

What We Talk About When We Talk About Growth  
*Alternative Narratives on the Future of Growth*

by

Kimberley Peter

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 Kimberley Peter, 2017

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# ABSTRACT

Increasing inequality, rising social unrest and climate change suggest new approaches to economic growth are needed. This project asked “How might reframing growth enable change to a more desirable alternative?” and used two primary approaches in the process of discovery. Causal Layered Analysis was used to understand causes, processes and outcomes of economic growth and alternatives to it. Three narratives were analyzed comparatively including the current growth-first narrative, an emergent participation narrative and a speculative freedom narrative. Outputs from this analysis were used to reframe economy and create an accessible and participatory role play experience for stakeholders to explore how change might happen. Responses to the role play experience show how powerful a participatory approach can be and provide insight into engaging diverse stakeholders as participants in the future of economy not just as receivers of economic policy. Proposals are presented based on candidate strategies generated through role play.

**KEYWORDS:** Growth, economy, causal layered analysis, system-level change, worldviews, narrative, metaphor, role play, reframing, wellbeing, innovation

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**1/**

# INTRODUCTION



# 1/

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2016 at the Parkland Institute's 20th Annual Conference in Edmonton, Alberta, John Ralston Saul gave the closing keynote entitled "The Canadian Economy: Denial, Delusion, or Cutting Edge?". In his talk, Saul provides a perspective on the idea of open narrative from a novelist's point of view and contrasts that to the narrow linear trajectories ideologues would prefer we embrace. The following excerpt from that speech provides a useful foundation for understanding narrative as an open or closed concept:

As a novelist, (...) we know that a novel has a story, has a narrative. But it's just a narrative inside many other narratives. The narrative doesn't begin with the first page of the novel and end with the last page of the novel. It's one of the problems. You have to choose how many characters you're going to have, and what the geographical space of the novel is going to be, knowing full well that just on the edge of each page are millions and millions of other people who aren't in your novel, and there are all of their experiences before, during and after. A great novel, when you start reading it you instantly understand that it's about the millions and millions of other people, including yourself.

That's what novelists understand about narrative. That's also what great economic historians understand about narrative. (...) Karl Polanyi, who is a very good example of who I would call an economic historian, understood the nature of shape and non-ideological understanding of narrative.

The thing about ideologues, of all sorts, whether they are idea ideologues, or self-interest ideologues, or financial ideologues, or whatever, is that they hate the idea of open narrative—the idea that outside their narrative there are other things going on, and the other things started going on before they started. (...)

This is as true of the abstract ideologue, the commodities ideologue or the banking ideologue. They are all looking for a narrow linear truth, and when you are provided with choice, the choice is almost always Manichean, either/or, black or white. (...) It's never, is there a third choice? How about twenty choices? How about complexity? How about the real narrative, in which many things are possible? That is one of the ways you know you are caught up in ideology is that you are either provided no choice, or you are provided two choices and it's pretty clear which one you are supposed to choose, which is the one that the person who is giving you the choice is offering you as the best choice. It has nothing really to do with reality (17:48-21:15).

## A CLOSED NARRATIVE

This excerpt from Saul's speech provides two foundational concepts related to this study. First is the notion of *closed narrative* in which the underlying ideologies, or worldviews, oversimplify reality and ignore diverse perspectives. Second is the concept of *choice*. Closed narratives leave little to no choice for the majority of participants living within them. Much of what informs the reality of advanced Western economies is based on a closed narrative or, as Saul describes it, a "narrow linear truth" in which economic growth is the hardened substrate. Reality, if we follow what Saul is saying, is more complex and inclusive of many possible truths, perspectives and people. And "real narrative, (is that) in which many things are possible".

Unlike novelists and the stories they construct, the larger narratives that define most people's everyday realities are not directly within their control but circumscribed by economic and political policies that were conceived in the twentieth century, and by successive policies since that time. These policies and the associated ideologies have created a narrow view through which much of Western society sees the world: that of the economic lens. The narrators of our reality, then, are economists and politicians from another time, yet they continue to frame the values of our society and both guide and limit the choices we make from the international organization level down to the individual.

Within the current economic lens a number of ideologies prevail, including the following:

1. *Growth will 'float all boats'* — This is a market orientation based on competition, self interest and trickle-down theory, which claims that economic benefits to the wealthiest will trickle down to benefit all in the society, an ideology embraced within the neoliberal political philosophy that was introduced in 1938 and first integrated into monetary policies in Britain and the United States in the 1970s (Monbiot, 2016).

2. *Productivity is (almost) everything* — With the invention of national income (Kuznets, 1934), a forerunner to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), came the invention of “the economy”, the ability to count a country’s output and later to compete with other nations on economic ranking.
3. *Innovation is the ‘holy grail’ of growth* — Significant economic growth and general societal advances came out of major innovations during the second industrial revolution in particular (Gordon, 2016). Innovation, with a focus on the digital variety, continues to be extolled as the source of growth and social benefit.

The ideologies and larger economic growth focus that pervade our world are collectively what Ivana Milojević and Sohail Inayatullah would call a “used future”. A used future is one that is inherited from the past and that we continue to accept without considering other possibilities. They are “based on assumptions that are no longer current, meaning these old assumptions about the nature of reality have been significantly challenged by economic, ecological, technological, demographic and cultural changes” (2015, p. 155). Given the ever-increasing inequality gap, rising social unrest and climate change, we are overdue for alternative approaches.

## OPENING THE NARRATIVE

In discussing “narrative foresight” as an approach to exploring, understanding, and transforming a current narrative to a desired future, Milojević and Inayatullah (2015) emphasize how “reality is framed and reframed” (p. 154) through narrative. Symbolically, narrative is the means through which we construct the world around us and organize knowledge about ourselves and others. Narratives are the stories we tell ourselves that provide an anchor for individual and collective meaning, frame what we value and prioritize, and guide our decisions and actions.

Appreciating the complexity of narrative in the sense that Saul (2016) presents, and using it as a tool for exploring transformative change by understanding underlying assumptions and reframing, Milojević and Inayatullah (2015) describe a structure for considering the components and processes that lead to prevailing ideological narratives and as a way of constructing alternative desired futures. In this structure, “beginnings” represent the causes, “middles” the processes and laws, and “ends” the outcomes and effects (Russell & Bryant et al., 2004, as cited in Milojević & Inayatullah, 2015, p. 154). These mappings of beginnings, middles and ends provide fitting containers for the context of the dominant narrative on economic growth described within this report and considered in relation to alternatives that emerged to the growth orientation. “Ends” are not necessarily resolutions but outcomes that trigger or give rise to other beginnings. Moreover, the narratives are not necessarily linear. The processes and outcomes of one narrative can be concurrent with another, adding to the complexity of the telling and, perhaps more importantly, to the experience of living them.

# REFRAMING GROWTH

The purpose of this research study is to understand the dominant and emerging narratives on economic growth and to explore how reframing might influence change toward desired alternative future narratives that are more socially inclusive and less environmentally extractive. Because reframing, if used successfully “by accessing what we and like-minded others already believe unconsciously, making it conscious, and repeating it till it enters normal public discourse” (Lakoff, 2004, p. xii-xiii), this project seeks to develop collectively-informed current and emerging narratives, explore how they might be used in participatory stakeholder engagements as a channel for generating ideas toward more desirable alternatives, and to use the learning to inform approaches to economic policy research and development.

## { Metaphor + Narrative Foresight + Role Play }

Metaphor, narrative foresight and role play are used as approaches for influencing transformative change because they each offer the possibility of reframing current situations in new ways and can do so with participation by those living the current situation and affected by potential social change (Jarratt & Mahaffie, 2009, p. 10; Lakoff, 2004, xiii; Milojevic & Inayatullah, 2015, p., 153). Reframing is believed to be necessary for constructing change by enabling people to see a situation through a different conceptual or emotional perspective, and do so through conscious and repeated usage (Lakoff, 2004, p. xii-xiii).

With this ground laid, the research study seeks to answer the following question:

*How might reframing growth  
enable change to a more  
desirable alternative?*

On the path to answering this question, a number of sub-questions are investigated:

- What is the current dominant narrative, including its causes, processes and outcomes?
- What are common underlying metaphors for the current dominant narrative?
- What alternative narratives are being explored? What motivated them, what might enable or be a barrier to them, and who is involved or affected?
- What alternative metaphors might inform an alternative narrative and resonate broadly?
- How might role play be used to engage and inform a broader representation of stakeholders and be used as a reframing approach to influence economic policy?

To better understand the current system and emerging alternatives, and to explore how we might navigate to desired alternatives, this study is structured in two phases of research and two primary frameworks, which are described next.

## APPROACH

The project is structured based on two phases, each with a specific purpose:

***Phase I: Understand the ‘What’***  
Understand dominant and alternative  
narratives on economic growth  
(A ‘descriptive’ approach)

***Phase II: Explore the ‘How’***  
Explore how reframing might influence  
change toward more desirable alternatives  
(A ‘prescriptive’ approach)

**PHASE I** — In the first phase of primary research focused on *understanding the narratives*, interviews were conducted with six subject matter experts working in the areas of, or related to, economics and economic policy. The interviews endeavored to understand perspectives on growth, what alternatives are being explored, and how we might get to an alternative narrative founded upon a wholly different metaphor and new ways of thinking, and guide our actions toward a more socially inclusive and less ecologically extractive system. The primary theoretical framework, and guide for informing the arc of the interviews, is Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) (Inayatullah, 2004) because it allows exploration of the topic at different levels: litany, social causes (systemic), worldview (discourse) and metaphor and myth. By going down to the level of metaphor and myth, we find the substance that shapes everyday realities for people and the level at which change might begin to be explored. This first phase of the project takes a broad *descriptive* approach using CLA as the way to structure themes revealed through talking to subject matter experts and is further informed by literature, media and attending events.

**PHASE II** — In the second phase of primary research focused on *exploring change*, a role play workshop was used to reframe and explore an alternative narrative to economy and economic growth. The primary framework guiding the discussion in the workshop, and for providing the structure for proposals for change, is Roman Krznaric’s “Rough guide to how change happens” (2007). Conceived as a rough guide, not a model, for considering how a particular change happened in the past in different contexts and from different perspectives this framework uses six questions that cover what the change is, who was involved, what strategies, contexts and pathways (or processes) were involved, and of those four middle questions what the main elements were that led to the change. For this study, these questions are asked not of how a change happened in the past but of how we might realize a change in the future. In this respect, the second phase of the project offers some *prescriptive* proposals for future consideration.

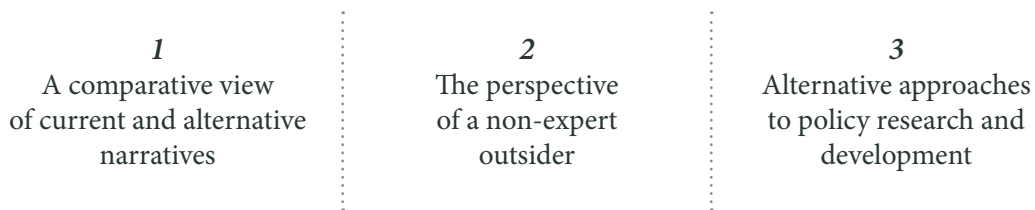
## RATIONALE

The rationale for taking this topic on was first motivated by the belief that the current economic system appears to be failing us in many ways including, but not limited to, growing inequality, social unrest and environmental degradation. As a systems and change research topic, the kindred questions of what are the alternatives to the current growth narrative and how might reframing growth enable change to a more desirable alternative became of increasing interest.



Much has been written both in favour of and in dissent to the current economic growth orthodoxy. Alternative ways of seeing and approaching economy have been proposed since its inception. What is not in abundance are comparative views of alternatives, which is something this study provides. Seeing different approaches to economy in relation to others allows us to consider options and provides reference points for exploring how we might craft the society we want and shape a different more open narrative to guide our lives.

In addition to bringing a comparative view, the study also brings the perspective of an outsider, a non-expert, and designer with the experience and tools of human-centered design. With that experience and toolset comes a commitment to applying new learning in systems thinking and foresight to a complex problem for the purpose of gaining experience in leading change. Extending this practice dimension is the observation that public policy “design” appears to be at the level of service delivery (the touchpoints between government and citizens). There is tremendous value in infusing service delivery with a human-centered approach, however, there is also value in expanding the role, practice and thinking of design to the level of policy research and development. As such, a second motivation and rationale for this project is to explore approaches that might be used with policy influencers and policy makers.



## SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Former US President Barack Obama (2013) described growing inequality as the “defining challenge of our time”. In an earlier speech, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon (2007) described climate change as the defining challenge. This study touches on both of these defining challenges because they are inextricably linked when looking at economic growth from a systems perspective. However, in an effort to narrow the scope, more of a focus is on inequality and examining causes, processes, outcomes and potential approaches to change.

The context of interest for the study is Canada and how alternative approaches to alternative narratives might provide insight to policy influencers and policy makers and how they engage citizens in crafting desired futures for themselves, their communities, and the country. Of course Canada is part of a larger global economic context and that context needs to be considered in the narratives. For that reason, the topic is explored in relation to other advanced Western economies, in particular Europe and the US, with a regular return to Canada as the focus.

One notable limitation arising from these factors is related to the final of the three narratives on freedom—the one put forward as the desired alternative—which takes only a limited number of signals into account. There are many signals toward an alternative that is not focused narrowly

on growth. However, it was not possible within the scope of the project to convey a more expansive panorama of possibilities, and hope, for change that are available and emerging. As such, the narrative offers ‘just enough’ to convey the essence of what freedom might look like.

Another notable limitation specific to the second phase of the project is related to the recruitment of participants for the role play activity. The participants were a highly-informed group comprised primarily of peers and alumni from the Strategic Foresight and Innovation program at OCAD University. They were recruited based on interest and willingness to participate in a role play activity. The group’s familiarity with one another and their heightened awareness of stakeholder diversity in complex systems might have contributed to the overall alliances reinforced or formed and fewer tensions between the stakeholders than anticipated. This is not an undesirable outcome, however, it is a variable to consider for future role play-based research.

## REPORT OVERVIEW

The report begins with the methodology, which is structured based on the two phases of research involving understanding the narratives and exploring change.

The *understanding the narratives* phase provides the larger context with three macro narratives that came out of the study. These take the labels of “domination” as the first narrative, “participation” as the second narrative, and “freedom” as the third narrative, where the first represents the *current* growth-first orientation and the second and third represent alternatives. The second narrative is *emergent* in that it is beginning to unfold now. The third narrative is largely *speculative* and based on past and current signals. The narratives were analyzed independently and comparatively and used to inform the second phase on exploring change.

The *exploring change* phase provides an overview of the role play activity and results derived from it. The two resulting outputs focused on stakeholder participation and potential collaborations, and on an inventory of candidate strategies for change. These two outputs provided the inputs and inspiration for a subset of *proposals for change*.

The final *conclusion and next steps* section brings closure to the study and suggests how it might be used upon completion.

## **2/** METHODOLOGY



## 2/

FOLLOWING FROM THE PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTION of “How might reframing growth enable change to a more desirable alternative?”, a combination of frameworks and methods were used to gather, analyze and synthesize inputs. The first part of this section describes the chosen approaches for this project, provides the theoretical underpinnings where more depth and background were considered warranted for methods or tools not self-describing, as well as the rationale for selecting a given approach as a means to answering the research questions.

The primary research was done in two phases: Understanding narratives and exploring change. This section is structured around the two phases. See Figure 2 for a visual overview of the project and methodologies used.

### UNDERSTANDING THE NARRATIVES

The first phase was focused on understanding how people working in economics and related professions think about the concept of growth and the economy. The purpose was to glean patterns related to the current narrative, including underlying metaphors and orthodoxies, and discover wholly different narratives and metaphors that might give us new ways of thinking and guide our actions toward a more socially inclusive and less ecologically extractive system.

### **Literature review**

A literature review at the onset of the project, and ongoing throughout, provided a historical foundation as well as themes associated with contemporary economic concerns, alternatives, and potential subject matter experts to interview. It was deliberately broad and inclusive of different dimensions because of the nature of the economic growth topic and how it broadly impacts different aspects of life, including but not limited to the social and ecological.

### **Events and presentations**

In addition to the literature review, attending events, speeches and presentations live and virtually, after the fact, was a useful source of data to enrich the review. It was also an opportunity for exposure to a diverse range of people working in areas related to the economy, including government representatives, non-governmental policy advisors and advocates, for-profit enterprise, startup and innovation representatives, social impact investors, economists, bankers, philosophers, journalists, essayists, theorists, and leading voices for Indigenous Peoples (see Appendix A for the list of events and presentations attended).

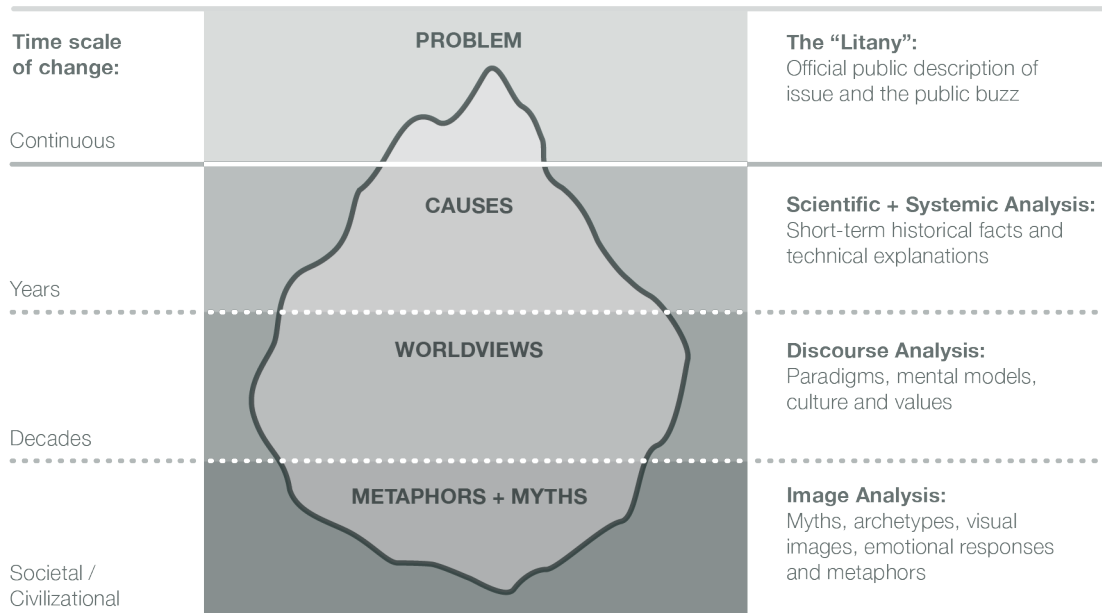
### **Semi-structured interviews**

Using a one-on-one semi-structured interview method with six subject matter experts, the interviews sought to understand diverse perspectives on how growth is and might be alternatively defined, what measures are used, what drivers underlie the definitions, what narratives pervade the discourse, what narratives are surfacing as alternatives, and what metaphors might be used to describe both the current and alternative narratives (see Appendix B for the interview guide). Each of these topic areas was investigated for how they represent different dimensions of interest on the topic of economic growth, and for how they can be analyzed at different causal layers of the system, described next.

### **Causal layered analysis**

To categorize and analyze the different views, inputs from the interviews, the causal layered analysis theoretical framework and methodology developed by Sohail Inayatulla (1998) was chosen because it provided a structure for considering the different perspectives at four levels, each with increasing depth: moving from the top-most *litany* level, to the social causation or *systemic* level, to the stakeholder discourse or *worldview* level, to the *metaphors and myths* level (Inayatullah, 2004, p. 8). According to Inayatullah, CLA “is also likely to be useful in developing more effective — deeper, inclusive, longer term — policy” (2004, p. 8). It is this potential for guiding policy that makes CLA an interesting methodology for exploring alternative narratives to economic growth.

Each of the four layers of the framework represents a different level of reality. All of which are legitimate and no one reality in particular is favoured (Inayatullah, 2013). (see Figure 1 for a conceptual representation of CLA).



**Figure 1.** Causal Layered Analysis (sourced from [https://librarynth.org/futurist\\_fieldguide/causal\\_layered\\_analysis](https://librarynth.org/futurist_fieldguide/causal_layered_analysis))

The litany level is the everyday and continuous thrall of news media, quantitative trends, events and problems of the moment. These tend to appear discontinuous and without connection, and are repeated, often overly punctuated, and used as material for political aims. This level of information is received as the “official unquestioned view of reality” (Inayatullah, 2005, p. 6). The effect of this belief is a feeling of helplessness and lack of individual power to do anything about the issues or to influence what happens next (Inayatullah, 2005, p. 6). An example at this level is the ongoing reportage about the slow Canadian economy (Fekete, 2016).

The social causation level reveals the systemic view with contributing factors from economics, culture, politics and history. This level provides context and explanation for what is happening at the litany level. Analysis and interpretation at this level tend to come from government and institutional sources in the form of reports, and sometimes surface in media editorials. These publications are weighted to quantitative and technical descriptions of phenomenon. While the data provided at this level are often debated, that debate tends to remain anchored in the same language of the content that is being criticized, and within the underlying paradigm that informs it. It is therefore inherently bound by the same paradigm (Inayatullah, 2005, p. 7). An example at this level is the report and associated recommendations from the Government of Canada’s Advisory Council on Economic Growth to “unlock innovation” as a means to drive growth in the economy (Advisory Council on Economic Growth, 2017a, 2017b).

The next and deeper level is that of worldview or discourse, which represents the ideological underpinnings to what is manifested at, and how stakeholders within give meaning and description to, the litany and systemic levels. Unconscious beliefs and assumptions about the way things are or ought to be can be explored at this level. Discourses are reflective of the

structures that underlie them, such as the economic, cultural or religious structures, and tend to be representative or constitutive of the issues rather than “cause or mediate” them (Inayatullah, 2005, p. 7). An example at this level is the underlying assumption that economic growth is good for all (Delong, 2006).

The fourth and deepest level is concerned with metaphors and myths. Images and emotions exemplify this level and exploration and analysis includes deeply ingrained stories within organizations, across society or civilization; archetypal representations that span a culture; and how people see things, such as “people as creative resources” (Inayatullah, 2005, p. 7-8). An example at this level is seeing the “economy as a garden” (Hennessey, 2014; Liu & Hanauer, 2011; World Economic Forum, 2015, p. 8).

It is this deconstructing and reconstructing that gives the basic structure to CLA, within which any issue analyzed can be summarized and communicated, as well as form the scaffolding for futures scenarios. This is the basic framework that will be used to represent the narrative themes that emerged through the interviews, literature and other sources reviewed.

### **Stakeholder analysis**

Part of understanding the narratives was discovering who the dominant voices are in each as well as who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged. This information was analyzed in the first phase and used to inform the role play in the second phase.

### **System mapping**

System archetypes were also used as analytical tools for understanding orthodoxies that surfaced through the interviews and supporting literature and events. These were augmentative analysis tools rather than primary but provided deeper comprehension of how problems have been dealt with within the current economic growth narrative. The two sources relied upon for archetype descriptions and templates were from Daniel H. Kim (1992) and John Boardman and Brian Sauser (2008).

## **SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS FOR INTERVIEWS**

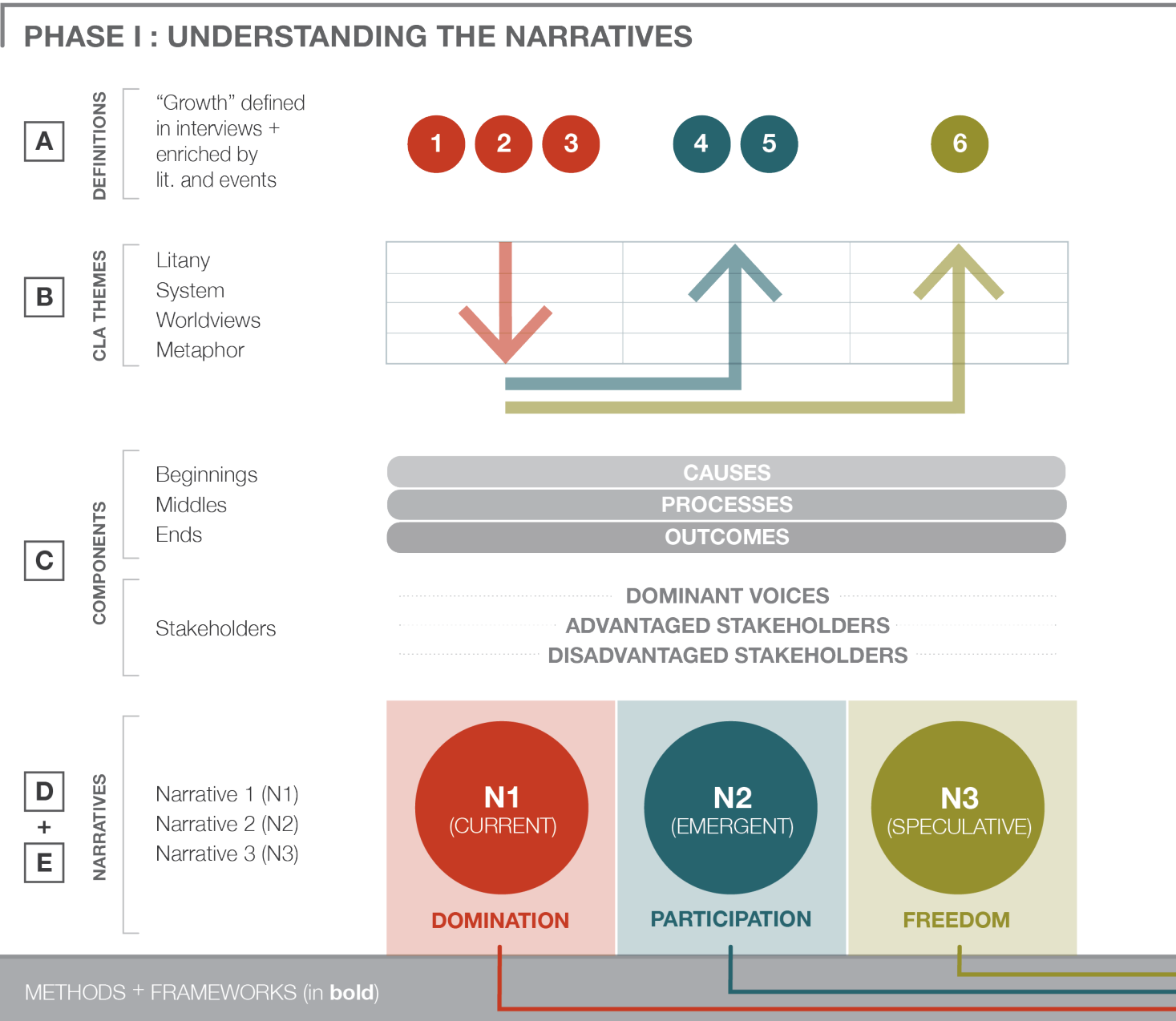
### **Expert sampling**

Based on the literature review and events attended, three general areas emerged as a useful cross-section for expert sampling. These included people who were subject matter experts in economy and economic growth and held informed alternative views that encompassed either social or environmental concerns, or both. The composition of participants was also drawn from a mix of sectors and disciplines (see Appendix C for the list of interview participants).

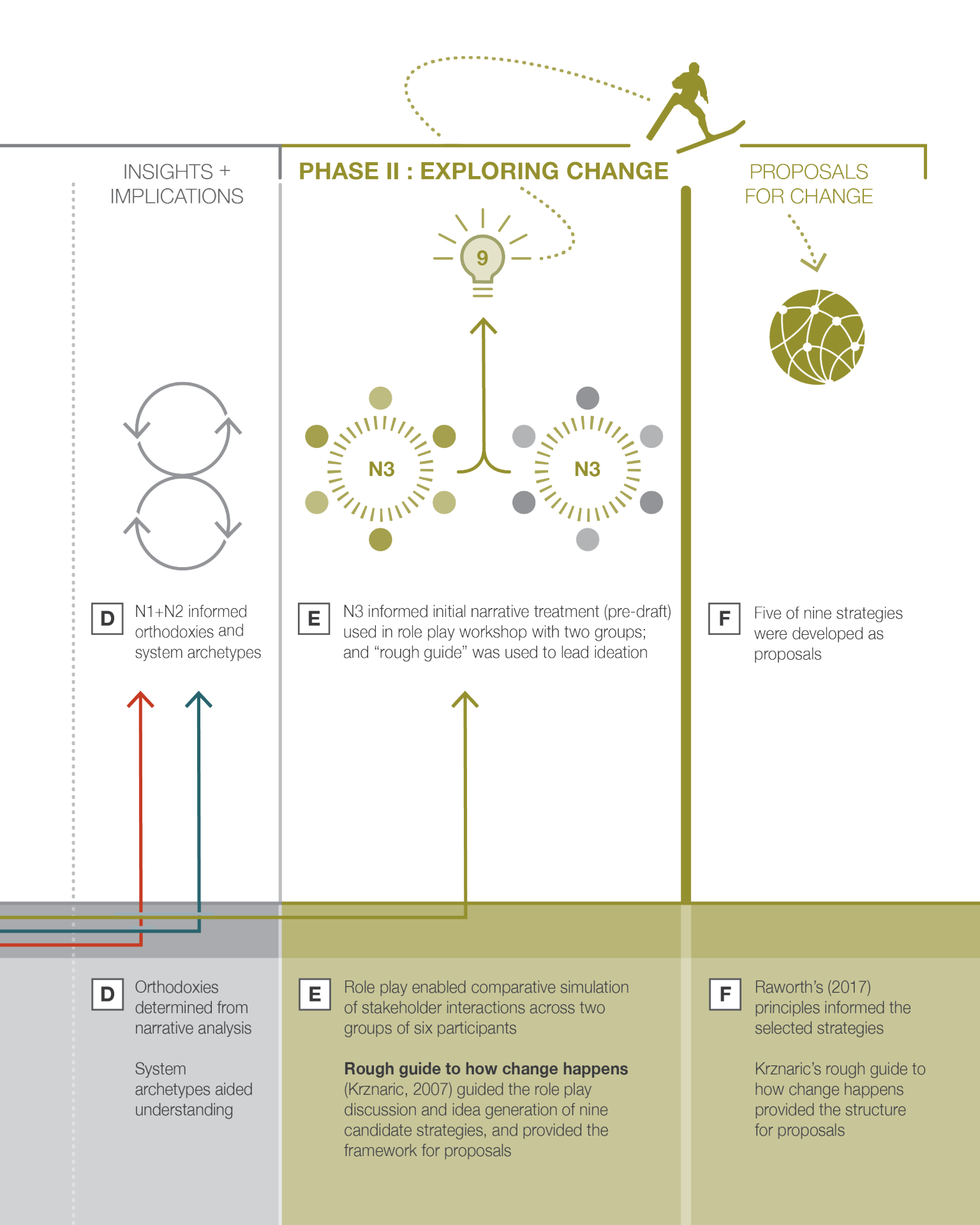
In addition to having broad perspectives on how growth might be alternatively defined, to the degree it was possible with the limited number of six interview participants, it was also important to have coverage of perspectives from different levels of the system: the global level (G), the Canadian national level (N), the community level (C), and the individual level (I) (see Table 1 for the expert sampling frame).

# PROJECT STRUCTURE + METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

**Figure 2.** Project structure and methodology overview. Read from the top left down and across to the right through letters (A to F) for an overview of the approach to how the narratives were researched, analyzed and developed, followed by approaches to exploring change and idea development.







## EXPLORING CHANGE

The purpose of the second phase of the study was to explore change using a participatory approach. Role play was used as the participatory method for its value in simulating multi-stakeholder engagement and as a generative channel for new ideas to consider how we might get to an alternative narrative.

In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that “much of cultural change arises from the introduction of metaphorical concepts and the loss of old ones” (p. 145). This idea informed the premise for the role play where the existing narrative of economic growth and related metaphors were described to the participants and juxtaposed against an alternative narrative and metaphor that arose from doing the causal layered analysis. Using the alternative narrative as a reference point, the participants in the workshop—each representing different stakeholder perspectives—were asked to consider how we might get to that alternative.

### RESEARCH METHODS AND ANALYSIS

The primary framework used to guide the workshop activity and later analysis was Roman Krznaric’s “Rough guide to how change happens” (2007, p. 30-32). The six questions in the rough guide are as follows:

1. What is the change we wish to explain?
2. Who might be involved in the change?
3. What strategies might be used to bring about the change?
4. What contexts might affect how the change happens?
5. What might be the process or pathway to the change?
6. What are the main elements from above that might lead to change?

This guide was augmented by questions to participants in a post-activity reflection. Additionally, a two-question post-workshop survey was used to gauge the degree of change experienced by the participants as a result of participating in the role play.

#### ***Why role play?***

First, the choice of role play was inspired by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1999) and the philosophy of embodied realism. According to Lakoff and Johnson, we come to know the world unconsciously through physical interaction with it (p. 77) in what they call “the cognitive unconscious” (p. 10). As a form of embodied realism, the hands-on experiential nature of role playing has greater transformational potential for reframing than a using a purely intellectual approach (Chen & Martin, 2015, p. 92; Daniau, 2016, p. 424).

Second, it was chosen for its use with, and potential empowerment of, representatives who might be outside the system of typical decision makers. Thus, providing new perspectives on a larger socioeconomic challenge without the constraints of having experts in the room. This has

	LEVELS OF SYSTEM REPRESENTED	BANKER	ECONOMIST	ECOLOGICAL ECONOMIST	ACADEMIC	NGO POLICY INFLUENCER	GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE
<b>Economic growth perspective</b>		✓	✓				✓
<b>Participant 1</b>	G, N						✓
<b>Participant 5</b>	N, C	✓					
<b>Participant 6</b>	G		✓				
<b>Social perspective</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Participant 1</b>	G, N						✓
<b>Participant 2</b>	N, C, I				✓	✓	
<b>Participant 3</b>	G, N, I			✓	✓		
<b>Participant 4</b>	N, C					✓	
<b>Participant 5</b>	G, C, I	✓					
<b>Participant 6</b>	G		✓			✓	
<b>Environmental perspective</b>				✓	✓		
<b>Participant 2</b>	N, C, I				✓		
<b>Participant 3</b>	G, I			✓	✓		
<b>Participant 5</b>	C, I	✓					

**Table 1.** Expert sampling frame. The system level codes are Global (G), national (N), community (C) and individual (I)

the benefit of eliciting novice judgment as a generative medium for guiding decisions through simulated interaction (Armstrong, 2001, p. 26-27; Green, 2002, p. 334; 2005, p. 467), and for discovering what other stakeholders might be engaged to participate in these conversations, in a real way, in the future.

Third, it was chosen for its use as a means for building empathy for others' perspectives and experiences (Popper, 2008, p. 81), and to discover potential new relationship mappings as a means of breaking down stereotypes and assumptions about others.

And finally, role play was chosen for its use in understanding challenges with communication within communities (Krolikowska et al., 2007) and to discover how those challenges might be addressed by rehearsing a situation in advance. As a participatory method, role playing can provide a rehearsal-oriented environment (Buchbinder, 2012) that has low-stakes and potentially high-value in the insights it can generate in advance of pursuing change.

### ***Limitations and considerations***

Role playing can be an appealing method for the creative potential it engenders, however one of its inherent limitations is the challenge participants can have in representing the viewpoints and interests of another and suppressing their own (Popper, 2008, p. 59). Additionally, a significant consideration is the time needed to design, prepare and enact a role play activity (Buchbinder, 2012). Given its transformative potential as a method, it is considered worth the effort required (Chen & Martin, 2015, p. 97).

### SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS FOR WORKSHOP

Participants for the workshop were recruited from the researcher's professional network and fellow students and alumni of the Strategic Foresight and Innovation program at OCAD University. Unlike the expert interviews, workshop participants did not require expertise in the subject matter. They only needed to have an interest in the topic and a willingness to participate in a role playing exercise.

**3/**

# UNDERSTANDING THE NARRATIVES



### 3/

UNDERSTANDING THE NARRATIVES involved investigating both the readily available mainstream discourse on economic growth as well as what might be emerging as alternatives. Literature review, popular media, events, speeches and interviews with subject matter experts informed this phase and are presented within this section. The causal layered analysis framework served to capture and aggregate interview inputs and themes at increasing levels of depth and provided the basis for the larger narratives. Each narrative is accompanied by a CLA table with related inputs from the interviews as well as a summary of themes at each level. For a view of the CLAs for the individual interviews see Appendix D.

Three narratives resulted from this investigation: The current dominant narrative focused on economic growth, an emergent narrative focused on broadening participation through inclusive growth, and a more speculative narrative focused on ideas of freedom and thriving with growth being a possible outcome but not the objective. The presentation of the three narratives follows the same overall structure in four parts, as follows:

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<b>ESSENCE</b>	Each narrative begins with an initial expression of its essence, represented by a poem or quote.
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<b>CONTEXT</b>	An event or scenario provides a temporal entry point and context for the narrative. These are increasingly immersive as the narratives move from current to emergent to speculative.
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<b>ANALYSIS</b>	The causal layered analysis framework is used to structure key themes that emerged from interviews and provide an anchor for discussing the perspectives of the subject matter experts. These perspectives are augmented by literature review, media, events and speeches and expanded discussion on the theme.
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A system summary and visual map are provided at the end of the system level of the CLA and include a capture of the causes (beginnings), processes (middles) and outcomes (ends) because these largely take place at the system level.

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A summary of themes for the causal layers is provided at the end of the analysis and is later presented comparatively with the themes from the other narratives.

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<b>SYNOPSIS</b>	A narrative synopsis is presented at the end of each narrative as a snapshot of its scope, values, goals, causes, processes, outcomes and stakeholders. It is also later presented comparatively with the synopses from the other narratives.
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The narratives may be read either linearly or non-linearly, taking advantage of the summary tables and maps provided.

### Defining growth

As the starting point for the interviews with subject matter experts, the first question asked was how they might define growth in a tweet or news headline. Two of the six participants responded with a traditional economic perspective and described how growth is defined by GDP growth, which is the money value of all products and services in an economy. As the primary indicator of economic health (Raworth, 2017a, p. 27), GDP is made up of four components: domestic consumption, direct and foreign investment, government spending and net exports (total exports minus total imports) (Statistics Canada, 2017). Represented as a formula, the expenditure approach to calculating GDP looks like this:

$$Y \text{ (GDP)} = \text{Consumption} + \text{Investment} + \text{Government} + \text{NX (exports - imports)}$$

A notable outcome of asking this question was that four of the six people interviewed responded with a modified definition that went beyond strictly economics to reflect some element of wellbeing as integral to growth, or as an alternative to growth. These definitions fall along a spectrum from the trickle-down assumption, to serving citizens with better goods and services, to consideration of social and economic dimensions as contributions to both growth and wellbeing, to, lastly, shifting the focus away from economics toward a new goal that changes society in a way that makes everyone's life better. The following are paraphrased versions of each of those four tweet-length definitions:

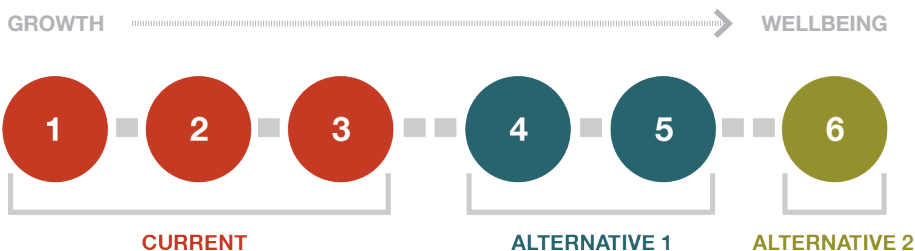
Growth is an economy that is growing in its outputs and eventually leads to benefits for society overall.

Growth is an economy that serves citizens better with more accessible, sustainable, and higher quality goods and services.

Growth is (related to) improvements in a range of social and economic dimensions that contribute ultimately to wellbeing.

Growth is evidence that we are striving and achieving the highest possible quality of life and wellbeing for all.

This spectrum provides a hint as to where the narratives diverge and inform alternatives, and an armature on which to build the narratives. The first, while societal benefit factors in it as a by product of economic growth and still closely tied to the dominant growth orientation. It represents the trickle-down ideology and is therefore categorized with the first two definitions. The second two of these definitions fall into a middle space between a strong growth orientation on one side and a strong wellbeing orientation on the other, a hybrid we will return to in the second narrative on participation. The fourth definition, which shifts away from growth as the goal, provides insight into the nature of the third narrative focused on freedom. In summary, three of the six definitions fit within the current growth narrative, two provide an alternative hybrid option that straddles growth and social concerns, and one suggests another alternative that is not about growth but about quality of life and wellbeing. This spectrum of definitions is represented schematically in Figure 3 and will provide a visual reference point as we move through the narratives.



**Figure 3.** Schematic spectrum of definitions for current and alternative narratives

To appreciate the alternatives, however, we first need to understand what they might be alternatives to. We will begin with an exposition of the current dominant focus on economic growth in which GDP is the go-to tool for counting the economy and the entry point into the larger narrative. The goal of economic growth, as Kate Raworth (2017a) describes it, is to grow the economy by increasing output of goods and services, regardless of whether or not people thrive (p. 227). Coupled with this goal at the country level, is to generate wealth through the



market at the global level. The market economy, which has been in place since the early 1980s with the neoliberal ideology embraced by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, is inherently competitive in nature. And although not entirely the original intent, it values wealth over people, short term gain over the long term frame, and eschews equality in favour of self interest and a dominance-based logic (Klein, 2017, p. 233).



## NARRATIVE #1: DOMINATION (CURRENT)

Without consideration, without pity, without shame  
they have built great and high walls around me.  
And now I sit here and despair.  
I think of nothing else: this fate gnaws at my mind;  
for I had many things to do outside.  
Ah why did I not pay attention when they were building the walls.  
But I never heard any noise or sound from builders.  
Imperceptibly they shut me from the outside world.

— *Walls* by Constantine P. Cavafy (1897) (as cited in Milonakis & Fine, 2009)

### CONTEXT

#### **The invention of “the economy”**

In 1934, when economist Simon Kuznets submitted recommendations to the US Congress on an approach for measuring the country’s national income, he carefully qualified the limits of what it measured, saying “the estimates submitted in the present study define income in such a way as to cover primarily only efforts whose results appear on the market place of our economy” (Kuznets, 1934, p. 6). But as Raworth (2017a) describes, with brisk and broad adoption, by the late 1950s “output growth (had become) the leading policy objective in industrial countries” (p. 32) to the exclusion of a number of other dimensions that make up daily life. In addition to addressing economic challenges, growth came to be seen as the answer to a number of social and political problems, including public debt, trade imbalances, national security, class struggle and poverty, without having to deal with political challenges associated with redistribution (Raworth, 2017a, p. 32).

Used first by US president Franklin Delano Roosevelt as a way to understand and comparatively track how the country’s economy was doing from year-to-year through the Great Depression and after it with his government’s New Deal policies in place, he later—again, with the aid of Simon Kuznets—showed how effective Gross National Product (GNP) could be in calculating the costs of war production during WWII (Marcuss & Kane, 2007, p. 36; Karabell, 2014, as cited in Kestenbaum & Goldstein, 2014). GNP’s popularity intensified and spread over time (see Figure 4 for its ascent as a measure of growth).

Out of the post-war period of growth across industrial countries came an expanded set of global economic relationships with the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation shifting to become the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in late 1960. The OECD’s first stated aim was “to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus to contribute to the development of the world economy” (OECD, 1960). With shared goals for economic growth across over 20 countries, GNP made it possible for member

# MEASURING GROWTH TIMELINE

ASCENT

DISSENT + DESCENT

ALTERNATIVES

**1934**  
**KUZNETS INVENTS 'THE ECONOMY'**  
National income accounts, the forerunner to Gross National Product (GNP) and later Gross Domestic Product (GDP), developed by Simon Kuznets as way to understand, measure and track what is happening with the economy in the Great Depression (Kuznets, 1934)

**1942**  
**WAR, MEASURED**  
GNP is introduced and used to plan war time production (Froyen, 2000)

**1944**  
**BRETTON WOODS STANDARDIZES MEASUREMENT**  
Bretton Woods agreement establishes International Monetary Fund and World Bank and GDP becomes the standard tool for measuring national economies (Dickinson, 2011)

**1955**  
**KUZNETS HYPOTHESES DECREASING INEQUALITY**  
Simon Kuznets hypothesizes that economic development initially increases economic inequality but eventually decreases it, an inverted U model referred to as Kuznets Curve (Riggs et al., 2012)

**1960**  
**CAMPAIGNS PROMISE GROWTH**  
John F. Kennedy promises 5% GDP growth rate if elected (Kudlow & Domitrovic, 2016)

**OECD SHARES GOALS**  
OECD forms with goal across members "to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living" (OECD, 1960)

**1962**  
**OKUN SEES POSITIVE TO UNEMPLOYMENT**  
Arthur Okun's Law says for every 1% decline in unemployment an increase of 3% in GNP could be observed (Lodewijks, 1988)

1930

**1934**  
**KUZNETS QUALIFIES LIMITS OF NATIONAL INCOME**  
Simon Kuznets qualifies the limits of what national income accounts measure "the estimates submitted in the present study define income in such a way as to cover primarily only efforts whose results appear on the market place of our economy"(Kuznets, 1934)

1940

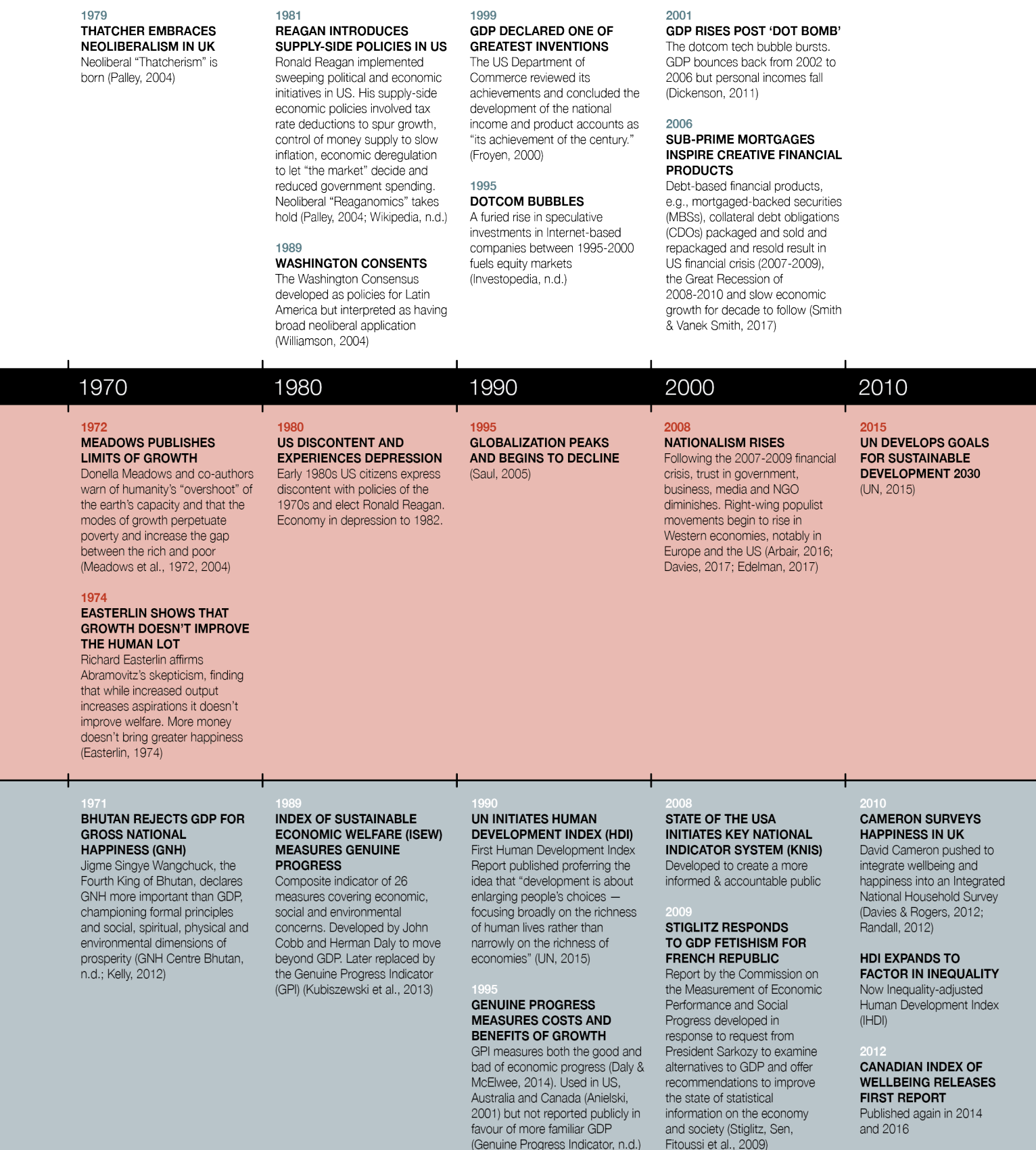
1950

**1959**  
**ABRAMOVITZ ENCOURAGES SKEPTICISM**  
Moses Abramovitz encourages skepticism of a measure that captured short term economic output as a useful reflection of long term welfare (Abramovitz, 1959)

1960

**1962**  
**KUZNETS WARNS AGAINST INFERRING WELFARE FROM NATIONAL INCOME**  
Simon Kuznets vocally resists the broad application of national income accounts, saying that "the welfare of a nation can scarcely be inferred from a measure of national income" (Kuznets, 1962)

**Figure 4.** Measuring growth timeline. This timeline is by no means exhaustive. It is meant to illustrate that as much as GDP and the growth-first orientation have been embraced there have been criticisms and alternatives proposed almost since its inception. (The initial inputs to this timeline owe much to Elizabeth Dickinson (2011). It was further informed by a number of other sources, each cited where applicable.)



countries to compete for economic rank—a practice that persists today with Gross National Income (GNI) and other variations published by international financial institutions such as the IMF (2017) and World Bank (2017a).

Although GNP was an evolution of Kuznets’s national income and was later replaced with Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the fixation on growth and counting the economy in terms of its production was set at its inception in the Great Depression. And so it was out of crisis that ‘the economy’ was born with a steadfast commitment to one indicator, which by virtue of its narrowness now plays a contributing role in other global crises.

### ANALYSIS

By considering the focus on growth through causal layered analysis, we can begin to deconstruct and understand how economic growth has manifested over time along with a number of complex and interconnected issues that threaten crises. Figure 5 shows the movement down through the layers, progressively building the larger narrative.

Causal layered analysis provided an initial input framework for understanding how all six of the subject matter experts interviewed thought about economic growth. The perspectives that emerged were a combination of individual participant’s views and observations. Key points were harvested from the interview responses and used to populate the CLA and illuminate the growth narrative. See Table 2 for the CLA representing aggregated interview inputs.

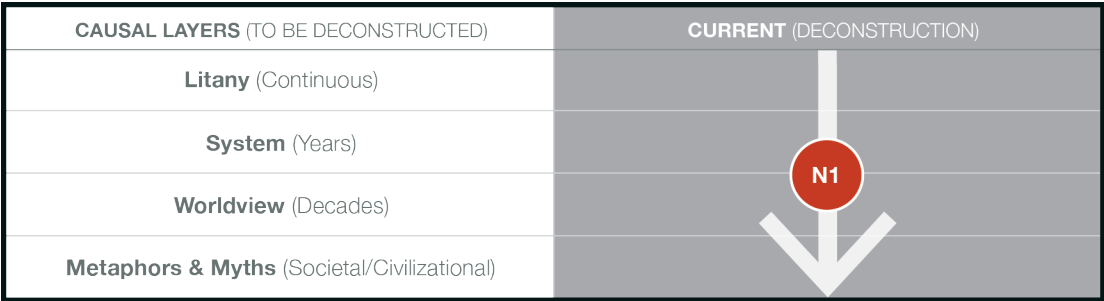


Figure 5. Deconstructing the current narrative (N1) on economic growth

### Litany level

The two most predominant themes at this level included:

1. Overuse and misrepresentation of GDP
2. Disconnect between lived realities of citizens and what government and media report

### *Overuse and misrepresentation of GDP*

Within this theme, the concerns raised in the interviews were around the recognition that “growth for growth’s sake is scary” and that there is a need to measure more than just economic

growth in order to better understand how people within an economy are faring, as well as how growth impacts the environment. For example, as one participant shared, at the international level countries increasingly seek guidance in areas beyond economics to include topics such as income inequality, minority and gender-related issues, and environmental degradation. Focusing narrowly on traditional economic indicators and growth ignores other ways of thinking about and approaching innovation, which, based on the definition from the OECD, goes beyond products and services to include processes, marketing methods and organizational innovation (OECD/Eurostat, 2005, p. 46). The narrow lens not only disregards human needs, it also comes at the peril of more open, long-lasting and innovative approaches to creating thriving economies.

In addition to not reflecting the broader reality of life in its many dimensions, a message punctuated in the interviews was that GDP reflects negative activities in society, which when counted toward a country's growth numbers appears as a deceptively positive outcome. Criminal activities that generate increased purchases of weapons, for example, will be good for the economy but not so good for society. High rates of consumption of packaged goods that result in increased waste production will be good for the economy but not so good for the environment. This means that when government and media messages related to GDP are positive, a false sense of progress is conveyed to the public.

Despite this distortion, it was noted in the interviews that GDP is often used in political campaigns to manipulate public sentiment giving would-be voters a sense of promise for an improved life if they vote for a particular politician. The literature and popular media search revealed examples of this that go back to US Senator-cum-President John F. Kennedy in 1960 who campaigned on doubling the economic growth rate at the time from 2.6% to five percent (Kudlow & Domitrovic, 2016). During the US presidential election of 2016, now-elected President Trump promised to expand the country's economy by three percent per year over ten years, which is possible, according to Robert Smith and Stacey Vanek Smith in their Planet Money episode "Here We Grow Again", but not probable (2017).

As highlighted in the interviews, these promises give hope to people during elections but unfulfilled they do little to fortify trust between political leaders and citizens. And even when growth reporting is positive, it is not always apparent how growth at the national level connects back to the individual who might be experiencing an entirely different kind of reality.

### ***Disconnect between lived realities of citizens and what government and media report***

Four of the six interviews raised the disconnect between lived realities and what is reported. Ongoing messages to the public through the media tend to center around the question of whether the economy is growing or not. When growth statistics are positive, such as when the GDP rises above two percent or unemployment numbers fall, the messaging takes on a celebratory posture. However, based on the interviews, for many people these messages are a poor reflection of the lack of wage growth at the individual income level as well as the diminishing employment prospects for those who have lost their jobs and are challenged to find new ones.

# AGGREGATED CLA INPUTS FOR CURRENT NARRATIVE

↓	INTERVIEW 1	INTERVIEW 2	INTERVIEW 3
LITANY (continuous)	<b>Access to social and environmental measures not readily available.</b> Quantitative sources for government reports primarily from Statistics Canada. Qualitative sources include feedback from consumers, newspaper articles, discussions with regulators and with other countries	<b>Media reflects government messaging on the economy and fixation with GDP as a measure for how the country is doing</b>	<b>GDP is used as a political tool for manipulating public sentiment.</b> GDP summarizes both good and bad of society but that is not in public conversations. Negative activities show growth but are not good for wellbeing
SYSTEM (years)	<b>Environmental issues, failed states, population immigration, and people living longer are all converging.</b> Disruptive technologies are displacing people and threatening incumbents	<b>GDP indicators bounced back after the financial crash, wellbeing indicators did not.</b> Living standards and time for leisure and self are diminishing	<b>National sentiment votes (e.g., Brexit, Trump) show that people are frustrated with the economic situation</b>
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<b>Technology services, communications and the sharing economy provide opportunities for more people to contribute to growth</b>	<b>“It’s the economy, stupid”.</b> The belief is that the economy matters first and foremost, and that GDP is a good guide for how a country is doing overall. It will “float all boats”	<b>It is believed that you either have unemployment or you have economic growth. This is the productivity trap.</b> Machines contribute to growth by increasing productivity. Because growth and productivity are tied, automation is viewed as a threat to jobs
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	The economy is a frontier of <b>INFINITE COLONIES</b> , ever growing and expanding to other territories and, eventually, other planets	The economy is a <b>MACHINE</b> to be tuned and maintained. Politicians are seen as ‘the fixers’	The economy is a <b>MACHINE, including nature</b> , to be managed like services

**Table 2.** Aggregated causal layered analysis for current domination narrative. Focused on economic growth first. Content gleaned from the inputs of six interview participants. (Read across columns, from left to right, to compare participant inputs across each causal layer. Read down rows, from top to bottom, for each participant’s inputs across all causal layers).



INTERVIEW 4	INTERVIEW 5	INTERVIEW 6	↕
<p><b>People feel a disconnect with growth messaging from government and media, and their own with lack of wage growth and diminishing job prospects.</b> Traditional economic measurements permeate government reports, which are then conveyed by media</p>	<p><b>GDP doesn't reflect what is happening in society and the environment, but it will not change as an indicator.</b> People are comfortable with it and how it is calculated. But growth for growth's sake is scary. Increases in crime and waste production might correlate with higher GDP but give a false picture of an economy's health</p>	<p><b>There is a growing awareness in many countries that growth is not equal to wellbeing.</b> Economic growth is no longer enough. Countries seek guidance on trends such as issues with inequality, minorities, gender, and environmental degradation</p>	LITANY (continuous)
<p><b>The Canadian government is struggling for ways to stimulate growth.</b> We can no longer rely on natural resources. Globalization has given multinationals the upper hand with their ability to move operations and capital, negatively impacting communities. Productivity and innovation are in focus</p>	<p><b>Increases in poverty and violent crime suggest economic growth is leaving people behind.</b> People are feeling downgraded from employed to unemployed. If a society will be judged by how it treats its weakest members, we have to re-evaluate the model. Level of education is a key</p>	<p><b>Getting an innovation engine going is key.</b> Providing the right type of environment for innovation to take place depends on what a country's needs are (developing countries vs. advanced economies)</p>	SYSTEM (years)
<p><b>There is a belief that there is no societal progress without growth.</b> Innovation, in particular technological innovation, is seen as the panacea for growth. With that comes the threat to jobs</p>	<p><b>Technology is going to take a lot of jobs and displace a lot of people,</b> particularly aging workers. The future does not hold much hope for young people</p>	<p><b>Innovation plays a significant role in contributing to both economic growth and wellbeing</b></p>	WORLDVIEW (decades)
<p>The economy is (traditionally) <b>ORGANIC</b>, with a dependency on natural resources</p> <p>Growth traditionally comes from the ground up, based on the natural resources a country is endowed with</p>	<p>The economy is a <b>DEPENDENT PATIENT</b> to be diagnosed and treated by the doctor (government) who knows best</p>	<p>The economy is a <b>PIE</b> to be made bigger, then shared</p>	METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)

One reason offered for the disconnect is the relationship between the media and government and the media's reliance on government reports, such as those from the Bank of Canada and Statistics Canada, to convey economic information to the public. According to two of the experts interviewed, the reports are permeated with traditional economic measurements. In other words, the information is economic in nature and not necessarily relatable at the day-to-day human experience level.

A relatable human way of representing this disconnect was shared in an example by another interview participant, as follows:

To put it into a context, does anybody really imagine that the person in Alberta or Ontario that lost their job because of the fall in oil prices or the collapse of the manufacturing industry is rushing to the newspaper at the end of each quarter to see how GDP is doing to make themselves feel better?

The 2016 Canadian Index of Wellbeing National Report offers a more holistic picture of how Canadians are doing with its "64 indicators representing eight interconnected domains of vital importance to full quality of life" (CIW, 2016, p. 2), and is publicly available, but not with the same prominence or frequency of economic reports and statistics that come through government channels, and therefore through the media. Attention on alternative sources like the CIW or the OECD's Regional Well-Being indicators (OECD, n.d.) is not present in the same fullness as that paid to reports and data from the government.

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE LITANY LEVEL**

1. Countries seek guidance on broader social issues, going beyond purely economic concerns.
2. GDP reflects both positive and negative activities in society.
3. GDP is used to manipulate public sentiment, which does little to fortify trust.
4. There is a disconnect between growth reporting from government and media and what people are experiencing with lack of wage growth and precarious employment.

### **System level**

Two primary themes emerged at this level:

1. Need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting
2. Traditional drivers, the quest for growth and the convergence of major global trends

#### ***Need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting***

The interviews revealed that underlying the data messaging and disconnect theme at the litany level are the data sources within the official reporting institutions at the system level. Two gaps

surfaced: the lack of holistic representation of what is really happening for people not just the economy, and the lack of inclusion of certain communities in the data.

For the first gap and a call for more holistic measurement, a noteworthy example cited is that following the 2008-2009 recession, GDP growth declined for a period of time but bounced back, however a number of wellbeing measures did not recover. Looking at this within the CIW Report, the areas that haven't fared so well include living standards, in particular income, food and housing security. Other wellbeing domains that saw declines in the post-recession years include leisure and culture, with people taking notably less vacation time, spending less time volunteering and engaging less in social, arts and culture related activities. The time use domain in general found people feeling more pressured, with a negative impact on time spent with family, adult educational pursuits and community-focused activities (CIW, p. 4). In other words, the economy grew but people's lives did not necessarily improve. In particular, living standards declined by 11% with increased precarity of employment after 2008 and increased challenges meeting rising costs in food and housing (CIW, 2016, p. 3-4).

It is not all bleak. Other data for the same period show improvements in community vitality with people more supportive of one another and welcoming to newcomers (CIW, 2016, p. 6). What is notable is that without this kind of data, a more holistic picture about what is going well and what is foundering is not possible. Decisions made for communities, and policies that affect the country as a whole, such as those related to immigration and placement of new families, cannot be as richly informed as they might were a more holistic approach to data collection and reporting taken.

A hindrance to the frequency, and therefore the currency, of CIW National Reports is the lack of availability of current data on wellbeing. While the CIW gets its data from over 200 sources, with the primary source being Statistics Canada (CIW, 2016, p. 2), surveys on data related to wellbeing are not available at the same intervals as economic data.

The second gap noted about lack of inclusion of certain communities revealed that national surveys do not currently cover designated Indigenous communities, which means that data about people living on reserves and in many northern areas are not available. This gap relates to a concept Joshua New from the Centre for Data Innovation referred to as "data poverty" (Canada 2020, 2017, 2:37:50). In the Canada 2020 session on The Open Government Data Explosion, New described data poverty as "the logical extension of the digital divide for a data-driven world. As more and more of government and society use data to inform their decisions, if you or your community is not represented in (the) data set you don't get to benefit from (decisions). (And) you are not included in the decision making" (Canada 2020, 2017, 2:37:58-2:38:16). This data gap might have come about as a result of historical relationships and decisions, but as with the lack of more holistic data, this kind of gap diminishes the government's level of knowledge to make well-informed policy decisions that relate to these communities and, based on what New described, might hinder, if not prevent, the excluded communities from weighing in on their own destinies.

It was emphasized in the interviews that the gap in having more holistic and inclusive measurements integrated into government reporting is not specific to Canada nor is it a new criticism. Almost since the inception of measuring the economy there were criticisms about omissions in what GDP represented and measured. The first formal critique was published by economist and economic growth specialist Moses Abramovitz in 1959 who encouraged skepticism of a measure that captured short term economic output as a useful reflection of long term welfare (p. 21). Simon Kuznets (1962) also vocally resisted the broad application of GNP, reinforcing his 1934 message on the limits and purpose of the calculation saying, now famously, that “the welfare of a nation can scarcely be inferred from a measure of national income” (p. 29).

According to experts interviewed, a number of alternatives to GDP that come in the form of replacements or extensions have been proposed and adopted at regional, national and international levels. Examples include composite indexes Gross National Happiness (GNH), Human Development Index (UNHDI) and Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI). These provide a hint of the history and nature of alternatives beyond strictly economic measurement (see these and other examples within the coarse historical timeline in Figure 4).

Two other notable references cited in the interviews include efforts in France and Britain to integrate extensions to GDP into national measurements. In a major report entitled the “Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress” co-authored by Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean-Paul Fitoussi (2009) in response to a request in early 2008 by then President of the French Republic, Nicholas Sarkozy, the authors provide an extensive examination of a range of alternatives and offer recommendations on a dashboard approach instead of using composite or adjusted indexes (p. 17). As described by the authors, the report was motivated by the:

present state of statistical information about the economy and the society. (...) The Commission’s aim has been to identify the limits of GDP as an indicator of economic performance and social progress, including the problems with its measurement; to consider what additional information might be required for the production of more relevant indicators of social progress; to assess the feasibility of alternative measurement tools, and to discuss how to present the statistical information in an appropriate way (Stiglitz, Sen & Fitoussi, 2009, p. 7).

With the French national statistical institute, INSEE, having done work since the 2009 report to integrate the proposal into their surveys (Tavernier, Cuneo & Plateau, 2015, p. 25), France serves as inspiration and a useful implementation reference for other countries.

In 2010, British Prime Minister David Cameron also pushed to integrate wellbeing and happiness into the national household survey, having expressed his views in an earlier speech that “wellbeing can’t be measured by money or traded in markets. It’s about the beauty of our surroundings, the quality of our culture and, above all, the strength of our relationships. Improving our society’s sense of wellbeing is, I believe, the central political challenge of our times” (Cameron, 2006, as cited in Stratton, 2010). In 2012, The Office of National Statistics

(ONS) in Britain published the first results of the Integrated National Household Survey (Davies & Rogers, 2012; Randall, 2012) and continues to this day.

One of the outcomes of making wellbeing an official part of the statistics collected and reported by government is that it receives interest and attention from the media, which brings it more into the public consciousness. The CIW in Canada currently does not garner the same level of attention and needs to do leg work on its own to get coverage from media on its reports if it is to provide benefit and integrate into public policy like that in France and Britain.

With at least some promise on the measurement front, the bigger challenge expressed in the interviews lies more in the ingredients considered essential to growth and progress.

### *Traditional drivers, the quest for growth and the convergence of major global trends*

Based on participant inputs, productivity, along with the talent, innovation and capital that support it, was identified as the traditional driver and trusted source of growth. Through exploration of these elements a number of major global trends and risks were surfaced. These are summarized together with the global processes at the end of the system level.

**PRODUCTIVITY** — As the American economist Paul Krugman said, “productivity isn’t everything, but in the long run it is almost everything. A country’s ability to improve its standard of living over time depends almost entirely on its ability to raise its output per worker” (Krugman, 1997, as cited in OECD, 2008, p. 11). But with a significantly different kind of economy emerging, the role of the worker and how human labour continues to factor into production is in question.

As called out during the interviews, with Canada no longer able to rely on natural resources or manufacturing as primary sources for economic growth, the Canadian government, businesses and people of Canada are adapting to an economy in which digital technologies and services dominate. In this transition, people are being displaced by technologies to other forms of income, as are incumbents in traditional industries, such as with taxis and Uber and hotels and AirBnB. Still, as the subject matter experts reinforced, even with this shift productivity continues to be considered a key driver of growth. This is at odds with an observed decrease in productivity.

While participation has increased with digitally-driven services, a counter trend with the rise of digital technologies over several decades has been a decrease in productivity (Galbraith, 2017, p. 45; Gordon, 2012, p. 2, 11-13; Gordon, 2016, p. 566, 635). James Galbraith (2017) attributes this decrease to a change in how businesses invest, specifically in the “character and quality of investment goods” (p. 46). He explains that in manufacturing, the investment goods—notably the buildings and machines—themselves require a significant capital investment in goods and labour to produce. With that investment productivity increases. In an era when digital technologies are either the business or essential to it, the cost of investment goods is significantly lower. Additionally, tech goods, mainly computing technologies and components, are produced in other countries, such as Japan and Germany, and imported, which means labour investment

is also in those other countries. The important impact, Galbraith argues, is not on lower productivity numbers but on the loss of domestic jobs and underemployment (p. 46).

According to the interviews, labour continues to be needed for a variety of purposes and continues to be considered key to growth. Those interviewed who spoke on this topic expressed that having enough talent in Canada is more the concern. This raises the question of where talent is needed and how is it being focused.

**TALENT** — As one of the subject matter experts described, like many other countries experiencing demographic changes—notably an aging population leaving the workforce—for Canada immigration is seen as essential to filling talent gaps. There is a spectrum in filling the talent gaps, as well as risks. At the low end of talent for value-added services such as retail, beauty, cleaning, and restaurant services, new citizens from other countries are appreciated for their work ethic and willingness to be paid minimum wage or less. This in turn drives down wages and threatens existing citizens who might otherwise be taking the low end jobs. This phenomenon also creates a polarizing tension between new citizens and existing citizens not able to fully participate in the service economy, and is a factor in increasing national sentiment and social instability. Writer Paul Arbair (2016) described of a similar phenomenon in Europe and, according to the Edelman Trust Report (2017), are risks Canada is not immune to.

In addition to the demographic needs and challenges of filling the talent gaps, the other dimension highlighted is that the pervasiveness of digital technologies across sectors, both public and private, has put the spotlight on education and skills training as a driver of productivity in support of growth. Three of the experts interviewed flagged the importance of education in helping people keep up with digital and other forms of emerging technologies to mitigate the possibility of being left behind and to empower them to direct their own futures. A lack of education and training in contemporary technologies was viewed as a particular challenge for aging workers, for young adults, and for disadvantaged communities. This view is reinforced in studies by Gerald Davis (2016) and Graham Lowe and Frank Graves (2017), which found that the low end service economy increasingly requires technological skills to participate, even if the work is task-based and the compensation low. A report on “Skills in the Digital Economy: Where Canada Stands and the Way Forward” reinforces the extensiveness of the need to bolster and sustain digital skills and provides a number of recommendations on sources of training (Asliturk, E., Cameron, A., & Faisal, S., 2016). This need creates a potentially endless cycle of training in digital skills in order to improve or maintain one’s employment prospects.

Adding to the challenge, according to Lowe and Graves (2017) employers are getting out of the business of training. Citing a study by Michael Porter and Jan Rivkin (2014) on the relationship between innovation, a firm’s competitiveness, living standards and workplace skills, Lowe and Graves affirm that rather than cultivating capabilities at this intersection, firms are tending to invest in “more technology, contracting out work, or hiring part-timers – rather than investing in a skilled, full-time workforce” or “forging needed partnerships with educational and training institutions to meet more immediate skill needs” (p. 164).



At the high end, attracting top talent to Canada through immigration as well as retaining highly skilled people within Canada was also highlighted in the interviews and is considered critical for driving job creation and stimulating economic activity. Recent initiatives by the Government of Canada affirm the main purpose of attracting and retaining high end talent in Canada is to stimulate innovation because it is believed that innovation stimulates growth (Population and Prosperity, Growth Summit II, as presented by Public Policy Forum, 2017; The Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2016).

**INNOVATION** — Considered by some to be the “holy grail of economic growth” (Ragan, 2017, as stated in Public Policy Forum, 2016), innovation is seen as a growth driver because it has the potential to increase demand for more labour, providing more people with work through the creation of some new value and more capital. As further explained in the interviews, new value comes in different forms: either as ideas that stimulate new markets or as streamlining existing processes that increase productivity. Clayton Christensen (2012) calls these two types empowering innovations and efficiency innovations, respectively. Empowering innovations arise by taking otherwise complicated and expensive products accessible to a few and making them simpler and at lower cost for many, such as cloud computing. New businesses or industries can be the result and, by extension, more jobs for people to build, service, sell and distribute the offerings. Innovations that streamline existing processes often mean cost savings and the replacement of certain jobs by automating technologies.

Both types of innovations involve capital, the other key input for productivity, but as Christensen (2012) and Christensen with co-author van Bever (2014) explain there is an important difference in how capital is used in each case that affects other factors in the economy and society. Capital was not explicitly covered in the interviews, however, the literature reviewed surfaced how its use has shifted since the late 1970s and the impact on long term negative trends, notably rising income and wealth disparity. Some of these sources are covered below, beginning with Christensen on capital investment and innovation.

**CAPITAL** — Empowering innovations require capital investment (Christensen, 2012). This type of investment has a generative effect on the economy through the stimulation of new markets and activities. Efficiency innovations in turn tend to emancipate capital, which can then be reinvested in new ways and, in theory, create a system in balance. However, in the name of more efficient capital and short term gains, according to Christensen, for the last four decades more investment has been going into efficiency innovations rather than empowering innovations, which is having more of an overall depletive effect. Over time this change in how capital is used has contributed to an accumulation of capital at the top, fewer jobs, and increased income inequality. Christensen also points out that a focus on efficiency innovations has created a reinforcing feedback loop with higher-education that is producing graduates with the skills of yesterday rather than the skills of tomorrow.

In a later article, Christensen and van Bever (2014) discuss the “Orthodoxy of New Finance” (p. 64)—the promise of short-term profitability with efficiency innovations and an aversion to

the risks associated with market-creating innovations—as the source of what has led businesses away from investments that contribute to real economic growth. But as Bain & Company (2012) present, at a time when capital is no longer scarce but rather “superabundant” (p. 19), the quest for capital appears to be more about accumulation than efficiency.

Although the real economy is considered “the engine that makes possible the accumulation and replenishment of capital assets” (Bain & Company, 2012, p. 4) through its productive capacity and reinvestment of capital, when “supplemented by leverage and creative financial engineering by banks and other financial intermediaries” (p. 4), capital grows disproportionately in relation to the products and services of the real economy. Bain & Company estimate that “total capital (today, is and) will remain 10 times larger than the total global output of goods and services” (2012, p. 8).

Others argue that this financialization of business, where capital is channeled more and more into financial assets and businesses are converted, in part or in whole, from products and services to finance, is one of the fundamental forces at the heart of other major global processes and trends (Foroohar, 2016, p. 126-127; Lambert, 2016, p. 3; Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013, p. 1317). Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey (2013) provide evidence that finance has become a primary source of income and that it accounts for “more than half of the decline in labour’s share of income, 9.6% of the growth in officer’s share of compensation, and 10.2% of the growth in earnings dispersion (income inequality) between 1970 and 2008” (p. 1284).

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS AND SUMMARY OF THE SYSTEM LEVEL**

Two gaps were discovered and discussed under the first system-level theme calling out the need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting:

1. More holistic measures that cover a range of wellbeing indicators are needed to build a better understanding of how different regions and demographics are doing across different dimensions and to guide policy decisions and actions at the national, regional and community levels.
2. More inclusive data capture and reporting is integral to not only illuminate how all populations are doing across Canada but to empower them in their own destinies. Data poverty limits knowledge and insight for policy researchers and creators, and it limits choice for affected populations by virtue of being excluded from the data.

The second theme covered traditional drivers, the quest for growth and the convergence of major global trends. In this theme, we learned that productivity is considered the key source of economic growth. Inputs that support it are talent, innovation and capital. However, as a different kind of economy based on digital technologies emerges, the role of the worker and how human labour continues to factor into production is in question.



Additionally, the drive to increase productivity in order to increase profit has led to a number of trends and risks at the national and global levels. The issues that surfaced through the system analysis are as follows:

1. Although immigration increases the population and those contributing to the economy, a polarizing tension between new citizens and existing citizens can lead to increasing national sentiment and social instability.
2. Digital and emerging technologies have led to a potentially endless cycle of training to keep employment prospects alive.
3. Employers are getting out of the business of training, putting the onus on the individual and government to find ways to stay up-to-date with digital skills.
4. A focus on efficiency innovations has created a reinforcing feedback loop stagnating more progressive education and keeping people stuck in old skills.
5. A decrease in investment goods required in the creation of digital technologies has led to a loss of domestic jobs and underemployment.
6. Changes in how capital is used has contributed to an accumulation of capital at the top, fewer jobs, and increased income inequality.
7. Financialization has led businesses away from investments that contribute to real economic growth and made finance a primary source of income.

See Figure 6 for a system summary map.

### **Worldview level**

Three themes emerged at this level that reveal assumptions about the way things are and help inform what is happening at the system level. Each is an ideology briefly introduced in the introduction. All are closely related to one another, with the second and third reinforcing the theme before it:

1. Economic growth will ‘float all boats’
2. Productivity is (almost) everything
3. Innovation is the ‘holy grail’ of growth

#### ***Economic growth will ‘float all boats’***

Citing the expression, “It’s the economy, stupid”—a variation on “the economy, stupid” and a phrase coined by James Carville when he was the campaign strategist for candidate Bill Clinton in 1992 (Kelly, 1992)—one of the subject matter experts said this sentiment encapsulates the belief that the economy is the first priority and will take care of other concerns in life. This line of thinking relates to the adage “a rising tide lifts all boats” adopted and popularized by John F. Kennedy (1963) and which came to be intrinsic to trickle-down economics. As economist Joseph Stiglitz (2016) describes, the “rising tide hypothesis” evolved over time to favour the rich and assumed that improved welfare of citizens and society as a whole would be the outcome of resources received at the top (p. 134).

## CAUSES

### MARKET FUNDAMENTALISM

Neoliberal ideology:  
Let the market decide, as little government as possible,  
reduced regulation, liberalized trade,  
trickle-down theory

### THE MARKET

Focused on wealth

### THE GOVERNMENT

Focused on income

### FINANCIALIZATION

Fundamental process  
(Speculative, based on  
Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013)

## PROCESSES

### GLOBALIZATION

Defined by porous borders for trade between nations for the movement of capital, goods and services, and interconnectedness of social and cultural relations at global scale

### DEUNIONIZATION

Long-term decline of membership and bargaining power of labour unions in combination with declining wages, increasing income concentration at the top, and the increasing gap in inequality

### TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

Focused on tech inventions that increase efficiency of, and dependency on, products and processes that increase output and decreasing input. With globalization, forces wages and real income downward

### CAPITAL INVESTMENT SHIFTS

Change in investment behaviour by businesses from fixed physical costs to profit opportunities inspired by financial deregulation, channeling of capital into financial markets, and movement of investment to more profitable markets

### FINANCIALIZATION

Process of non-financial businesses and sectors shifting away from products and services to derive profit, in part or in whole, from financial activities or assets, as well as an increasing overall dominance by the financial sector

## OUTCOMES

### RIISING INCOME AND WEALTH DISPARITY

Super-salaries, multinational movements, exclusion of communities from data (data poverty)

RELATED RISKS:  
Un/underemployment, profound social instability, failure of national governance

### INCREASING POLARIZATION OF SOCIETIES

Immigration, exclusion of communities from data (data poverty)

RELATED RISKS:  
Un/underemployment, profound social instability, large-scale involuntary migration

### RIISING CYBER DEPENDENCY

Automation, digital and emerging technologies

RELATED RISKS:  
Un/underemployment, profound social instability

### INCREASING NATIONAL SENTIMENT

Immigration, multinational movements

RELATED RISKS:  
Un/underemployment, profound social instability, large-scale involuntary migration

### AGING POPULATION

Reduced workforce, increased need for training

RELATED RISKS:  
Un/underemployment, profound social instability, large-scale involuntary migration

### CHANGING CLIMATE

Persistent use of fossil fuels, lack of national commitment and policy; poorest most affected

RELATED RISKS:  
Profound social instability, large-scale involuntary migration, failure of national governance

**Figure 6.** System summary map for domination narrative (N1). Entries informed primarily by two sources (World Economic Forum, 2017b; Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013). The lighter colour indicates areas only touched on but not given focus in the report. Connections based on overall research.

## MAPPING THE SYSTEM

For the purpose of making associations between the issues identified at the system level and the narrative structure of causes, processes and outcomes, a system summary map is provided in Figure 6. Note that what are often referred to as forces are represented here as processes, and trends are referred to here as outcomes. Topics covered only minimally are shown in a lighter colour. Thicker connection lines between different levels indicate those established through other research channels that surfaced in the literature review. Thin connection lines are more speculative.

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**CAUSES** — Market fundamentalism, with financialization possibly being the most fundamental in its contribution to the major global trend of income and wealth disparity (Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013, p. 1317).

**PROCESSES** — According to Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey (2013), the major global processes behind these trends, in particular the increasing rise in inequality, include globalization, technological change, capital investment shifts, deunionization and financialization (p. 1284). Brief descriptions of each process are provided in the system summary map in Figure 6 (see Appendix E for longer descriptions).

**OUTCOMES** — The issues identified align with trends and risks covered in the World Economic Forum's (2017b) Global Risks Report 2017 and can be distilled down to rising income and wealth disparity, increasing polarization of societies, rising cyber dependency, increasing national sentiment, aging population and changing climate. The associated risks include unemployment and underemployment, profound social instability and large scale involuntary migration, and to a limited degree the failure of national governance.

This pervasive prioritization of the economy directly relates to the fixation people have with work. As expressed in the interviews, “What do you do?” is a common first question asked when meeting new people, which significantly narrows how we identify with ourselves and others. According to the participant, the fixation with work is to the detriment of more leisure time for self and loved ones, and relates to a sense of fear and loss of self-worth when without employment.

As another interview participant said, “there is a belief that there is no societal progress without growth”. This mindset is patterned within us as a deep-seated conviction that all growth is good and necessary. This plays out noticeably when there is a lack of growth and everyone—with the primary source of discourse coming from the government and media—enters into a state of seeming paralysis about what to. There is a sense of panic about what is next, as opposed to accepting and working with it as a new normal, which some observers have noted (El-Erian, 2010, p. 12; Galbraith, 2014). But what might be believed to be normal is not necessarily a healthy state.

As expressed in another interview, that growth is healthy for us or not isn’t the point. The priority is a healthy economy. Considering this from a medical health angle, “the case for health promotion is for the sole purpose of having a more productive workforce. If people are healthy they will be more productive, and that will lead to a healthier economy”.

### *Productivity is (almost) everything*

The underlying view is that productivity is an essential source of a healthy and growing economy. When productivity is low, as it has been in Canada and a number of other OECD countries since the financial crisis of 2008, but trending downward since the early 2000s, it is considered a risk and “low-growth trap” (OECD, 2017a, p. 3; 2017b, p. 9).

Closely tied to low growth is the productivity trap, which, according to one of the interview participants, is where we are stuck. The trap is that “you either have unemployment or you have economic growth”. In an essay for the Globe and Mail, former clerk to the Privy Council of Canada and secretary to the cabinet, Kevin Lynch (2012), described the productivity trap this way:

There are two paths to the improvement of a country’s standard of living. One is to have more people working, so that in total we produce more “stuff.” The second is to improve productivity, so that each worker produces more “stuff.” With demographics that ensure fewer future workers, the trap means that we won’t be able to drive growth and raise living standards unless we increase productivity, something we have not done well recently.

This trap, and the perennial commitment to productivity, leads to the related prominent discourse on innovation, in particular automated technologies and the contribution of machines to increased productivity and the threat to the future of jobs.

### *Innovation is the 'holy grail' of growth*

Innovation is viewed as playing a significant role in contributing to both economic growth and wellbeing. Part of the reason expressed in the interviews for the latter is that through technology services, communications and the sharing economy more opportunities are opened for more people to contribute to growth. This brings a positive moral angle to the narrative, which serves to at least make some people feel better, especially the makers, the users and the proponents of these technologies, even if the system trends suggest another kind of reality—notably, the low income associated with many digitally-enabled services jobs and the relentless need for training.

While innovation, in particular technological innovation, is seen as the panacea for growth, the more negative angle, and where the discourse quickly goes, is job replacement, which is the most prominent messaging through the media, government and private sector. As one of the interview participants asserted, “technology is going to take a lot of jobs and displace a lot of people, particularly aging workers. The future does not hold much hope for young people”.

The three worldview themes support and legitimate system level described earlier. The next level down provides the well-spring from which these views can be attributed.

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE WORLDVIEW LEVEL**

1. Growing inequality tells us that growth does not 'float all boats'.
2. A fixation on work means that self-worth is often tied to what a person does for a living.
3. The productivity trap binds us to the idea of employment and production of more stuff.
4. Innovation is seen as a panacea for growth but it is also replacing the need for human labour.

### **Metaphor and myth level**

Underlying the worldview is the civilizational layer of the causal layered analysis. The metaphors and myths on which a society bases its beliefs are part of this deep layer and function as a kind of unconscious civilizational compass. When probed on metaphors that might best represent the current economic growth narrative, the following themes emerged from the interviews and are supported in the literature, media and through events and speeches reviewed:

1. The economy is a frontier of infinite colonies
2. The economy is organic
3. The economy is a machine
4. The economy is a dependent patient
5. The economy is a pie

### *The economy is a frontier of infinite colonies*

This theme is about colonizing other territories, and eventually planets, ever on the hunt for growth opportunities. According to one of the interview participants, this colonization theme is being

pushed to a new level. In anticipation of tapping out on the ecological viability of planet earth we now seek to colonize other planets.

Historically, seeking new colonies to expand the reach of power was the business of empires, which are defined as political fabrications of domination by one state over another (Atlas of Empires, 2009). Political domination of this kind is now frowned upon but the practice of colonizing other territories for the purpose of economic gain in the globalized world is not. According to John Ralston Saul (2005), with the rise of integrated free trade at the international level, “it was soon obvious that empires were organized conduits of natural resources for industrial centres” (p. 43). Finding other territories to exploit is a sanctioned and encouraged practice that has its own special category known as “Frontier Economies” within a number of financial market indices, including MSCI, Standard & Poor’s and Russel.

As Aldo Musacchio & Eric Werker (2016) describe in their Harvard Business Review article entitled “Mapping Frontier Economies: Where to play and how to win”, a frontier economy is “characterized by politically manipulated markets, weak legal systems, and either lower per capita income or faltering GDP” (p. 42), deeming them higher risk for investors. However, as 19 of the 25 countries worldwide anticipated to grow over the next five years frontier economies, such as Vietnam, Myanmar and Rwanda, hold promise of untapped resources, less competition, opportunities to grow under-developed sectors, and provide companies willing to take the risk one of the increasingly limited ways to grow their profits (Musacchio & Werker, 2016, p. 42). That is until the resources are tapped, competition increases, sectors become over-developed and the risks outweigh the gains.

Signals of other planets being the next frontier are in messages from Stephen Hawking (2016) that tell us there is no future for humans unless we go to space; in The Space Frontier Foundation’s goals to “(protect) the Earth’s fragile biosphere and (create) a freer and more prosperous life for each generation by using the unlimited energy and material resources of space” (The Space Frontier Foundation, 2017); in the respective endeavours of super-rich entrepreneurs Paul Allen, Jeff Bezos, Richard Branson and Elon Musk competing on the mission to take humans into space (Tynan, 2016); and in NASA’s efforts to mine asteroids for scarce resources such as water and minerals (Steigerwald, 2015).

This frontier of infinite colonies metaphor may be the most poignant among those raised in the interviews because it represents a fundamental compulsion at the heart of the quest for growth, which is first to conquer then to manage, and that the other metaphors seem relegated to serve. The idea of management or oversight comes through with the other metaphors raised that see the economy as being organic, as a machine, as a patient and as a pie.

### *The economy is organic*

In resource-based economies in particular, the traditional way of thinking about growth is that it is organic, “from the earth” as one participant phrased it. From the participant’s perspective, although Canada has a diversified economy, it has also been known for, and dependent on,

drawing economic activity from natural resources. This basis for economy is one that builds from the ground up and grows organically based on the resources the country is endowed with.

A key part of using these endowments is their oversight, a positional relationship with nature considered simplified and mechanistic by ecological and behavioural economists, respectively, Miklós Antal and Stefan Drews (2015). The mechanistic perspective sets up an inherently exploitive relationship in that it sees nature as a commodity or as services to be managed and consumed (p. 1070). In this sense, seeing the economy as organic is a nested perspective within the larger domination metaphor of the frontier of infinite colonies where an anthropocentric bias lays waste to whatever it chooses to conquer to ensure its own position. The authors argue that as long as nature is conceived of in this mechanistic way, including the language used to frame it, such as “natural capital” (Hawken et al., 1999), it will be difficult to change exploitive behaviours (p. 1056-1057).

Citing the work of George Lakoff (2010), Antal and Drews reinforce the idea that the frames we use activate cognitive relationships to other frames and to the values and actions associated with them (2015, p. 1057-1058), which leads to considering the economy as a machine.

### *The economy is a machine*

As one interview participant expressed, the machine metaphor is rooted in short-termism and the notion of control and management of something that can be fixed with the right tools and a deft mechanic at the ready. The participant suggested that this promotes a misleading message to the public and builds the expectation of politicians as ‘the fixers’. The machine frame evokes actions involving adjustments and tuning to get the best performance out of the machine (Antal & Drews, 2015, p. 1057), and tends to oversimplify what is needed to do the same for the economy. An example of this is in a 1991 Globe and Mail article by Terence Corcoran who quoted examples from then President George H. W. Bush, whom he called a master “metaphorician”, who referred to the economy as an engine that needed to be jump started and that all that was needed was a repair kit and an engine overhaul. Methods for jump starting included borrowing, spending and taxes. And if debt became too high, that would be time for the repair kit and the overhaul.

### *The economy is a dependent patient (or sick organism)*

Like the economy as machine metaphor, this concept persists the notion that people, notably politicians, central bankers and corporate leaders, are in control of a country’s economy, even if it is more of a grand laboratory experiment.

The sick or dependent patient metaphor arose from a discussion during one of the interviews on how the current system promotes a top-down model where the government is in the position to take care of the people—and that they do so by tending to the economy as a physician might tend to a patient. This implies a certain command of a discipline with an expert-knows-best orientation. But like the clinical physician, those who oversee the economy bring what they know to the task of addressing problems and it is through experimentation with different



antidotes (economic levers) they work to keep the economy in a healthy state. Messages that suggest control over the economy do not necessarily serve the government, or the people. As the financial crisis of 2008 revealed, sometimes those in power have limited knowledge or control over what is happening in the system.

Given the long period of slow growth that has sustained since 2008, the idea that the economy and the path to growth might be controlled is in question. For political and business leaders across both developing and developed countries, how to open up new sources of employment and realize widespread advances in living standards has been the confounding challenge since the global financial crisis (World Economic Forum, 2015, p. v). In parallel with this question is a mounting distrust among citizens for institutions that represent power, which include the government, media, business and non-governmental organizations (Edelman, 2017, p. 7).

In the findings of Huili Wang et al. (2013), one of most conspicuous metaphors used following the financial crisis of 2008 was the economy as a sick organism. Although considered as an extension of the economy as organic (or as organism) metaphor discussed earlier, the authors also relate the sick organism to the more anthropomorphic view of the economy as human being—as an extension of ourselves—which relates to the patient metaphor and exposes our tendency to create things in our likeness. In their examination of this theme, the authors surface the monster as a human creation embodying mostly our evil side, only to realize later we have created a monster that has turned on us, as was the case with the financial crisis (Wang et al., 2013, p. 269). It then becomes the task of bringing the beast back into submission through “interest rate deductions, tax cuts, special liquidity schemes and bank bail outs” (Buttonwood, 2008).

### *The economy is a pie*

The last of the metaphors raised in the interviews is the economy as a pie. The pie is often spoken about as something that can be made bigger so one might get a bigger slice or so more people might get a share. It is also a nod to the trickle-down ideology and how the benefits of those with the larger shares will eventually spill over for those with little to no share to receive, but there are inherent difficulties with the pie within this ideological frame. What can be shared is inherently limited by a pie's geometric boundaries, which corresponds to the limits to growth Donella Meadows et al. originally wrote about in 1972 and updated with increasing evidence of humanity's “overshoot” of the earth's capacity (1992, 2004). In reference to the benefits of growth spilling over such that the pie might be more equitably shared, the authors explicitly state that the economic system in its “current modes of growth perpetuate poverty and increase the gap between the rich and the poor” (Meadows et al., p. 41, 2004) because the flow of growth favours the wealthiest members of the wealthiest countries. As long as the economy is perceived as a pie, the idea of “shares” or “slices” will tend to favour those who have more control over the pie or have the means to acquire larger slices.



**KEY TAKEAWAYS AND REFLECTIONS ON THE METAPHORS AND MYTHS LEVEL**

Each of these metaphors provides a perspective on the current growth-first orientation. Although there are other metaphors one can find to describe the economy, the five that surfaced are apt representatives of the predisposition, particularly in politics and business, for control. Understanding that the economy is seen as organic with resources to be tapped and managed, as a machine to be tuned, as a dependent patient to be overseen, and as a pie to be divided provides insight into the pervasive top-down orientation that suggests decisions come from places of authority. While these four are domination-based frames to some extent, they are more about managing something that exists. The frontier of infinite colonies came through as the most representative of the growth-first narrative because it embodies the competitive self interest of the market economy and the chronic need to scale, conquer and consume. Once conquered, the lands and peoples can be managed as commodities, a machine, a patient or a pie.

See Table 3 for a summary of the themes covered at each level of the causal layered analysis.

CAUSAL LAYERS	NARRATIVE #1: DOMINATION THEMES
LITANY (continuous)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overuse and misrepresentation of GDP</li><li>• Disconnect between lived realities of citizens and what government and media report</li></ul>
SYSTEM (years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting</li><li>• Traditional drivers, the quest for growth and the convergence of major global trends</li></ul>
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Economic growth will ‘float all boats’</li><li>• Productivity is (almost) everything</li><li>• Innovation is the ‘holy grail’ of growth</li></ul>
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	<p>The economy is ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A frontier of infinite colonies</li><li>• Organic</li><li>• A machine</li><li>• A dependent patient</li><li>• A pie to be made bigger, then shared</li></ul>

**Table 3.** Summary of causal layered analysis themes for current domination narrative (N1)

## SYNOPSIS

Table 4 provides an overview of the first narrative on economic growth. The goal of this narrative is an economy that is growing regardless of whether or not people are thriving. The market prevails. Wealth is valued over people. Short-term gain is prioritized over the long-term frame. And self-interest trumps concerns about inequality.

The frontier of infinite colonies was selected as the base metaphor because it fits with the market orientation and goal of economic growth that favours scale and competing to dominate. This can mean colonizing other markets and, eventually, other planets as the resources of current markets and planet are exhausted.

This narrative favours the “no choice” choice of growth, regardless of what that means to humans and the ecological environment in which we live. Market fundamentalism is encoded with one direction in mind and the limits to growth is not a guiding principle. The tendency toward efficiencies favours technological innovations that increase profit, curtail investment of capital in replenishing and market-creating opportunities and the reduction or replacement of human labour. Businesses based on digital technologies are a boon for owners and investors because they cost much less to operate than those of the manufacturing era. Capital is liberated to invest in more capital, part of the major process of financialization.

In addition to the financialization of business and increasing dominance of the financial sector, the processes of globalization; reduced negotiating power of labour; rapid and broad technological change; and capital shifts in business away from empowering to efficiency innovations, as well to markets with greater potential for profit, inform the outcomes that have manifested since the political embrace of the neoliberalism in the early 1980s. In advanced economies these outcomes include rising income and wealth disparities; polarization of societies and increasing national sentiment, particularly with increased migration; aging populations leaving the workforce, contributing to slower global growth; increasing dependency on digital technologies; and climate change. The interconnected socioeconomic risks of unemployment and underemployment and profound social instability loom large.

### **Stakeholder overview**

Table 4 includes the outcome of investigating who the dominant voices are in this narrative, who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged. These lists are not surprising but they provide a useful reference for stakeholders to engage in exploring change in phase II of the project.



## NARRATIVE #1: DOMINATION (CURRENT)

The economy is a frontier of **INFINITE COLONIES**, ever growing and expanding to other territories and, eventually, other planets

<b>SCOPE</b>	Advanced economies with a focus, when possible, on the Canadian context
<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	Market-led, power at the top, trickle-down guided, competition-oriented; values wealth over people, short term gain over the long term frame, and eschews equality in favour of self interest and a dominance-based logic
<b>GOAL</b>	An economy that needs to grow, regardless of whether or not people thrive (Raworth, 2017a, p. 227)
<b>CAUSES</b> (beginnings)	Market fundamentalism (and financialization)
<b>PROCESSES</b> (middles)	Globalization, deunionization, technological change, capital shifts and financialization
<b>OUTCOMES</b> (ends)	Income and wealth disparity, polarization of society, cyber dependency, national sentiment, aging population and climate change
<b>DOMINANT VOICES</b>	"The market", multinational businesses, government and media
<b>WHO IS ADVANTAGED?</b>	Multinational businesses and financial institutions; those close to and can influence the levers of government; and people with technical skills, or more generally with science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills
<b>WHO IS DISADVANTAGED?</b>	Low-income and low-skilled individuals, generally, those with lower technical skills; specifically, aging workers, youth and young adults, and Indigenous peoples; middle class people

**Table 4.** Narrative synopsis for current domination narrative (N1)



## NARRATIVE #2: PARTICIPATION (EMERGENT)

We are now in a period of reflection—and hopefully enlightenment—where we can draw lessons from the crisis and propose solutions for the future and where we can also look at the unintended consequences of our policy choices.

—Angel Gurría, Secretary-General (2013)

### CONTEXT

#### **From crisis to inclusion**

In a presidential address to the citizens of the United States of America on September 24, 2008, George W. Bush read out a carefully postured offer of conciliation to the nation. He explained that while many people had just lost their homes and any sense of financial stability, the government, through consultation with “top economic experts”, had decided that the citizens would foot the bill for the financial crisis with their taxes. Best experienced in the original transcription, the following is a selection of statements from that speech:

Good evening. This is an extraordinary period for America’s economy. (...)

With the situation becoming more precarious by the day, I faced a choice, to step in with dramatic government action or to stand back and allow the irresponsible actions of some to undermine the financial security of all.

I’m a strong believer in free enterprise, so my natural instinct is to oppose government intervention. I believe companies that make bad decisions should be allowed to go out of business. Under normal circumstances, I would have followed this course. But these are not normal circumstances. The market is not functioning properly. (...)

The government’s top economic experts warn that, without immediate action by Congress, America could slip into a financial panic and a distressing scenario would unfold. (...) I know that an economic rescue package will present a tough vote for many members of Congress. It is difficult to pass a bill that commits so much of the taxpayers’ hard-earned money. I also understand the frustration of responsible Americans who (...) are reluctant to pay the cost of excesses on Wall Street. But given the situation we are facing, not passing a bill now would cost these Americans much more later. (...)

Under our proposal, the federal government would put up to \$700 billion taxpayer dollars on the line to purchase troubled assets that are clogging the financial system.

In the short term, this will free up banks to resume the flow of credit to American families and businesses, and this will help our economy grow (Bush, 2008).

The 2008 crisis was an inflection point in the overall economic growth narrative because it revealed how beholden governments and citizens are to the financial system—a system where the concept of choice is not a hallmark. It is the market that decides, and it was that ideology and the belief that saving the banks would put the economy back on track for all which guided President Bush and later President Obama (Stiglitz, 2016, p. 136). Bush faced what can be considered a Manichean choice: either intervene using “taxpayers’ hard-earned money”, or not intervene—do nothing and see what happens?—and “undermine the financial security of all”. The latter suggests that if the citizens did not pay it would be them that undermined the financial security for all. The speech made it clear which option was the one to choose, which was the one that Bush was offering as the best choice. Of course, the citizens had no choice. They had to accept the government’s decision and effectively pay a second time for the “companies that make bad decisions”.

Ultimately, citizens have continued to pay because the trend in growing income and wealth disparity, now broadly reported, has continued to grow since 2008 (Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013; Milanovic, 2016a, 2016b; Milanovic & Roemer, 2016; Piketty, 2014; Saez, 2016; Stiglitz, 2016). And that trend has not been confined to the US. According to the World Economic Forum (2017a), “in the last 5 years, annual median income declined 2.4% in advanced economies, while GDP per capita averaged less than 1%” (p. vii). Although it was in the US where the source of the financial crisis originated, the US economy has generally recovered while many countries have not, notably Europe with its use of austerity measures over investment (Stiglitz, 2017).

In the World Economic Forum’s Global Risks Report 2017 income and wealth disparity is seen as the economic trend “most likely to determine global developments over the next 10 years” (2017b, p. 11). Related to this trend, the results showed a pairing of the risks of unemployment with increasing social instability (World Economic Forum, 2017b, p. 11-12), and asserted that with growing populist movements a focus on stimulating growth is not enough, market capitalism needs to be reformed (p. 6).

For Bush (2008), the purpose of bailing out the banks was primarily to “resume the flow of credit” so that “American consumers and businesses (could ...) meet their daily needs and create jobs”. A stark example on this kind of messaging from the public’s perspective is from a protestor’s sign in the lead up to the 2017 French presidential election that said, “Work! Consume! Shut up” (Reguly, 2017). When condescending messaging from global leaders is coupled with a deepening feeling of no choice for many individuals and communities, it is not a wonder there is growing mistrust of government, business and media (Edelman, 2017), as well the related global trends of increasing polarization of societies and increasing national sentiment with rising income and wealth disparity (World Economic Forum, 2017b, p. 11).

The coalescing of these trends in combination with an attenuated period of global slow growth, technological change, aging populations and concerns about the associated risks, has shifted the imperative at the global level to inclusive growth (World Economic Forum, 2017b p. 4). This is the mainstream alternative narrative that has emerged and is being promoted at the global level. The major international institutions, including the IMF, World Bank, OECD and World

Economic Forum are behind it and providing guidance to countries on policies and actions they can take to realize this new agenda for growth. As we shift to understanding what inclusive growth is and to analyzing it through the causal layers, the question is whether or not it is truly an alternative to the current narrative or a variation on it.

### Defining inclusive growth

Returning to the definitions provided by the experts interviewed on how they might define growth in a tweet or news headline, although not definitions of inclusive growth, the following statements served as an entry point to a narrative that purports to move beyond growth-first toward social inclusion:

Growth is an economy that serves citizens better with more accessible, sustainable, and higher quality goods and services.

Growth is (related to) improvements in a range of social and economic dimensions that contribute ultimately to wellbeing.

As presented earlier, these definitions fall into a middle space between a strong growth orientation on one side and a strong wellbeing orientation on the other, and represent a tension of balance within inclusive growth that finds its fulcrum in promoting participation. Figure 7 shows schematically where these two definitions fall within the spectrum of the six provided.



**Figure 7.** Definition spectrum with focus on first alternative narrative

Defined by the World Bank (Ianchovina & Lundstrom, 2009) as the only sustainable path to poverty reduction, inclusive growth is encompassing of all sectors and allows broad-based participation opportunities for people to both contribute to and benefit from economic growth. Unlike pro-poor approaches in economic development that focus on the welfare of the poor, a distinguishing feature of inclusive growth is that it is concerned with enabling labour force participation by all, including the poor and middle class. Productive employment contributes to both employment growth and productivity growth, making it a more sustainable long-term approach than direct income redistribution for excluded groups (p. 1-2). Additional characteristics of inclusive growth described by Ianchovina & Lundstrom (2009, p. 4), include:

- Structural transformation to diversify economies across sectors and enable a long term growth perspective
- A focus on both the *pace*—that it be rapid—and the *pattern*—that the economy increases in size and opportunities for investment and participation—of growth

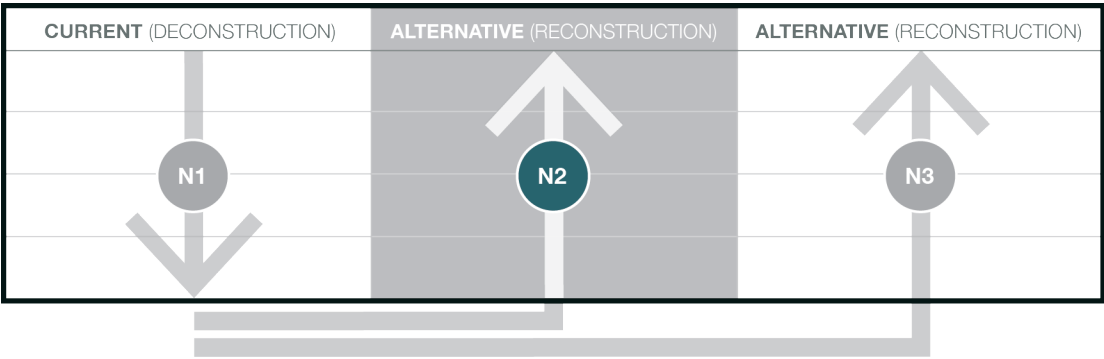
- Access to markets, resources and an unbiased regulatory environment for both individuals and businesses
- While still fundamentally driven by market-based growth, the role of government is one of active facilitator

### Inclusive growth and the Canadian context

Canada shares many of the challenges that are compelling a new approach at the global level. In addition to slow growth with GDP persisting under or just above 2% from 2012 to late 2016 (World Bank, 2017b), income inequality in Canada is wider in comparison to some of its peers (World Economic Forum, 2017a, p. 48). Its aging population presents a challenge to long-term productivity performance and technological change is a significant force motivating coordinated public policy and industry action. Other factors motivating change for Canada are the impacts of falling commodity prices leading the economy away from a dependency on natural resource exports, and monetary policy that has kept interest rates at the near-zero level since 2009 (Bank of Canada, n.d.). Consistent with the Liberal Party’s 2016 election campaign, which was “animated” by the inclusive growth theme (Morneau, 2017, 2:06-2:12), participation is at the center of the now ruling Liberal government’s fiscal policy. This will be further explored in the causal layered analysis in relation to the forces and trends where Canada overlaps with those at the global level.

### ANALYSIS

With the context established for inclusive growth, we return to causal layered analysis to consider it as an alternative, reconstructing from the bottom up beginning with metaphors and moving up through the other layers (as illustrated in Figure 8). Table 5 represents the aggregated inputs specific to this narrative, which were derived from three of the six interviews.



**Figure 8.** Reconstructing an alternative narrative (N2) on inclusive growth

Although representative of what is happening with the inclusive growth agenda, with a particular focus on Canada, unlike the first narrative on growth this one does not have a long history of empirical evidence to suggest what is working and what is not. It is emergent, which means



# AGGREGATED CLA INPUTS FOR EMERGENT NARRATIVE

↑	PARTICIPANT 1	PARTICIPANT 4	PARTICIPANT 6
LITANY (continuous)	Expanded access to, and use of, measurements on social and environmental data, such as happiness and social cohesion (aspirational)	Media reflects the lived realities of citizens by expanding its information sources with respect to the economy. Sources go beyond primarily government (aspirational)	A range of indicators and manuals guide countries on innovation, defined broadly, to be about novelty in a range of areas, such as social innovation, and that go beyond products and services
SYSTEM (years)	Information and communications technologies (ICT), open trade, and the sharing economy make the global economy more open to broader participation as well as disruption	Government reports reflect lived realities of citizens through adoption of, training with, and communication of broader measurements that extend what GDP tells us (aspirational)	Improvements in a range of social and economic dimensions ultimately contribute to wellbeing
WORLDVIEW (decades)	Inclusive growth is about seeing ourselves as all linked together on one small planet. Sustainable development and inclusive economy all get back to this notion (aspirational)	Inclusive growth benefits all of society. It addresses social inclusion, not just economic growth, by giving access to opportunities to participate and voice to vulnerable individuals and communities (aspirational)	Inclusive growth provides equal opportunities, though not equal benefits. Innovation can contribute to wellbeing by enabling participation
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	The economy is a <b>A SMALL FRAGILE PLANET</b> , the limits of which we share	The economy is <b>SYNTHETIC</b> , where growth is dependent on government policy and levers as stimulus	The economy is a <b>PIE</b> , to be shared through participation, and made bigger together (or better, a <b>GARDEN</b> )

**Table 5.** Aggregated causal layered analysis inputs for emergent participation narrative (N2). Participation is considered the route to growth. The inputs were gleaned from the six interview participants where three emerged to inform this narrative. (Read across columns, from left to right, to compare participant inputs across each causal layer. Read up rows, from bottom to top, for a reconstructed alternative view of each participant's inputs through the causal layers.)

that aspects of it are aspirational, and other aspects are simply modestly wishful. Because it overlaps with the current growth narrative, it carries forward the outcomes and risks, as well as the underlying ideologies of growth. Alternative metaphors provide prospects for a new foundation, potential for new discourse and behaviours, and reveal a critical difference from the first narrative, that of the facilitating hand of government. This narrative begins with a new take on the pie.

### **Metaphor and myth level**

The metaphors that emerged as alternatives to the current narrative included:

1. The economy is a pie to be shared and made bigger together
2. The economy is synthetic
3. The economy is a small fragile planet

#### ***The economy is a pie to be shared and made bigger together***

The pie continues to be a common metaphor in inclusive growth. As Bill Morneau has said, “Growth slows, and people are worried about how they share the pie” (Morneau, 2017, 2:48).

Based on interview input, a common debate in discussions about inclusive growth is whether to increase the pie and then turn to the concern of inclusiveness, or to be concerned about inclusiveness in the process of increasing the pie. The bigger pie metaphor comes out in a variety of communications and reports from institutions including the IMF (Lipton, 2016), OECD (2017c, p. 2), World Economic Forum (2015, p.4) and World Bank (Ianchovina & Lundstrom, 2009, p. 2).

As one of the interview participants conveyed, each side of the ‘when to include’ debate has different implications in how the pie is shared. The first—*after* growth is achieved—option suggests oversight and rationing of the pie by a higher power, presumably by government in collaboration with industry and international institutions. The second—*during* the growth process—suggests a fundamental shift in the approach to generating growth through structural changes, policies and programs that enable increased opportunities for participation, and for the participants to contribute to and receive the benefits of growth. In this second option, although control of the mechanisms that enable growth (the recipe for the pie, such as fiscal policy) is not necessarily shared, the potential inputs (the ingredients for the recipe, such as talent, innovation, capital) are broadly available for contributions. This approach is more in line with the common definition of inclusive growth referenced in the work of Ianchovina and Lundstrom (2009) from the World Bank, a message reinforced by the World Economic Forum’s Inclusive Growth and Economic Development Report 2015:

Strong economic growth is the *sine qua non* of improved living standards. While a growing national economic pie does not guarantee that the size of every household’s piece will be larger, such an outcome is arithmetically impossible unless the overall pie does indeed expand. Growth creates the possibility of a positive-sum game for society, even if it does not assure it (p. 7).

This calls for the need to enable the possibility to both participate in the economy and benefit from that participation. The next metaphor points to the enablers coming from government.

### *The economy is synthetic*

In the first narrative, the economy of a nation endowed with natural resources, as Canada has been, could rely on the extraction, processing and export of those resources as its main source for economic growth. Once those resources deplete or the market prices fall—in particular with oil prices—and stay low, the country needs to look to other means, as has been the case for Canada. For the interview participant, the alternative is the “hothouse”, where the plants are artificially supported with hydroponics or artificial light. In the hothouse, there is still output but the means to that output are synthetic instead of organic. In relation to the economy, it is government policy that functions as the synthetic stimuli (levers) for growth. Like the hothouse, the inputs do not guarantee the vitality nor necessarily the quantity of outputs, which means the economy in this metaphor is a kind of laboratory where some experiments will work better than others. For the expert interviewed, the Canadian government is at a turning point looking for ways to create growth in a persistently slow global economic environment. With government involvement in the economy a key characteristic of inclusive growth, there is promise of a more conscious and conscientious approach toward economic expansion with social inclusion, even if the means might seem synthetic and experimental.

The final metaphor related to participation recognizes the potential of inclusive growth to increase social inclusion, and for a more humane economy. It does this through a lens of necessity by taking an external perspective on the fragility and limits of what we share.

### *The economy is a small fragile planet*

Offered in response to the frontier of infinite colonies where our vantage point is from that of ourselves looking out to what we might acquire—an egocentric and acquisitive point of view where the world, and the planets beyond, are ours for the taking—this alternative metaphor asks us to look back at ourselves from the opposite direction. Referring to an image that can be seen on a 2011 Kindle edition of *Myths to Live By: The Collected Works of Joseph Campbell*, which is looking from space back at a tiny blue planet earth, the interview participant conveyed the idea that this representation asks us for humility and to consider the fragility of the life we have. More, it asks us to put a visual to the humane, the empathic, and the part of us that understands how to give rather than to take, and to share rather than to acquire. On the small fragile planet we are linked together in an inclusive economy that recognizes participation and responsibility as essential to sustaining connection with others, with ourselves, and with our planetary residence.

With its focus on sharing within limits versus getting more shares from an expanding source, this metaphor pushes beyond the defining characteristics of inclusive growth. It encapsulates both the social and ecological dimensions and draws attention to the need for recognizing limits while we seek increased participation in the economy. This perspective suggests that striving for both within inclusive growth should be the aspiration, which relates to themes that will be covered at the worldview level.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS AND REFLECTIONS ON THE METAPHORS AND MYTHS LEVEL

Of the other two metaphors raised in the interviews, the pie evokes the strongest association with sharing the benefits of a growing economy. However, sharing the benefits means participating in the process. This is where “making the pie bigger together” in this narrative differs from the pie in the first narrative, which is shared only after it is made bigger. We could interpret the ‘economy as synthetic’ as the underlying ‘how’—or through what processes—the government might enable participation and the ‘economy as a pie’ as the ‘what’ might be shared as a result of increased participation. In this way, the two metaphors are complementary and reflective of changes happening at the national level. Of these two metaphors, the pie wins out because it is immediately relatable, particularly when it comes to addressing sentiments of exclusion and feeling left behind. One of the challenges of this metaphor is that it requires a shift in attention to individuals and communities not typically empowered to contribute, which brings with it the need for persistent long term investment, something very difficult to maintain from government to government.

Additionally, what is missing with the bigger pie metaphor is the larger environmental context. The pie is a self-contained object, yet the economy functions at several levels—from the community (micro) level up through the regional (meso), national (macro) and international (mundo) levels—and is interdependent with other entities and the conditions of the environment in which it operates. As the World Economic Forum (2015) points out, the garden might be a more appropriate metaphor than the pie because it embodies concepts beyond itself, including the environmental conditions:

If an economy can be thought of as a garden or arboretum, its macroeconomic and competitive environment sets the climate (basic conditions of moisture, sunlight, and temperature), while its institutions represent nutrients in the soil. Improvements in soil fertility can have a pronounced effect on the pace and consistency of plant growth, a process that takes years to get right and requires regular monitoring and modulation. Similarly, the essential fecundity of an economy – its yield of broad-based advancement of living standards – is shaped by the health of its macro-competitive environment as well as strength of its institutions and policy-based incentives in areas particularly important for social inclusion. Like both weather conditions and soil quality, these factors require equal and ongoing attention (World Economic Forum, 2015, p. 8).

What we might take from this is that the garden can provide a balanced environment for all to thrive if the overall conditions (the climate) and the governing institutions (the soil) are managed well with policies that support broad inclusion (the plants). This metaphor embodies a delicate dynamic that requires constant tending by gardeners (the institutions) at all levels. Otherwise the balance can be easily upset allowing for, say, invasive species to take over (as if to colonize) with those species getting more space in the (still) limited garden.

While the garden is more of a system within a system, like the pie it includes the notion of partitioning because the space (opportunities) must be shared among gardeners

(contributors). If we extend the metaphor to that of a community garden, each gardener is responsible for their own plot, yet the health and viability of the overall garden is the result of collective effort. Some contributors will care more than others about the overall garden, but the community rules (policies, regulations, governance structures and social culture) guide behaviour and enable favorable outcomes from the interactions between contributors (the economic actors and institutions, both private and public), which speaks to the facilitating role of government in inclusive growth. And if the contributors continue to nurture (invest in) the garden, not only will there be continued bounty, but the overall garden might grow and provide more space (opportunities and new markets) for existing and new contributors.

In summary, the pie metaphor, though apt and easy to relate to has limitations on its own. It either needs complementary metaphors that speak to the long-term investment in enabling participation of excluded communities or it needs to be replaced with a richer metaphor that encapsulates the complexity of the greater environment, as suggested by the garden.

## **Worldview level**

Across the aggregated CLAs for the worldview level is a shared mindset in support of inclusive growth. Within this shared mindset were different angles of discourse supporting it, as follows:

1. Inclusive growth and sustainable growth reinforce each other
2. Vulnerable populations have more opportunities and voice
3. Innovation increases opportunities to participate

### ***Inclusive growth and sustainable growth reinforce each other***

Sustainable growth was mentioned by three of the interview participants and seemed to suggest that sustainability is somehow inherent to inclusive growth. Given the ambiguity of the term “sustainable growth”, it is worth pausing to consider what it means, which seems to depend on who is speaking.

As a starting point, Ianchovina and Lundstrom (2009) argue that to have sustainable growth, you need to have inclusive growth (p. 2). On one end, sustainable growth is about an economic environment that is “less fragile and less likely to end in crisis” (World Economic Forum, 2015, p. 11), and gets more at the causes and precarities associated with growing inequality. This aligns with what Ianchovina and Lundstrom were getting at with pace and pattern as characteristics of inclusive growth: “Rapid pace of growth is unquestionably necessary for substantial poverty reduction, but for this growth to be sustainable in the long run, it should be broad-based across sectors, and inclusive of the large part of the country’s labor force” (2009, p. 2). The goal is rapid economic growth, and to have sustained economic growth it has to be inclusive. This is a key point in understanding inclusive growth because it shines a light on participation as an economic imperative, not necessarily a moral one.

On the other end, sustainable growth is about sustainable development, which is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Common sources using this reference include the UNDP (n.d.) and the OECD (Ramos, 2015). The goal is long term ecological viability in the process of economic development.

Based on the common definition of inclusive growth from the World Bank (Ianchovina and Lundstrom, 2009), it is the first of the two uses that is assumed when talking about sustainable growth in relation to inclusive growth. However, it is sustainable development that was at the heart of the interview participants’ input, and both uses came out through different interviews.

Given the decisive findings from a US-focused study by Hsiang et al. (2017) that climate change is costing approximately 1.2% of GDP for every 1°C increase in temperature, and that its impact on incomes in the poorest of areas will only increase inequality—“between 2 and 20% of county income (90% chance) under business-as-usual emissions” by the late 21st century (p. 1362)—it could be argued, in complement to Ianchovina and Lundstrom, that to have inclusive growth, you need to have ecologically sustainable growth.

### ***Vulnerable populations have more opportunities and voice***

This second theme raised by one of the participants builds on the first in two ways. First, it connects opportunities to participate with the economic imperative to increase participation. Second, it connects the voices of often excluded or vulnerable communities to the challenges of inequality and ecological sustainability.

Core to inclusive growth, and to the primary discourse around it, is the notion of increased participation. With that promise is the potential for bringing people in the low and middle income, and middle skilled, levels up into the middle class—or, in the oft-used and oft-cited words of the Canadian government, to “strengthen the middle class and help those working hard to join it” (Trudeau, 2016).

In a country concerned about the size of its workforce as its population ages (Statistics Canada, 2015), and as the number of women entering the workforce has plateaued (Drolet, Uppal & Côté, 2016, p. 2), increasing labour market participation is seen as a primary economic imperative for Canada (Department of Finance Canada, 2016, p. 9). In addition to Canada’s commitment to immigration, and the separate but complementary efforts of the Century Initiative to “welcome 100 million Canadians in 2100” (Century Initiative, n.d.), part of fulfilling this imperative is increasing the participation of Indigenous Peoples (Advisory Council on Economic Growth, 2017a, p. 2), which includes the First Nations peoples, Inuit and Métis populations. Not only are these the fastest growing populations in Canada at a rate of “20.1% between 2006 and 2011, compared with 5.2% for the non-Aboriginal population” (Statistics Canada, 2011) (this statistic is for individuals), they also represent the youngest median age at 23 years for Inuit, 26 years for First Nations, and 31 for Métis, compared to 41 years for the non-Aboriginal population, as of the 2011 census (Statistics Canada, 2016).

As highlighted in the interview, increasing the participation of Indigenous Peoples is considered to be a significant opportunity for their nations and peoples, as well as for Canada, and not just for the economic benefit—although it is estimated to grow the economy by 27.7 billion (Fiscal Realities Economists, 2016, p. 15)—it holds the promise of raising the prominence of their voices and perspectives. This is particularly relevant to environmentally sustainable growth and what Indigenous wisdom can bring to that concern, a message reinforced by National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Perry Bellegarde, in a joint statement with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (2016). Another version of this message is from Noam Chomsky (2014) who recommends we “follow the lead of people who are really trying to do something about (climate change and environmental concerns). In Canada, for example, you can follow the lead of the First Nations. (...) The so-called least ‘advanced’ people are the ones who are taking the lead in trying to protect all of us, while the richest and most powerful among us are trying to drive society to destruction”.

### ***Innovation increases opportunities to participate***

Considered a key driver of growth, innovation is also viewed as an opportunity for broad participation and, through the potential economic and social benefits participation can bring, it can be a conduit to greater wellbeing. For this reason, according to the subject matter expert interviewed, innovation is a priority in policy making and at the center of country-level inclusive growth strategies.

Although innovation is defined in broad terms to include novelty in products (goods or services), processes, marketing and organizational methods (OECD/Eurostat, 2005, p. 46), advances in digital and emerging technologies including, for example, artificial intelligence, robotics, 3D printing, blockchain and virtual and augmented realities (World Economic Forum, 2017b, p. 63-64), have come to dominate the discourse around innovation.

Research has been presented on both sides of the argument as to the overall socioeconomic benefit of digital innovations. Among the more prominent on the ‘nay’ side are from Robert Gordon, Tyler Cowen, James Galbraith and Gerald Davis. Gordon (2012) describes the advances of each of the first three industrial revolutions and asserted that the “second industrial revolution (IR #2) within the years 1870-1900 created within just a few years the inventions that made the biggest difference to date in the standard of living (p. 3)”. Gordon (2016) asserts that in contrast to the broad social benefits experienced with the rise in living standards during and following what he calls the “special century” (1870-1970), although the more recent digital technologies have led to wide-spread access to information and services, they are benefiting far fewer people than the “only once” general purpose innovations of that special century (p. 1). Cowen (2011) attributes the reduced benefit of recent innovations—including high-tech digital ones, such as Facebook’s social platform, but not limited to the digital realm—to them being targeted more toward private instead of public goods (p. 22). He explains that a scarcity of novel ideas can be directly tied to a rise in income inequality. With labour and capital being generally abundant in the global economy today, returns on investment have stagnated. The companies or individuals that hold the rights to scarce new ideas have enjoyed higher returns



compared to the past (p. 21-22). As noted in the first narrative, Galbraith (2017) identifies the main reason for the higher returns on digital technologies is that the cost of investment goods is much lower, and less domestic labour is required (p. 46). Davis (2016) extends the point on labour with several examples of so-called “large” tech companies that have millions, or in some cases billions, of users but relatively very few employees:

As of 2015, Facebook has 1.35 billion users, but only 9,199 employees. Twitter had 288 million monthly users, and 3,638 employees. Dropbox had over 300 million users, and 971 employees—Zynga, 1,974 employees; Zillow, 1,215; LinkedIn, 6,897; Uber, perhaps 2,000; Square, 1,000. Of course, Google—the paradigmatic corporation of the 21st century—is a bit bigger, with 53,600 employees around the world. But the combined global workforces of all of these companies put together is still just 80,000—less than Blockbuster had in 2005, or the number of net new employees GM added in 1942 alone (p. 92).

The OECD (2017d) Advisory Group on Innovation for Inclusive Growth, on the other hand, point out in their report, “Making Innovation Benefit All: Policies for Inclusive Growth”, the democratizing aspects of digital innovations that arise from information and communication technologies (ICT) and that have benefits on both the demand and supply sides (p. 30-31). On the demand side, digital technologies have increased availability for consumers to higher quality affordable products and services that support social inclusion, most notably online services for government, health and education. The report cites Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs), such as the Khan Academy, as an example of how the web has opened up education to the masses (p. 53). On the supply side, digital technologies have opened opportunities for entrepreneurship, new service delivery options, manufacturing and business processes—changes that have disrupted fundamental notions about how products, services and markets operate. However, while digital collaboration platforms have lowered the bar for entry for disadvantaged groups to earn a modest income from peer-to-peer type businesses, such as Uber and AirBnB, those with the means to own the assets, such as the vehicles and properties, are the ones generating the greater incomes. Additionally, the jobs tend to be temporary and void of the securities that can come with full time employment (p. 42).

Because of the equivocal nature of the topic, much attention has been given to the impacts of these innovations on income inequalities and raises major questions about the implications for innovation policies—the focus of the OECD (2017d) Advisory Group and the OECD-World Bank (2016) collaboration on Technology, Innovation and Inclusive Growth. Establishing the right environment and policies for innovation to take place involves consideration across a number of areas, including skills, access to funding, labour market policies, intellectual property, among many others, and depends on the country’s needs.

Based on input during the interviews and on the OECD (2017d) report, the one thing that does seem certain within this discourse is that policies at the national level are needed to foster inclusiveness, consider regional and population differences in innovation capacity, and put educational programs and opportunities in place that take advantage of the technologies and



favour broad participation (p. 7-10). Within the Canadian context, Mike Moffat and Hannah Rasmussen (2017) add that national innovation policies need to go beyond economic inclusion to being “autonomy-enhancing”, which they define as:

any innovation that translates into greater choice and more opportunities for individuals, families and/or local communities to develop and follow their economic and social goals and that creates or strengthens the causal links between the choices made and the outcomes achieved by those actors (p. 6).

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE WORLDVIEW LEVEL**

1. Participation is considered an economic imperative, not necessarily a moral one.
2. To have inclusive growth, you also need to have ecologically sustainable growth because the impact of climate change on poorer areas will only increase inequality.
3. Indigenous voices and wisdom should be integral to policy direction on ecological sustainability in particular.
4. Because of the equivocal nature of the impacts of innovation on income inequalities, policies at the national level are needed to foster inclusiveness, consider regional and population differences in innovation capacity, and put educational programs and opportunities in place that take advantage of the technologies and favour broad participation.
5. National innovation policies need to go beyond economic inclusion to being “autonomy-enhancing”, enabling choice for individuals, families and communities.

### **System level**

Two themes emerged at this level that provide the basis for discussion of inclusive growth in the Canadian context:

1. Strengthening the middle class and helping those working hard to join it
2. Measuring and reporting lived realities

In the first narrative, the inputs at the system level led to an analysis of the traditional drivers of growth and the identification of converging major global trends. The first theme in the system level for this participation-oriented narrative begins with the forces and trends Canada is experiencing followed by a summary of the Government of Canada’s response. The interviews set the stage for the investigations that went into this theme but will not be explicitly mentioned throughout the summary. In general, the interview participants who spoke on this topic were positive about the intent of inclusive growth. To provide a sense of where their perspectives diverge somewhat and open thinking beyond the participation-for-growth narrative, these points have been added at the end of the causal layered analysis, after litany, where they begin to inform the third narrative.

The second theme at this level will cover a response to the earlier theme that called for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting, something not explicitly covered in the government's plan but that surfaced as an aspiration in related discussions.

### ***Strengthening the middle class and helping those working hard to join it***

Because Canada shares many of the challenges happening at the global level across OECD member countries, including persistent slow growth, growing inequality, an aging population, and disruptive technological change, it has proactively embraced inclusive growth and sought to make a number of changes across a range of social and economic dimensions. One of the first steps was to call on the advice of experts. The following provides a high-level description only to give a sense of the coverage and direction Canada is taking in support of inclusive growth and in relation to the major global phenomenon discussed earlier.

In March 2016, the Minister of Finance, Bill Morneau, appointed an Advisory Council on Economic Growth with the mandate to “develop advice on concrete policy actions to help create the conditions for strong and sustained long-term economic growth”, and enable the Government to “develop an even more robust growth strategy designed to provide higher living standards and greater opportunity for the middle class and those working hard to join it” (Government of Canada, 2016a). The fourteen member council was composed of Canadian and international leaders from business and academia, each selected for their work and reputations as progressive-thinking individuals in their fields, with Dominic Barton, global managing partner, McKinsey Company, as the chair. The Council gathered input from experts and stakeholders across the country through interviews, roundtables and workshops, including public and private sector participants from the ten provinces, First Nations communities, and targeted outreach to Canadian youth (Advisory Council on Economic Growth, 2017a, p.2).

As context for the work of the council, in a speech given at the Public Policy Forum's “Growth Summit: Beyond 2%” in October 2016, Dominic Barton, described a set of forces at the global level that are integral to thinking about the future of economic growth for Canada. The following summarizes three of these forces as covered again in a later speech at Converge 2017:

First, is an **ECONOMIC POWER SHIFT FROM THE WEST TO ASIA AND AFRICA**, with close to two and a half billion new middle class consumers anticipated to come into the world market in the next 10 to 15 years, there is promise of new business opportunities and trade relationships. Citing Nigeria—a frontier market—as a rich opportunity for Canadian consumer goods companies, Barton said these companies would be “irrelevant unless (they are) in Nigeria now, not 10 or 15 years from now”.

Second, is **TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE**. Referencing Larry Summers, Barton emphasized that we are in only the early stages of a technological revolution and that with broad-scale digital transformation—not only with the Internet and commerce, but across all industries such as medicine and mining, for example—“everyone's a technology company”, and this can all be attributed to three drivers: the accelerated computing power of devices, the connectedness of people, and data.

Third, closely related to the second, is the need for **NEW SOCIAL CONTRACTS**. Over the next ten years, 40 percent of the jobs we know today in Canada could be automated. Anticipating double the rate of job dislocation over the next tens years than was seen in the previous ten years, Barton emphasized how ongoing retraining and education—to continually renew—will be critical. Otherwise, people will be displaced, the inequality gap will only grow and social discontent will rise, like that exemplified by the sentiment in Brexit.

At the onset, the Council identified the aging Canadian population and poor productivity performance as the two “structural forces” restricting Canada’s economic growth. Confronting what they described as the “headwinds” of “slowing global growth rates, unprecedented technology disruption, and increasing connectivity in trade, capital, people and information” (Advisory Council on Economic Growth, 2016a, p. 2), the Council developed two sets of reports with twelve recommendations under four foundations. The following summarizes two of the foundations as they relate to inclusive growth. See Appendix F for all foundations and recommendations, as well as the government’s response to them as reflected in their budget.

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**FOUNDATION 1** Digital skills literacy is a cornerstone of inclusive growth (World Economic Forum, as quoted in Advisory Council on Economic Growth, 2017a, p. 4).

—  
*Skills and  
workforce  
participation*

1. Increase immigration with priority on economic immigrants and top talent
2. Develop a FutureSkills Lab to build a skilled and resilient workforce
3. Broaden workforce participation and tap the economic potential of underrepresented groups (broad recommendation)

---

**FOUNDATION 2** With natural resources and a growing workforce no longer reliable sources for growth, innovation can take a significant role in driving scale and growth by increasing productivity, supporting inclusive growth and enabling entrepreneurs to get beyond the startup to the global stage (2017c, p. 2).

—  
*Innovation*

4. Create innovation marketplaces to foster commercialization and adoption
  5. Build value-added growth capital strategy on fastest-growing firms
  6. Implement a public procurement program that enables the government to be the first customer for innovative companies
  7. Review and rationalize existing business-facing innovation programs
  8. Invigorate the talent pool streamlining immigration entry for top talent
-

With this work at its early stages, the overall outcomes are yet to be revealed. However, the Council has identified what they consider would be the “key metric of success” and that is to “(deliver) an additional \$15,000 in median household income above current projections by 2030” (Advisory Council on Economic Growth, 2017a, p.2).

The most immediate reflection of near term advances with this overall inclusive growth agenda are in the government’s actions, beginning with their February 2017 budget (Government of Canada, 2017), which covers four areas (see Appendix F for more detail):

1. Innovation and skills
2. Infrastructure
3. Tax fairness for the middle class
4. A strong Canada at home and in the world

Although not with complete overlap, the Council’s advice factors prominently into the government’s plans (see for the four areas covered in the February 2017 budget). Two elements stand out: First, the “Innovation and skills” plan focuses on digital skills training and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), which is narrower than the Council’s recommendations that push for building critical thinking and adaptation to change. Second, related to “Tax fairness for the middle class”, when asked by Edward Greenspon in an interview at the Growth Summit II about his government’s thinking on basic income, Bill Morneau replied that they have supplements to seniors’ income and child benefits, which are better than basic income—they prefer to give people opportunity (Morneau, 2017). For Morneau and the Liberal government, the preference and focus is labour force participation, not redistribution.

### *Measuring and reporting lived realities*

The first narrative looked at the theme expressing the need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting. As expressed by one of the experts interviewed, “We are due for a reconsideration and broadening of traditional measures of growth”. In response, a number of ideas emerged that recast the current system to better measure and reflect the lived realities of the people. In this aspirational view, the need to represent all peoples is recognized and steps are being taken to address past gaps. This includes steps in both quantitative and qualitative ways of gathering and reflecting feedback, and the beginning of more publicly reported measures that take a more holistic approach.

It is important to first underscore that this theme was not directly in the Advisory Council on Economic Growth’s recommendations nor in the Government of Canada’s inclusive growth plan—at least it was not detected when investigating. However, there are signals suggesting the need and that some work is being done. Examples encountered during research included a session at the Growth Summit II on “Population and Prosperity” (Public Policy Forum, 2017) that highlighted the criticality of collecting data in order to make more informed policy decisions, and at the Canada 2020 (2017) session on The Open Government Data Explosion, which touched on the need for access to real-time and inclusive data.

Related to Canada 2020, in March 2017 Don Lenihan and Tom Pitfield published a report entitled, “How Big Data is About to Explode Policy Making as We Know It: The Rise of Civil Analytics”. Among the messages in the report, the authors provide examples using data in combinatorial ways to see the relationships and interdependence of different factors, to understand cause and effect, and to inform proactive policy making. They advocate for a systems-based approach that takes advantage of Big Data, analytics and new policymaking approaches (Lenihan & Pitfield, 2017, p. 27). As discussed in the first narrative, there is a need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to data to provide well-rounded views into different populations and their needs. The notion of “data poverty” (Joshua New, as stated in Canada 2020, 2017) was flagged as an issue related to northern communities and designated Indigenous communities in Canada. Extending the argument for holistic and inclusive data, Lenihan and Pitfield add the need for the data to be real-time and used in combination with a richer analytics and policymaking toolkit.

A notable example of data poverty that has important implications for innovation, digital technology and related education is a report from the Brookfield Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (Lamb & Seddon, 2016) entitled “The State of Canada’s Tech Sector, 2016”. The report is comprehensive in many respects including the industry coverage, composition, impact and technical professionals. However, geographically it only includes the provinces (p. 6)—no Yukon, no Northwest Territories and no Nunavut—and there is no mention of any of the First Nations, Inuit or Métis peoples. With reports of this kind having the purpose of informing policy makers, they need to be inclusive as well, which puts pressure on the government and other data collecting agencies as primary data sources to be inclusive. The system informs itself.

The theme of measuring and reflecting lived realities goes to these gaps in current government reporting, which, as discussed, are filled with traditional growth measures and get picked up across other government reports, external reporting agencies and organizations, the media and, by extension, it is the information the public receives. The interviews highlighted the need for broader data as well as a better qualitative reflection of people and their daily lives—their lived realities. The message went beyond reports to the need for adoption, training, and communication throughout government and those who represent and collaborate with them. This would not only reflect a larger reality beyond traditional metrics but inform decision making across a spectrum of social and economic dimensions the can ultimately contribute to wellbeing.

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS AND SUMMARY OF THE SYSTEM LEVEL**

In the first theme at the system level, the Government of Canada’s priority is to increase the living standards and opportunities “for the middle class and those working hard to join it”.

Three forces are compelling an inclusive growth agenda at the national level:

1. Force #1: Economic power shift from the west to Asia and Africa — Close to two and a half billion new middle class consumers are anticipated to come into the world market in the next 10 to 15 years, providing a rich opportunity and imperative for Canadian consumer goods companies to be relevant by scaling and competing at the global level.
2. Force #2: Technological change — Three drivers are making everyone a technology company: the accelerated computing power of devices, the connectedness of people, and data.
3. Force #3: New social contracts are needed — Enabling people to continually renew through ongoing education and training, with a focus on STEM and digital skills, is critical to bridging the inequality gap and mitigating growing social discontent.

With input from the Advisory Council on Economic Growth, the Government of Canada aims to:

1. Increase workforce participation through immigration, with a priority on economic immigrants and top talent, and by tapping the potential of underrepresented groups
2. Build a skilled and resilient workforce with a FutureSkills Lab
3. Drive scale and growth through innovation and enabling entrepreneurs

The second theme at this level provides an aspirational view that addresses data gaps and uses an open, systems-based approach that takes advantage of Big Data, analytics and new policymaking methods to make informed policy decisions. This theme also calls for adoption, training and communication throughout government and among their collaborators on broader and more inclusive measurement toward a shared goal of collective wellbeing.

## **Litany level**

The main theme that emerged at this level is the natural extension of the second theme at the system level on measuring and reporting lived realities. At this level, it is about how they surface in the day to day:

1. Reflecting lived realities and guiding decisions

### ***Reflecting lived realities and guiding decisions***

A general sense of lack of richer data, beyond economic measures, and the need to better reflect people's lived realities to better guide policy decisions was the predominant message at this level. Expanded access to, and use of, measurements on social and environmental data, such as happiness and social cohesion would better inform reports and decision making. More attention of the media and policy makers on the wellbeing index as augmentative measures beyond GDP would reveal how Canadians are really doing. Additionally, by the government expanding its information sources to include richer inputs, in turn the media would have richer material to

better reflect the lived realities—the stories—of citizens. The roundtables (also referred to as listening tours) the government hosts provide a forum for attendees to share their views. This is a positive step to richer engagement, however, based on the Open Dialogue report (Lenihan, 2017) these consultations do not allow people to participate in decision making. At a time when trust in leaders is diminishing, technology is mediating communication and communities are fragmented, an open dialogue approach with a focus on storytelling and enabling communities to define their own narratives would build social capital and foster greater trust in leaders.

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS AT THE LITANY LEVEL

1. Expanded access to, and use of, measurements on social wellbeing and environmental data would better inform reports, policy decision making and the media.
2. An Open Dialogue approach between government and the people of Canada would enrich data sources, better reflect lived realities and engage communities in their own destinies.

See Table 6 for a summary of themes in the alternative narrative on participation.

CAUSAL LAYERS	NARRATIVE #2: PARTICIPATION THEMES
LITANY (continuous)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflecting lived realities and guiding decisions</li> </ul>
SYSTEM (years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening the middle class and helping those working hard to join it</li> <li>Measuring and reporting lived realities</li> </ul>
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusive growth and sustainable growth reinforce each other</li> <li>Vulnerable populations have more opportunities and voice</li> <li>Innovation increases opportunities to participate</li> </ul>
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	<p>The economy is ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small fragile planet</li> <li>A pie to be shared and made bigger together (or better, a garden)</li> <li>Synthetic</li> </ul>

**Table 6.** Summary of causal layered analysis themes for emergent participation narrative (N2)



## SYNOPSIS

Table 7 provides a synopsis of the second narrative on participation. The goal of this narrative is to allow broad-based participation opportunities for people to both contribute to and benefit from economic growth (Ianchovina & Lundstrom, 2009). Participation is favoured over redistribution for excluded groups as a longer-term approach. For Canada, the priority is on strengthening the middle class and helping those working hard to join it. With global slow growth; growing inequality; an aging population, with diminishing workforce participation affecting productivity performance; and disruptive and rapid technological change, inclusive growth is considered an economic imperative.

Although representative of what is happening with inclusive growth at the international and Canadian levels, unlike the first narrative this narrative does not have a long history of observable evidence to show what is working and what is not. It is emergent. Therefore much of it remains aspirational, and incremental. However, because the participation narrative overlaps with the current domination narrative, it carries forward the outcomes and risks, as well as underlying ideologies of growth. A critical difference from the current narrative is the facilitating hand of government who, in the quest for inclusive growth, take a central role in enabling opportunities for greater participation. Choice, in this narrative, is bounded by the opportunities afforded.

Alternative metaphors provide the prospect of a new foundation and the potential for new discourse and behaviours to emerge. Making the pie bigger together is more fitting than making the pie bigger then sharing it. Nonetheless, given the pie metaphor is absent of the larger environment—the different levels of systems (micro, meso, macro and mundo)—the community garden emerges as a more apt metaphor. Importantly, the community garden has plots, where the gardeners are limited by the space (opportunities) they are afforded. Still, ideally they share responsibility for the overall health and vitality of the garden.

The overall outcomes of the inclusive growth agenda are yet to unfold. In the Canadian context, the Government of Canada's Advisory Council on Economic Growth has identified the "key metric of success" as "an additional \$15,000 in median household income above current projections by 2030" (2017c, p.6), reinforcing the economic focus of the mandate given to the Council. The most immediate reflection of advances toward inclusive growth in Canada are in the government's actions to begin implementing a number of the Council's recommendations, which were detailed in their February 2017 budget (Government of Canada, 2017).

### **Stakeholder overview**

Table 7 includes the outcome of probes through interviews, literature and presentations of who the dominant voices are in this narrative, who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged. The dominant voices and advantaged stakeholders in this narrative are similar to those in the current narrative. In particular, "the market" and investors continue to dominate and the tech literate are strongly advantaged and explicitly supported. An interesting and notable addition to the disadvantaged stakeholders is non-economic immigrants. This addition reinforces the





## NARRATIVE #2: PARTICIPATION (EMERGENT)

The economy is a **PIE**, to be shared through participation and made bigger together

<b>SCOPE</b>	Advanced economies with a focus on the Canadian context
<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	Government-facilitated, centralized, market-informed, participation-oriented; values participation over redistribution and a strong and growing middle class
<b>GOAL</b>	An economy that expands social participation in the process and benefits of economic growth (World Economic Forum, 2015, p. 1)
<b>CAUSES</b> (beginnings)	Global: slow global growth, aging populations, in-country inequality, cyber dependency; Canada: low productivity, aging population, tech disruption, global connectivity, low commodity prices
<b>PROCESSES</b> (middles)	Innovation, skills, training and education, immigration, infrastructure, stronger and healthier population and trade relationships
<b>OUTCOMES</b> (ends)	A growing economy with increased labour force participation and a stronger and growing middle class. The key metric of success is an additional \$15,000 in median household income above current projections by 2030
<b>DOMINANT VOICES</b>	Government, investors, businesses, academia and “the market”
<b>WHO IS ADVANTAGED?</b>	Tech-literate, people with access to capital to create businesses (clean tech, digital and agri-food), people with access to ongoing education, women in or seeking leadership roles, economic immigrants and top talent in high-demand areas, e.g., machine learning, data science, product management, UX design, sales and digital marketing, SW engineering and instrumentation technologies
<b>WHO IS DISADVANTAGED?</b>	People displaced by technologies, incumbents threatened by disruptive tech and broader participation, communities not represented in the data, non-economic immigrants

**Table 7.** Narrative synopsis for emergent participation narrative (N2)

continued focus on economic growth and shows favour to stakeholders who are already in a position to contribute to the economy. As with the first narrative, these lists provide a useful reference for who to engage in exploring change in the second phase of the project.

## BEYOND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Based on inputs of the subject matter experts on the topic of inclusive growth, certain aspects of their perspectives suggest a stronger weighting to the wellbeing side of the spectrum than is emphasized in the government's plans. Although improved quality of life and wellbeing are considered an implicit outcome of economic growth and wealth-based prosperity, the priority and messages are focused first on the economic imperative of participation, less so a moral one. To illustrate some of the divergence, the following provides a paraphrased summary of additional sentiments expressed by participants when talking about inclusive growth:

### *On growth ...*

The first level for any kind of growth is giving people the opportunity to focus more on quality of life than just sustaining life.

### *On innovation ...*

As Canada embraces the digital revolution, it needs to push for innovation that is socially positive and takes a long term mindset. A focus on social impact innovation and clean technologies are two areas that would serve these concerns.

### *On alternative drivers and viewpoints ...*

Happiness: Championed as an alternative indicator by Richard Easterlin in 1974 (1974, 2016).

Others propose autonomy-enhancing innovation (Moffat & Rasmussen, 2017) that promote “the dignity of being self-sufficient, not necessarily in the neoliberal sense, but certainly in a communal, familial and fraternal sense” (p. 11). Related to this is to become truly inclusive of traditionally marginalized communities, notably Canada's Indigenous Peoples. Going beyond economic participation, Canada will benefit from integrating alternative ways of thinking about relationships with one another and with the land—wisdom Indigenous people can impart as advocates for the environment.

Autonomy, mastery and purpose: The three motivators Daniel Pink writes about in his 2011 book *Drive* provide insight into understanding it is not money alone that motivates people. These should be factored into public policy development. *Autonomy* is about individuals feeling they have some personal agency and responsibility, as well as the capacity to reinvent themselves when large firms close in their communities. *Mastery* speaks to people feeling as skilled as they need to be at any given point in time to not just survive but to thrive in an evolving labour market. *Purpose* relates to sustainability and working for a higher purpose and goals. This requires connecting environmentally sustainable growth, and measuring sustainability goals at the individual and firm level so they see how their contributions reflect a higher purpose. There is an appetite for “do no harm, green growth” but there needs to be incentives for participation.





## NARRATIVE #3: FREEDOM (SPECULATIVE)

It is necessary to construct a broader and more coherent narrative—possibly structured around metaphors of good life and increased freedom through “independence from economic growth”—that can generate public interest and support. A movement can challenge the status quo, but to be successful, it should resonate with the deepest perceptions of people.

— Stefan Drews and Miklós Antal (2016)

### CONTEXT — A POSSIBLE FUTURE

The 2027 future context described in “A new mandate” to follow is fictional. It was extrapolated from present-day signals and sources and represents the strong interest, will and voices in favour of an approach that shifts the priority from a growth-first orientation to encompass broader concerns.

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#### A new mandate

At the Opening Session of the OECD Forum: A New Mandate on June 23rd, 2020, Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General, reinforced the OECD’s role as a “‘hub’ for global dialogue and debate on economic policy issues” but came with a new message that would impact what it would mean to pursue “internal modernisation and reform” (OECD, 2017e). This message, and the new mandate to come, hinged on a critical change to a specific part of the OECD’s 1960 founding constitution: Article 1a would be rewritten to reflect a new primary aim in the policies the OECD promotes, moving from:

**1960**

*Achieve the highest sustainable rate of growth and employment and a rising standard of living in member countries.*

to ...

**2020**

*Create regenerative and distributive economies that enable humanity to thrive, whether or not they grow.*

(Raworth, 2017b)

Based on an original provocation in 2017 from the self-described renegade economist and Senior Visiting Research Associate at Oxford University’s Environmental Change Institute, Kate Raworth—followed by three years of negotiations with the OECD’s 35 member countries—the controversial move was taken. Here is an excerpt from the press release primer for the OECD Forum 2020:

**Paris, France - June 23, 2020** - Traditional models do not integrate important dimensions such as justice, trust or social cohesion that are not easily measurable. In fact these models are based on an ideology or narrative that claims that people are rational, take the best decisions according to the information they have to maximize utility, and that the accumulation of rational decisions will deliver the best outcome.

Real people are not like that. Their lives are shaped by their hopes, aspirations, history, culture, tradition, family, friends, language, identity, the media, community and other influences. (...) As the economic profession became highly quantitative, the non-measurable features of the economy were just ignored, such as people's fears, expectations or sense of unfairness.

We need a new approach to economics that isn't just about quantitative economics. (...) We also need a new narrative to integrate all these different, often conflicting influences. So what might such a new narrative look like?

(Ramos, 2017)

The above excerpt sets the stage for this year's Forum. Gabriel Ramos, Special Counsellor to the OECD Secretary-General and G20 Sherpa, will present more from the report and initiative in New Approaches to Economic Challenges (NAEC) followed by a programme of speakers that bring diverse perspectives but a common goal of creating regenerative and distributive economies that enable humanity to thrive. More about the initiative and Forum 2020 can be found in the following resources:

Initiative: [New Approaches to Economic Challenges \(NAEC\)](#)

Report: [New Approaches to Economic Challenges: Towards a New Narrative](#)

Book: [Debate the Issues: Complexity and Policy Making](#)

OECD Forum 2020: [From Bridging Divides to a New Mandate](#)

**As the major international public conference that enables an exchange on policies and ideas between civil society, governments, academia and business, OECD Forum 2020 is our collective opportunity to begin writing that new narrative—one that begins to extend the aim of Article 1a from vision to reality. Join us.**

— OECD Forum 2020

This was a bold step for the OECD, making 2020 a remarkable year for the annual public conference, and for the years to follow leading up to the present one, 2027. After the Secretary-General's announcement on that 23rd day of June, 2020, there was precisely one idea exchanged for the remainder of the conference—or rather, one question that pervaded the thoughts and discussion of the delegates: What does it mean for the future of the economy to not be about growth first?

Now seven years into the new mandate, and three years shy of the complementary 2030 Sustainable Development Goals established in 2015 by the UN, a number of the member countries have made progress with new engagement models, more holistic and inclusive measurement and reporting, new behavioural incentives, increased focus on social impact and on promoting local economies. However, there is much to be done and most countries are in catch up mode in some form or another as they unwind entrenched approaches supporting the old system and take up new ones supporting notions of vitality, freedom and interdependence.

### **The new mandate in the Canadian context**

The Government of Canada under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was at the beginning of its second term when Gurriá announced the new mandate. Having participated in ministerial meetings leading up to the June 2020 announcement, the new mandate did not come as a surprise to the government. However, after close to five years investing significant time, effort and funds into incremental progress with the inclusive growth initiative, the “big pivot”, as the government called it, was not insignificant and came with a number of challenges, including the loss of key ministers as people revealed their limitations in shifting mindset—a critical prerequisite to leading such a profound change.

In some ways, many of the policies under inclusive growth were still sound with the new mandate, including the government’s stimulus spending and open approach to other countries, particularly on immigration and trade, which were lauded on the world stage with comments like the one from Christine Lagarde of the International Monetary Fund (Kupfer, 2016):

*I really very much hope that Canadian economic policies can actually go viral, and that this energy and this passion for openness can be sufficiently contaminating, including for the European Union.*

— Christine Lagarde, Managing Director, IMF

The government was able to use that positive momentum both internally and externally. The big pivot was first about the mindset shift, then about identifying effective ways to reframe growth and adopting new, more participatory, practices. Initially, the known patterns of working using conversation, debate, more debate, and listening tours were used to make the shift. However, it became clear that real change meant real engagement. People needed to be actively engaged and have a role in informing decisions. This was a systems challenge and the unidirectional declarative approaches from on-high were not going to work. The unfamiliarity of these new interactions was as true for the people as it was for those in government. This was not a nation of people accustomed to getting so involved in their own destinies.

When the Liberals handed the reins over to the People’s Platform Party at the end of their second term in November 2023, they had spent much of those last three years developing their take on the “Open Dialogue” (Lenihan, 2017) approach to engagement with partner agencies and the public. First introduced by Don Lenihan of Canada 2020 in 2017, Open Dialogue, and its sister principles of Open Data and Open Information, had just been recast as an interlocking set and new substratum for Open Government, setting the foundation for new behaviours and stimulating the “metabolic rate” of the government, as Dominic Barton (2016) once referred to it.

Although some of the ground work had been laid by the Liberals, the People’s Platform Party, or P3 as they have come to be known, had a more natural transition into the new mandate having spent a number of years developing momentum

around The Leap Manifesto (This Changes Everything team, 2015) and fostering support across the nation, and well beyond to a number of international organizations. Oxfam and Greenpeace among them (Klein, 2017, p. 249). Supporters of the manifesto and those who united to write it fervently shared the belief that it was time to

advance policies that dramatically improve lives, close the gap between rich and poor, create large numbers of well-paying, low-carbon jobs, and reinvigorate democracy from the ground up (Klein, 2017, p. 236).

Founded on the goal to “move from a society based on endless taking and depletion to one based on caretaking and renewal, (and grounded in) principles of reciprocity and care” (Klein, 2017, p. 247), they were the ideal movement to take on the new mandate.

Those behind the manifesto did not originally plan for it to be a platform for a political party. It was to be a platform for mobilizing change and a positive populism, and they were supporters to a degree of both the New Democrats and the Green Party in Canada at the time. However, they believed that people wanted bold, positive ideas that simultaneously made the economy more fair and addressed climate change—and they would vote for them if they were available. Thus, it was natural after the OECD announcement in 2020, and visible shifts happening at international and national levels, that their collaborations with the political parties—and a diverse number of other contributors—evolved to commit a portion of The Leap effort to form the P3. This new coalition signaled a broader social and cultural mandate to the public than “Green” implied, was something bolder than the NDP (and more energized), and would allow all contributors to the vision of P3 to bring their respective value forward and lead the country through the great transformation.

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### **Defining a new mandate**

Although fictional, the purpose of beginning with an immersive scenario is to establish a temporal context for considering the narrative through causal layered analysis. Some of the sources that informed the scenario described above, along with the last of the six definitions provided by the subject matter experts on how they might define growth in a tweet or news headline, inspired the entry point into this third and final narrative.

This definition was the one from the interviews with the most notable departure from the growth-first orientation, putting a focus on quality of life and wellbeing as indicators of societal progress:

Growth is evidence that we are striving and achieving the highest possible quality of life and wellbeing for all.

Figure 9 shows schematically where this definition falls within the spectrum of the six provided. Notably, it is a singleton, which provides some insight into how little of the daily litany, system-level concern, and discourse evolve around a non-growth narrative.





**Figure 9.** Definition spectrum with focus on second alternative narrative

What is present at all levels is the growing dissent with the current system. But as Klein (2017) beseeches, dissent is not enough. It is not enough to expose and critique the world we don’t want. Instead, it is necessary to conceive and advocate for the one we do (p. 233), to create a compelling alternative in opposition to the one that is not working. In essence, to create a movement that can challenge the status quo. In Canada, this movement may be best represented by The Leap Manifesto, which seeks to “create a tool that allows people to push Canada towards a climate and economic justice agenda” (This Changes Everything team, 2015).

Raworth (2017a) has a similar message in her book *Doughnut Economics*. By, literally, drawing the world we want based not on “long-established theories but (on) humanity’s long-term goals” (p. 8), we can craft a new “narrative of our shared economic future that is fit for the twenty-first century” (p. 10). With that idea as the genesis, Raworth rendered the Doughnut—a visual representation intended to replace the long-standing and narrowly focused Circular Flow diagram created by Paul Samuelson in 1948. Samuelson’s diagram was intended to represent how income flows in the economy between businesses and households but over time was adopted as the model for the economy itself. This meant that certain economic actors were prioritized and others neglected (p. 55-58). Raworth’s Doughnut is a broader visual assertion that defines the “safe and just space for all” (p. 9) within the limits of a social foundation of human wellbeing and an ecological ceiling we should not breach.

Along with this new visual articulation, the alternative goal Raworth proposes, and that informs the freedom narrative, is “an economy that allows people to thrive, regardless of whether or not it grows” (Raworth, 2017a, p. 227).

### **Principles to guide the new mandate**

In support of this goal, Raworth (2017a) puts forward seven new ways of thinking about economics offering a blueprint for bringing economics forward to meet the needs and challenges of the 21st century. These seven new ways of thinking translate to seven principles that inform the freedom narrative and the proposals for change later in this report. Each of the principles is listed and described briefly below.

**CHANGE THE GOAL** — Move beyond GDP and the focus on growth-first to an economy that allows people to thrive (Raworth, 2017a, p. 227).

**SEE THE BIG PICTURE** — Expand the actors to reflect life beyond economic dimensions and embed the economy in the larger interdependent web of life that reflects the complexity of social needs and ecological context (Raworth, 2017a, p. 61).

**NURTURE HUMAN NATURE** — Appreciate that human nature is driven by more than self interest and open the range of approaches toward a narrative that amplifies the better behaviours and reflects the social adaptability of humans (Raworth, 2017a, p. 23). Figure 10 shows the potential for shifting to the more positive side of human nature.



**Figure 10.** Toward a new narrative that nurtures human nature (based on Raworth, 2017)

**GET SAVVY WITH SYSTEMS** — Expand the economic toolkit to systems thinking and its building blocks of stocks and flows, feedback loops and delays (Raworth, 2017a, p. 118) and embrace more experiential means of engaging people and helping policy makers understand impacts of policy decisions (Raworth, 2017a, p. 131).

**DESIGN TO DISTRIBUTE** — Leverage a “network of flows” (Raworth, 2017a, p. 151) rather than seeing, and expecting, redistribution to be a hand-out from the government.

**CREATE TO REGENERATE** — Take a circular rather than linear approach and be “regenerative by design, restoring and renewing the local-to-global cycles of life on which human well-being depends” (Raworth, 2017a, p. 176).

**BE AGNOSTIC ABOUT GROWTH** — Be neutral about growth as only part of what it means to prosper. Take a more holistic approach that is a “safe and just space for humanity” and enables a “regenerative and redistributive economy” (Raworth, 2017a, p. 38).

### **Freedom to choose**

Why freedom? It embodies the notions of independence, self-determination, autonomy and democracy. It also conveys choice, the freedom to choose for oneself what the narrative will be, or to participate with others in crafting it, rather than being trapped in the prevailing status quo, such as the discourse of technological determinism that says people have no choice in their relationship with, or in the acceleration, design or use of, technologies intended to replace them. To use John Ralston Saul’s 2016 Parkland Institute speech as a reference, the freedom narrative is intended to open the “edge of the page” to possibilities beyond the current growth trajectory. It is to suggest that there can be an economy without growth as the primary and only goal.

The freedom narrative will explore some of the perspectives, principles and signals that emerged as challengers to the status quo. It will also integrate ideas from the subject matter expert interviews presented at the end of the participation narrative, which went beyond inclusive growth. And like the domination and participation narratives, it will use the interview themes derived from causal layered analysis as the opening for further exposition.

### ANALYSIS

The inception point for reconstructing this new vision of freedom from growth is again at the bottom of the causal layers with metaphors, moving up through worldview, system and finishing with the litany, as shown in Figure 11. Inputs from three of the six interviews provided the base. For the CLA representing aggregated inputs specific to this narrative, see table 8.



**Figure 11.** Reconstructing an alternative narrative (N3) on freedom

### Metaphor and myth level

The alternative metaphors that emerged included:

1. The economy is a self-healing patient, participating, informed and co-responsible
2. The economy is a garden, where we plant the seeds for change
3. The economy is a web, connected, interdependent with others and with nature

Freedom begins with the metaphor of the self-healing patient representing a more personal and emotional expression of exasperation with what is not working. From there, we return to the garden and the qualities of the patient gardener who understands that change takes time and appreciates that self-interest is better supported through cooperation than competition. These come together within a third perspective in the last of three metaphors, the web, which represents belonging to something larger than self and self-interest in the competitive sense. It represents connection and interdependence across and up through the levels of the system.

# AGGREGATED CLA INPUTS FOR SPECULATIVE NARRATIVE

↑	PARTICIPANT 2	PARTICIPANT 3	PARTICIPANT 5
LITANY (continuous)	Government and media go beyond government to capture and communicate a more holistic view of how people are really doing	Individuals can connect their lives and issues to the larger system level	'GDP 2.0' takes an inter-metric approach to reflect relationships between indicators and more of what is happening in society and the environment. Citizen stories are shared and promoted by national media
SYSTEM (years)	A wellbeing index that measures 'what really matters' is fully integrated into government and used complementarily to GDP	Productivity and labour are decoupled. This frees labour from GDP (output) and self-worth from work	Social and ecological contracts are supported and encouraged between citizens (bottom up approaches are embraced). Incentives for positive practices are embedded at all levels: the household, industry and government
WORLDVIEW (decades)	What matters most is what matters to you	Automation is an opportunity for life improvement and new sources of self-worth	Society is more fulfilled when their needs are cared for at individual, community and system levels and they have a reduced propensity to consume
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	The economy is a <b>GARDEN</b> , where gardeners plant the seeds for change and take a long term view	The economy is a <b>WEB</b> , connected, interdependent with others and with nature	The economy is a <b>SELF-HEALING PATIENT</b> , participating, informed and co-responsible for change

**Table 8.** Aggregated causal layered analysis inputs for speculative freedom narrative (N3). Human thriving and wellbeing are prioritized. The inputs were gleaned from the six interview participants where three emerged to inform this narrative. (Read across columns, from left to right, to compare participant inputs across each causal layer. Read up rows, from bottom to top, for a reconstructed alternative view of each participant's inputs through the causal layers.)

### *The economy is a self-healing patient, informed and co-responsible for change*

As a counterpoint to the metaphor of the economy as a dependent patient, one of the participants suggested that instead of the “experts” telling the patients—the citizens of “the economy”—what the fix is for their ills, the alternative should be that people take matters into their own hands and pursue what it means to self-heal. The discourse shifts to “Listen up, Docs! Don’t tell us, we’ll tell you! It’s bottom-up time”.

This idea expands out to people creating their own economy, one that serves them more directly and helps them reclaim some sense of autonomy, mastery and purpose (Pink, 2011). As in holistic health, the patient shares responsibility in their own outcomes and value is mutual. As Rushkoff (2016b) has expressed, all you need for economy is a person who has something to offer on one side and a person who wants or needs that thing on the other side. The real economy is in that transaction, that exchange of value. With that notion as the basis of this narrative, the people organize and endeavour to make their own economy.

### *The economy is a garden, where we plant the seeds for change*

We return to the garden. This time it is the gardener in focus, and the garden is the material to be shaped as an outcome of the gardener’s intentional choices and interests. In Eric Liu and Nick Hanauer’s book, *The Gardens of Democracy: A New American Story of Citizenship, the Economy, and the Role of Government*, the gardener’s responsibility is to tend with purpose, not to “let nature take its course” as one might do with “the market” (2011, p. 7).

The patient gardeners among us might be regarded as those willing to tend over the long haul the challenge of seeing change through in an entrenched system. They are the tireless advocates who have a vision for better ways of doing things, for more equitable outcomes, for more accurate representations of how people are doing. They are those who advocate for more expansive measures of progress, wellbeing and quality of life. They are also the policy makers and influencers who understand that an active role is needed in creating a society that supports broad and diverse populations, and does not favour those who might already have advantaged positions. They understand, as Liu and Hanauer do, that “the ultimate measure of a value system should be ‘Does it work for us?’” (p. 159).

The patient gardeners also understand that it is not the ‘winner takes all’ competitive model that is in anyone’s self-interest, but rather it is cooperation and the recognition that “we are all better off when we are all better off” (Liu & Hanauer, 2011, p. 114). From Liu and Hanauer’s perspective, freedom is communal not solitary (p. 12). Communalism extends to the concepts of pluralism, of recognizing diversity and the other, and interdependence, of recognizing the impact of one’s actions on others. For Clarkson (2014), communalism and interdependence are part of a larger sense of belonging, of citizenship—a topic the author explores in her Massey Lecture and book, *Belonging: The Paradox of Citizenship*. Clarkson spends some time considering the notion of belonging in relation to the principles of generosity, ethics, tolerance and perseverance that underlie Gross National Happiness (GNH), the Bhutanese way of measuring the collective happiness of their nation and, as a complete alternative to GDP (p. 160-162).

These concepts and principles inform the economy as web metaphor, the third offering in this alternative narrative and the one that brings the other two metaphors together.

***The economy is a web, connected and interdependent with others and with nature***

In searching for a way to describe a new vision of the economy where growth is not at the center and that expresses a change essential to our wellbeing, Raworth (2017a) offers the following suggestion: “human prosperity in a flourishing web of life” (p. 47). For Raworth, humanity is interwoven into the web of life rather than dominant over it. This relationship is represented in the author’s alternative drawing for the economy, the Doughnut, which situates humans within a larger interdependent context and asks us to see the bigger picture—for nothing less than the future of humanity. Raworth takes the notion of citizenship to the global level with a quote from American ecologist, Aldo Leopold, who “deftly put it, we need to transform the way we see ourselves, ‘from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it’” (p. 98).

Antal and Drews (2015) reinforce the importance of how we frame our relationship specifically with nature, stating that “an interpersonal relationship frame is associated with love, empathy, responsibility, and interdependence”, which brings with it different values than the common mechanistic view where dominance over nature values performance (p. 1057-1058). In the latter we “use” nature as we might a machine. In the former, we “relate” to it as a partner. The frame we use guides our thinking and actions. Seeing the economy as a web suggests that our relationships with both people and nature embody notions of connectedness and interdependence—partnerships *with* instead of dominance *over*.

As we move up the causal layers, these concepts inform the discourse and what is valued, our relationships in and with the larger system, and what is communicated. With the web as the metaphorical frame, alternate worldviews become possible and are explored at the next level.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE METAPHOR AND MYTH LEVEL**

The web metaphor brings the other two metaphors together by seeing our relationships with both people and nature as interdependent. Relationships in this metaphor imply reciprocity and a co-responsibility and tap into the more positive aspects of human nature.

**Worldview level**

Getting to what matters to others instead of what they do for a living can have a positive effect on how they feel, engender a feeling of self-worth that is not tied to work and might lead to a more fulfilled society. These ideas underlie the theme at this level:

1. What matters to you is what matters most

### ***What matters to you is what matters most***

According to one of the subject matter experts interviewed, having more free time is an important dimension in improving wellbeing and this is validated by the Canadian Index for Wellbeing (2016). Expanding on this theme, it was shared that people often have different things they like to do with their time and many feel they do not have enough time for the activities or people they love. Although the question “What do you do?” could mean something like “What hobbies or other interests do you like to spend most of your available waking hours doing?”, whenever asked the “What do you do?” question, most people are likely to jump to thinking of, and responding with, what they do for money.

Related to this is a fixation with work. According to another interview participant, for some people self-worth is tied to work and not having work, or having precarious work, can have detrimental social, psychological and emotional ramifications. This issue was viewed as a contributor to social challenges, including the risk of profound social instability, which is interconnected with unemployment and underemployment (Arbair, 2016; World Economic Forum, 2017b, p. 11)

One of the participants proposed a call to action suggesting that if more of us asked a different question, “What matters to you?”, instead of “What do you do?”, we might ease some stress, enjoy a broader range of conversation and improve our sense of wellbeing. This relates to the ‘changing the goal’ principle and has the potential to not only shift the discourse but also to increase a sense of fulfillment. People will feel more cared for, which can have a positive impact on behaviour. Reinforcing this idea, another of the interview participants suggested that when needs are cared for, society is more fulfilled and people have less propensity to consume. The focus and discourse are more on community, a shared story of meaning, purpose and collective wellbeing as core values.

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE WORLDVIEW LEVEL**

The discourse is informed by a sense of what matters and not what people do for a living. This fundamental shift loosens the connection of people's self-worth from work and helps them focus more on what they like to do and to those around them.

### **System level**

Two themes that emerged at this level as alternatives to the current include:

1. Forging new social and ecological contracts
2. Measuring what matters

#### ***Forging new social and ecological contracts***

Since the second industrial revolution in the late nineteenth century and the advent of mass production (Schwab, 2016), people have relied on employment with large firms, although



not always with the most favourable terms for the workers. After WWII, new compacts were established between workers and large corporate employers in the US providing a “safety net” (Davis, 2016, p. 115) that would seal employer-employee relationships for whole careers, from working age to retirement. This safety net, Davis argues, provided stability for people and their families through wages, benefits and pensions. Since the 1980s, there have been staged dilutions of employee-advantaged policies and more capital going into efficiency innovations (Christensen, 2012) in efforts by corporations to reduce costs. These efficiency innovations and the digital revolution have meant that people are looking at how to redefine work.

Although much of the discourse around automation is negative, one of the subject matter experts brought a hopeful perspective suggesting it is an opportunity for life improvement. Related to this, they also suggested that as automating technologies replace human labour, that labour be decoupled from productivity (GDP output) measurement. This would have the positive social and psychological benefit of freeing a person’s sense of self-worth from work. Another reason such a shift is seen as positive is that it opens the possibility of people having more free time to do what they love. The question that immediately follows is how will they make money? There are a number of possibilities, and not all transactions require money.

Government redistribution is a common response, albeit not always popular or within the ideological comfort zone of governments. However, guaranteed basic income (GBI) programs have been used with very positive societal results. For example, a pilot in Dauphin, Manitoba from 1974 to 1979 provided “Mincome” cheques to a subset of residents to lift their incomes above the poverty level. In addition to the non-measurable qualitative benefits expressed by recipients, there was a positive measurable impact on the healthcare system with reduced “hospitalization rates (for accidents, injuries, and mental health diagnoses)” (Lum, 2014). The Government of Canada offers a Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement for low-income seniors, as does the Ontario provincial government. The latter has also introduced a GBI pilot in selected communities entitled the Ontario Basic Income Pilot (OBIP) (Carey, 2017).

Given that the need for a basic income supplement might increase as a direct result of automating technologies, a source of funding for GBI programs might appropriately come from taxing these technologies, or more specifically the businesses that employ them, an approach suggested by Bill Gates (Delaney, 2017). This implies a shared responsibility between government and industry that redirects some of the profits from increased efficiencies back to the affected people. These initiatives are examples of Raworth’s ‘design to distribute’ and ‘see the big picture’ principles.

Another source of income is the return to communities as the center of economic activity. Except, as Davis (2016) describes, the community is now global in proportion, with a significantly extended reach, and a number of enabling “raw materials” (p. 170) creating the potential for a “cosmopolitan locavorism” (p. 167). According to Davis, the raw materials include open source tools for distributed co-creation and collective action; inexpensive capital equipment, such as 3D printers for local fabrication and production; smart phones, which have democratized access to many services; the creators themselves, the digital natives, with their digital acumen; and climate change, which is necessitating both localized economic activity and



low-carbon energy use and innovation (2016, p. 170-171). Examples of platforms that leverage combinations of these raw materials in their quest to enable local economies with broad reach include the following Canadian-based companies:

- Shopify, an Ottawa-based ecommerce startup with the mission to “Make commerce better for everyone” and that supports approximately 500,000 merchants around the globe, many of them small
- Bunz, a Toronto-based bartering platform with the motto “Don’t trash it. Trade it.”, an example of circular economy and the ‘create to regenerate’ principle

Where the circular economy keeps existing goods in motion, complementary currencies keep money—and therefore, its value—in motion (Atwood, 2007, p. 99; Rushkoff, 2016a, p. 125) by providing a parallel option to centralized currencies for the purpose of supporting a local economy or a particular need within a community. These currencies function as money by virtue of agreement within the community and are convertible to fiat currency when needed (Lietaer & Belgin, 2011). Examples of complementary currencies include:

- Bitcoin, an online cryptocurrency
- Bristol Pound, a local currency to Bristol in the UK used as real money designed to support the local economy in and around the city (Bristol Pound, n.d.)
- Fureai Kippu (pronounced ‘foray-eye-keepoo’), a sectoral currency in Japan used as a token system providing elderly care. Fureai Kippu is also an example of time banking (Hayashi, 2012; Rushkoff, 2016a, p. 162)

Another kind of care system that is emerging from a distributed group that once had the primary function of delivering mail, is the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. As Klein (2017) describes, in response to growing austerity measures by Canada Post Corporation and the threat of privatization of their services, the union collaborated with The Leap team and the Friends of Public Services to redefine every local post office across the country as a local center for green transition (Klein, 2017, p. 251). In this new conception, the post office is a network of climate and care workers where

residents can recharge electric vehicles; individuals and businesses can do an end run around the big banks and get a loan to start an energy co-op; and postal workers do more than deliver the mail—they also deliver locally grown produce and check in on the elderly (p. 252).

These examples demonstrate Raworth’s principle of ‘create to regenerate’, as well as draw out the ‘nurture human nature’ principle. They are also examples of bottom-up approaches that have come about as a result of people not being happy with, or seeing a better way than, the current system.

In their book, *Redesigning Work: A Blueprint for Canada’s Future Well-Being and Prosperity*, Lowe and Graves (2017) proffer the challenge to redesign work from the ground level up,

through the eyes of the workers (p. 190). At the foundation of this redesign are three indicators that provide the intrinsic rewards of work:

1. Being able to take initiative in your job
2. Fully contributing your knowledge, skills, and capabilities in your job
3. Learning new ways to do your job better (p. 174)

Through their research, the authors found that among the most intrinsically motivated Canadian workers are the self-employed (p. 176). They absorb uncertainty and instability in favour of autonomy and flexibility, which allow them to apply themselves in ways that tap the three areas of skills and development (p. 192). The least intrinsically motivated workers are those doing term, contract, temporary or seasonal work (p. 175).

By connecting the growing precarity of work with the quest for intrinsically motivating work and the growing social (and ecological) challenges, there is great potential for these to come together in socially-oriented businesses. Based on trends Lars Boggild (2016) of Purpose Capital shared in his talk “Investing for Impact: The Movement for Financial and Social Returns”, which tell us that more impact is wanted, that public benefit is expected, and that increased demand is anticipated, he said “(t)here has never been a better time for entrepreneurship—why not create a socially-oriented business”. Boggild shared that thought as a call to action along with a number of examples to motivate people to take the step and the opportunity. An increased focus on Socially Responsible Investing (SIR) is making this possible for many entrepreneurs and organizations, including the Immigrant Access Fund with the Inspirit Foundation and Revolution Foods, two of a number of examples Boggild cited in his December 2016 talk at the Rotman School of Management.

These examples provide a glimpse into the variety of ways people can bring the economy closer to themselves and their communities, move away from a dependency on industry, and find opportunities for life improvement.

### *Measuring what matters*

The alternative vision at this level is a wellbeing index that measures ‘what really matters’, is fully integrated into government data collection and reporting and is used complementarily to GDP. As discussed in the first narrative, the Canadian Index of Wellbeing is currently a separate effort from the Government of Canada. Steps to integrate the measures would provide a more holistic picture of how Canadians are really doing with its “64 indicators representing eight interconnected domains of vital importance to full quality of life” (CIW, 2016, p. 2). A balanced approach would be guided by a vision that ensures people’s lives are enriched across all domains of wellbeing (Education, Healthy Populations, Community Vitality, Democratic Engagement, Living Standards, Time Use, Environment, and Leisure and Culture). Social and environmental data would be collected at the national and local levels and across jurisdictions—including different populations, demographics and geographies—on a regular and ongoing basis to guide decision-making.

This vision puts the CIW close to the levers of government, if not integrated within it as its own division like in France and Britain, and to influencing policy. And as suggested in the interviews, change at the political level might eventually make change at the bureaucratic level, which would be enabled by integrating adoption, training, and communication throughout government and for those who represent and collaborate with them—something recommended by another participant within the context of the participation narrative but also applicable here.

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS AND SUMMARY OF THE SYSTEM LEVEL

1. Labour has been decoupled from productivity (GDP output) measurement allowing people to focus more on the things and people they love.
2. Automating technologies have freed people from the long work week and opened the potential for new workshare models and alternative sources of income.
3. Redistribution programs are funded by technologies introduced to improve productivity.
4. A “cosmopolitan locavorism” has democratized access to the materials and services needed to start businesses and engage in more community-centric economic activity (at both global and local levels, and through virtual and physical connections).
5. Complementary currencies are being used more to support local economies.
6. Employee-owned and driven initiatives have been inspired by corporate austerity measures, e.g., the Canadian Union of Postal Workers have formed a network of climate and care workers.
7. It is a good time for socially responsible investing and opportunities to start a socially responsible business.
8. Wellbeing indicators have been integrated into government, beginning to measure and report “what really matters”

#### Litany level

One primary theme emerged at this level:

1. Connecting realities of people and system

This mostly aspirational litany takes signals from the levels before it to reimagine an alternative to the current disconnect between the lived realities of the people and what the government and media convey.

#### *Connecting realities of people and system*

With the vision to have more holistic, inclusive and open data collection and reporting integrated across levels of government and jurisdictions—or “GDP 2.0”, as one expert suggested—media are greatly aided in their efforts to provide a more balanced perspective of the economy and the people.

Although this more representative approach is still nascent and experimental, media’s former recursive representation of government and centralized view of the economy seemed only to stoke social instability. Recognizing their own disconnect with the people—exemplified by the broadsiding

effects in 2016 of Brexit in the UK, the election of Trump in the US, a growing negative populism in a number of European countries, and troubling new research from the 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer for Canada on the declining trust of media, government and business (2017, p. 7)—the mainstream media have also opened their channels of communication to engage with a greater swath of the public to better represent them and to challenge the status quo. This work is enabling a shared narrative by helping people to connect their own lives and situations to others and to the government.

An increasing sense of connection with the larger system is also enabled by a governmental shift at different levels to stronger engagement practices with the public. This too is nascent, however it has real signals to suggest a shift in behaviour and interest beyond aspiration.

Examples include the City of Toronto and their Civic Innovation Office i-team funded by the Bloomberg Foundation to “help city leaders resolve pressing issues though innovation, technology, new approaches, collaboration and partnerships” (City of Toronto, 2017); the Province of Ontario’s Digital Government team, who are “Making government work better for people in the digital age” (Government of Ontario, 2017); and the Government of Canada’s recent announcement and formation of the Canadian Digital Service (Brison, 2017). Each of these efforts represents a commitment to increase engagement with the public and take a more human-centered approach to the services offered at each level.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE LITANY LEVEL**

Mainstream media have access to broader data and reporting and have opened channels of communication to better represent a broader public and to challenge the status quo. And the government has adopted stronger engagement practices with the public.

Table 9 provides a summary of themes in the alternative narrative on freedom.

CAUSAL LAYERS	NARRATIVE #3: FREEDOM THEMES
LITANY (continuous)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting realities of people and system</li> </ul>
SYSTEM (years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forging new social and ecological contracts</li> <li>Measuring what matters</li> </ul>
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What matters to you is what matters most</li> </ul>
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	<p>The economy is ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A self-healing patient, informed and co-responsible for change</li> <li>A garden, where we plant the seeds for change</li> <li>A web, connected, interdependent with others and with nature</li> </ul>

**Table 9.** Summary of causal layered analysis themes for speculative freedom narrative (N3)

## SYNOPSIS

Table 10 provides an overview of the third narrative on freedom. The goal of this narrative is an economy in which people are able to thrive, and while growth might be an outcome it is not the goal (Raworth, 2017a). A focus on community, a shared narrative, purpose and collective wellbeing are core values. The discourse is informed by a sense of what matters to people and not what they do for a living. This fundamental shift has helped loosen the connection of people's self-worth from work, as has the changing employment landscape. The trend toward increased automation in industry has freed people's time to do more of the things they love and to conceive new ways of making a living that are more intrinsically rewarding and impactful—focusing on where social and ecological needs are and where more and more capital is flowing.

Motivated by diminishing trust in government to take swift and complete action on their promises, work prospects that are changing radically with increased technological dependency and efficiency, and increasing social and environmental needs, a movement is afoot to take on these challenges in a more local and community-oriented way. A sense of connection with the larger system has been spurred on by increased activism and bottom-up economic development initiatives; a move to more public and employee ownership models; a greater commitment to redistribution, enabled by impact-oriented partnerships between the government and business; a focus on socially responsible investing; and open government—all processes facilitating different potential outcomes for this narrative. Media also play a role in connecting people to the larger system and enabling the possibility of a shared narrative. Their efforts have been helped by more holistic, inclusive and open data collection and reporting across jurisdictions and at different government levels.

At the root of the increased sense of connection is seeing the economy as a web, a metaphor that suggests our relationships with both people and nature are about connectedness and interdependence. People seek partnerships *with* not dominance *over* others or nature. This frame guides people's thinking and actions, enables them the freedom to choose what the narrative will be and to work with others in crafting new approaches to the economy.

The outcomes of this narrative are just beginning to unfold but many stories are emerging that show promise for an economy that allows people to thrive, whether or not it grows. Desirable outcomes include less focus on growth as the goal and more on wellbeing, more balanced stories channeled through media, and growing embrace of bottom-up approaches to the economy.

In many ways, aspects of this narrative have been active in parallel as long as “the economy” has existed, and for a long time before that when economies were more localized. However, the dominant growth narrative is deeply entrenched and interwoven with much of our daily existence from individual and community levels, to the regional, national and global. It is in the metaphors people collectively use, the shared worldviews, the intricate and highly dependent systems we have constructed and manage, and in the daily tweets and other forms of contemporary communication. The urgency for change is real but so is the entrenchment. (See Appendix G for orthodoxies that both challenge and motivate change.)

## Stakeholder overview

Questions specific to stakeholders were not explicitly covered in the interviews. However, some input suggests that a greater focus on wellbeing would increase the number of advantaged stakeholders and balance the voices across the system. These are listed in Table 10. More specifics on stakeholders for this alternative narrative are covered in exploring change and proposals for change.

## TRANSITION

As we transition from understanding the narratives to exploring change, a fitting sentiment to conclude this section that expresses an urgency for change comes from Roberta Jamieson (Public Policy Forum, 2016, 20:40-23:57) who—as the first woman elected chief of the Mohawk Six Nations of the Grand River, the first Indigenous woman in Canada to earn a law degree (among other accomplishments), and a prominent leader and advocate for Indigenous education and collective wellbeing in Canada—knows a thing or two about making change happen.

*We have a lot of work to do to make this an economy in Canada in which the bottom line becomes our collective wellbeing, and I think we need to get started yesterday.*

— Roberta Jamieson, President & CEO, Indspire

For a comparative view of the CLA themes across the three narratives, see Table 11. And for a comparative view of the narrative synopses, see Table 12.



### NARRATIVE #3: FREEDOM (SPECULATIVE)

The economy is a **WEB**, connected  
and interdependent with others and with nature

<b>SCOPE</b>	Advanced economies with a focus on the Canadian context
<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>	Relationship-driven, decentralized, participatory, community-oriented; values community, a shared narrative, purpose and collective wellbeing
<b>GOAL</b>	An economy that allows people to thrive, regardless of whether or not it grows (Raworth, 2017a, p. 227)
<b>CAUSES</b> (beginnings)	Diminishing trust in government, business and media; threat of unemployment; tech change, with increased automation; increased social and environmental needs
<b>PROCESSES</b> (middles)	Increased activism, supported public and employee ownership and redistribution models, increased focus on socially responsible investing, open government (plus open data and open dialogue)
<b>OUTCOMES</b> (ends)	Less focus on growth as the goal and more on wellbeing, more balanced stories channeled through media, and growing embrace of bottom-up approaches to the economy
<b>DOMINANT VOICES</b>	[Not explicitly covered in this phase] Voices are more balanced with opportunities for a diversity of people to be heard (more in outcomes of exploring change and proposals for change sections to follow)
<b>WHO IS ADVANTAGED?</b>	[Not explicitly covered in this phase] All Canadians and Indigenous Peoples (more in outcomes of exploring change and proposals for change sections to follow)
<b>WHO IS DISADVANTAGED?</b>	[Not explicitly covered in this phase] No one is disadvantaged (more in outcomes of exploring change and proposals for change sections to follow)

**Table 10.** Narrative synopsis for speculative freedom narrative (N3)

NARRATIVE THEMES: A Comparative View of Causal Layered Analyses

CAUSAL LAYERS	CURRENT (DECONSTRUCTION) — NARRATIVE #1: DOMINATION THEMES
LITANY (continuous)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overuse and misrepresentation of GDP</li><li>• Disconnect between lived realities of citizens and what government and media report</li></ul>
SYSTEM (years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need for more holistic and inclusive approaches to measurement and reporting</li><li>• Traditional drivers, the quest for growth and the convergence of major global trends</li></ul>
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Economic growth will 'float all boats'</li><li>• Productivity is (almost) everything</li><li>• Innovation is the 'holy grail' of growth</li></ul>
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	<p>The economy is ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A frontier of infinite colonies</li><li>• Organic</li><li>• A machine</li><li>• A dependent patient</li><li>• A pie to be made bigger, then shared</li></ul>

N1

Table 11. Narrative themes: a comparative view of causal layered analyses



<b>ALTERNATIVE (RECONSTRUCTION)</b> — <b>NARRATIVE #2: PARTICIPATION THEMES</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVE (RECONSTRUCTION)</b> — <b>NARRATIVE #3: FREEDOM THEMES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflecting lived realities and guiding decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting realities of people and system</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening the middle class and helping those working hard to join it</li> <li>Measuring and reporting lived realities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forging new social and ecological contracts</li> <li>Measuring what matters</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusive growth and sustainable growth reinforce each other</li> <li>Vulnerable populations have more opportunities and voice</li> <li>Innovation increases opportunities to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What matters to you is what matters most</li> </ul>
The economy is ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small fragile planet</li> <li>A pie to be shared and made bigger together (or better, a garden)</li> <li>Synthetic</li> </ul>	The economy is ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A self-healing patient, participating, informed and co-responsible for change</li> <li>A garden, where we plant the seeds for change</li> <li>A web, connected, interdependent with others and with nature</li> </ul>



<p>NARRATIVE CONTINUUM</p> <p>A Comparative View of Narrative Synopses</p>	<p><b>NARRATIVE #1: DOMINATION</b> CURRENT</p>  <p>The economy is a frontier of <b>INFINITE COLONIES</b>, ever growing and expanding to other territories and, eventually, other planets</p>
<p><b>SCOPE</b></p>	<p>Advanced economies with a focus, when possible, on the Canadian context</p>
<p><b>ATTRIBUTES</b></p>	<p>Market-led, power at the top, trickle-down guided, competition-oriented; values wealth over people, short term gain over the long term frame, and eschews equality in favour of self interest and a dominance-based logic</p>
<p><b>GOAL</b></p>	<p>An economy that needs to grow, regardless of whether or not people thrive (Raworth, 2017a, p. 227)</p>
<p><b>CAUSES</b> (beginnings)</p>	<p>Market fundamentalism (and financialization)</p>
<p><b>PROCESSES</b> (middles)</p>	<p>Globalization, deunionization, technological change, capital shifts and financialization</p>
<p><b>OUTCOMES</b> (ends)</p>	<p>Income and wealth disparity, polarization of society, cyber dependency, national sentiment, aging population and climate change</p>
<p><b>DOMINANT VOICES</b></p>	<p>“The market”, multinational businesses, government and media</p>
<p><b>WHO IS ADVANTAGED?</b></p>	<p>Multinational businesses and financial institutions; those close to levers of government; and people with tech skills, or more generally with science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills</p>
<p><b>WHO IS DISADVANTAGED?</b></p>	<p>Low-income and low-skilled individuals, generally, those with lower technical skills; specifically, aging workers, youth and young adults, and Indigenous peoples; middle class individuals and families</p>

**Table 12.** Narrative continuum: a comparative view of narrative synopses

## NARRATIVE #2: PARTICIPATION EMERGENT



The economy is a **PIE**, to be shared through participation and made bigger together

Advanced economies with a focus on the Canadian context

Government-facilitated, centralized, market-informed, participation-oriented; values participation over redistribution and a strong and growing middle class

An economy that expands social participation in the process and benefits of economic growth (World Economic Forum, 2015, p. 1)

Global: slow global growth, aging pop., in-country inequality, cyber dependency; Canada: low productivity, aging pop., tech disruption, global connectivity, low commodity prices

Innovation, skills, training and education, immigration, infrastructure, stronger and healthier population and trade relationships

A growing economy with increased participation and stronger middle class. The key metric of success is an additional \$15,000 in median household income above current projections by 2030

Government, investors, businesses, academia and “the market”

Tech-literate, people with access to capital to create businesses (clean tech, digital and agri-food), people with access to ongoing education, women in leadership, economic immigrants and top talent

People displaced by technologies, incumbents threatened by disruptive tech and broader participation, communities not represented in the data, non-economic immigrants

## NARRATIVE #3: FREEDOM SPECULATIVE



The economy is a **WEB**, connected and interdependent with others and with nature

Advanced economies with a focus on the Canadian context

Relationship-driven, decentralized, participatory, community-oriented; values community, a shared narrative, purpose and collective wellbeing

An economy that allows people to thrive, regardless of whether or not it grows (Raworth, 2017a, p. 227)

Diminishing trust in government, business and media; threat of unemployment; tech change, with increased automation; increased social and environmental needs

Increased activism, supported public and employee ownership and redistribution models, increased focus on socially responsible investing, open gov. (+data+dialogue)

Less focus on growth as the goal and more on wellbeing, more balanced stories channeled through media, and growing embrace of bottom-up approaches to the economy

[Not explicitly covered in this phase] Voices are more balanced with opportunities for a diversity of people to be heard (more in outcomes of exploring change and proposals for change)

[Not explicitly covered in this phase] All Canadians and Indigenous Peoples (more in outcomes of exploring change and proposals for change sections to follow)

[Not explicitly covered in this phase] No one is disadvantaged (more in outcomes of exploring change and proposals for change sections to follow)

### SIGNALS



**4/**

# EXPLORING CHANGE



## 4 /

THE PURPOSE OF THE SECOND PHASE of the research project was to explore change using role play as a participatory method for reframing economic growth. This phase built on reframing approaches used in the first phase, which included the following alternative metaphor and narrative:

**METAPHOR:** “The economy is a web”, connected, interpersonal and interdependent with others and with nature

**NARRATIVE:** “Freedom”, as a speculative narrative informed by past and present signals from interviews, literature and media

Used in combination with the “Rough guide to how change happens” (Krznaric, 2007), an initial treatment of the narrative was developed for use in the role play where it served as a reference for generating ideas toward approaches that might inform economic policy research and development. It was also expected that workshop inputs would inform future iterations of the narrative, which could then be used as inspiration and iterative probes for further workshops, further learning, and to explore readiness for change. See Appendix H for the alternative narrative treatment used in the workshop.

This section provides a brief description of the role play workshop, the stakeholder roles represented, the six questions from Krznaric’s guide used to lead the exploration, and a summary of the results from the workshop condensed into two outputs: The stakeholders considered important to engage in the change and an inventory of ideas generated as candidate strategies for change. These two outputs inform proposals in the final portion of the report. In addition

to these outputs, a summary of learning from research observations and group reflections on using role play for exploring change is also provided.

## ROLE PLAY OVERVIEW

### OBJECTIVES

For the participants, the role play workshop was an opportunity to learn about alternative narratives on the future of growth and the economy, share their own perspectives and learn those of others, and immerse in a research activity outside the norm of everyday life.

For the researchers, the workshop was an opportunity to learn how stakeholders in a system might come together to chart a pathway toward a different narrative (the content aspect), and to observe how using an alternative metaphor and guided role play might work as a combined methodology toward initiating and enacting system-level change (the methodology aspect).

### STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATIVES + RELATIONSHIPS

Based on the stakeholders that emerged from the interviews, literature and other sources analyzed when understanding the narratives, six stakeholders were selected to be developed as profiles for the role play and represented by participants in the workshop. These included a mix of dominant voices and disadvantaged groups identified in the first two narratives. The selected subset included representatives from government, media, investment (qualified in the workshop as a combination of startup and social impact investment), business, aging workers and non-economic immigrants. Not all stakeholders that surfaced during that first phase of research were included because of the limited number of available participants for the workshop, time limitations, and the limited depth of research into all representatives suitable for participating in the role play dialogue. As such, the role play was considered a prototype that could inform similar future activities on this topic, taking forward the learning from this initial workshop including new or different stakeholders as an outcome, which is covered in the results to follow.

The six stakeholders included a mix of roles representing policy makers, policy influencers and policy receivers, as follows:

#### POLICY MAKERS

1. The **finance minister** represented the government perspective on the economy, its fiscal policy and strategies to stimulate economic growth.

#### POLICY INFLUENCERS

2. The **wellbeing director** represented a non-governmental organization advocating for broader measures of how individuals, communities and society as a whole are doing.

3. The **enterprise CEO** represented a disrupted industry that is looking for both local and global opportunities to keep the company going.
4. The **startup co-founder** represented small and growing businesses with a focus on enabling investors and startups to engage for positive social and environmental impact.

#### POLICY RECEIVERS

5. The **national news reporter** represented public media and an interest in providing a balanced view of government efforts on the economy as well as others who influence and receive the policies of government.
6. The **citizen and 1st generation immigrant** represented citizens impacted by the state of the economy, changes in job prospects and what the future might hold for their children.

A profile was developed for each of the six stakeholders. Each profile card included an overview of the stakeholder, their name, role and affiliation, interests, challenges and potential relationships (alliances and tensions) within the role play activity. See Figure 12 for an image of stakeholder profile cards. Appendix I shows an example of the profiles.

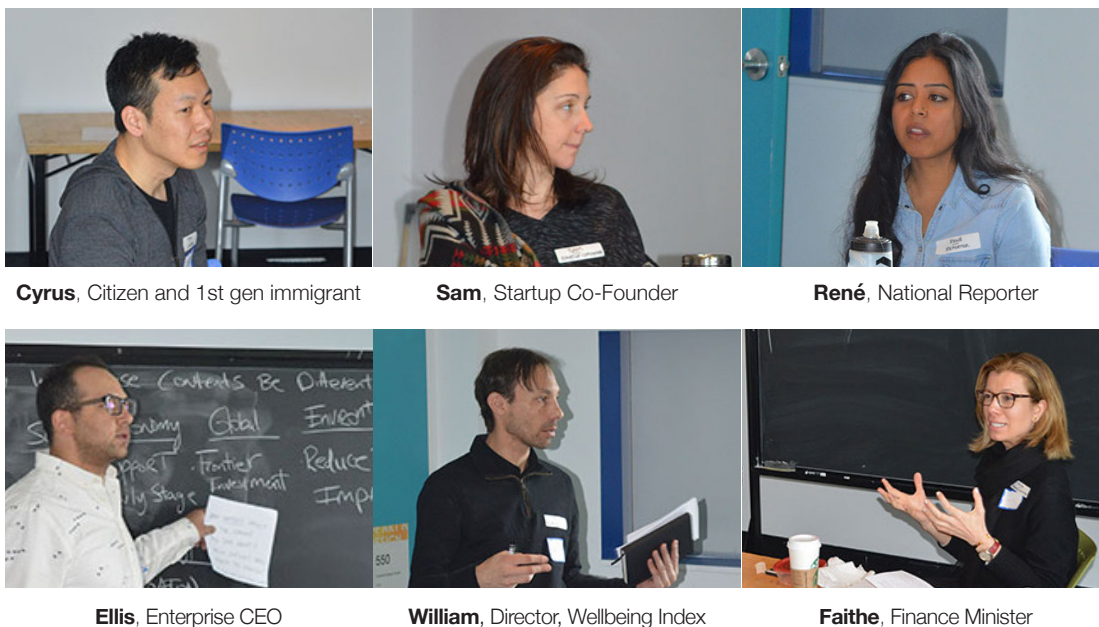


**Figure 12.** Stakeholder profile cards

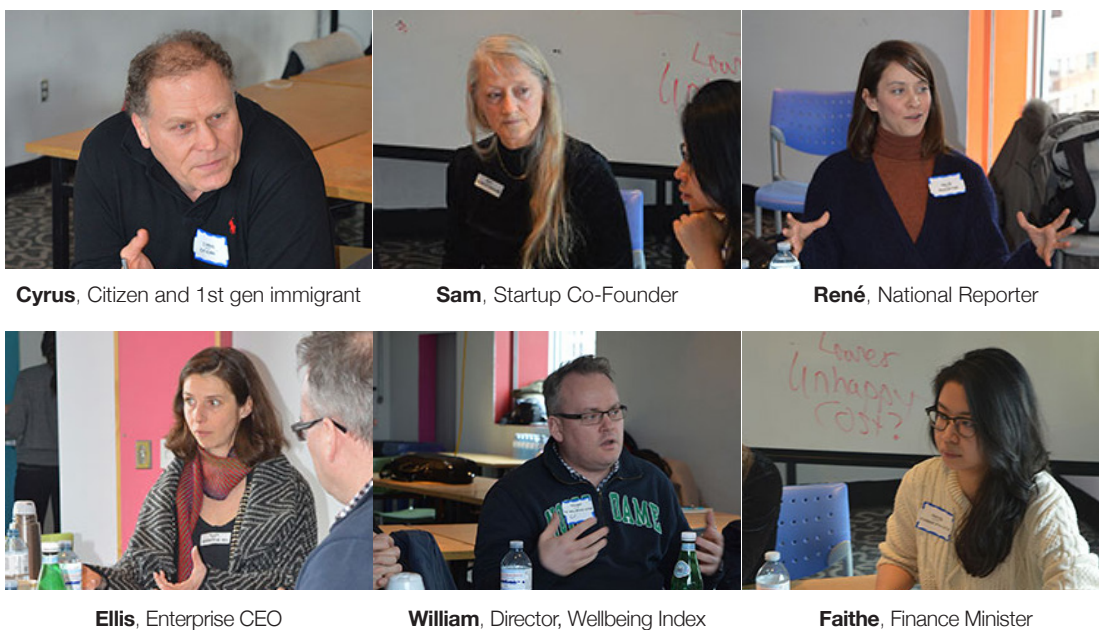
Photo credit: Michael Schaus, 2017

Twelve participants signed up for the workshop and were split into two groups of six stakeholders. Having two groups allowed for the potential of more ideas to be generated, as well as to compare how the role play might unfold for two distinct groups and used as learning for the future. See Figure 13 and Figure 14 for images of the stakeholders within each of the two groups.





**Figure 13.** Role play group 'A'



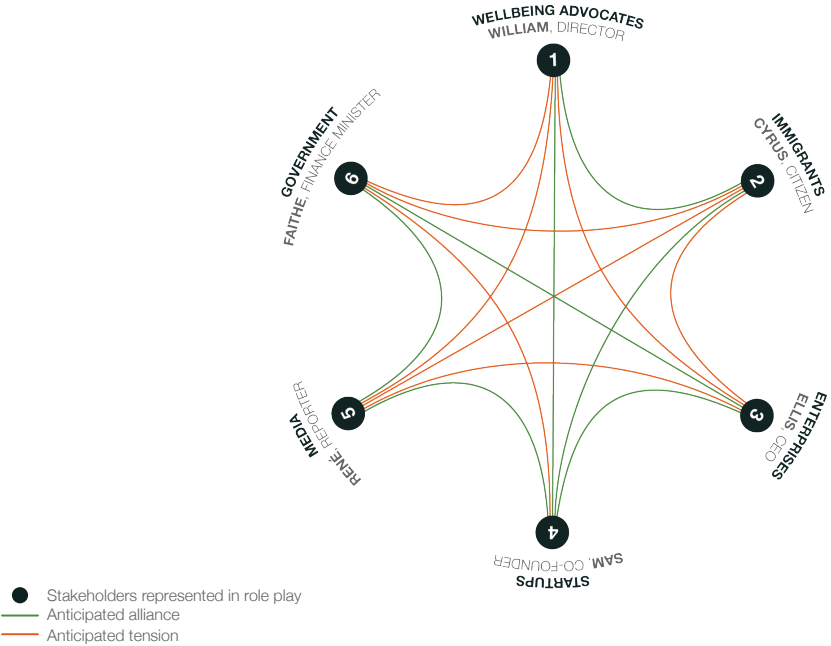
**Figure 14.** Role play group 'B'

Photo credit (all images on page): Michael Schaus, 2017

The potential relationship alliances and tensions presented in each of the profile cards the participants received were based on research done in the first phase of the project but were also hypothetical. The purpose of including this information as an input was to suggest a starting point for the stakeholders to engage, providing some comfort in the unknown, with the idea the relationships would be reinforced or shift through the activity. Additionally, from the researcher’s perspective, the outcomes would provide some insight, if still speculative, into relationships that might be anticipated in advance between stakeholders, and potentially inform future engagements.

**ANTICIPATED** — Figure 15 shows the anticipated stakeholder relationships determined *before* the workshop. This set provided the baseline for considering the relationships that emerged.

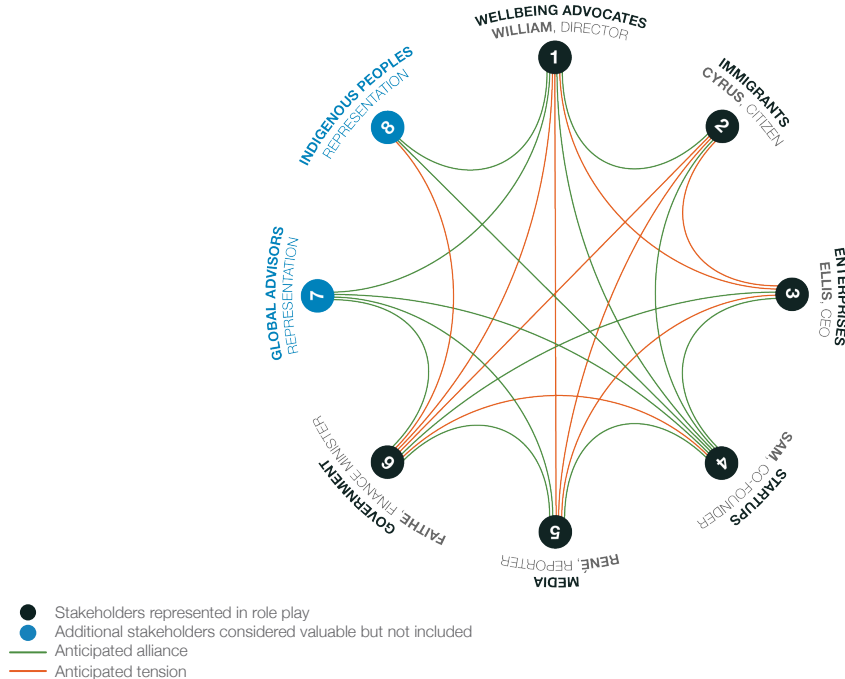
Each of the represented stakeholders are indicated with a black dot (●). Anticipated alliances between stakeholders are indicated by green connection lines (—). Anticipated tensions between stakeholders are indicated by orange connection lines (—).



**Figure 15.** Anticipated stakeholder relationships within role play

Figure 16 shows blue dots (●) to represent two additional stakeholders not part of the workshop but considered to be among those who should be included if the number of participants had allowed, and if the profiles for those stakeholders were prepared in advance. The two stakeholder groups considered missing but valued were global advisors and Indigenous Peoples. Global

advisors are those that provide research insights and policy recommendations to governments based on their international purview. Examples include the World Economic Forum and OECD. Indigenous Peoples include First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada.



**Figure 16.** Anticipated additional stakeholders

## SIX QUESTIONS EXPLORING HOW CHANGE MIGHT HAPPEN

The workshop role play activity was guided by the six questions from Roman Krznaric’s “Rough Guide to How Change Happens” (2007, p. 30-32). The questions were used to prompt each of the two role play groups to consider the different elements that might come together to advance change toward the alternative narrative.

1. What is the change we wish to explain?
2. Who might be involved in the change?
3. What strategies might be used to bring about the change?
4. What contexts might affect how the change happens?
5. What might be the process or pathway to the change?
6. What are the main elements from above that might lead to change?

The first two questions were not explicitly asked because they were embodied within the narrative itself as “the change” and in the stakeholders represented within the workshop as the “who”, both informed by the first phase of research. However, the second question on who

might be involved in the change received additional attention through observations of the interactions between stakeholders during the role play and in probing participants after the activity about their interactions and who they thought might be missing from the conversation. The observations and probes were used to gather insights for future stakeholder engagements and are presented in the results section below.

The remaining four questions were asked directly during the role play by a facilitator embedded within each group (see Appendix J for the Facilitator Guide with information on how the activity was conducted). The responses to these questions across the two groups were distilled down to an inventory of candidate strategies for change, integrating related ideas that came up in the first phase of research, and are presented as a single list within the results. These ideas later informed a subset of proposals for change as an outcome of this project.

## GROUP REFLECTIONS

After the role play activity the facilitators guided their groups through a set of questions to gather responses on the experience and to generate potential new knowledge and actions toward change. The reflection questions focused mainly on stakeholder relationships as well as on missing, advantaged and disadvantaged stakeholders, and informed the final recommendations of the study. Responses related to relationships and missing stakeholders have been integrated into the results below.

An anonymous two-question survey was sent out after the workshop to gauge the degree of change experienced by participants as a result of taking part in the role play. See Appendix K for the Post-Role Play Workshop Survey Results.

## ROLE PLAY RESULTS

### STAKEHOLDER REPRESENTATIVES + RELATIONSHIPS

The purpose of the following analysis was to discover potential insights on the second question of who might be involved in the change. The results from this analysis could be used in an iterative way to inform future role play activities, as well as offer recommendations to policy influencers and makers on stakeholders to engage as participants in change.

The **COMPARATIVE STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS MAP** (Figure 17) shows a series of radial convergence graphs representing the stakeholders and relationships between them. It also identifies potential additional stakeholders. The role play results to follow are best read with the map. The image groups across the two pages represent three types of relationships, as follows: Anticipated stakeholder relationships *before* the workshop (left column), emergent stakeholder relationships from the two groups *during* the workshop (center columns) and combined emergent stakeholder relationships determined *after* the workshop (right column).

**ANTICIPATED** — Described previously as Figure 15 and Figure 16, within Figure 17 map images (a) and (b) in the left column represent anticipated relationships and candidate missing stakeholders, and provided the baseline for considering the relationships that emerged as well the new ones identified in the workshop.

**EMERGENT** — The graphs at the top of the two center columns show the relationships that emerged based on observation of the interactions *during* the workshop in Group A image (c) and Group B image (e), respectively. Anticipated alliances between stakeholders that were reinforced are indicated with thick green lines (—). Anticipated tensions between stakeholders that were reinforced are indicated with thick orange lines (—). Relationships that were neutral, where there was neither a tension nor an alliance formed, are indicated by a thick light blue line with white dashes (—). And finally, where alliances emerged but tensions were anticipated, a dashed green line (---) is used.

It is notable that no tensions formed where alliances were anticipated, which would have been indicated with a dashed orange line (---). Overall there were fewer tensions than anticipated. This might have been due to the participants being primarily from the Strategic Foresight and Innovation program at OCAD University and having some familiarity with one another in advance. They were also a group already aware of complex system challenges and might have come in with a high level of sensitivity to stakeholder diversity and the need for openness.

See Appendix L for a comparative view of the anticipated and emergent relationships. The combined emergent results are presented below.

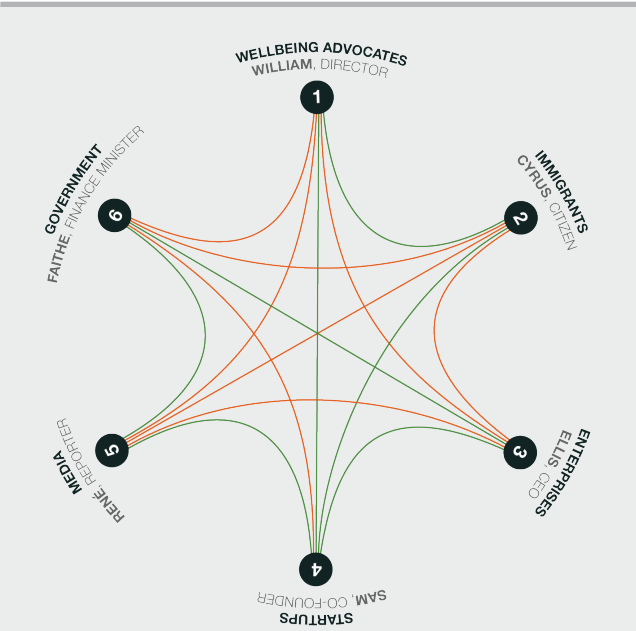
The graphs at the bottom of the center two columns show additional stakeholders each group identified after the role play activity as valued but missing from the interaction. See Group A image (d) on the left and Group B image (f) on right. These are also summarized in the combined emergent results below.

**COMBINED EMERGENT** — The graphs in the far right column show the combined outcome from interactions within and reflections by the two groups. The top image (g) represents nine common relationships across the groups (listed below). For the alliances reinforced and newly formed, a number of potential partnerships were also identified with ideas to be explored (also listed below) and factor into the candidate strategies for change presented later in the results.

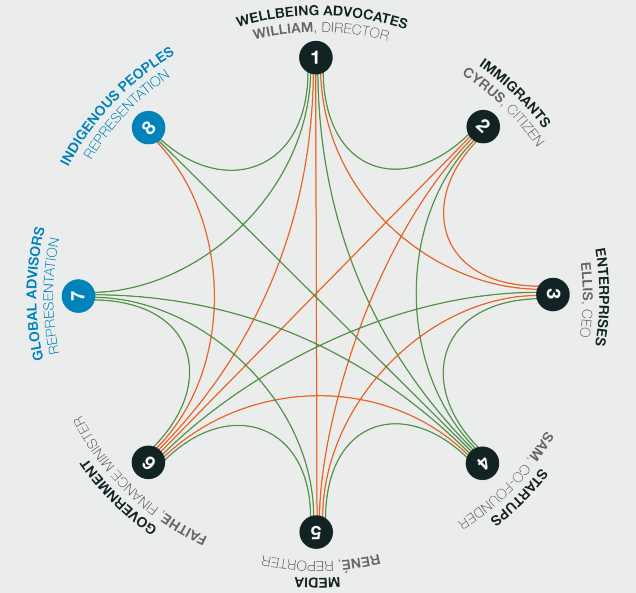
Image (h), in the bottom right of the Comparative Stakeholder Relationships Map, shows the contributions from the two groups, as well as one from the initial anticipated set not explicitly stated by the groups, Indigenous Peoples, for a combined total of six additional stakeholders to be considered for future stakeholder engagements.

# COMPARATIVE STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS MAP (Figure 17)

**ANTICIPATED** STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS  
(for the two groups **before** the role play activity)



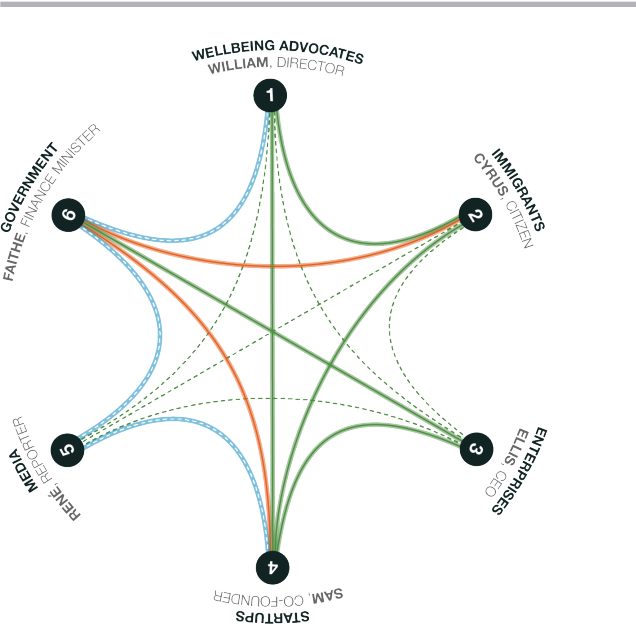
(a) Anticipated stakeholder relationships among the six participants planned for the role play



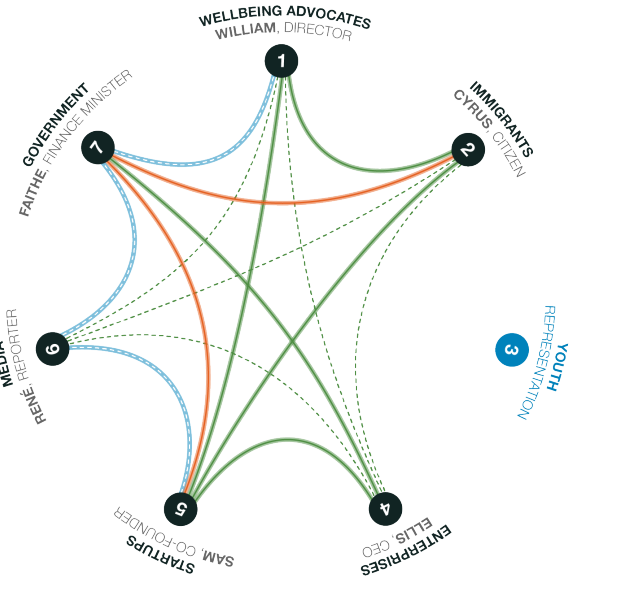
(b) Anticipated stakeholder relationships with two additional identified in advance as valued but not included

- Stakeholders represented in role play
- Additional stakeholders considered valuable but not included
- Anticipated alliance
- Anticipated tension

**EMERGENT** STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS  
(for each of the two groups **during** the role play activity)



(c) GROUP A – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships among the six participants in the role play

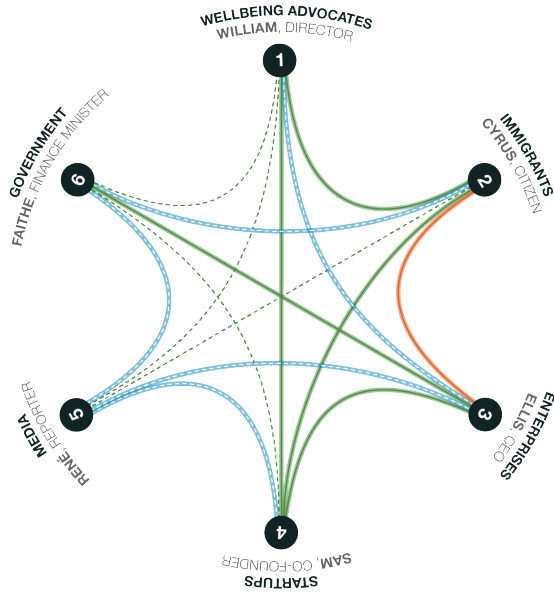


(d) GROUP A – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships with one additional identified by role play team as valued but missing

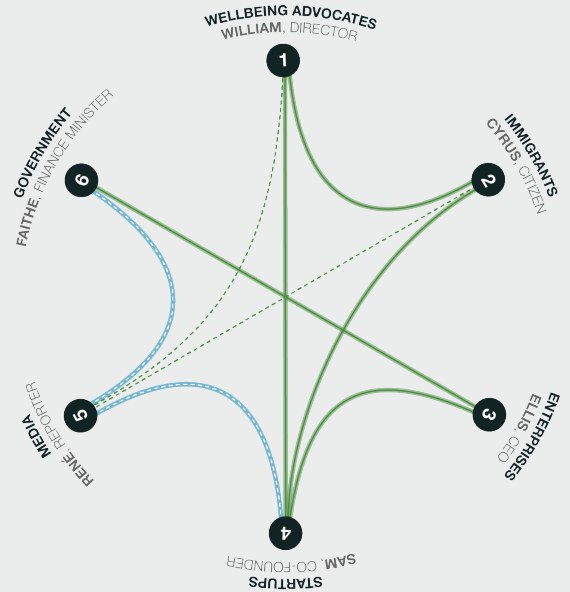
- Opposite of anticipated – alliance formed
- Opposite of anticipated – tension formed (no relationships in this category)
- Anticipated alliance reinforced
- Anticipated tension reinforced
- Neutral relationship



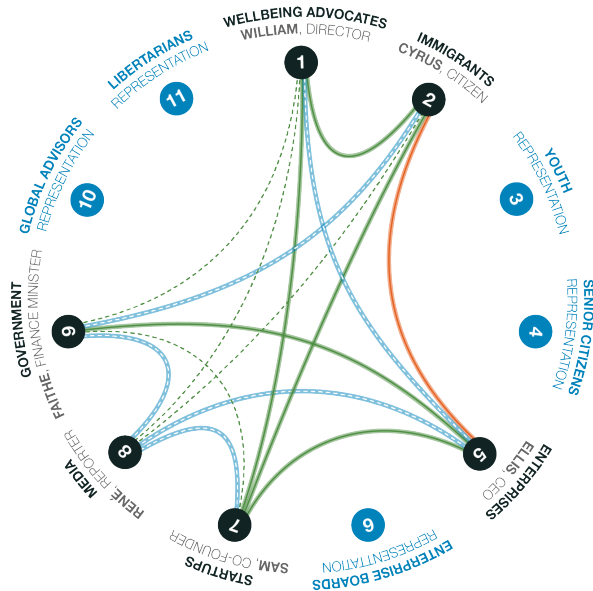
**COMBINED EMERGENT** STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS  
(for the two groups combined **after** the role play activity)



(e) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships among the six participants in the role play



(g) COMBINED EMERGENT stakeholder relationships common across two role play teams



(f) GROUP B – EMERGENT stakeholder relationships with five additional identified by role play team as valued but missing



(h) COMBINED EMERGENT stakeholders relationships with six additional participants identified as candidates in future

### *Common relationships across groups*

Five anticipated alliances were reinforced:

Wellbeing advocate — Startup  
Wellbeing advocate — Immigrant  
Immigrant — Startup  
Enterprise — Government  
Enterprise — Startup

Two alliances were formed that were the opposite of anticipated:

Wellbeing advocate ---- Media  
Immigrant ---- Media

Two anticipated alliances were neutral (the media reps made a particular effort to be neutral):

Startup == Media  
Media == Government

### *Potential partnerships to explore*

Media as leading discussions and drawing out a broad balance of voices and stories — Related to this is giving increased attention to policy influencers, including wellbeing advocates, and policy receivers, including new immigrants and existing citizens, on matters related to the economy, versus the emphasis on economic reporting being weighted to representing the government. These collaborations help address the need for more balanced representation in a system that favours certain stakeholders. Applies to potential partnerships:

Wellbeing advocate ---- Media  
Immigrant ---- Media

Partnerships between enterprise and startups — Capital flows in support of startups are one thing but the idea that emerged was about cross-pollination where enterprise might provide insights to startups on scaling, and the more nimble startups, focused on social impact in particular, might provide guidance to the larger more established enterprises on adapting to a more socially- and ecologically-oriented approaches to the economy. These partnerships might help address the need for investing in social infrastructure and value-creating activities. Applies to potential partnerships:

Enterprise — Startup



Partnerships between social impact startups and new Canadians — This extends the cross-pollination theme where social impact investors and startups help enable integration and success of new citizens. In turn, new citizens bring new ideas and perspectives into the local economy. These partnerships might help address the need to support economic and non-economic immigrants and encourage socially-minded new businesses. Applies to potential partnerships:

Immigrant — Startup

Partnerships between wellbeing advocates and social impact startups and investors — There is potential regenerative value in the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) and like indexes providing insight on where needs are in different communities to spur potential investment and enlist new participants. These partnerships might help address needs in local communities and stimulate local and localized economies. Applies to potential partnerships:

Wellbeing advocate — Startup

Partnerships between government and corporate enterprises in guaranteed basic income (GBI) — This relates to ideas around corporations transferring some of the gains they get from increased productivity as a result of introducing new technologies, and cases of companies that offshore operations to take advantage of lower wages and increase their income. Taxation gradients or GBI fund levels could be determined based on a company's automating technology investments or de-investments. These partnerships might help address the gaps left by efficiency investments in automating technologies and company exits. Applies to potential partnerships:

Enterprise — Government

Networked co-creation between wellbeing advocates, new Canadians, enterprise and startups, and other stakeholders who might have, or be incented to have, 'skin in the game' within communities — This is about prototyping the change communities want to see. These collaborations might help address the 'citizen as receivers' rather than drivers of their own futures. Applies to potential partnerships:

Wellbeing advocate — Immigrant  
Enterprise — Startup

### *Stakeholders to involve in future engagements (both simulated and actual)*

1. Youth (children and young adults): "We don't treat them as real participants."
2. Seniors
3. Enterprise board members: "In public companies, the board holds the power."
4. Global advisors (overlapping with anticipated)
5. Libertarians: "There was an inherent bias, but some people won't want this."
6. Indigenous Peoples (identified in advance)

## *Advantaged and disadvantaged stakeholders*

The following stakeholders were identified as advantaged and disadvantaged based on the interactions within the groups. For a comparative view of the responses from the two role play groups, including additional detail and quotes from the participants, see Appendix M. Comparative View of Advantaged and Disadvantaged Stakeholders.

### Viewed as **ADVANTAGED**:

- Government: “They have the resources. They make the rules. They make policy.”
- Startups: They are favoured in current system because they represent potential for new innovation, new investment flows and new jobs.
- Effective storytellers: Those who could clearly and compellingly articulate their view.

### Viewed as **DISADVANTAGED**:

- Citizens: “Citizens need fast solutions.”
- Immigrants, parents and youth: A sense of not being heard was strong in one of the groups, in particular between the government representative and the immigrant/citizen representative. Getting past positions to focus on interests was expressed as the challenge.
- Government and enterprise: “People with power” because they are traditionally the ones that have pressure on them from multiple directions to solve the problems.

## INVENTORY OF CANDIDATE STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

Ideas collected in the role play workshop, and informed by ideas that came up in the first phase of the study, are listed below. Each is tagged with related principles and is briefly described in terms of candidate strategies for policy makers and policy influencers to consider. Partnerships that might be leveraged are also listed as inputs for consideration. Both the common relationships across role play groups and additions considered important based on the overall research are included with each candidate.

The proposals for change section to follow provides a subset of candidate strategies based on the prominence of topics raised throughout the project and seen through the lens of a set of guiding principles proposed by Raworth (2017).

## STRATEGY

## DESCRIPTION

### 1. Build a holistic and inclusive open data source that goes beyond economic measurement

#### *Principles:*

Change the goal  
See the big picture

Create a ministry of inclusion and wellbeing; improve breadth, access and frequency of data.

Leverages partnerships:


Wellbeing advocate  /  Government (*added*)

Media  Government (*added*)

Wellbeing advocate  Immigrant

Wellbeing advocate  Startup

Wellbeing advocate  Media

Immigrant  Media

### 2. Promote a shared narrative that connects people and system

#### *Principles:*

Get savvy with systems  
Create to regenerate

Foster multilateral communication between citizens, data collectors, report creators and media; capture and convey lived realities of people with data collection and reporting; “put a face to the data” by integrating storytelling.

Leverages partnerships:

Wellbeing advocate  Immigrant

Enterprise  Startup

++

### 3. Redistribute wealth

#### *Principles:*

Design to distribute  
See the big picture

Implement a guaranteed basic income that supports all people living below the poverty line. Consider partnerships between government and industry for novative approaches to funding.

Leverages partnerships:

Enterprise  Government

### 4. Persist platforms for change across ruling governments

#### *Principles:*

See the big picture  
Change the goal

Use persisting principles to guide ‘keep or quash’ decisions vs. party ideology. Take a long-term view with the people at the center versus basing all programs on time in rule.

Leverages partnerships: (not assessed but applies to an ongoing social contract between government and the people)

---

**5. Foster positive alternatives to the threat of automation**

***Principles:***

Design to distribute  
Create to regenerate  
Nurture human nature

Pilot reduced work week approaches; decouple labour from productivity; restructure compensation system; incentivize industry to invest in training and contribute to redistribution programs.

Leverages partnerships:

Enterprise — Government

Enterprise — Startup

---

**6. Integrate behavioural approaches into planning and programs**

***Principles:***

Nurture human nature  
Get savvy with systems

Embed incentives into public and private programs that incentivize social and environmental practices.

Leverages partnerships:

Government — Government (*added*)

Enterprise — Government

Government — / --- Startup (*added*)

Government — / — Immigrant / Public (*added*)

---

**7. Foster a culture of engagement over apathy among citizens**

***Principles:***

Create to regenerate  
Nurture human nature

Bottom-up activism and participation in civil society— use political activism as a lever for change; use work in elementary schools to nurture spirit of interest in politics and political agitation from elementary school up; disaggregate into smaller, regular, community-led participatory events that feed into the national level (Signal: Leap).

Leverages partnerships:

Public — Public (including Indigenous Peoples) (*added*)

Public — Government (*added*)

Public — Enterprise (*added*)

Public — Startup (*added*)

NGO — NGO (*added*)

NGO — Government (*added*)

Government — Government (*added*)

++

<p><b>8. Engender a 'prototyping' mindset across government</b></p> <p><i>Principles:</i> Get savvy with systems See the big picture</p>	<p>Enable prototyping at the system level to understand, anticipate and measure the impact of change and policies; pilot a single workflow.</p> <p>Leverages partnerships: Government — Government (<i>added</i>) Government — / — Immigrant / Public (<i>added</i>) Government — / ---- Startup (<i>added</i>) Enterprise — Government</p>
<p><b>9. Harmonize training and recognition across interprovincial borders</b></p> <p><i>Principles:</i> Create to regenerate Nurture human nature</p>	<p>Recognize and support transitions between careers or jobs; orient training toward social and environmental innovation; integrate measurement adoption and training; incentivize businesses to invest in training staff to meet innovation needs; enable people to train one another (Signal: GoC and Provincial government efforts).</p> <p>Leverages partnerships: Enterprise — Government Government — / — Immigrant / Public (<i>added</i>) Government — Government (<i>added</i>) Public — Public (including Indigenous Peoples) (<i>added</i>)</p>

## REFLECTIONS ON USING ROLE PLAY FOR EXPLORING CHANGE

In the methodology section, four reasons were given for using role play as an activity to explore change. The following results are a summary of observations of the participant interactions and inputs from the participants on the activity. These results help inform future use of role playing as a participatory method in stakeholder engagement, as well as how the activity might be evolved when used again.

### *1. How the role play worked as a form of embodied realism in which the direct, if simulated, experience provided greater transformational potential than a purely intellectual approach:*

Each of the groups had different experiences 'getting into character' and this affected how quickly, and possibly how deeply, they were able to respond as a group to the

questions as well from the individual stakeholder's point of view they represented. This was a known limitation going into the activity. Specifically, while there is creative potential with role play, it can be a challenge for participants to represent the viewpoints and interests of another and suppress their own (Popper, 2008, p. 59).

One of the most interesting differences between the groups, and one that provided an idea for future role plays, was that in one of the groups the first person to speak had already taken on a level of empathy for his character that his emotion and heartfelt expression immediately drew the others in. This was surprising to everyone, including the individual, but extremely effective. It gave rise to the idea of having a “plant” in each group who shows deep empathy for the role they are playing and can express their interests through a story to bring others quickly into their roles. This also punctuated the value of storytelling, of personal resonance in communication, when seeking to effect change, something that was raised in the interviews as well.

**2. *How the role play worked to help empower stakeholders who might be outside the system of typical decision makers to provide new perspectives and generate ideas on a large socioeconomic challenge:***

A number of the participants expressed a feeling of powerlessness in the role play. The need for change felt real but bigger than what they thought they could effect. An interesting counter point from the researcher's perspective is that although the situation was challenging for the participants, both groups were able to generate a number of ideas toward enabling change. This is demonstrated in the inventory of candidate strategies for change presented earlier.

It is also notable, however, that the material generated was largely unstructured. Although four specific questions from Krznaric's framework were used to structure the ideation—specifically around strategies, contexts, pathways and elements—and the pacing was guided by the facilitators embedded within each group, the categorization of the responses needed to be determined during analysis after the fact. The uncertainty experienced by the participants might have contributed to this lack of structure in the dialogue. Given the participants were almost all novices in the topic area, this is not a surprising nor a negative result. It affirms Armstrong (2001) and Green (2002, 2005) on the benefit of eliciting novice judgment as a generative medium in a simulated interaction. It is something to appreciate, as well as to anticipate and plan for in analysis.

Another dimension raised by a few participants was the challenge of not being aligned in values with the stakeholders they represented. This affected how empowered they felt, or the power they could embody within themselves for representing that voice in the system. It was suggested later by participants that providing the materials in advance of the workshop would help them get into character.

3. *How role play worked for building empathy for others' perspectives and experiences, and to discover potential new relationship mappings as a means of breaking down stereotypes and assumptions about others:*

A number of the participants reinforced the use of role play as a powerful approach for building empathy, and that it would be an effective tool to use with actual stakeholders in a system where they would play the role of other stakeholders. Examples of related sentiment:

"I was surprised how the role playing really deepened the empathy (or reservations) I had to a particular character."

"(The experience) created empathy for stakeholders outside my everyday role."

"Hearing the gov't rep and CEO's opinions/struggles/positions—what seemed genuine and even personal—in response to the person who had lost his job. This was helpful to me to put a face on big officials/execs who are really just people trying to do their job."

"The immersive experience helped me to see the complexities of my character's place in society."

4. *How role play worked as a rehearsal method for future stakeholder communications and collaborations:*

The most notable result of conducting the role play as a kind of rehearsal in a simulated context was the potential partnerships that were gleaned. These informed the candidate strategies and can be used to guide future iterations on the role play in simulated or real stakeholder contexts.

The workshop provided useful learning on the benefits and challenges of using role play as a method for exploring change, including the importance of techniques that enable participants to get into their roles and the timing and richness of inputs used to frame the activity. The role play itself appeared to have transformative potential (see summary in Appendix K Post-Role Play Workshop Survey Results) but future iterations are needed (see Appendix N for Future Considerations and Ideas for Using Role Play to Explore Change).





**5/**

# PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE



## 5 /

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE takes the learning from understanding the narratives and the ideas from exploring change and revisits the primary research question asked at the beginning of the study:

*How might reframing growth  
enable change to a more  
desirable alternative?*

Alternative metaphor, narrative foresight and role play were used in combination to reframe growth and spark the generation of potential strategies that might be used to enable change. This section presents the resulting strategies as preliminary proposals for consideration.

Using the seven new ways of thinking put forward by Raworth (2017) as the guiding principles, this section offers five proposals for change as a subset of the inventory of candidates. The proposals fall under one of three themes that recurred throughout the research: collect & connect, engage and incentivize. These themes provide a high-level frame for the topic area of each proposal. Representation of all themes and a breadth of coverage across the principles guided the selection of proposals. Additionally, candidates that have had greater attention at the policy level were not included. The section begins with an overview of the proposals.

## PROPOSALS OVERVIEW

Each proposal is accompanied by the contexts, pathways and people—key elements for enabling change generated during the role play and the final question in Krznaric’s “Rough guide for how change happens”. A primary and secondary principle has been applied to each. ‘Be agnostic about growth’ is considered fundamental and applies across all. Three of the five proposals are further enriched by additional tools and considerations to enable implementation and potentially open new ways to engage and inform policy. The final two are less developed but provide starting points for further consideration.

### SELECTED CANDIDATES

The five selected candidate strategies are ordered here in the sequence they will be presented:

- 1 Build a holistic + inclusive open data source** (Candidate 1)
- 2 Promote a shared narrative that connects people to system** (Candidate 2)
- 3 Engender a prototyping mindset across government** (Candidate 8)
- 4 Integrate behavioural approaches into planning + programs** (Candidate 6)
- 5 Foster positive alternatives to the threat of automation** (Candidate 5)

### PROPOSAL THEMES

The three themes provide a high-level frame for the topic area of each proposal. In summary:

#### **COLLECT & CONNECT**

Collect holistic, inclusive and open data  
Connect data, people and contexts

#### **ENGAGE**

Engage diverse stakeholders to participate (to write the narrative together)  
Engage to promote action, choice and a positive populism

#### **INCENTIVIZE**

Incentivize community-focused practices and collective wellbeing  
Incentivize social and ecological impact



## STRATEGY FOR CHANGE | 1 |

### *Build a holistic and inclusive open data source*

#### DESCRIPTION

#### THEME: **COLLECT & CONNECT**

More holistic and inclusive approaches are needed in data collection and reporting. Holistic coverage that includes all wellbeing domains and all populations would better reflect how people are really doing, help to inform and tailor policies and actions to different community needs, raise the presence of currently neglected communities and address the issue of data poverty.

The goals of this strategy for change are to better measure and reflect the lived realities of the people and to enable success for all peoples through more inclusive representation in the data.

#### *Principles*

- 1° Change the goal
- 2° See the big picture

#### CONTEXTS

—  
*Create* a Ministry of Inclusion and Wellbeing in the government that is connected with the survey cycles and reporting of Statistics Canada.

*Tailor* communication to positive messages and quality of life for everyone. Steer away from language and communication that keep people in service to the economy.

#### PATHWAYS

—  
*Integrate* the 8 domains and 64 indicators in the Canadian Index for Wellbeing (CIW) into the data collected, captured and communicated to the public. Stage integration based on government plans.

*Expand* the National Surveys to include northern and designated communities.

*Leverage* the work of the Open Government initiative.

#### PEOPLE

—  
*Learn* from the work of the INSEE in France and ONS in Britain.

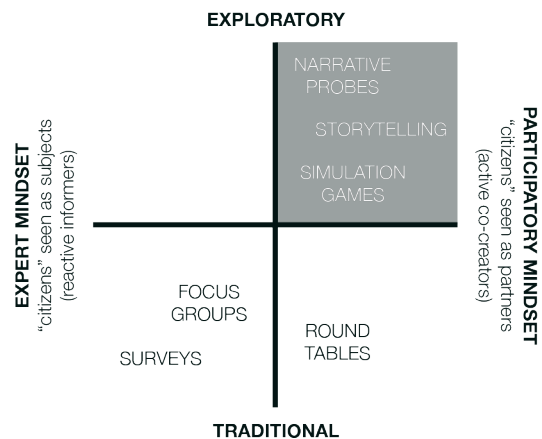
*Partner* with Canada 2020 and Open Government initiatives.

*Involve* the media as communication partners in getting the word out about the results of the holistic measures.

## New Tools

A new toolkit for collecting and working with data might help enable this strategy for change:

**Policy Research & Engagement Map** — The purpose of the map (Figure 18) is to provide a guide to planning policy research and engagements and a richer toolkit for collecting, analyzing, synthesizing and communicating the data. The concept is based on Liz Sanders's (2008) research map and puts an emphasis on participatory engagement while still providing a guide to traditional approaches. The rendering below shows the structure and begins to populate the map with methods tailored to the policy space. This new tool would be prototyped, applied and evolved in the context of doing research to inform policy in collaboration with those who receive, those who influence and those who craft economic policy.



**Figure 18.** Policy research and engagement map. Based on Sanders (2008). The top right shows the focus on more of a participatory mindset and exploratory and experimental practices. These are examples only as a starting point.

## Additional Considerations

### Data types

Gather both quantitative and qualitative data for a richer view of the numbers. The proposed Policy Research & Engagement Map is intended to help diversify and guide approaches.

### Data frequency

Increase the frequency as well as the breadth of data collected.

### Data education

Plan and enable adoption, training, and communication throughout government, and with those who represent and collaborate with them, of a more holistic and inclusive set of measurements.

---



## STRATEGY FOR CHANGE | 2 |

### *Promote a shared narrative that connects people to system*

#### DESCRIPTION

THEME: **ENGAGE**

The disconnect people feel between their everyday lived realities and higher levels of the system could be addressed through different forms and channels of engagement. Enable people to tell their stories and be present to those of others, including fellow citizens, Indigenous Peoples, industry and government. Foster multilateral communication between the public, data collectors, report creators and media. Capture and convey lived realities of people along with data collection and reporting. Extend the Strategy for Change 1 with a qualitative perspective on the collection and presentation of the data.

The goal of this strategy for change is to fortify trust between people and government, put a face to the data and provide channels for people to relate and relay to the government.

#### *Principles*

- 1° Get savvy with systems
- 2° Create to regenerate

#### CONTEXTS

—  
*Open* channels for participating: *Create* Participation Lab(s) in conjunction with the FutureSkills Lab(s).

*Open* channels for telling stories: *Leverage* formal (e.g., CBC) and informal (grassroots, community) channels for broadcasting.

#### PATHWAYS

—  
*Open* channels for participating: *Use* the Open Dialogue approach described and promoted by Canada 2020.

*Open* channels for telling stories: *Explore* development of a platform for alternative narratives that enables people to tell their stories.

#### PEOPLE

—  
*Open* channels for participating: *Get* beyond the experts to the public in informing policy. *Engage* the public as participants in decision making.

## *New Channels*

Two new tools might help enable this strategy for change:

- 1. Participation Labs** — The purpose of the Participation Labs is to provide ongoing venues for engagement alongside existing and planned venues, notably but not limited to the FutureSkills Lab(s). Although the Participation Labs are intended to coexist with other venues for engagement, such as those for innovation or skills development, it does not assume their missions. They are intended to function as an open channel for ongoing exchange between government, public, industry and academia. The forms of engagement may vary considerably from a unidirectional ‘walk up & talk back’, to one-on-one engagements, to group activities and workshops. Engagements that foster multilateral communication are favoured as a mechanism to build understanding.
- 2. Sound Futures Platform** — The purpose of the Sound Futures Platform is provide a channel for producing and communicating alternative narratives. It would be seeded by alternative narratives on growth, and invite contributions from individuals and groups to build on this foundation. A dedicated ReMEDIate channel would provide a platform for media to engage and help shift the focus from the center to the field. Cross-posting and collaboration with The Leap stories platform should be investigated.

## *Additional Considerations*

Related to Pathways, *Open* channels for participating (augmented by *Open* channels for telling stories):

Although the Government of Canada uses roundtables, based on the Open Dialogue report (Lenihan, 2017), these consultations provide attendees an opportunity to share their views but not participate in decision making. In a time when communities are fragmented, when technology is mediating communication and when nationalistic movements are on the rise, an open dialogue approach with a focus on storytelling and enabling communities to define their own narratives would build social capital within communities and greater trust in leaders.

The Participation Labs and Sound Futures Platform are offered as new channels to explore to open the dialogue and to get beyond the experts to deeper public engagement.



## STRATEGY FOR CHANGE | 3 |

### *Engender a prototyping mindset across government*

#### DESCRIPTION

THEME: **ENGAGE**

Enable prototyping approaches at the system level to understand, anticipate and measure the impact of change and policies. Engage diverse stakeholders in the process of testing hypotheses, and enable people to connect themselves with the larger system.

The goals of this strategy for change are to increase the slow “metabolic rate” (Barton, 2016) of the government by taking a learn through engagement hypothesis-driven approach that seeks to engender a culture of critical thinking, build empathy by putting an external face to policy and service development, help people connect themselves to the larger system, and foster trust between people, government and industry.

#### *Principles*

1° Get savvy with systems

2° See the big picture

#### CONTEXTS

—  
*Augment* the FutureSkills Labs with a Participation Labs that involves multiple stakeholders in prototyping (see Strategy for Change 2 — Supplement).

#### PATHWAYS

—  
*Pilot* a single workflow.  
  
*Develop* new tools to help enable the strategy (see Supplement):  
1. Policy Research & Engagement Matrix (guide)  
2. Narrative Probes (method)

*Leverage* existing practices, e.g., service design, lean UX.

#### PEOPLE

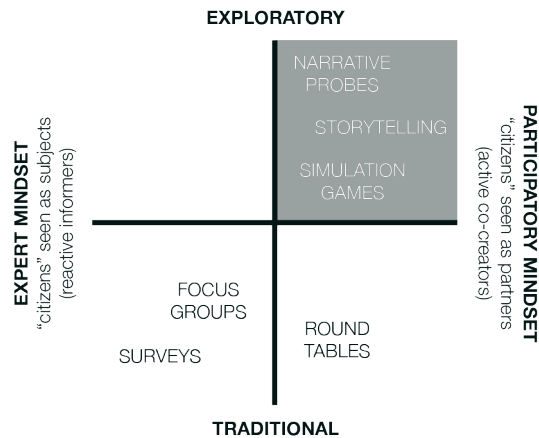
—  
*Engage* diverse stakeholders based on an understanding of needs and interactions within the system. Consider who has the dominant voice, who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged.



## New Tools

Two new tools might help enable this strategy:

1. **Policy Research & Engagement Map** — Use and evolve the Policy Research & Engagement Map (Figure 18) described in Strategy for Change 1. Extend the methods to include approaches to system-level prototyping.



**Figure 18.** Policy research and engagement map. Based on Sanders (2008). The top right shows the focus on more of a participatory mindset and exploratory and experimental practices. These are examples only as a starting point.

2. **Narrative Probes** — As one of the new tools for Policy Research & Engagement, the purpose of narrative probes would be to probe *readiness for* or, conversely, *resistance to*, change. Alternative narratives used in combination with different forms of engagement and prototype development, such as role play, would be used as iterative test tools. With this purpose, the role play might best be used with actual stakeholders, not in a simulated experience. The findings from the probes could be used to iterate on the narrative, evolving it to a desired future for the stakeholders in the system and used to probe again, as well as to inform changes from the dominant growth orientation toward the alternative. Through this process, the stakeholders would both generate the strategies, contexts and pathways for the change and participate in iteratively making the change happen.

## Additional Considerations

Leverage not only the inputs but the value of diverse stakeholders. For example, Indigenous Peoples have history and wisdom to impart as custodians of the land, which should not be just heard but put into application. They can also play a role in educating and mentoring others in non-monetary approaches to economy and through this regain a greater sense of purpose.

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## STRATEGY FOR CHANGE | 4 |

### *Integrate behavioural approaches into planning and programs*

#### DESCRIPTION

#### THEME: **INCENTIVIZE**

New tools are needed to help decision makers refocus public policy on the long term. This strategy proposes developing and integrating new planning tools for policy rehearsal that provide insight into the consequences of economic policies in the larger social and environmental context. By extension, new public and private partnerships and programs may be fostered that incentivize social and ecological contracts and tap into the better angels of our nature.

The goal of this strategy for change is to enable new ways of understanding the consequences of choices, and to incentivize co-responsible approaches to the economy across government, industry and public.

#### *Principles*

- 1° Nurture human nature
- 2° Get savvy with systems

#### CONTEXTS

—  
*Refocus* public policy development on social and ecological impact.

*Use* the PoliCon Game with government at national and international levels (see Pathways).

*Utilize* public/social Participation Labs (see Strategy for Change 2 — Supplement).

#### PATHWAYS

—  
*Change* the game. *Develop* a Policies & Consequences Game (PoliCon) — a tool for strategy and policy rehearsal. Consider crowd funding and other sources to develop game).

*Use* the grid for energy reuse.

*Restructure* compensation systems such that happiness creates rewards.

#### PEOPLE

—  
*Engage* systems game makers, designers and researchers.

*Prototype* and test collaboratively with stakeholders across system.

*Collaborate* with social impact investors and startups to spur new ventures.

*Incentivize* industry to revisit compensation models.



## STRATEGY FOR CHANGE | 5 |

### *Foster positive alternatives to the threat of automation*

#### DESCRIPTION

#### THEME: **INCENTIVIZE**

Increased automation can provide new opportunities for people to bring the economy closer to themselves and their communities, move away from a dependency on industry, and find opportunities for life improvement. New partnerships, collaborations and incentives for businesses and communities offer potential for thriving, more localized (physical and virtual) economies, and put the focus on people and environment.

The goal of this strategy for change is to promote alternative sources of self-worth by fostering mastery, autonomy and purpose within communities. It is also to foster diverse perspectives beyond STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and to nurture creative capacity.

#### *Principles*

1° Create to regenerate

2° Design to distribute

#### CONTEXTS

*Prioritize* responsibility of training and education in and through the business context.

*Leverage* the FutureSkills Labs for education opportunities + the Participation Labs for public-to-government engagements.

*Use* social impact investment forums to stimulate potential for new participants.

#### PATHWAYS

*Pilot* reduced work week and redistributive approaches.

*Decouple* labour from productivity and use more holistic metrics.

*Enable* public ownership models of infrastructure and services.

*Promote* STEAMD (A=Art, D=Design), not just STEM.

#### PEOPLE

*Create* partnerships between startups, enterprise and government.

*Incentivize* business to reinvest capital into training and redistribution programs in the communities they operate within or exit.



**6/**

CONCLUSION + NEXT STEPS



Motivated to understand why the current economic system appears to be failing us—which is manifest in a number of issues including growing inequality, social instability and environmental degradation—and what a human-centred approach might bring to the challenge, this study investigated both current and alternative narratives on economic growth and how approaches to reframing might enable change to a more desirable alternative.

## APPROACHING CHANGE

The investigation was conducted in two phases: Understanding the narratives and exploring change. At the onset of the first phase, interviews with six subject matter experts working in the areas of, or related to, economics and economic policy were conducted to establish a foundation for further investigation into existing and emerging narratives. Three narratives were determined through the interview process and analyzed both independently and comparatively using Inayatullah's (1998) Causal Layered Analysis. The first of the three narratives came to be called "domination" based on its growth-first orientation driven by a dominance-based logic and the self-interest that exemplifies market fundamentalism. The second narrative was named "participation" for its orientation toward increased social and economic participation within the emerging international and national agenda for inclusive growth. This narrative continues a focus on economic growth with increased participation weighting more toward an economic imperative than a moral one. The third narrative took the moniker of "freedom" because it embodies notions of independence, self-determination, autonomy and democracy. It also puts choice at the center of economy, giving people the freedom to choose for themselves what the narrative will be, or to participate with others in crafting it through more community-level (both physical and virtual) approaches to value exchange.

The CLA framework was chosen as the primary tool for understanding the narratives because it allows for deconstruction at ever-deeper levels of a current system and the hopeful reconstruction of alternatives as an ongoing iterative process. This iterative quality meant that an alternative narrative could be understood through different perspectives and used to engage diverse stakeholders to participate in its evolution. Although the flexibility of CLA was conceptually appreciated from the onset, it was not anticipated how important the iterative dimension would be until the freedom narrative emerged and was used as an input to the participatory role play activity in the second phase on exploring change.

On its own, the role play—structured around Krznaric’s rough guide to how change happens—proved to be a powerful activity in particular for use with non-experts as a generative method for exploring change and probing potential relationships for future stakeholder engagements. These learnings in combination informed a number of proposals as outputs of this project that can inform further exploration and research. The role play activity also revealed limitations in using it to help participants build empathy, highlighting the need for rich inputs, generous time and possibly designated participant “plants” to trigger immersion for the other participants.

### **A key outcome**

As powerful as CLA and role play were on their own as primary approaches in each phase of the study, a key outcome of the project was that CLA and role play used in combination may be an even more powerful approach for engaging diverse stakeholders as participants in their own collective futures. While narrative analysis and an initial speculative scenario and metaphor were useful as inputs to the role play, the responses from the role play can be used to improve future iterations of the narrative. This is useful for evolving the narrative as a tool for future role play engagements, but the richer, if more nuanced, outcome is that by having stakeholders use the reconstructed narratives from CLA to explore change in the context of role play, they can iterate on the system itself. In this way, narratives can be used as both representatives of the change desired as well as probes for change, and through simulated enactment of the alternative, stakeholders in the system might themselves begin to enact the change in the world.

As Drews and Antal (2016) expressed, narrative, structured around positive alternative metaphors, can inform a movement that has the power to challenge the status quo, but it needs to resonate deeply and broadly. Because we tend to inherit the narratives we live within they become habitualized, even prescriptions for how we think and behave. Having choice, or personal agency, within these narratives may not occur to people. As stated by artist Candice Breitz, “We are to some extent condemned to living scripted lives, scripted in the sense that we must work with the language that pre-exists us and try to make it specific to own experience” (as quoted in “Same Same” by Burke, 2009). This is what makes the use of a human-centred participatory approach in combination with the vision-setting possibility of narrative foresight so powerful. Together they provide the potential for people to write their own scripts, or to at least find ways to make the scripts they live within work better for themselves, their families, their communities and to improve the future outlook.

## Participation at scale

The report put forward proposals that encourage policy influencers and policy makers to adopt and evolve a richer set of policy research and development tools. Because governments may be challenged to implement and scale such approaches, there is work to be done with these approaches in other areas of the public sector as well as in industry and non-profit contexts.

Finding ways to encourage and stimulate bottom up, community-level, approaches to change was also highlighted. In Canada in particular, where apathy or lack of public engagement is not uncommon, individuals, community groups and organizations can play a role in stimulating engagements that foster greater participation. As the current economic growth-first orientation threatens the future viability of social and ecological systems, activism and more creative approaches to enacting alternatives may be an imperative.

## NEXT STEPS

Application of this work beyond the initial study involves two types of activities: sharing the work and extending the work.

### SHARING THE WORK

A number of individuals and organizations informed the research both in terms of the approaches used and in the content researched and presented. Steps will be taken to reach out to those instrumental in helping develop the content to explore how the work might be used. Additionally, some of the authors whose work informed the study may be interested in seeing how their efforts have been applied and may have insightful input on how and where it might be taken further. The comparative analytic approach, and associated artefacts in particular, may be of use to subject matter experts and serve as a starting point for extending the content. Opportunities for sharing the approaches and engaging practitioners in academic, industry and government forums will also be investigated.

### EXTENDING THE WORK

The study inspired a number of ideas and potential for future projects or research.

Extending the practice dimension was the observation that public policy “design” appears to be focused on service delivery. This is valuable work, however based on findings in the study that point to advocacy for more open and participatory approaches in government engagement, and the outcomes of using narratives with role play, there is also value in expanding the role, practice and thinking of design to the level of policy research and development. Further investigation is needed to understand how the approaches covered within this study have direct application and what other approaches might complement them.



## Future projects

Three project ideas emerged within the proposal development and warrant further investigation:

### 1. *Policy Research & Engagement Matrix*

The map may be seeded by investigating what alternative approaches and participatory methods are presently being advocated or used. Based on Sanders's (2008), it has the potential as a reference specific to the policy space as a richer toolkit for collecting, analyzing, synthesizing and communicating. The guide would be prototyped, applied and evolved in the context of doing research to inform policy in collaboration with those who receive, those who influence and those who craft economic policy.

### 2. *Narrative Probes*

Based on the outcome of the study of using alternative narratives in combination with role play as an ongoing probe for *readiness for* or, conversely, *resistance to*, change, the probes could be developed first in a simulated context and tested when possible with actual stakeholders. The findings from the probes could be used to iterate on the narrative, evolving it to a desired future for the stakeholders in the system and used to probe again, as well as to inform changes from the dominant growth orientation toward the alternative. Through this process, the stakeholders would both generate the strategies, contexts and pathways for the change and participate in iteratively making the change happen.

### 3. *Sound Futures Platform*

Originally part of the research proposal, the idea of “sound futures” was intended to be an audio-based installation of the different growth narratives and used as a probe for resonance. Time did not favour that direction, however one of the attributes of the narratives that came out of the research is their non-linearity, both within themselves and in relation to each other. One of the potential ways to advance the project is to take the learning forward to develop the narratives in a non-linear medium using sound and images and put it into the public domain for discovery. It could also serve as the foundation for the sound futures platform discussed in the proposals to enable others to extend.

## Future questions

Although initial valuable learning came out of the study as it relates to the primary research question of How might reframing growth enable change to a more desirable alternative?, if the growth orientation does run its course, there may be significant work to do to develop approaches that guide transition and foster adaptation for both government and people in the face of change. The approaches discussed within, along with Raworth's (2017) principles to guide new ways of thinking, provide a foundation for this future learning.



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# APPENDICES



## Events and presentations

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### ATTENDED IN PERSON

- **Graham Lowe and Frank Graves** presentation on their book *Redesigning Work: A Blueprint for Canada's Future Well-Being and Prosperity*, Big Ideas Speakers Series, hosted by Rotman School of Management, Toronto, ON, Canada, June 21, 2017
- **Canada 2020 Conference**, event with a series of speakers and panels primarily focused on technology, innovation and the economy, hosted by Canada 2020, a independent think-tank working to redefine the role of the federal government for a modern Canada, Ottawa, ON, Canada, June 14-16, 2017
- **Canada Growth Summit II: What It Takes To Win**, event with a series of panels on the topic of growth, hosted by the Public Policy Forum, Ottawa, ON, Canada, April 20, 2017
- **Lars Boggild**, Manager of Client Services, Purpose Capital presentation on “Investing for Impact: The Movement for Financial and Social Returns”, sponsored by the Michael Lee-Chin Family Institute for Corporate Citizenship, Rotman School of Management, Toronto, ON, Canada, December 13, 2016
- **Looking Beyond GDP: Measuring Prosperity in Ontario**, presentation and panel featuring the Institute for Competitiveness & Prosperity (ICP) Working Paper, hosted by Rotman School of Management, Toronto, ON, Canada, October 13, 2016
- **Canada Growth Summit: Beyond 2%**, event with a series of panels on the topic of growth, hosted by the Public Policy Forum, Ottawa, ON, Canada, October 12, 2016
- **Gerald F. Davis**, Pierpont Collegiate Professor of Management – Ross School of Business, Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of the Interdisciplinary Committee on Organization Studies, U of Michigan, presentation at the Big Ideas Speaker Series, Rotman School of Management, on his book *The Vanishing American Corporation: Navigating the Hazards of a New Economy*, Toronto, ON, Canada, October 7, 2016
- **Sir Mervyn King**, Former Governor, Bank of England (2003-2013) and author of *The End of Alchemy: Money, Banking, and the Future of the Global Economy*, in conversation with Amanda Lang, Bloomberg TV Canada, at the Global Finance Experts Speaker Series, Rotman School of Management, co-hosted event with the Munk School of Global Affairs, Toronto, ON, Canada, April 25, 2016



## Events and presentations

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### VIEWED ONLINE

- **Expanding the Circle: What Reconciliation and Inclusive Economic Growth Can Mean for First Nations and Canada**, event with a series of presentations and panels, co-hosted by the Public Policy Forum, the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, Ottawa, ON, Canada, February 15, 2017 (viewed selections online, March 4, 2017)
- **Dominic Barton**, Global Managing Director McKinsey & Company, Gordon Osbaldeston Lecture following Canada Growth Summit, Ottawa, ON, Canada, October 12, 2016
- **John Ralston Saul**, essayist and novelist, keynote on “The Canadian Economy: Denial, Delusion, or Cutting Edge?” at Shifting Gears: Transitioning to the Future Economy, Parkland Institute’s 20th Annual Conference, Edmonton, AB, Canada, November 18-20, 2016 (viewed online, February 26, 2017)
- **David Cay Johnston**, Contributing Editor, Newsweek, on his book *Divided: The Perils Of Our Growing Inequality*, in conversation with Robert Johnson, Institute for New Economic Thinking, November 18, 2015 (viewed online September 14, 2016)
- **Paul Mason**, economist and journalist, presentation on “Is Capitalism Dead?”, and panel with panelists John Mulholland, Zoe Williams, Douglas Murray, Pat Kane and Julia Powles, *The Guardian Live*, London, UK, July 22, 2015 (viewed online, November 7, 2016)
- **John Ralston Saul**, essayist and novelist, presentation on “Innovation: To What Purpose?” at Human After All: Innovation | Disruption | Society conference co-hosted by the Centre for International Governance Innovation + Institute for New Economic Thinking, Toronto, ON, Canada, April 11, 2014 (viewed online, February 11, 2017)

# APPENDIX B

## Interview Guide (questions only)

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### SECTION 1

#### *Interests/Expertise*

1. Can you describe the focus of your interests/expertise as they relate to the topic of growth?
2. What is the scope of your interests/expertise (e.g., geography or something else)?

### SECTION 2

#### *Definitions of growth (current and alternatives)*

3. If you were to define growth in a Tweet or News Headline what would it say?
  - What factors influence your definition (e.g., values, geographical context)?
  - What patterns or trends are you seeing that support or work against this definition?
4. What other definitions of growth have you heard of being explored or might be explored?
  - What is motivating these explorations?
  - Who might benefit / not benefit if growth were defined in these terms instead of the current?
5. If you were to redefine growth in a Tweet or News Headline in terms informed or influenced by cultural, moral and ecological dimensions what would it say?
  - What factors influence your redefinition (e.g., values, geographical context)?
  - What patterns or trends are you seeing that support or work against this definition?

#### *Measures of growth*

6. What indicators or measures of growth do you look out for and monitor? Why of interest?
7. What alternative measures or proposals have you heard of or are of interest you? Why of interest?

### SECTION 3

#### *Drivers of growth (technology, population, other)*

8. What are the most important drivers of growth? Why important?
  - How do these drivers influence policy?
  - Who is advantaged / disadvantaged by a focus on these drivers?
9. What alternative drivers might we consider? Why important?
  - How would these drivers influence policy?
  - Who might be advantaged / disadvantaged by a focus on these drivers?

#### *Emerging narratives*

10. What are the emerging narratives about the future of growth? (Consider natl/global levels)
  - How might these emerging narratives inform policy?

#### *Myth and Metaphor*

11. What metaphor or analogy would you use to describe the current dominant narrative?
12. What might be an alternative metaphor or analogy that fundamentally flips the dominant?

## APPENDIX C

### **Interview Participants**

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#### **Anonymous 1**

Financial Services Trade and Relations, Government

#### **Anonymous 2**

Risk Management Specialist, Banking and Financial Services

#### **Bryan Smale**

Director, Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) and Professor, University of Waterloo

#### **Caroline Paunov**

Senior Economist, OECD Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation, and manages Innovation for Inclusive Growth project

#### **Miklós Antal**

Ecological Economist, Post-doc, political economy of energy transitions, Eötvös Loránd University, Institute for Social Relations and Central European University, Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy, Hungary

#### **Sarah Anson-Cartwright**

Director, Public Affairs — Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada, Government Relations, Strategic Communications - Public Policy

Causal Layered Analysis for individual interviews

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CLA — Participant 1

↓	PARTICIPANT 1 - CURRENT	PARTICIPANT 1 - ALTERNATIVE	↑
LITANY (continuous)	<b>Access to social and environmental measures not readily available.</b> Quantitative sources for government reports primarily from Statistics Canada. Qualitative sources include feedback from consumers, newspaper articles, discussions with regulators and with other countries	<b>Expanded access to, and use of, measurements on social and environmental data, such as happiness and social cohesion</b> (aspirational)	↑
SYSTEM (years)	<b>Environmental issues, failed states, population immigration, and people living longer are all converging.</b> Disruptive technologies are displacing people and threatening incumbents	<b>Information and communications technologies (ICT), open trade, and the sharing economy make the global economy more open to broader participation as well as disruption</b>	↑
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<b>Technology services, communications and the sharing economy provide opportunities for more people to contribute to growth</b>	<b>Inclusive growth is about seeing ourselves as all linked together on one small planet.</b> Sustainable development and inclusive economy all get back to this notion (aspirational)	↑
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	The economy is a frontier of <b>INFINITE COLONIES</b> , ever growing and expanding to other territories and, eventually, other planets	The economy is a <b>A SMALL FRAGILE PLANET</b> , the limits of which we share	↑

Causal layered analysis for participant 1 of the six interviews. (Read down rows on the left, from top to bottom, for the participant's inputs at each causal layer. Then read from bottom to top on the right side for the alternative view.)

## CLA — Participant 2

↓	PARTICIPANT 2 - CURRENT	PARTICIPANT 2 - ALTERNATIVE	↑
LITANY (continuous)	Media reflects government messaging on the economy and fixation with GDP as a measure for how the country is doing	Government and media go beyond government to capture and communicate a more holistic view of how people are really doing	↑
SYSTEM (years)	GDP indicators bounced back after the financial crash, wellbeing indicators did not. Living standards and time for leisure and self are diminishing	A wellbeing index that measures 'what really matters' is fully integrated into government and used complementarily to GDP	↑
WORLDVIEW (decades)	"It's the economy, stupid". The belief is that the economy matters first and foremost, and that GDP is a good guide for how a country is doing overall. It will "float all boats"	What matters most is what matters to you	↑
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	The economy is a <b>MACHINE</b> to be tuned and maintained. Politicians are seen as 'the fixers'	The economy is a <b>GARDEN</b> , where we plant the seeds for change and take a long term view	↑

Causal layered analysis for participant 2 of the six interviews. (Read down rows on the left, from top to bottom, for the participant's inputs at each causal layer. Then read from bottom to top on the right side for the alternative view.)

↓	PARTICIPANT 3 - CURRENT	PARTICIPANT 3 - ALTERNATIVE	↑
LITANY (continuous)	<b>GDP is used as a political tool for manipulating public sentiment.</b> GDP summarizes both good and bad of society but that is not in public conversations. Negative activities show growth but are not good for wellbeing	<b>Individuals can connect their lives and issues to the larger system level</b>	↑
SYSTEM (years)	<b>National sentiment votes (e.g., Brexit, Trump) show that people are frustrated with the economic situation</b>	<b>Productivity and labour are decoupled.</b> This frees labour from GDP (output) and frees self-worth from work	↑
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<b>It is believed that you either have unemployment or you have economic growth. This is the productivity trap.</b> Machines contribute to growth by increasing productivity. Because growth and productivity are tied, automation is viewed as a threat to jobs	<b>Automation is an opportunity for life improvement and new sources of self-worth</b>	↑
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	The economy is a <b>MACHINE</b> , including <b>nature</b> , to be managed like services	The economy is a <b>WEB</b> , connected, interpersonal and interdependent with others and with nature	↑

Causal layered analysis for participant 3 of the six interviews. (Read down rows on the left, from top to bottom, for the participant's inputs at each causal layer. Then read from bottom to top on the right side for the alternative view.)

↓	PARTICIPANT 4 - CURRENT	PARTICIPANT 4 - ALTERNATIVE	↑
LITANY (continuous)	<p><b>People feel a disconnect with growth messaging from government and media, and their own with lack of wage growth and diminishing job prospects.</b> Traditional economic measurements permeate government reports, which are then conveyed by media</p>	<p><b>Media reflects the lived realities of citizens by expanding its information sources with respect to the economy.</b> Sources go beyond primarily government (aspirational)</p>	↑
SYSTEM (years)	<p><b>The Canadian government is struggling for ways to stimulate growth.</b> We can no longer rely on natural resources. Globalization has given multinationals the upper hand with their ability to move operations and capital, negatively impacting communities. Productivity and innovation are in focus</p>	<p><b>Government reports reflect lived realities of citizens through adoption of, training with, and communication of broader measurements that extend what GDP tells us</b> (aspirational)</p>	↑
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<p><b>There is a belief that there is no societal progress without growth.</b> Innovation, in particular technological innovation, is seen as the panacea for growth. With that comes the threat to jobs</p>	<p><b>Inclusive growth benefits all of society.</b> It addresses social inclusion, not just economic growth, by giving access to opportunities to participate and voice to vulnerable individuals and communities (aspirational)</p>	↑
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	<p>The economy is (traditionally) <b>ORGANIC</b>, with a dependency on natural resources</p> <p>Growth traditionally comes from the ground up, based on the natural resources a country is endowed with</p>	<p>The economy is <b>SYNTHETIC</b>, where growth is dependent on government policy and levers as stimulus</p>	↑

Causal layered analysis for participant 4 of the six interviews. (Read down rows on the left, from top to bottom, for the participant's inputs at each causal layer. Then read from bottom to top on the right side for the alternative view.)

↓	PARTICIPANT 5 - CURRENT	PARTICIPANT 5 - ALTERNATIVE	↑
LITANY (continuous)	<p><b>GDP doesn't reflect what is happening in society and the environment, but it will not change as an indicator.</b> People are comfortable with it and how it is calculated. But growth for growth's sake is scary. Increases in crime and waste production might correlate with higher GDP but give a false picture of an economy's health</p>	<p><b>'GDP 2.0' takes an inter-metric approach to reflect relationships between indicators and more of what is happening in society and the environment.</b> Citizen stories are shared and promoted by national media</p>	↑
SYSTEM (years)	<p><b>Increases in poverty and violent crime suggest economic growth is leaving people behind.</b> People are feeling downgraded from employed to unemployed. If a society will be judged by how it treats its weakest members, we have to re-evaluate the model. Level of education is a key</p>	<p><b>Social and ecological contracts are supported and encouraged between citizens</b> (bottom up approaches are embraced). Incentives for positive practices are embedded at all levels: the household, industry and government</p>	↑
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<p><b>Technology is going to take a lot of jobs and displace a lot of people,</b> particularly aging workers. The future does not hold much hope for young people</p>	<p><b>Society is more fulfilled when their needs are cared for at individual, community and system levels and they have a reduced propensity to consume</b></p>	↑
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	<p>The economy is a <b>DEPENDENT PATIENT</b> to be diagnosed and treated by the doctor (government) who knows best</p>	<p>The economy is a <b>SELF-HEALING PATIENT</b>, participating, informed and engaged</p>	↑

Causal layered analysis for participant 5 of the six interviews. (Read down rows on the left, from top to bottom, for the participant's inputs at each causal layer. Then read from bottom to top on the right side for the alternative view.)



↓	PARTICIPANT 6 - CURRENT	PARTICIPANT 6 - ALTERNATIVE	↑
LITANY (continuous)	<b>There is a growing awareness in many countries that growth is not equal to wellbeing.</b> Economic growth is no longer enough. Countries seek guidance on trends such as issues with inequality, minorities, gender, and environmental degradation	<b>A range of indicators and manuals guide countries on innovation, defined broadly, to be about novelty in a range of areas, such as social innovation, and that go beyond products and services</b>	↑
SYSTEM (years)	<b>Getting an innovation engine going is key.</b> Providing the right type of environment for innovation to take place depends on what a country's needs are (developing countries vs. advanced economies)	<b>Improvements in a range of social and economic dimensions ultimately contribute to wellbeing</b>	↑
WORLDVIEW (decades)	<b>Innovation plays a significant role in contributing to both economic growth and wellbeing</b>	<b>Inclusive growth provides equal opportunities</b> , though not equal benefits. Innovation can contribute to wellbeing by enabling participation	↑
METAPHOR & MYTH (societal/civilizational)	The economy is a <b>PIE</b> to be made bigger, then shared	The economy is a <b>PIE</b> , to be shared through participation, and made bigger together  (or better, a <b>GARDEN</b> )	↑

Causal layered analysis for participant 6 of the six interviews. (Read down rows on the left, from top to bottom, for the participant's inputs at each causal layer. Then read from bottom to top on the right side for the alternative view.)

## APPENDIX E

### Process Descriptions for System Level (Causal Layered Analysis)—Narrative #1

For reference with Figure 6. System summary map for domination narrative (N1)

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**GLOBALIZATION** is, if we return to where we started with John Ralston Saul (2005), the “assertion that all civilizations from now on (are) going to be led by commerce” (p. 18). Further, it as “an inevitable form of internationalism in which civilisation is reformed from the perspective of economic leadership” (p. 19). Economic leadership in both the Saul sense and the neoliberal sense, does not come from people but from the economic forces that drive the marketplace. Born out of the idea of creating porous borders for trade between nations for the movement of capital, goods and services, globalization necessarily encapsulates other dimensions of life that include the interconnectedness and effects of social and cultural relations at the global scale.

**TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE**, in economic terms, is focused on the invention of technologies that increase the efficiency of products and processes that lead to increased output while decreasing input (labour and capital). When the goals of technological change by this definition are realized in combination with globalization, the drive to catch up with emerging markets naturally forces wages and real incomes downward in advanced economies (Gordon, 2012, p. 20; Moffat & Rasmussen, 2016, p. 6).

**CAPITAL INVESTMENT SHIFTS** refers to the change in investment behaviour by businesses from fixed physical costs to profit opportunities inspired by financial deregulation—starting under US President Reagan in the 1980s—and the channeling of capital into financial markets instead, as well as movement of investments to more profitable markets. This expedient alternative channel for profit gave rise to the financialization sub-process (described below) of nonfinance firms getting into the business of finance and investment activities (Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013, p. 1292-1293). Lower costs in investment goods associated with digital businesses (Galbraith, 2017, p. 46) and increased investments in efficiency innovations instead of market-creating empowering innovations (Christensen, 2012; Christensen & van Bever, 2014, p. 64) also contribute to shifts in capital investment away from fixed assets.

**DEUNIONIZATION** is the long-term decline of membership and bargaining power of labour unions, which is coupled with declining wages, increasing income concentration at the top and the increasing gap in inequality (Autor, 2014, p. 843; Piketty & Saez, 2006, p. 204)—what Lin & Tomascovic refer to as income dispersion (2013, p. 1310).

**FINANCIALIZATION** is defined by two processes. The first is the rise of the financial sector and its disproportionate representation in the US economy, which according to Rana Foroohar (2016) creates 4 percent of the jobs, represents 7 percent of the overall economy, but takes almost 25 percent of the corporate profits (p. 38-39). The second process is the conversion of nonfinance businesses, in part or in whole, to finance-oriented services and investment markets (Lin & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2013, p. 1286).

**Government of Canada's Advisory Council on Economic Growth—Narrative #2**

Four foundations and twelve recommendations

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<b>FOUNDATION 1</b>	Digital skills literacy is a cornerstone of inclusive growth.
<i>Skills and workforce participation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase immigration with priority on economic immigrants &amp; top talent</li> <li>2. Develop a FutureSkills Lab to build a skilled and resilient workforce</li> <li>3. Broaden workforce participation and tap the economic potential of underrepresented groups (broad recommendation)</li> </ol>
<b>FOUNDATION 2</b>	With natural resources and a growing workforce no longer reliable sources for growth, innovation can take a significant role in driving scale and growth by increasing productivity, supporting inclusive growth and enabling entrepreneurs to get beyond the startup to the global stage.
<i>Innovation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Create innovation marketplaces to foster commercialization and adoption</li> <li>5. Build value-added growth capital strategy on fastest-growing firms</li> <li>6. Implement a public procurement program that enables the government to be the first customer for innovative companies</li> <li>7. Review and rationalize existing business-facing innovation programs</li> <li>8. Invigorate the talent pool streamlining immigration entry for top talent</li> </ol>
<b>FOUNDATION 3</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Create a national infrastructure bank and strategy as a foundation for inclusive growth and improving productivity</li> <li>10. Establish a foreign direct investment agency to boost global direct and indirect investment in Canada</li> </ol>
<i>Infrastructure and capital investment</i>	
<b>FOUNDATION 4</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Unleash the growth potential of key sectors</li> <li>12. Position Canada as a preferred global trading partner (broad recommendation)</li> </ol>
<i>Competitive market environment</i>	

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**The Government of Canada's February 2017 Budget Coverage—Narrative #2**  
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- 1. INNOVATION AND SKILLS** — For a competitive world-leading innovation economy and a stronger and growing middle class
  1. Foster lifelong learning, including a focus on digital training and education in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)
  2. Make Canada a world leader in innovation to create jobs and grow the middle class
  3. Focus on key growth industries (clean technology, digital and agri-food) with support and improved access to funding
- 2. INFRASTRUCTURE** — For clean and sustained growth, stronger communities and a stronger middle class jobs
  1. Support early learning and childcare, including funding and space for low- and modest-income families, including programs for Indigenous children
  2. Invest in social infrastructure with an inclusive national housing strategy, including funding and initiatives to increase availability, affordability and access to housing
  3. Encourage and support a clean growth economy, including Smart Cities Challenge and investments in green infrastructure, and rural and northern community, public transit and trade and transportation infrastructure
- 3. TAX FAIRNESS FOR THE MIDDLE CLASS** — For a fair and equitable tax system that enables more people to succeed and strengthens the middle class
  1. Crack down on tax cheats, to ensure essential services and programs for areas such as child benefits, health care and housing can be funded
  2. Provide tax relief for individuals and families through simplification measures and tax credits for education tuition, persons with disabilities and caregivers
  3. Maintain a resilient financial sector that fosters a secure and trustworthy system that supports businesses and provides middle class jobs
- 4. A STRONG CANADA AT HOME AND IN THE WORLD** — For a thriving middle class
  1. Enable healthier Canadians through new health funding and better home care
  2. Support Canada's veterans and their families with programs, services and support for transition from military to civilian life
  3. Provide equal opportunity for women and men through steps toward equitable pay, increased diversity in the workforce, more leadership positions and safer work environments for women

## Orthodoxies that might challenge the inclusive growth agenda—Narrative #2

CAUSAL LAYERED ANALYSIS revealed a number of orthodoxies across the first two narratives. The more obvious include the following:

1. The economy will continue to grow and GDP is the most representative indicator.
2. Growth will continue to come through traditional drivers.
3. Citizens will continue to absorb the decisions of finance and policies of government.
4. Increasing participation will lead to growth and wellbeing for all.
5. Innovation is the holy grail of growth.

Because the second narrative promoting increased workforce participation has been put forward as the mainstream alternative to the current, the three additional orthodoxies identified for this narrative might significantly challenge the realization and success of inclusive growth. The descriptions and associated system archetypes to follow briefly summarize the three orthodoxies.

### **Orthodoxy 1 : *Increasing participation will lead to growth and wellbeing for all***

The primary finding in understanding the narratives was that inclusive growth is based on the same growth premise as the domination narrative. This premise is fueled primarily by worldviews discussed in the first narrative: *Productivity is (almost) everything* and *economic growth will 'float all boats'*.

With the former, increasing labour force participation is considered essential to increasing productivity, and therefore to increasing GDP. The push for increased labour force participation is intended to serve an economic imperative not a moral one. For the latter, there is still a strong market orientation with scaling up and competition as primary motivations. As long as it is a market-driven system where self-interest, the quest for profit, and competition reign, the inclusive part of inclusive growth will likely be severely compromised. This is reinforced by recent risk reports by both the OECD (2017g) and World Economic Forum (2017b) that flag that inequality continues to grow. Further, as discussed in the second narrative under the worldview that inclusive growth and sustainable growth reinforce each other, climate change has the greatest impact on incomes in the poorest of areas and will only increase inequality. A growth narrative that doesn't put the climate at the top of the priorities alongside inequality is a vote increasing inequality.

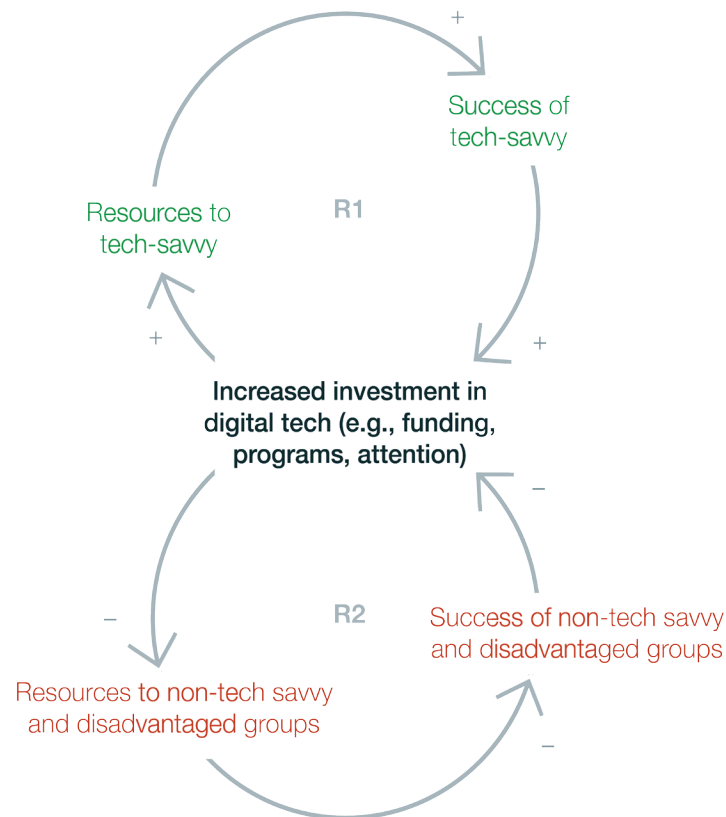
This slippage to the growth orientation begs the need for policies and practices that overcompensate to the inclusive side. Otherwise the same trends and risks will continue. In particular, rising income and wealth disparity, increasing polarization of societies, rising cyber dependency, increasing national sentiment and climate change. In this way, inclusive growth is at risk of the drifting goals system archetype.



engineering and math (STEM) education is an indicator of the narrowness of options. It biases a particular focus and disregards other dimensions, including culture, the arts and humanities, all of which bring different perspectives and enrich lives in ways that technologies do not. A broader STEAMD (A=Arts and D=Design) mission for education would open the portal for participation and foster critical thinking. This is not to say that STEM education and skills are not desirable, just that they are not representative of the breadth of interests and disciplines. Moreover, with digital technologies in particular there is a strong push for, and anxiety around, the continuous need to retrain. This sets up a seemingly endless cycle that needs to be supported in terms of funding, access and availability for the population at large. How likely, and inclusive, is that likely to be?

Another limiting factor is data poverty. Omissions of whole communities and geographies from data collection and reports intended to inform policy means these populations will continue to struggle to weigh in on their own destinies. The system not only delimits itself, it ensures that opportunities to participate are limited to those most likely to already be participating.

#### **SYSTEM ARCHETYPE:** Success to the Successful



In both the domination and participation narratives, the system advantages certain stakeholders and disadvantages others. A comparative view of the stakeholders is shown in the following table:

NARRATIVE 1: DOMINATION	NARRATIVE 2: PARTICIPATION
<b>Who are the dominant voices in this narrative?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The market”</li> <li>• Multinational businesses</li> <li>• Government</li> <li>• Media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government</li> <li>• Investors</li> <li>• Businesses</li> <li>• Academia</li> <li>• “The market”</li> </ul>
<b>Who is advantaged in this narrative?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multinational businesses and financial institutions</li> <li>• People with technical skills, or more generally with science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tech-literate creators and consumers</li> <li>• People with access to capital to create businesses in growth industries (clean tech, digital and agri-food)</li> <li>• Economic immigrants and top talent in high-demand areas</li> <li>• People with access to ongoing education</li> <li>• Women in or seeking leadership roles</li> </ul>
<b>Who is disadvantaged in this narrative?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-income and low-skilled individuals, generally those with lower technical skills</li> <li>• Specifically, aging workers, youth and young adults, and Indigenous Peoples</li> <li>• Middle class individuals and families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People displaced by technologies</li> <li>• Incumbents who are threatened by disruptive tech and broader participation through disintermediation, cutting need for a third party</li> <li>• Communities not represented in the data</li> <li>• Non-economic immigrants</li> </ul>

### **Orthodoxy 3 : *Traditional measures and drivers of growth serve humanity***

Closely related to the first orthodoxy, this one begs the questions of how the drive for profit and increased productivity can co-exist with increased human participation? And, as a result, if the facilitating hand of government in trying to realize the inclusive growth agenda is moot? The worldview informing this orthodoxy comes from the second narrative: *Innovation increases opportunities to participate.*

The following factors suggest that human labour associated with productivity will no longer be needed:

- *Increased investment in efficiency innovations* lowers costs once used for labour and investment in market-creating innovations, and channels it into productivity-by-machine.



- *Decreased investment goods* with digital technologies—which might be market-creating but require less investment goods—have lower production needs and therefore lower productivity than in previous industrial times.
- *Increased financialization* is diverting capital investment away people and assets and into making more capital.
- *Decreased investment in education* by businesses is demanding increased investment by government (and individuals). Although the education and training might be for use in industry, they are increasingly not paying for it.

The addition to productivity growth has a negating effect: first of human labour, as people increasingly bear the brunt of these patterns, and maybe, eventually, much of humanity as capital replaces the need for people.

**SYSTEM ARCHETYPE:** Shifting the Burden (Addiction Loop) (no image provided)

On a more positive note, the diminished need to contribute to productivity might loosen the dependency on industry and allow people to consider other uses for their time. This is something proposed in the research and reflected in the proposals for change.

**Alternative Narrative Treatment** (Role Play Activity)

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Your challenge today is to respond to the question:

*How might we get to a more inclusive economy?*

**METAPHOR:** *The economy is a web*

It is a single interconnected and interdependent ecosystem. The physical system is finite but dynamic and evolving through its own processes, through our relationship with it and with one another. Connection and support are widespread values in this metaphor — both strong and fragile simultaneously.

**NARRATIVE OVERVIEW:** *Inclusive Economy*

The Inclusive Economy shifts away from growth to economy being about exchange of value and participation by many vs. accumulation by a few. It harkens to barter and the idea of value for value, e.g., Bunz here in Toronto is a contemporary online example. The inclusive economy encapsulates social and environmental dimensions.

**SCOPE:** Canada

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**NARRATIVE TREATMENT:***A sense of wellbeing*

In this alternative narrative, there is a sense of collective wellbeing and this informs much of the values and discourse within and between communities and individuals.

There is a sense of wellbeing for one's children as well, and the future, because jobs are focused more on sustainable circular approaches, and how we can innovate with what we have. Social impact investing has become the most common type of investment, much of it coming from other individuals and angel investors vs. venture capital, although the latter still exist.

*An integrated and inclusive system*

There is integrated measurement at national and regional levels on wellbeing that uses the eight domains from the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. A dedicated Ministry of Wellbeing was founded on the earlier charitable foundation work of the CIW and is developing a 'capture and share' system with regular reporting intervals to both the government and citizens.

Social impact initiatives, and opportunities to create new projects, as well as invest in others, have become a core part of the economy.

Education is broadly accessible but not all through traditional formal institutions. Programs have been enabled in communities to foster peer-to-peer education and the token system (noted below) incentivizes teaching others. This includes supporting others as they learn and adapt to new technologies. At one time the attitude was that the young were always ahead on technologies and it was them that would have to teach the aging population and new members of the community, but with continual rapid change, as Kevin Kelly said, we are all perpetual “newbies”. This new collectively oriented model for education allows everyone to be a teacher and a learner.

Traditionally marginalized groups, including Indigenous Peoples, have equal access to education, community programs and are participants in this co-creating the economy. Their environmental wisdom has been embraced and is now integrated into policies and governance.

Token systems have been put in place to provide care and services for others, and to redeem them when needed for self.

Manufacturing is focused on ‘green’ products with an emphasis on reuse of compositional materials, which has opened the field for innovation in this area.

Households, businesses and governments utilize the ‘give back’ program where energy you’ve ‘banked’ for electricity is opened up for use by others in the system. This spreads the value to others and provides cost-savings for anyone generating electricity through solar and other means.

### *A shared story and meaning*

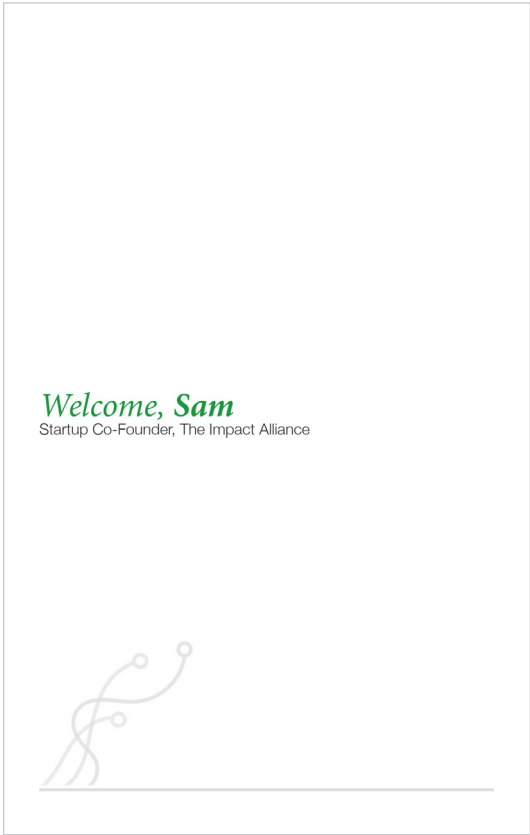
People have a sense of usefulness and contribution. Productivity has been decoupled from growth, allowing more free leisure time and less time ‘on the job’. The average work week is now 2-3 days. This means people can spend more time with their families and friends and doing more things they like to do.

With citizens more engaged, freed largely from the pressure to be preoccupied with jobs, conversation about ‘what you do’ has shifted to other interests and ‘how do like spending your time?’. As a result, there is greater awareness of others’ interests and more partners and small groups initiating projects in the community. And sometimes, when the opportunities arise, there is also partnering with their local government on broader initiatives. With this, there is generally a more ‘bottom-up’ supported environment, along with opportunities for bi-directional engagement with the government vs. having to just receive their policies.

The news media is tuned into the broader community and to wellbeing as essential to any life. It’s no longer ‘just about the economy, stupid’ or, rather, economy has taken on a different and more positive meaning.

**Stakeholder Profile Card Example** (Role Play Activity)  
*Sam, Startup Co-Founder, The Impact Alliance*

**Front**



**Inside** (Page 1 of 2)

Your challenge today is to respond to the question:

*How might we get to a more inclusive economy?*

**THE STAKEHOLDER YOU REPRESENT** is the co-founder of The Impact Alliance (IA)\*, a startup that provides a platform to connect other startups focused on social impact and innovation with one another, as well as with investors. IA recognized a trend of not only the need for social impact but also a general desire to have more impact.<sup>1</sup> There was also recognition that with increased global challenges and complexity, and the associated impacts on society and environment, a systems-level investment approach is needed.<sup>2,3</sup> Key criteria for investors include going beyond financial value to societal and environmental value, having impact at the market level, and a focus on the longer term. **The Impact Alliance works to bridge the social need with the desire of investors to have impact.** A hopeful sign in growing the investor side of the network is that non-traditional investors are growing in number with crowdfunding channels.<sup>4</sup> And angel investors are taking the lead as the primary and preferred funding source at 44%.<sup>5</sup> Coupling the millennial interest in impact investing<sup>6</sup> with the \$30 trillion anticipated in wealth transfers from baby boomers to millennials<sup>7</sup>, the future potential for capital for social impact and innovation is strong. Opening that channel is the challenge.

**NAME:** Sam

**ROLE + AFFILIATION:** Startup Co-Founder, The Impact Alliance

**INTERESTS:** Your interest in this session is in how we might stimulate a more sustainable startup and innovation culture within the country that supports both the startup side and the investor side, and contributes to a healthier economic climate and opportunities for more people to participate. You also care deeply about future opportunities for you, and others', children.

1

## Inside (Page 2 of 2)

### CHALLENGES:

1. *On the startup side:* Funding gaps. Getting funding beyond the first round is a challenge and encourages exits (startups shut down, leave to more funding-friendly countries, or sell to larger businesses).<sup>8</sup> Themselves founded on a business model innovation that leverages the network and disintermediated co-creation, IA too has struggled to get the funding needed to keep going. Every round of funding presents new challenges and takes significant energy and time.<sup>5,8</sup>
2. *On the investor side:* Lack of infrastructure for capital flows to support traditional and non-traditional investors.

### RELATIONSHIPS:

*Potential allies within group, but not absolute:*

**Grace**, Senior Advisor and Economist, Institute for Global Economic Impact (IGEI)

**Cyrus**, Citizen and 1st generation immigrant

**Will**, Director, Wellbeing Index

*Potential tensions within group, but not absolute:*

**Faith**, National Finance Minister

**Ellis**, CEO, GroMo Corporation (large enterprise)

### WILDCARDS you may play anytime during the session (choose only two):

1. *The 'Illustrator':* Get up and illustrate something on the whiteboard, and pull the group's attention and discussion to your images and words.
2. *The 'Storyteller':* Make a point using a short story or anecdote.
3. *The 'Questioner':* Ask everyone to pause and consider a particular question or angle, or new frame to an issue.
4. *The 'Sage':* Assess the situation and offer advice on how to resolve and move forward.
5. *The 'Pacer':* Get up and walk around or back and forth, maybe stretch, during part of the discussion. Consider inviting others to stand with you for a bit.

2

## Back

### NOTES

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3. State of the Industry Analysis: Tipping Points 2016. (2016. Retrieved from <http://tiiproject.com/tipping-points-2016/>
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6. Bogglid, L. (2016, December 13). Presentation at Rotman School of Management. Bogglid cited a statistic in Canada that 58% of millennials say they are interested in impact investment (to be located).
7. Osterland, A. (2016, June 16). Get ready for the \$30 trillion (with a T) 'great wealth transfer' Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2016/06/15/the-great-wealth-transfer-has-started.html>
8. Public Policy Forum. (2016, December 04). PANEL 2-Canada's emerging innovators face funding, talent and culture gaps. Retrieved <https://medium.com/canada-growth-summit/panel-2-canadas-emerging-innovators-face-funding-talent-and-culture-gaps-63ef1fa9a760#2g99n1era>

\* This is a fictional business

This workshop is part of my Major Research Project investigating alternative narratives on the future of growth. Thank you for participating!

**Kimberley Peter**

MDes Candidate, Strategic Foresight + Innovation, OCAD University

## APPENDIX J

### **Facilitator Guide** (Role Play Activity + Reflection Questions) (condensed version)

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Getting started: Once the group is in the dedicated area, give them time to read their stakeholder and narrative descriptions. While they do that, consider writing the first question (provided separately) on a piece of paper. When they are ready prompt them to begin.

During the role-play the facilitator's role is mainly to prompt the group with the guided questions, to keep track of the time and to observe the group, its dialogue, actions and behaviours. Only prompt at other times with other questions if the group appears to be stifled beyond a reasonable amount of time. The facilitator's judgement is the best guide, but you are encouraged to allow the group to work through their own silences and let the action evolve on its own as much as possible.

The guiding questions (see Krznaric's separate guide for details):

1. Who should be involved? (leave this for last or don't cover unless time)
2. Strategies?
3. Contexts?
4. Pathways or process?
5. Elements? (the facilitator could guide this based on the team's capture)

#### **REFLECTION – QUESTION GUIDE**

Overview: Following the role-play activity, guide your group through a reflective conversation to consider the experience and implications, and what actions might be taken. Ask each question to the group and capture responses on the large paper provided (one per question).

#### **Questions:**

1. What was most striking or notable about the experience? (Impressions)
2. What kinds of thoughts were going through your mind as the situation played out?
3. What challenges did you experience in your role?
4. Who was advantaged / disadvantaged / missing in the situation?
5. What actions might be taken to enable the advantaged / disadvantaged?
6. Name one take-away recommendation you, as the stakeholder you represented, would offer to policy makers and policy influencers?

Thank group and close the discussion.

## APPENDIX K

### Post-Role Play Workshop Survey Results

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Nine of the 12 participants responded to the two-question survey that was sent out after the workshop to gauge the degree of change experienced as a result of participating. The questions asked were as follows:

1. To what degree has your personal point of view changed as a result of participating in the alternative narrative role play experience (no change, some change, change)?
2. What is the primary reason for your response?

The following summarizes the responses along with the reasons given each response:

TWO PARTICIPANTS REPORTED NO CHANGE (22%)

“Change takes time.”

“Didn’t change my outlook. Not sure why.”

SIX PARTICIPANTS REPORTED SOME CHANGE (67%)

“Thinking about how to turn a value into grounds for individual and collective action was a very worthy exercise; and I would do it again.”

“It is hard to say if my perspective changed on this subject or if it just brought forward feelings I already considered. That said, I clearly feel more informed about the issue and pieces of the puzzle that could be elements of the solution.”

“I understand better that there is a big difference between the roles, positions and commitments of other stakeholder in this big system. This gives them different perspectives when looking to the same problem, and a different “vocabulary”, (which) [sic] means that makes it difficult to get a clear alignment and understanding between them.”

“I was surprised how the role playing really deepened the empathy (or reservations) I had to a particular character.”

“I think it’s really helpful to have a group of people, each dedicated to a different stakeholder perspective, at the same table. When I think about the future, it’s abstracted and I’m not able to simultaneously explore multiple stakeholder views at the same time. This exercise allowed me to hear those views, and more interestingly, to see how (they) [sic] collided, melded, or otherwise interacted with each other. It illustrated opportunities for conflict, compromise, and synergy between those views.”

“Hearing the gov’t rep and CEO’s opinions/struggles/positions—what seemed genuine and even personal—in response to the person who had lost his job. This was helpful to me to put a face on big officials/execs who are really just people trying to do their job.”

ONE PARTICIPANT REPORTED CHANGE (11%)

“The immersive experience helped me to see the complexities of my character’s place in society.”

## APPENDIX L

### Comparative View of Anticipated and Emergent Stakeholder Relationships

(Based on observations and dialogue transcript from role play activity)

ANTICIPATED	EMERGENT GROUP 'A'	EMERGENT GROUP 'B'
<b>ALLIANCE</b> —	<b>ALLIANCE REINFORCED</b> —	
Wellbeing advocate — Startup Wellbeing advocate — Immigrant Immigrant — Startup Enterprise — Government Enterprise — Startup Startup — Media Media — Government	Wellbeing advocate — Startup Wellbeing advocate — Immigrant Immigrant — Startup Enterprise — Government Enterprise — Startup	Wellbeing advocate — Startup Wellbeing advocate — Immigrant Immigrant — Startup Enterprise — Government Enterprise — Startup
<b>TENSION</b> —	<b>TENSION REINFORCED</b> —	
Wellbeing advocate — Government Wellbeing advocate — Media Wellbeing advocate — Enterprise Immigrant — Government Immigrant — Media Immigrant — Enterprise Enterprise — Media Startup — Government	Immigrant — Government Startup — Government	Immigrant — Enterprise
	<b>NEUTRAL</b> —	
	Wellbeing advocate — Government Startup — Media Media — Government	Wellbeing advocate — Enterprise Immigrant — Government Enterprise — Media Startup — Media Media — Government
	<b>ALLIANCE FORMED</b> —	
	Wellbeing advocate — Media Wellbeing advocate — Enterprise Immigrant — Media Immigrant — Enterprise Enterprise — Media	Wellbeing advocate — Government Wellbeing advocate — Media Immigrant — Media Immigrant — Enterprise
	<b>TENSION FORMED</b> —	
	None	None



## APPENDIX M

### Comparative View of Advantaged and Disadvantaged Stakeholders

(Based on post-role play group reflections)

ADVANTAGED (A)	ADVANTAGED (B)
<p>GOVERNMENT: "They have the resources. They make the rules. They make policy."</p> <p>"We know any change we (as citizens) will want to make will take too much time."</p>	<p>STARTUPS: They are favoured in current system because they represent potential for new innovation, new investment flows and new jobs. However, they are not able to thrive as much because of constraints and challenges with funding.</p> <p>EFFECTIVE STORYTELLERS, e.g., parents, immigrants: Those who spoke from the heart and told stories that appeared to affect them (the stakeholders they represented) at a personal level, or those who could clearly and compellingly articulate their point of view to the group, tended to excite those listening.</p>
DISADVANTAGED (A)	DISADVANTAGED (B)
<p>CITIZENS: "Citizens need fast solutions."</p> <p>GOVERNMENT: It was not spoken in this group during the reflection but something that was strongly apparent during the initial part of the role play was the dependency on the government to solve the problems. The finance minister repeatedly encouraged the group to consider how they might contribute to solutions. Eventually the other group members did contribute ideas toward solutions. In fact, during the summary of 'elements' that could lead to change, the finance minister sat back and listened and all other of the five participants jammed on ideas.</p> <p>IMMIGRANTS (CITIZENS): A sense of not being heard was strong, in particular between the government representative and the immigrant/citizen representative (on both sides). Getting past positions to focus on interests was expressed as the challenge.</p>	<p>GOVERNMENT AND ENTERPRISE: "People with power" were disadvantaged because they are traditionally the ones that have pressure on them from multiple directions to solve the problems. A different take was that government representatives as individuals that might have different perspectives than the responsibilities their professional roles demand of them. In the context of the role play they came with their professional 'hat' on.</p> <p>IMMIGRANTS, PARENTS &amp; YOUTH: "Cyrus gave voice to disadvantaged." A sense of not being heard was strong in one of the groups, in particular between the government representative and the immigrant/citizen representative. Getting past positions to focus on interests was expressed as the challenge.</p>

## APPENDIX N

### **Future considerations & Ideas for Using Role Play to Explore Change**

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#### **Bringing the participants into the alternative metaphor and narrative frame of the role play:**

Before the activity:

- Spend more time introducing and elaborating on the alternative metaphor and associated narrative in advance.
- Reinforce that the goal is to generate approaches toward that alternative from the starting point of 'today' and their current stakeholders.
- Spend more time priming the group for the alternative metaphor they will be working within. This might include some kind of warm-up activity to aid their immersion.
- Use a more developed narrative and richer detail (i.e., move beyond treatment).

During the activity:

- Reinforce the metaphor with each of the guiding questions.
- Give independent 'create' time for each question to allow them time to think and to better leverage the multiple perspectives at the table.

#### **Helping participants get into the role they are playing:**

Before the activity:

- Send the narrative and stakeholder profile cards to the participants to allow them time to immerse themselves in the ideas and role.
- Establish a 'plant' in each group who shows deep empathy for the role they are playing and can express their interests through a story to bring others quickly into their roles.
- When assembling participants consider tendencies toward introversion and extroversion as well how the candidates participants might be able to transcend self to inhabit a different person's mindset and interests, and how the individual participants might relate to the role they are playing.

During the activity:

- At the beginning of the activity, after participants have familiarized with their profiles (whether sent in advance or provided in the activity), have them write down and then share with the group some 'facts' about themselves, as well as assumptions, biases and

fears or uncertainties, from their stakeholder's point of view. This could serve as a warm up exercise and will help the other stakeholders with the diverse perspectives present.

- Have a 'plant' be one of the first to speak to set the emotional tone and imperative.

### **Testing resistance to change:**

A suggestion from the workshop was to use the role play and narrative iteratively as a way to gauge resistance to or readiness for change based on the role play experience. The iterative probes would have two applications and benefits:

1. To test and evolve the reframing method (role play) and tools (narrative and metaphor) in simulated contexts. Once the prototype gets to a powerful state, it could be used broadly as a tool for change.
2. To use as a repeated probe with actual stakeholders to test over time how strong the resistance to change is that would have to be overcome among stakeholders in the system. Additionally, different ideas within the narrative could be iterated on and composed of different elements with each probe allowing stakeholders to simulate and prototype the future of the system they work within and begin to take actions toward change.

As a starting point for using the approach as a probe, a two-question post-workshop survey was sent out to gauge the degree of change participants experienced. Although this would best be done with actual stakeholders, it provided some insight into how role playing might advance the possibility of change for participants. The results cannot be extrapolated to the actual stakeholders but they suggest the approach is worth exploring further. Nine of the 12 participants responded. In brief:

Two participants reported no change (22%)  
 Six participants reported some change (67%)  
 One participant reported change (11%)

See more detailed results, including quotes from each respondent on their reasons for the outcome, in Appendix K for the Post-Role Play Workshop Survey results.

### **Enabling shifts in perspective for breaking down resistance to change:**

The role play could also be used with existing stakeholders in the system as a way to help them understand the perspectives and interests of other stakeholders.