, spending and investment. BFN's case studies and ongoing action research within the network will serve to test, interrogate and revise this theory of change. We believe it is a useful and appropriate starting point for understanding and facilitating change in the domains the network targets: livelihoods, citizenship, youth leadership, ICTs, food security, organic agriculture, social enterprise, climate change, renewable energy, and more.

Responsibility for monitoring the Startup Phase will rest with the Co-ordinating or Management Committee which we hope the Forum will establish. The 2014 Action Plan offers a framework of roles, responsibilities and indicators to be monitored. Costs—principally the time of key people—will be met by in-kind salary contributions and/or program revenues covering management costs of the network.

The challenge of organizational learning will play out in two domains. The first is the content of the BFN—the network is intended to promote joint inquiry and learning for more effective action to support community development initiatives and the changes expected to follow. The second is the creation and growth of the network itself. In the former, the process is already under way. We have noted above the two case studies which COEP is preparing for the November Forum; but these are just two of a much wider portfolio of applied research projects. There is a wealth of experience among existing and expected network members, in documenting and disseminating “what we are learning”. For the latter, this Draft Program Plan is the operational starting point. The organizing partners expect that both network members and external supporters will conduct regular joint analyses of what works and what needs adjusting.

IV. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE BFN

IV.1 Boundaries and Membership

1) Considerations:

- The focus of the BFN is co-operation between communities and their organizational allies to improve community well-being, using practical and theoretical knowledge to respond to issues like poverty, food security, climate change, and rights and citizenship. Organizational relationships in action are thus at the heart of the network's agenda.
- At the same time, the participants in this network-in-the-making are individuals, who bring their knowledge and commitment to the project. These individuals are also part of an organization — a university or a community, for example, a research organization, a network, a civil society organization. They may or may not represent or speak for their organization, but they do contribute some of its resources to the BFN, and their organization in turn benefits from their presence in the network.

- So, we see a creative tension within the BFN, between individuals and organizations: On one hand, the “atoms” of the network (individual people) are its working parts and its motive energy. On the other hand, they are part of organizations and draw upon organizational resources; and, as members of the BFN, they work to build more effective organizational relationships— i.e., productive co-operation between communities and their organizational allies. The individuals who make up the network can be seen as bridges or enablers for their organizations.

2) Proposals on membership:

We thus propose that:

- Members of the BFN will be individuals.
- The network will engage with a range of different organizations, benefitting from them and contributing to them. This means both making ourselves open to people from those organizations, and encouraging these organizations, including other networks, to play a role in BFN as supporters, occasional or long-term working partners, sponsors of events, and so on. (For examples on how this might be done, see points below on co-ordinating the network.) Thus, universities and communities working together are a key feature of the network. This feature is not exclusive, however. BFN includes civil society organizations, networks with members from the private sector, research organizations and operational agencies working with communities. These different organizations have common interests in education and research, mutual learning and training.
- Membership in the network will be based on an individual applying via the Co-ordinating Committee (below). His or her application will include a simple statement of agreement with the values, aims and objectives of the BFN.
- We will have 100 members of by the end of 2014, and 500 by the end of 2018.

IV.2 Management and Governance of the BFN

As noted in section III.3, the BFN will rest on an internet platform. COEP’s existing technology offers an established vehicle. Adapting COEP’s platform will require time and money, however, as well as a reasonably clear market of readers and regular users. (See section V, Resourcing the Network.)

1) Co-ordinating the Network: Structures, Positions, Functions

We propose a Co-ordinating Committee for the BFN with the following roles and membership:

- The role of the CC is to ensure the effective management and governance of the network, and to facilitate, encourage and support programming. The CC will work with the network’s members so that regular learning forums of the BFN also function as general assemblies, advising on the overall direction of the network, programming issues, etc.
- At least in the first stage of BFN’s life—say, to the end of 2016—the network will need a Co-ordinating Committee comprising individuals from:
 - organizations which have played a resourcing role (such as Carleton);
 - organizations which are well networked regionally and globally, such as the University of Victoria and PRIA; and

- networks such as COEP, UCPSARnet, APUCEN, or GUNi.

For the period between November 2013 and the start of the Mid-Term Program Plan (January 2015), it might be more effective to convene a core group as a Management Committee.

- In the longer term, we foresee a Co-ordinating Committee with up to twelve members.
- A key consideration will be ensuring that young people and women participate in the leadership

and governance of the network. COEP's positive experience with Comitês mobilizadores (Mobilizing Committees) in communities of the Northeast suggests considering a quota system, such as one-half the CC membership.

- Following are examples of the co-ordinating/facilitating role of a CC member:

- When an individual seeks to join the network, they would do so through a CC member, who would then take the application to the CC as a whole. The CC member(s) in a region would be responsible for encouraging participation in the BFN in that area. The CC would use a similar process if an organization seeks affiliation as a supporter.
- Each CC member would be responsible for co-ordinating programming in a particular region. Examples might be: COEP – Brazil and Latin America; Carleton – Canada, Central America; University of Witwatersrand – (Southern) Africa; Universiti Sains Malaysia Southeast Asia and the Pacific.
- For the forums of the BFN, CC members in a region would be responsible for bringing forward case studies from the region (not necessarily or only from their own organization), and for securing resources to enable participation at the forum. Participants would include both a person from the organization presenting the case study, and one or more members of the community/ies involved.

- Selection of CC members, and length of service: Regular forums will function as General Assemblies of the network to select CC members. Three-year terms staggered in the early years) will combine continuity with change.

Staffing

We propose two co-ordinating positions in the Network:

- The Co-ordinator would play a more political role, leading the BFN's Co-ordinating Committee.
- An Executive Secretary, secondly, would have overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the network, especially the internet platform. This position would be based in Canada at first, with a complementary capacity in Brazil. The budget in Section V also anticipates an administrative capacity, also at first in Canada and Brazil.
- In the first instance (with the exact schedule to be determined), COEP is offering to fill these two roles. In the second stage, COEP would become responsible for the Executive Secretaryship and the Co-ordination of the Committee would rotate.
- We thus foresee that the management function of the BFN will be dispersed and shared, with both staff positions and CC membership spread around the world.

2) Examples of program activities in this structure

- The BFN would build a databank of initiatives, fed by participating individuals and their organizations. People involved in these could feature in regular interviews—say, monthly or quarterly—posted on the internet platform. These would be virtual case-study presentations intended to stimulate debate between those presenting the cases, and participants in the wider network.
- Every participant in the BFN will be able to post notices, and each community will have a page in the Network's platform.
- The BFN website will make provision for discussion forums, to be initiated and sustained by individual members, and monitored by a webmaster. These may be open to the public if members so choose.
- Every 18 - 24 months the BFN will convene a face-to-face learning forum, each time in a different place, hosted by an organization linked to the CC.
- CC members would select case studies for these regular forums, and help to secure resources to support community participation. The case studies presented at the forum will make up a publication. Forum participants could vote on those experiences which have made the greatest impression.
- The BFN would create a databank of community exchanges within the network – communities which make themselves available to receive members, especially young people seeking an experience in other communities. These exchanges would be organized, resourced, and the responsibility of the members of the BFN, assisted by their organizations